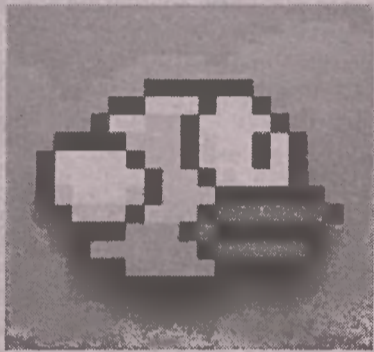


Unintuitive app takes over lives

By CHI CHI ZHU

It's impossible to utter the name "Flappy Bird" without expecting a chorus of groans and sighs in response. In late Jan. 2014, the lives of a world full of smartphone users were knocked upside down by the introduction of the simple yet addictive app.

This time period can be marked in the technological world as a clear "Flappy Bird" takeover, in which the game itself made over \$50,000 a day in just ad revenue.



Flappy Bird up close.

"Flappy Bird" is not Nguyen's first app, but it is the first that has reached outrageous popularity. Though originally put on the consumer market summer of 2013, it wasn't until late November and December that the app started getting attention. Reaching number one in the Apple Store in January, the app remained in that position until Feb. 9, the date the creator voluntarily removed to app due to "dissatisfaction" with it.

Instructions to play "Flappy Bird" are unintuitive. Tap to make the bird rise, leave the screen alone to let it fall. By tapping, make the bird travel between pipes without touching them. The logic is not just simple, it's crude. Psychologists and social scientists around the world clamored for an explanation on why this game still had the capacity to have the effect it does on the population.

A proposed reason by CNN analysts is that the addictive qualities exist because of the game's simplicity rather than in spite of it. Users download the app to explore the cause behind the fuss and discover a seemingly easy game of tapping a screen to maneuver a pixel bird up and down through pipes, only to be rudely awakened by the fact that their high score is a zero.

When the first scored point is achieved with great difficulty, the mindset of an addict sets in. One point was achieved, so what's two, what's three? And the cycle begins.

The technical details of "Flappy Bird" demonstrate a massive deviation from previously addictive apps such as "Candy Crush," "Angry Birds," and "Temple Run" in that rather than developing minimal strategy in maneuvering, building upon previous accomplishments when restarting the game, and having the capability and

the desire to advance, the starting point for Flappy Bird is stagnant.

Previously, addictive apps were games that allowed progress to be demonstrated and marked but still simple and rather easy. Perhaps the contrast between "Flappy Bird" and past top apps is a mark in a new direction of simplicity for gamemakers.

Or, according to CNET, it's "the embodiment of our descent into madness."

The deficit in procrastination techniques caused by the removal of "Flappy Bird" was quickly compensated for by the arsenal of copy-cat games to shoot to top positions in app stores soon thereafter. "Splashy Fish," "Dumpy Doge," and "City Bird" are among the top that have taken the original app's place. The predicted lifespan of this game remains unknown because in recent app trends, none have been similar enough in style to use in creating a predictive lifespan model.

Miniterm allows student experiences around the world



Courtesy of Zoë Voigt

Left: Paris Miniterm: From left to right: Zoë Voigt, Mark Dubois, Emily Nicholson, Michelle Zhao, Su Cho, Carrie Wright, Brooke Huang, Kevin Chen, Lily Zhang, David Choi, Anli Zhang, Janet Yan.

Right: Italy Miniterm: From left to right: H'Kera Ktul, Meredith Dorminey, Emily Fost, Erin Rymiszewski, Annie Jo Buchanan, Caroline Conrad, Lindsay Young, Paige Wulf, Jungsu Hong, Josie Daniel, Claire Vallery, Kiya Walker, Hannah Walrath.



Juniors begin applying for Senior Leadership Positions

By RICHARD ONG

On Feb. 4, applications for student leadership positions were released to the NCSSM junior class, opening up a new frontier of opportunity, excellence, and competition.

After a rigorous selection process, the student leaders will be selected, continuing the backbone of this institution.

Student leadership position is an umbrella term for the following jobs: attaché, Library Liaison, Multicultural Peer Counselor, Peer College Counselor, Residential Life Assistant, Smart Bar, Student Ambassador, and Sustainability Project Leader.

Many of these applications require a supplemental application specific to the job which are due at different times, with the general application due March 1.

Student leaders, in many ways, allow the school to function.

They provide essential services like Smart Bar assistance, school tours, and



2013-2014 Attachés pose for a picture.

taking check to name a few. But their responsibilities extend far beyond those listed.

As role models for the junior class, student leaders occupy desirable positions in the student body, and represent the school and its occupants. There are other, more material incentives to attract potential leaders.

"It obviously helps with college; it helps showing you're involved the community and shows going above and beyond," said junior Suad Jabr, a leadership applicant. RLAs also get first choice of rooms

and leadership positions count as required work service. RLA and Ambassador positions are often seen as a stepping stone towards similar positions at colleges.

However, these incentives make it a far more dangerous game, because students may receive leadership positions for only these incentives.

"You have to want it for more than just perks. There has to be a drive to help people, lead, and be a role model," said RLA Chase Mansell.

Naturally, these leadership positions are a tantalizing

proposition to many students, causing rampant competition.

"For RLA, especially on girl's halls, a lot of girls want to be an RLA. I feel there is general interest in PCC and MPC, but not so much as a primary choice," said Jabr.

Though this competition will increase the difficulty of getting a position, there is a distinct benefit. "As far as RLA, the competition affects the quality of the RLA. The people that do get it do a good job," said Mansell.

There will always be plenty of qualified people who do not receive spots however.

Positions like RLA, MPC, or Student Ambassador have significant time and effort commitments placed on top of already intensive student schedules.

Students occupying positions similar to a staff member's role not only puts pressure on the student, but calls into question the ability of students to perform as well as an adult counterpart.

Courtesy of Layla Namak