

Losing Money to Become a Tycoon: Starting with Games

Chapter 455: Time to Start Throwing Money Around

“Sold out?”

“All fourteen thousand phones?”

“In a single day?”

For a moment, Pei Qian found the reality impossible to accept.

He had originally thought the phones would at least last two or three days. He figured that if he called now, he could at least reserve one for personal use ahead of time.

But in the end, he was still one step too late!

Chang You hurriedly explained:

“I’m sorry, President Pei. I really didn’t expect this either. This was my failure!”

“Other phone brands get hundreds of thousands of reservations, and even completely new brands usually prepare at least thirty or fifty thousand units. We only stocked fourteen thousand phones, and they still lasted an entire day before selling out—that’s already pretty good!”

Pei Qian was speechless.

“‘Only’ sold out? That’s not what you were saying two days ago! You kept telling me all this inventory would end up rotting in the warehouse!”

Chang You quickly apologized again.

“I’m sorry, President Pei. I was too shortsighted. Looking at it now, your decision to aggressively build inventory was absolutely correct. Even these fourteen thousand units weren’t enough!”

Pei Qian: “...”

Damn it, that’s not what I meant to imply!

According to Chang You, GOG had officially launched at 8 a.m. that morning. The game received massive recommendation resources across the official platform, the Shenhua app store, and various other channels, causing it to instantly explode in popularity throughout the morning.

The review outlet had already completed the main body of its review video. But after seeing GOG Mobile, they hurriedly tested it as well, inserted the footage into the edited project, and rushed to upload the final video onto the Ailida website around noon.

As the video’s popularity continued to soar, combined with the hard-ad placements inside both GOG and Blood War Anthem: Enhanced Edition, OTTO E1’s sales naturally entered a phase of rapid acceleration.

Then, around an hour ago, sales finally peaked and completely wiped out all the inventory they had painstakingly prepared beforehand.

In short, the situation had changed in the blink of an eye.

Pei Qian had already predicted that the launch of GOG Mobile would cause another spike in phone sales.

But he never expected it to happen this fast...

Hearing President Pei fall silent on the other end of the line, Chang You hurriedly added:

“Don’t worry, President Pei. I’ve already asked the manufacturing plant to continue production. As soon as the new batch arrives, I’ll send one directly to you immediately!”

Pei Qian: “...Fine.”

After hanging up the phone with extreme reluctance, Pei Qian leaned back in his boss chair and fell into a long silence.

But soon, he pulled himself together.

“How can I let a tiny setback like this crush me?!”

“Hold the line. Hope hasn’t been completely extinguished yet!”

At that moment, Pei Qian felt as though he were radiating a kind of inspirational glow.

“Based on my understanding of the system’s twisted personality, every time it quietly closes one door on you, it secretly opens a window somewhere you’re not looking.”

“The more money I earn, the more ways the system permits me to spend money.”

“So there must be some new spending method I can exploit!”

“Something that looks like a crisis can also become an opportunity instead, just like when the ROF PC assembly business exploded, which then gave me the excuse to burn money aggressively under the banner of the 1024 Digital Festival...”

“Sure, that might create hidden dangers for the next settlement cycle. But once the next cycle begins, I can just create more money-burning businesses and come up with even more extravagant ways to spend!”

“That’s right. Exactly!”

The success of GOG and the phones was clearly about to bring Pei Qian another huge pile of money.

If he simply let that money accumulate unchecked, then suffering losses this cycle would become absolutely impossible.

But Pei Qian clearly had no intention of giving up. He firmly believed that where there’s a will, there’s a way!

“The real challenge is beginning now. In the end, if I want to lose money, I still need to ‘open the flow and throttle the source’...”

“Throttling the source means suppressing GOG and the phone business’s profits in the short term—at least until after settlement.”

“I’ll add a ‘rent-to-own’ feature to GOG. For every skin in the game, players can pay one-tenth of the price and immediately use it for an entire month.”

“In that case, GOG’s revenue for this month can immediately be cut down by ninety percent... uh, no, that’s impossible. I also need to account for retaliatory spending behavior. Cutting off four-fifths should be about right.”

“That way, after a month, if players aren’t satisfied with the skin, they simply don’t buy it. It’s equivalent to renting it for one month at one-tenth the price. But if they are satisfied, they can just pay the remaining balance a month later to purchase it permanently.”

“In the long run, this might actually have the opposite effect and boost sales instead. But at least this month’s settlement can be secured.”

“As for the phones... a large portion of the profits came from other departments giving concessions anyway. As long as cash flow remains stable, I’ll just return all those profits back to the various departments and let them figure out ways to burn through the money themselves...”

“Many hands make light work.”

“In short, I’ll issue a strict order to every department: all returned profits must be completely spent before the end of the month—not a single cent left over. Of course, the money can only be burned, not used to develop new products...”

“And then there’s the ‘opening the floodgates’ part.”

“There’s a little more than two weeks left before settlement. Which means that after another week, there can’t be any unfinished projects remaining. Time is tight, so having Chang You dump a massive amount of money into R&D now is definitely too late.”

“But some reward-based approaches can still work!”

“First, GOG can spend a huge sum expanding its cloud server bandwidth. The justification would be improving players’ online experience and preventing potential lag issues. That sounds perfectly reasonable, right?”

“Second, find more ways for the phone division to throw money around. Rent cloud storage servers for users so they can upload photos, videos, and other storage-heavy files to OTTO’s cloud service for free.”

“For phones that suffer severe non-human-caused malfunctions, not only should we immediately provide replacement units, but also offer cash compensation...”

“And finally, set up prize pools in GOG.”

“First place gets a 100,000 yuan cash reward. Ranks two through ten get 50,000 yuan each. Ranks eleven through fifty get 30,000 yuan each. Ranks fifty through two hundred get 10,000 yuan each.”

“That means every payout cycle can burn through 3.25 million yuan... Hmm, still not quite enough.”

“Let’s also give rewards to the Grandmaster players ranked two hundred to five hundred. 1,000 yuan each... no, too little. Make it 5,000 yuan each. That’s another 1.5 yuan million.”

“So altogether, each payout cycle can distribute 4.75 yuan million.”

“Hmm... that’s about the same amount I spend on charity once.”

“This could worsen the problem of boosted accounts and paid rankers, but whatever. Those problems would exist regardless of whether prize money existed. There are other ways to punish account boosting.”

“Oh right. PC and mobile players are matched separately, so rankings definitely need to be calculated separately too. That means double the fun! Double the prize money!”

“But there’s still one problem: all this money has to be distributed before March 31, otherwise it’ll be too late.”

“In that case, let’s do it like this. Each year is one season. Since this year is 2011, it’ll be the S1 season. But in order to aggressively burn money before the end of March, each season will be split into four phases.”

“January 1 to March 31 is the Spring Split.”

“April 1 to June 30 is the Summer Split.”

“July 1 to September 30 is the Autumn Split.”

“October 1 to December 31 is the Winter Split.”

“That’s the terminology for regular players. If there are professional tournaments later, we’ll definitely need a different naming system... gotta leave room for world championships and such...”

“Pfft~ As if this game would ever have a world championship!”

“The dates are a little awkward and don’t perfectly align with quarters, but there’s no helping it if I want to catch this settlement cycle. We’ll just make do. Players will get used to it eventually.”

“The final three days of each phase will be used for settlement, statistics, and prize distribution, ensuring that the money is definitely handed out before the last day.”

“That way, nearly 40 million yuan can be spent every year. During the early stages, that should burn through most of GOG’s profits...”

“And my reasoning is perfectly valid too. This will further increase GOG’s popularity and intensify high-rank competition, helping the game seize an advantage in the market...”

“Sounds reasonable, right?”

Pei Qian cautiously tested the idea.

The system raised no objections whatsoever, which clearly meant the plan was feasible.

Pei Qian made up his mind.

This was the way to do it!

He glanced at the calendar.

Settlement would occur on March 31, so the money absolutely had to be spent before then.

That meant GOG’s ranked ladder data would need to lock at midnight on March 29.

GOG Mobile was fine—there were still two full weeks until March 29.

More than enough time for players to beat each other’s brains out.

But GOG's PC version wouldn't officially launch until next Monday, meaning players would only have one week left to compete for the top rank.

One week.

Reach Rank #1 and earn a 100,000 yuan prize.

Even making it into the top 500 would still earn 5,000 yuan.

Five thousand yuan a week.

Seven hundred yuan a day.

Damn, that was exciting.

Under the original design, players would have needed to grind for three whole months to earn this money.

But due to the current special circumstances, the timeframe had been drastically shortened.

There was no helping it.

President Pei was in a hurry right now, so these people would just have to get lucky.

Even so, the players who ultimately managed to win those prizes would definitely all be gaming prodigies.

After arranging everything, Pei Qian finally felt much more at ease.

Sure enough, methods for spending money were like water in one's brain—if you squeezed hard enough, something would always come out.

Many problems in this world could be solved simply by throwing money at them.

And if they still couldn't be solved?

Then throw even more money.

At this point, Pei Qian still couldn't say with certainty that he had completely dealt with all the extra funds.

But at the very least... he had handled a critically important portion of them.

As for the remaining money, he could just recklessly dump it into Fright Hostel.

As long as the project could still officially finish during the next settlement cycle, throwing several million—or even tens of millions—into it wouldn't be a problem.

After checking everything over and confirming there were no issues, Pei Qian instructed Assistant Xin to notify all departments.

Since the gaming department had the largest number of changes, Pei Qian specifically reorganized the proposal and separately sent it to Hu Xianbin.

...

At this moment, Hu Xianbin was no longer paying much attention to GOG Mobile.

Instead, he had returned to handling the final polishing work for the PC version, striving to officially launch operations a couple of days earlier if possible.

Still, during breaks from work, he couldn't help feeling slightly conflicted.

GOG Mobile had become such a huge success...

Yet President Pei still hadn't praised him!

Even though it wasn't a major issue, Hu Xianbin still felt a tiny bit upset.

Just as he was brooding over it, he suddenly noticed a document sent through Tengda Group's internal chat software.

And it had been personally sent by President Pei!

Hu Xianbin froze for a moment before quickly opening it.

"Th-this is..."

The document contained a detailed follow-up promotional strategy for GOG, including server expansion plans, the skin rental-purchase system, seasonal cash prizes, and more.

After reading it, Hu Xianbin fell silent.

So that was it!

No wonder President Pei hadn't praised his work.

It was because his work still contained many flaws!

And this follow-up proposal perfectly filled in all those gaps.

To prevent server strain caused by the game suddenly exploding in popularity, President Pei planned to burn money expanding server bandwidth.

To further promote skins and cultivate spending habits among players who loved freeloading, he introduced the skin rental-purchase feature.

To motivate high-level players, further increase the game's popularity, and strengthen its competitive atmosphere, he introduced seasonal prize pools—allowing GOG to possess an exceptional esports ecosystem right from launch...

Hu Xianbin suddenly felt deeply ashamed.

He had misunderstood President Pei!

President Pei hadn't withheld praise because he was dissatisfied for no reason.

It was because Hu Xianbin's work genuinely wasn't good enough yet—there was still so much room for improvement!

Wasn't President Pei personally stepping in to patch all those shortcomings for him?

Sigh...

The problem was that his own work simply hadn't been thorough enough.

He absolutely had to work harder.

He could not let down President Pei's expectations!