



Motivations for playing Guild Wars

MOTIVATIONS FOR PLAYING GUILD WARS

WHAT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO PLAY GUILD WARS AND HOW ARENANET CAN KEEP THEIR
PLAYERS MOTIVATED TO PLAY, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

BY

NINA SANDBERG

GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS OF THE INSTITUTE OF
COMMUNICATION AT THE UTRECHT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

UTRECHT, MAY, 2011

Abstract

Every year so many new games are coming out on the market, while free time becomes a scarcity. It is hard for game developers to make games that catch the eye and attract the attention of players. ArenaNet wants to know how to make their games stand out and motivate their players to keep playing them.

In order to give ArenaNet recommendations on how to captivate their players, research was conducted. The different research methods that have been used are:

- Desk research
- Online survey
- Online forums
- Interviews

By looking at and analyzing the research, it was possible to reach a conclusion and give an answer to the research and policy questions. The players have several different reasons for playing Guild Wars, according to Nick Yee's motivations, these are:

- Escapism
- Socializing
- Advancement
- Discovery

They are involved in the online communities because of these reasons:

- Sharing and obtaining new information about the game from others.
- Being around like-minded people.
- Socializing.
- Discussing game mechanics, tactics and new ideas.
- Having a place to communicate with each other.

After answering the research questions, it was possible to answer the policy question and give recommendations to ArenaNet on what they should do to keep players motivated to play their games. The recommendations are divided into the three 'themes' that are mentioned several times as for why people play Guild Wars. Each 'theme' has its own recommendations, which are:

- Motivation
- Community
- Business model

Dedication

*To ArenaNet for making such an amazing game.
To I Am Azubah and all the other players out there
that make playing Guild Wars a fun experience.*

Table of Contents

List of figures	1
List of tables and graphs	1
Acknowledgements	2
1. Introduction	3
1.1 ArenaNet	3
1.2 Guild Wars	4
1.3 Justification	4
1.4 Problem definition	4
1.5 Research and policy question	5
Research question	5
Policy question	5
Sub questions	5
1.6 Operationalization	5
1.7 Restrictions	6
1.8 Purpose and rationale	6
1.9 Structure of the report	6
2. Methodology	7
2.1 Desk research	7
2.2 Online survey	7
Demographics	7
'Lifestyle'	7
Research questions	7
Open-ended questions	8
2.3 Online forums	8
2.4 Interviews	8
Interviewee 1 - Relics of Orr	8
Interviewee 2 – GW-X	8
Interviewee 3 – Rubi Bayer	8
Interviewee 4 - Angel Leigh McCoy	8
3. Theoretical framework	9
3.1 Bartle's player types	9
Richard Bartle	9
The original player types	9
The new player types	11
Player development	12
3.2 Bartle on gaming communities	14
3.3 Yee's player motivations	15
Nick Yee	15
Factor Analysis	15
The Achievement motivations	16
The Social motivations	17

The Immersion Component.....	17
3.4 Business models for online games	18
B2P – Buy to play.....	18
P2P – Pay to play/ Subscription	18
F2P – Free to play	18
Downloadable content.....	18
4. Research results, analysis and conclusions.....	19
4.1 Desk Research	19
4.2 Online Survey	20
What is your age?	20
What is your gender?	22
What is your occupation?	23
Where are you from?.....	24
How long have you played Guild Wars?	25
How often do you play Guild Wars?	26
What motivates you to play Guild Wars?	27
Are you involved with online/offline Guild Wars communities?.....	29
Why are you involved with those communities?	30
Are you going to play Guild Wars 2?.....	31
4.3 Online forums.....	32
Analysis of the online forums	35
4.4 Interviews.....	36
Interview 1 – Relics of Orr.....	36
Interview 2 – GW-X	38
Interview 3 – Rubi Bayer	40
Interview 4 – Angel Leigh McCoy.....	42
Analysis of the interviews	44
4.5 Answering the research questions.....	46
SQ1: Who plays Guild Wars?	46
SQ2: Why do people play Guild Wars?.....	46
SQ3: Why be involved in Guild Wars communities?	46
RQ1: What motivates people to play Guild Wars?.....	47
RQ2: What motivates people to be involved in the community around Guild Wars?	47
5. Recommendations.....	48
5.1 Motivation.....	49
5.2 Community	50
5.3 Business model.....	51
6. List of footnotes	52
7. Bibliography	53
8. Appendix.....	55
8.1 Online survey	55
8.2 Why are you involved with those communities?	56

List of figures

Figure 1. ArenaNet logo	3
Figure 2. Guild Wars logo.....	4
Figure 3. Structure of the paper.....	6

List of tables and graphs

Graph 1: Bartle's Original Player Types	9
Graph 2: Bartle's new player types 3D model	11
Graph 3: Player development.....	12
Graph 4: Player development new model	13
Graph 5: What is your gender	22
Graph 6: What is your occupation	23
Graph 7: Where are you from.....	24
Graph 8: How long have you played Guild Wars	25
Graph 9: How often do you play Guild Wars	26
Graph 10: What motivates you to play Guild Wars	27
Graph 11: What motivates females to play Guild Wars	28
Graph 12: What motivates males to play Guild Wars.....	28
Graph 13: Are you involved with online/offline Guild Wars communities	29
Graph 14: Are you going to play Guild Wars 2.....	31
Table 1: The different factors and motivations	16
Table 2: What is your age.....	21
Table 3: What is your gender	22
Table 4: What is your occupation	23
Table 5: Where are you from.....	24
Table 6: How long have you played Guild Wars	25
Table 7: How often do you play Guild Wars	26
Table 8: What motivates you to play Guild Wars	27
Table 9: Are you involved with online/offline Guild Wars communities	29
Table 10: Are you going to play Guild Wars 2.....	31
Table 11: Motivations mentioned on the online forums.....	35
Table 12: Motivations mentioned during interviews	44

Acknowledgements

While writing this paper, several people assisted me along the way. Now I would like to thank them for their direct or indirect contributions to this dissertation.

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my tutor, Peter de Groot, for his expert help and tips. He has been a great teacher and tutor this last year and very helpful with this paper.

Second, I would like to thank my patient boyfriend, who has helped checking and double checking for errors in the paper.

Third, I would like to thank all the people who have helped me out with the research; the people I interviewed, the people who responded to my survey and the people who commented on my forum posts.

Fourth, I would like to thank ArenaNet for giving me the opportunity to do this research on their behalf and making the best game ever and hopefully continuing that with their upcoming game, Guild Wars 2.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank my parents who bought me my first PC and introduced me to the amazing world of computer games.

1. Introduction

This paper is written in order to give ArenaNet an answer to their policy question and give them advice on what to do.

The topic of this paper is what motivates players to play Guild Wars and to be involved in the Guild Wars communities. There are many different reasons why people play games and everyone has their own goals in the game and this paper will find out what these motivations are. Not only will the focus be on the motivations for actually playing the game, but also the reasons for why people are involved with Guild Wars communities inside and outside of the game.

By conducting research on this topic it will be possible to give ArenaNet, a game developer company in the US, advice on how to keep their customers motivated to play Guild Wars and to encourage them to continue playing when the sequel Guild Wars 2 will be launched. Guild Wars, a MMORPG¹ is the most popular game from ArenaNet and it is therefore this paper will focus on that particular game.

1.1 ArenaNet



Figure 1. ArenaNet logo

ArenaNet is a game-development company located in Washington, USA. ArenaNet is a subsidiary of the Korean based company NCsoft Corporation. In 2000, the company was formed and its goal was to create a state-of-the-art interactive game network and to develop premier multiplayer online games. Their most popular game Guild Wars is a result of these goals. The game offers instanced missions, streaming updates and unlike most other similar games they use a subscription-free business model.

The staff working for ArenaNet consists of people from different countries and cultures. The employees speak a variety of different languages from all over the world, which makes it easier for them to understand the needs of the gaming communities, listen to, and give feedback to the gamers and fans around the globe. No matter where they are from, they all share the love for games. In order to bring people together and share their love, ArenaNet's game servers allow people to play their games at anytime, anywhere and together with anyone you want.

Not only do they design and create the games, but the employees also play together with the fans in Guild Wars and they are actively involved in the community. They read blogs and forums, they tweet with their fans, they attend live in-game events on a regular basis and they socialize with their fans on gaming conventions, where they even arrange special events for the fans. When making decisions regarding their games, they listen to the community of players and fans, which makes the community feel appreciated and leads to great loyalty for the game and company (ArenaNet).

ArenaNet will not have an active role in my research since they are located in the USA it will be hard for me to visit them. Therefore, any contact between them and me will be over email or involvement in the Guild Wars community.

¹MMORPG - Massively multiplayer online role-playing game.

1.2 Guild Wars



Figure 2. Guild Wars logo

Guild Wars is a MMORPG that is created and produced by ArenaNet.

The game is based in a fantasy world where players can cooperate in group combat against fantasy monsters or in single player adventures in the PvE² environment. They can also engage in PvP³ activities where the players battle each other in different arenas.

Guild Wars is a mission based game where people follow an intriguing storyline that consists of missions and quests. You create your own characters and by going through the game storyline your characters progress and gain achievements, unique items and special armors and weapons.

Key Game Features (Guild Wars).

- *Join in cooperative quests or unite in head-to-head guild battles.*
- *Develop a unique character that can explore multiple professions and choose from hundreds of unique skills.*
- *Enjoy fully integrated support for guilds, including worldwide tournaments and ladders, guildhalls, special character identification and forums directly built into the game.*
- *Experience a changing world, where the entire landscape can be altered as you explore and conquer.*
- *Play in a secure server-hosted game environment that prevents cheating; ArenaNet's technology allows quick and seamless resolution of exploits.*

1.3 Justification

Gaming is a relatively new research topic so not a lot of research is conducted on it yet. The research that has been conducted so far mostly focuses on the influence games can have on people's health, how it affects the social life of gamers and if it creates more aggression and violence amongst the players. There has been little research on player motivations and that is why this paper will be useful because it may bring more insight into this topic.

ArenaNet is interested in getting more insight in what motivates people to play their game and how they can use it to keep motivating players.

1.4 Problem definition

In the world of gaming, there have been many changes since it first became popular. A traditional way of thinking about people who play games is that they are young guys who play games solely for mindless entertainment. We saw games changing from 2D platform games to beautiful 3D environments on your PC, Xbox or other consoles. Nowadays, you can even play full-blown games on your phone. So if the technologies used, and the possibilities they offer change so much, then why not the traditional idea of why people play games?

²PvE – Player versus Environment.

³PvP – Player versus Player

This leads to the problem definition for this paper:

'Every year so many new games are coming out on the market, while free time becomes a scarcity. It is hard for game developers to make games that catch the eye and attract the attention of players. ArenaNet wants to know how to make their games stand out and motivate their players to keep playing them.'

By finding out what it is that motivates people to play Guild Wars and to be involved in the Guild Wars community, it will be possible to give advice to ArenaNet and answer the policy question.

1.5 Research and policy question

Research question

What motivates people to play Guild Wars and be involved in the Guild Wars community?

Divided research question in two parts:

RQ1: What motivates people to play Guild Wars?

RQ2: What motivates people to be involved in the community around Guild Wars?

Policy question

PQ: How can ArenaNet keep their players motivated playing Guild Wars and the upcoming Guild Wars 2?

Sub questions

Sub questions to help answer the research questions

SQ1: Who plays Guild Wars?

- What gender?
- Age?
- Where are they from?
- Occupation?

SQ2: Why do people play Guild Wars?

- Social, play together with "real life" friends/play together with online friends?
- Escape reality?
- Achievements and titles in-game?
- Just play for fun?
- Different motivations for male and female?

SQ3: Why be involved in Guild Wars communities?

SQ4: How can ArenaNet motivate current players and attract new players to Guild Wars?

- How can ArenaNet keep their players motivated going into Guild Wars 2?
- Business model?
- Community involvement?

1.6 Operationalization

This paper is written by using the American English language with its spelling and grammar. The font type that is being used in this document is Arial with the font size of 10, with some exception regarding headings, tables, figures and graphs. All sources used are summarized in the bibliography according to the style of the American Psychological Association (APA). Desk research, online survey, online forums and interviews are the research tools used.

Explanation of some words and expressions that are used in this paper are mentioned here, the rest will be described in the footnotes and in the list of footnotes.

- ArenaNet – ArenaNet is the company that this paper is created for in order to answer their policy question and give them advice.
- Guild Wars – Guild Wars is a MMORPG that was created by ArenaNet. This game is the focus in this research.
- MMORPG - Massively multiplayer online role-playing game. These games are online games where thousands of people from all over the world play at the same time over the internet.
- PvE – Player versus Environment. Here the players play against the world and environment. They have to fight foes and travel through the world map.
- PvP – Player versus Player. This means that the players battle each other in special arenas.
- RL – Real life. With real life I mean peoples everyday life and all that comes with that.
- Builds – When players are talking about builds them mean different sets of skills used together in the best way possible.

1.7 Restrictions

In order to really do thorough research on this topic I would have liked to have more time to conduct the research. With more time, it would have been possible to get more respondents to the online survey and create more discussions on the forums. Another restriction besides time was to find enough people that were willing to be interviewed, I contacted more people than the ones that were willing and able to be interviewed but most of them were very busy and did not have time to participate in my interview. It would have given more insight into the topic from ArenaNet's point of view if more of the employees would have been available for interview.

1.8 Purpose and rationale

The purpose of this paper is to gain more insight into what motivates people to play Guild Wars, join in on the communities around that game and in the end give advice to ArenaNet.

In order to do so research must be conducted to be able to answer the research questions and its sub questions. From the answers gotten on the research questions it will be possible to answer ArenaNet's policy question and give them advice on what to do.

1.9 Structure of the report

The structure of this report will be as following:



Figure 3. Structure of the paper

2. Methodology

The research conducted for this paper consists of four parts:

- Desk research
- Online survey
- Online forums
- Interviews

2.1 Desk research

The first part of the research was desk research. Desk research was done to get an overview of the theory about the topic. Literature on the subject is scarce, therefore most of the theory was found on the World Wide Web and from research papers written by two of the leading researchers on this topic, Richard Bartle and Nick Yee.

2.2 Online survey

An online survey was created to get a more general overview of the players and their thoughts. The reason why the survey was made online is because Guild Wars is an online game and therefore it is easiest to reach the players online. Another reason why the survey was online, is that the target group that consists of Guild Wars players are located all over the world, so to manually hand out questionnaires to everyone would be time and money constraining. Furthermore, it would be difficult or almost impossible to track down the players, since players are only known by their in game character names. Their real identities remain unknown.

One problem that comes with conducting an online survey instead of manually handing out questionnaires is that there is little control over the sample size and who is responding.

In order to create and spread the survey, I used a new online survey website called Survey Pirate. It is a free service to use and it allows you to make as many questions you want and have as many respondents as possible. Spreading the survey around was done by using online Guild Wars forums (see part 2.3 Online forums later in this paper), by using social media such as Twitter and inside of Guild Wars.

The survey was created by following the questionnaire design guide from the book 'Practical Research Methods for Media and Cultural Studies' (Davies & Mosdell, 2006). According to the guide the questions in the questionnaire is divided into four sections:

- 1 Demographics
- 2 'Lifestyle'
- 3 Research questions
- 4 Open-ended questions

Demographics

The first few questions in the survey are questions about the person's demographics. Questions such as; 'What is your age?', 'What is your gender?', 'Where are you from?' were asked.

'Lifestyle'

After asking questions about the demographics there were some questions about the person's 'lifestyle'. Interesting information about the players lifestyle related to the topic of this paper lead to questions such as; 'How long have you been playing Guild Wars?' and 'How often do you play Guild Wars?'

Research questions

In this part of the survey, the question asked is the most important question in the whole survey. This is the question out of all the questions that will help answer the research question in this paper. The questions asked was 'What motivates you to play Guild Wars?' There were given several motivation options and the player could cross out multiple options for what motivated him or her. The motivation options that were used in the survey are the same motivations that Nick Yee has found in his research (Yee, Motivations of Play in MMORPGs, 2005). I used those motivations because his research and theory is a part of the theoretical framework for this paper.

Open-ended questions

In the end of the survey, there is an open question where the respondents can answer more detailed. The question asked here was 'Why are you involved in Guild Wars communities?' Here the respondents could elaborate freely.

2.3 Online forums

For most popular games there are several websites and forums available. These sites and forums are most often created by the communities of fans of these particular games. With Guild Wars, this is no different. For the research of this paper, these community forums have been used to start up discussions and asking questions to the players. In this case, the respondents were asked more in-depth questions which are hard to answer via a survey. The forums were also used to spread the survey to get more respondents.

There are so many Guild Wars forums online, but for this paper, three of the most popular ones were chosen.

- Guild Wars Guru
- Guild Wars INC Gamer
- Guild Wars 2 Forum

2.4 Interviews

Four people were interviewed for this paper. Three of them are important figures in the Guild Wars community and one is an ArenaNet employee. These interviews were conducted in order to get to hear from some of the people that play a big role in the Guild Wars experience and see what they had to say on the subject.

Interviewee 1 - Relics of Orr

Relics of Orr is a Guild Wars community that runs a website, www.relicsof Orr.com, a Facebook site, a Twitter account and a weekly podcast which discusses what is happening in Guild Wars and shares news about Guild Wars 2.

Interviewee 2 – GW-X

GW-X is another Guild Wars community website, www.gw-x.net. The site is purposely designed so that people can join and make their own community, groups etc. Here they can have a free way of communicating with in game friends, guilds and other communities.

Interviewee 3 – Rubi Bayer

Rubi is the community manager and reporter at Massively.com. Massively is a blog focused on the massively multiplayer genre of online gaming. In addition to providing the latest MMO news, they produce informative and entertaining editorials, guides, community features. She also hosts a weekly podcast, Guildcast, together with another Massively colleague where they talk about Guild Wars.

Interviewee 4 - Angel Leigh McCoy

Angel Leigh McCoy is a writer/designer on the Design Team at ArenaNet. She did some freelance lore writing for Guild Wars, and now she is officially hired by ArenaNet to work on Guild Wars 2.

3. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework is a result of the desk research that was conducted for this paper. This part will explain some of the existing theories about player types and motivations. Not a lot of research has been done on the topic of player motivations, but Bartle and Yee's theories are the ones that stand out. In addition, a part will explain more about gaming communities and different business models used for games.

3.1 Bartle's player types

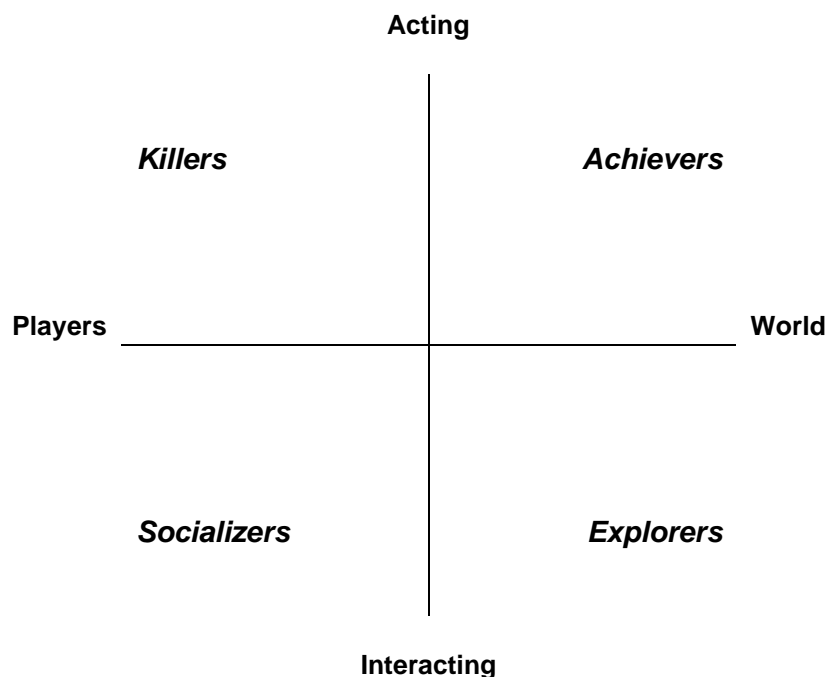
Richard Bartle

Richard Bartle, a British writer, professor and game researcher. He has a PhD in artificial intelligence from the University of Essex. Together with Roy Trubshaw, Richard created the first MUD⁴ game. Later they renewed their game and created MUD2. Other than creating games, he has also conducted research about player types in these MUD games and wrote one of the first papers on this subject, *Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs* (Bartle R. , *Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs*, 1996). He also wrote the book *Designing Virtual Worlds* (Bartle R. , *Designing Virtual Worlds*, 2003) where he explains his theories about creating games more in-depth. His theory on player types is also explained in this book in an adapted new version.

The original player types

In 1996 when Richard Bartle wrote his paper, '*Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs*'; he introduced four original player types. He introduced these different player types after observing different people play his games. By observing the players, he realized that players find different things to be fun when playing games.

The player type model divides the players into four categories. Players are divided into these categories by using two axes that shows if the player prefers acting on or interacting with the virtual world itself or its other players. This division is illustrated in Graph 1: Bartle's Original Player Typed.



Graph 1: Bartle's Original Player Types

⁴ MUD - Multi-User Dungeon, the predecessor to today's MMORPG.

Achievers

Achievers are players that like acting on the world. They see virtual worlds as games and in the end their goal is to win. Achievers are typical gamers and they play to achieve things in the game, such as getting higher levels on your character, earning titles and finishing missions and quests. In game, you might hear these players say things like:

"Sure, I'll help you. What do I get?"

"So how do YOU kill the dragon, then?"

"Only 4211 points to go!"

(Bartle R. , Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs, 1996)

Socializers

Socializers are players that like to interact with other players. They see the games as entertainment such as TV, clubs or concerts and they like to discuss about their or others performance and behavior. Chatting in game and helping each other out is their main interest. This is also the player type that is most into role-playing. In game, you might hear these players say things like:

"Hi!"

"Yeah, well, I'm having trouble with my boyfriend."

"What happened? I missed it, I was talking."

"Really? Oh no! Gee, that is terrible! Are you sure? Awful, just awful!"

(Bartle R. , Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs, 1996)

Explorers

Explorers like to interact with the virtual world around them. These players see the games as a pastime and the discovery and greater understanding is their reward. They love to discover new maps and explore lands they have not been to yet. In game, you might hear these players say things like:

"You mean you don't know the shortest route from <obscure room 1> to <obscure room 2>?"

"I haven't tried that one, what's it do?"

"Why is it that if you carry the uranium you get radiation sickness, and if you put it in a bag you still get it, but if you put it in a bag and drop it then wait 20 seconds and pick it up again, you don't?"

(Bartle R. , Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs, 1996)

Killers

Killers are players that like to dominate other players. To these players the game is like sport, the hunting and shooting kind of sport where they can dominate others. They try to dominate the other players by bullying them. They usually do this by attacking the other player or trying to find other ways to make life hard for them. In game, you might hear these players say things like:

"Ha!"

"Coward!"

"Die!"

"Die! Die! Die!"

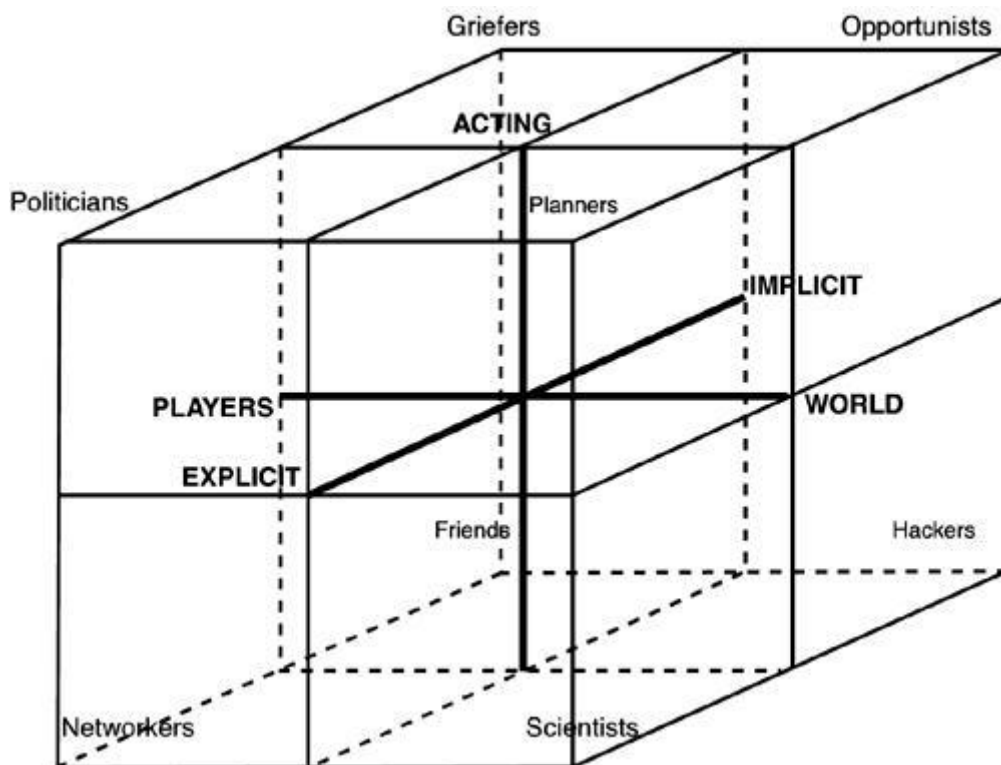
(Bartle R. , Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs, 1996)

The new player types

The old player types model from 1996 have some flaws such as:

- Players might change their player type over time, but the model does not suggest how and why this is.
- All of the player types seem to have sub types that are not illustrated by this model.

Because of these flaws from the original model, Bartle evolved his model and created four more player types. This new player type model was introduced in his book 'Designing Virtual Worlds' (Bartle R. , Designing Virtual Worlds, 2003). By adding a new axis to the old model, implicit actions vs. explicit actions, the model would now consist of eight player types. Implicit actions are actions in the game that are done automatically without a conscious mind behind it, while explicit actions are planned actions that lead you to a goal or desired effect in the world or on other players. The new model is illustrated in Graph 2: Bartle's new player types 3D model.



Graph 2: Bartle's new player types 3D model

The new model has created eight player types, or in other words, the four old player types are now divided into two sub types each.

Achievers

Opportunists

The opportunists are players with implicit actions. These players take chances when the opportunity is there, they look for things to do without always knowing what they look for and if they encounter obstacles, they do something else instead. Opportunists jump from one idea to the next idea.

Planners

Planners are achievers with explicit actions. They often set goals for themselves and tries to achieve those goals, if they encounter obstacles they find a way around it and they usually perform actions as a part of a bigger picture. Planners usually stick to one idea at a time.

Explorers

Scientists

Scientists are explorers with explicit actions. These players experiment to form theories in the game and they use these theories to test them. They like to gain knowledge and they try to explain phenomena in the game.

Hackers

Hackers are explorers with implicit actions. They try to reveal meaning in the virtual world by experimenting; they go wherever they want to go in the world and seek to discover new things.

Socializers

Networkers

Networkers are socializers with explicit actions. They look for people to interact with and make an effort to get to know the other players. They assess who is cool to hang out with and whom they should play with.

Friends

Friends are socializers with implicit actions. They usually just interact with the players they already know because they know and understand them. They like their company and accept their weaknesses.

Killers

Griefers

Griefers are killers with implicit actions. "Attack, attack, attack" is their philosophy. They like to be annoying and in your face. Their goal is to get a big but bad reputation amongst other players.

Politicians

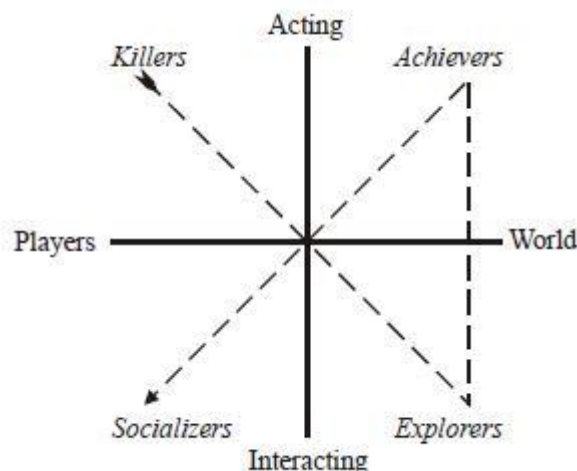
Politicians are killers with explicit actions. These players act with forethought and foresight and try to manipulate other players. They like to think they contribute a lot to the community in the game. Their goal is to get a big, good reputation.

Player development

Since the beginning of the player type concept it has been seen that players change type over time. Usually their change follow a certain pattern, not always, but usually the pattern is like this:

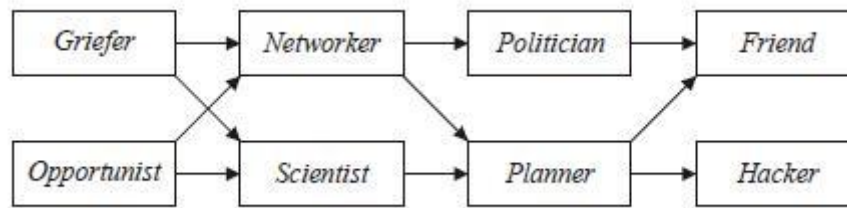
1. When players start playing, they usually start fighting and killing stuff.
2. Then they get tired of killing and they starts to explore the world and environment around then.
3. After exploring a while, they feel they have enough knowledge to start achieving and winning the game.
4. Having won the game they start socializing with others and helping them.

The pattern is shown in Graph 3: Player development using the old player type model.



Graph 3: Player development

If we look at the new player type model the player development pattern would look like this:



Graph 4: Player development new model

By looking at this pattern, we can see a general sequence of how players develop over time.

1. The players start playing the game and tries out actions and act on their experiences and instinct to see where the boundaries are. Usually they do so by either playing as an opportunist or a griever.
2. After figuring out the boundaries and actions they can do they begin playing the game by performing different actions and learning what works together. The players do this either by experimenting as a scientist of by communication with other players as a networker.
3. Now they have figured out what works and what does not work in the game, so they start using their actions to achieve things and succeed in the game. The players success is measured either by the virtual world for achievers or by other players for politicians.
4. The player have now won the game, either they have gained great understanding of the virtual world as a hacker or they have created great relationships with other players as friends.

3.2 Bartle on gaming communities

In the 1990's when the internet became a big hit there was a lot of talk about why the community was so important. If you had a great community, it meant that people would stick around. How important community is for the internet also translates into games. By having a community of players and fans the people will keep on playing and coming back to the game.

Gaming communities are established through relationships between players. The players come together and make up the social norms and culture for the game. The game developers do not have much to say on how the community is working, but they can encourage or discourage particular desired or undesired activities and influence the community that way.

Communities are formed by groups of people who:

- Have the means and opportunity to communicate with one another.
- Have some reason for communicating with one another.
- Share a cultural context.
- Can choose the degree to which they participate in the community.
- Can be in other communities at the same time. (Bartle R. , Designing Virtual Worlds, 2003)

For a community to be strong it should have certain characteristics. Having a strong community for your game is highly desirable because it creates stronger bonds between the players and that makes them less likely to go off and play other games.

Some of these characteristics should be:

- Members have a shared pool of knowledge.
- Members adhere to common practices.
- The community has a history.
- Members share a vision of the community's future.
- Members work together on projects that are for the benefit of the community. (Bartle R. , Designing Virtual Worlds, 2003)

The first level of a community is when people with common interests come together. People then start sharing their knowledge and information with each other. Now they start to see that the community can offer more than that so they start working on projects together that are important and useful for the community. This takes a lot of time and effort and therefore it creates a commitment to the community. By sharing their knowledge and working together for the community, the players form strong bonds to the other players and the game.

For the game developers it is sometimes useful to look at the players in terms of communities instead of individuals because:

- Communities create bonds between players and are one of the biggest reasons why people stay playing the game.
- The big amount of players in some games makes it hard and impractical to consider each player on an individual level. With so many players, it is easier to reach out to the communities than to the individuals.
- A lot of the times when the players play, they act in groups. Therefore, if you only look at each individual all the time you will miss the big picture, what really goes on.
- The way communities and players act, can be compared to each other. What you might know about the players can often be applied to the communities.

3.3 Yee's player motivations

Nick Yee

Nick Yee was born in Hong Kong but moved to the US when he was 14 to go to school. After high school, he went to Haverford College, Philadelphia, where he majored in Psychology with a concentration in Computer Science. At the end of his college years, he wrote his thesis about the personality differences among gamers of different video game genres. After college, he started working for a tech R&D group in Chicago. A few years later, he started graduate school at Stanford University where he got his PhD in 2007 and since then he has been working as a research scientist at the Palo Alto Research Center (Yee, Nick Yee's HomePage). During his years at school and work, Nick Yee has written several research papers on MMORPG players and their motivations.

Factor Analysis

Yee thought Bartle's player type model, both the new and the old one, still had some flaws. He did not like the fact that according to Bartle players could only be one type at the same time e.g. they could not be both achiever and socializer. They could change types, but never be multiple types simultaneously. In Yee's opinion, player could be more types at the same time and therefore he started his own research on the subject.

Based on Bartle's types, he created a survey with 40 questions and collected data from 3000 MMORPG players. The survey was posted online and players from several popular MMORPGs at that time answered it. Games such as EverQuest, Dark Age of Camelot, Ultima Online, and Star Wars Galaxies were a part of the survey.

The results of this research reached three goals that overcame the weaknesses from Bartle's model:

- It showed that each of the components of each motivation or player type was correlated.
- The research showed that the different motivations were indeed different from each other.
- It could provide a way to assess player motivations in MMORPGs. (Yee, Motivations of Play in MMORPGs, 2005)

One of the biggest differences between Bartle's player types and the factor analysis is that Bartle's axis model says that the motivations are opposite to each other and suppress other motivations. This means that you can only have one motivation at the same time. The factor analysis says something completely different. If a player scores high on one motivation it does not mean the player cannot score high on other motivations as well. For example, a player can score high on the achievement motivations but also at the social motivations.

As with Bartle's player type model, the factor analysis approach is also not perfect. The primary weakness with this approach is that there might be other motivations that are not accounted for. Although the approach is not perfect, it still solves some of the flaws from Bartle's model and shows a more accurate view of what motivates players to play MMORPGs.

Table 1 shows the different factors and motivations that were the result from the factor analysis survey (Yee, Motivations of Play in MMORPGs, 2005).

Achievement	Social	Immersion
Advancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Power Accumulation Status 	Socializing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual chat Helping others Making friends 	Discovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploration Lore Finding hidden things
Mechanics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers Optimization Templating Analysis 	Relationship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Self-disclosure Find and give support 	Role-playing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story line Character history Roles Fantasy
Competition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging others Provocation Domination 	Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration Groups Group achievement 	Customization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appearance Accessories Style Color schemes
		Escapism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relax Escape from RL⁵ Avoid RL problems

Table 1: The different factors and motivations

The Achievement motivations

Advancement

The players that scored high on this motivation during the survey likes to reach goals, level their characters fast, and collect in game resources and money. They love making progress and gain power in the game, such as being proficient in combat, have high social recognition or become rich and have high-end weapons and armor.

Mechanics

These players get motivated to play the game through trying to analyze and understand the mechanics of the game. They want to figure out what skills work best with each other and how things really work in the virtual world.

Competition

Players that are motivated by competition in the game like to 'win' over the other players, either by beating them in combat or having more money or better weapons and armor than them. They love dominating the other players and being the best player.

⁵ RL – Real life

The Social motivations

Socializing

Meeting and getting to know other players is what motivates these players. They like to log into the game to chat and gossip with the other players and help them out if they need help.

Relationship

Having scored strong on this motivation means that the player wants to find friends and form meaningful relationships with the other players. They look for players that can become close friends in game but also give support and help when dealing with things in RL.

Teamwork

Working and collaborating with others is what motivates these players. They like to play in groups rather than play solo, and they strive for group achievements instead of individual ones.

The Immersion Component

Discovery

These players love to explore the world and discover new locations, quests or items that others may not know about yet. They like to collect special items and information not many others have.

Role-Playing

Role-playing is what these players are into. They love to be immersed into the story and see the world through their own characters eyes. They like to see the character as a part of the story in the game.

Customization

Making your own character the way you want it is something that motivates these players. They love spending time customizing their characters look and style and try to create a unique character different from all others.

Escapism

Escaping real life and the issues and problems in life is a motivation to play games. Escape from your everyday life and go into a fantasy world and chill out and relax is something these players like about gaming. Avoid all other problems and just play and have fun.

3.4 Business models for online games

There are several different business models when it comes to making games. Here is an overview of some of the most popular ones.

B2P – Buy to play

In this business model, the players have to buy the game in order to play it. Either this can be done in a retail store or by downloading directly to your computer by using a digital distribution system e.g. Steam service from Valve Software or PlayStation Store from Sony and the Xbox Live Arcade from Microsoft. Once the player has purchased the game, he or she can play it as much as they want without extra costs.

P2P – Pay to play/ Subscription

If the game is using this business model, the players have to pay frequently in order to play the game. All players have to sign up for a subscription where they have to pay a periodic fee to be able to play the game. Usually the payment happens automatically after you fill in a form with your credit card details the first time you play. Until you stop it, it will keep charging you each month even if you don't play the game. If you do not want to have a subscription, you can also buy prepaid cards for certain games where you get different amounts of playtime in the game. This has been one of the most popular business models for MMORPG games for a while now. World of Warcraft and Conan are examples of games that are using this model.

F2P – Free to play

In the free to play model, the game is freely distributed and you do not have to pay any subscription fee to play it. Although a free game seems appealing to a potential player, there can be some drawbacks. Usually these games are created with a smaller budget and this shows in the overall quality of the game. Other times game developers try to lure players with free, but limited content. E.g., the free game has limited missions and quests, limited items or you cannot reach the highest level with your character. If you want more out of the game beyond this, you will have to purchase extra content in the in game store. A game that has had great success with this business model is Lord of the Rings Online. This game first started out as a 'pay to play' game, but by using that model the game did not really have a big success. However, after they decided to switch their game to a free to play model in 2010 the revenue has been great. More players play the game now than ever. Not only Lord of the Rings Online is running on the free to play model with an in game store. More and more games are doing this and it might become the most popular model for MMORPGs in the future instead of pay to play (Nishi, 2011).

Downloadable content

Downloadable content consists of content that is specifically made for the game, which is separate from the original game. The game makes new content and to get it you can purchase and download it into your current game. Example of downloadable content can be a new quest or mission pack, a new outfit you can use on your character or an exclusive weapon set. Downloadable content model is often combined with other business models. While the most common name use these days is downloadable content, some game expansions can also be bought in retail stores.

4. Research results, analysis and conclusions

Here are the results of the research conducted for this paper.

4.1 Desk Research

For the desk research, several research reports and books were read in order to gain knowledge and different theories on this subject. During the desk research, information and theory about Bartle's player types, Bartle's thoughts on community, Nick Yee's motivation factor analysis and theory about different business models used for games were used.

The result from this research can be found in the theoretical framework.

4.2 Online Survey

The online survey was created at surveypirate.com, a free online survey tool, and it was shared on [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com) to Guild Wars players and fans, on online Guild Wars forums and in the actual game of Guild Wars. During the time the survey was online, 143 people responded on it. Here are the results and analysis of the survey, question by question.

What is your age?

As we can see in the table (next page), people that responded to the survey ranged from the age 14 years old to 62 years old. The age that was selected the most times is 21, the average age is 27 and the median age is 23 years old. Four people answered with an invalid answer.

According to the top 10 entertainment software industry facts (Top 10 entertainment software industry facts, 2011), the average player is 34 years old, which are quite some years older than the average Guild Wars player that responded on the survey. In one of Nick Yee's research reports (Yee, The Demographics, Motivations and Derived Experiences of Users of Massively Multi-User Online Graphical Environments, 2006), he had a total of 6675 MMORPG players, in the age range from 11 years to 68 years old, answer a survey. The average age from this group was 26.57 years old and the median age was 25. A few years later in a new report he wrote (Williams, Yee, & Caplan, Who plays, how much, and why? Debunking the stereotypical gamer profile, 2008), he only surveyed players from one specific game, EverQuest2. This time the respondents age range was from 12 years to 65 years old. The average player was 31.16 years old and the median age was 31.

It seems that Guild Wars players are on average a few years younger than players of other MMORPGs. Both the top 10 entertainment software industry facts and Yee's research show higher average ages.

What is your age?	Total
14	1
15	2
16	5
17	5
18	8
19	10
20	12
21	13
22	7
23	6
24	4
25	6
26	3
27	2
28	2
29	3
30	5
31	6
32	2
33	3
34	3
35	3
36	2
37	4
38	1
39	4
40	3
41	3
42	2
43	1
44	1
45	1
46	1
50	1
55	1
57	1
60	1
62	1
Invalid answer	4

Table 2: What is your age

What is your gender?

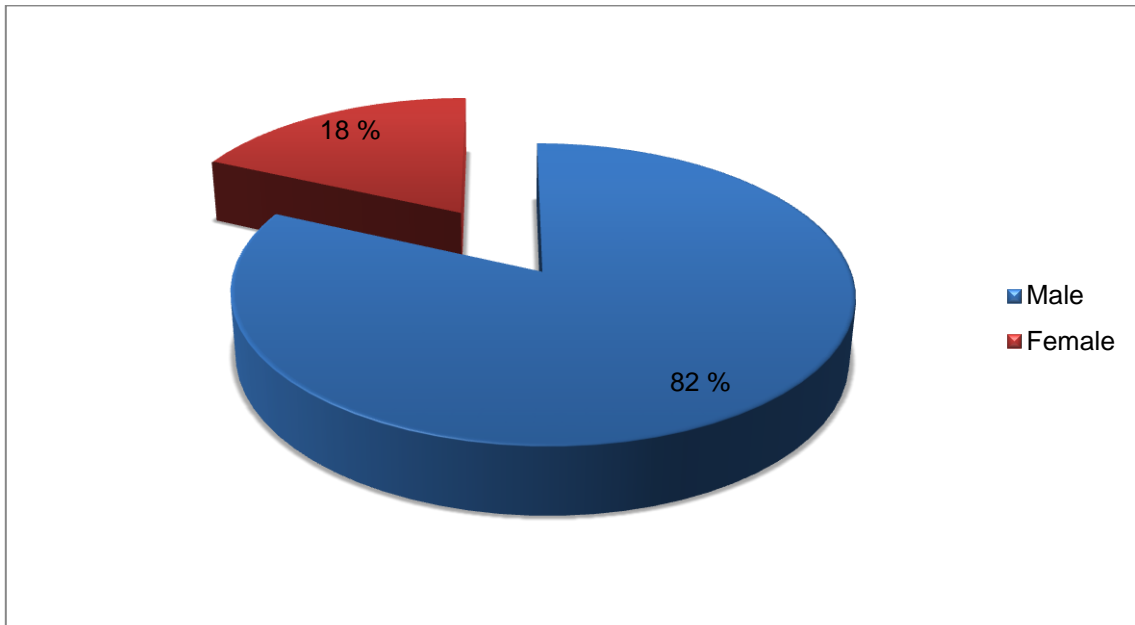
Of the 143 people that responded on the survey 82% of them were male and only 18% were female. This shows that there are more male players in Guild Wars, which is not really a big surprise as this has been the case with games since they first became popular.

According to the top 10 entertainment software industry facts (Top 10 entertainment software industry facts, 2011), the gender ratio in games are 40% are women and 60% are male. This is not the case with Guild Wars it seems where the ratio shows that there are considerably more males than women players. In 2006, after three years of research, Nick Yee wrote a report about MMORPG demographics (Yee, The Demographics, Motivations and Derived Experiences of Users of Massively Multi-User Online Graphical Environments, 2006). He surveyed 6675 players of several different MMORPGs and of those 6675 respondents, only 11% of them were female. Two years later Yee, together with Dimitri Williams and Scott E. Caplan, wrote another report (Williams, Yee, & Caplan, Who plays, how much, and why? Debunking the stereotypical gamer profile, 2008). This time the focus was on a specific game, EverQuest2. The results showed that in this game 19.20% of the players were female. This means that since his first research on this subject, the female population in games has risen by 8%. In his latest research report (Williams, Consalvo, Caplan, & Yee, 2009), the results are pretty much the same. This time 19.72% of the players were female.

Looking at Yee's research on MMORPG players and what the top 10 entertainment software industry facts has to say about gender ratio, the research in this paper is more or less the same results as Yee's results.

What is your gender?	Total
Male	117
Female	26

Table 3: What is your gender



Graph 5: What is your gender

What is your occupation?

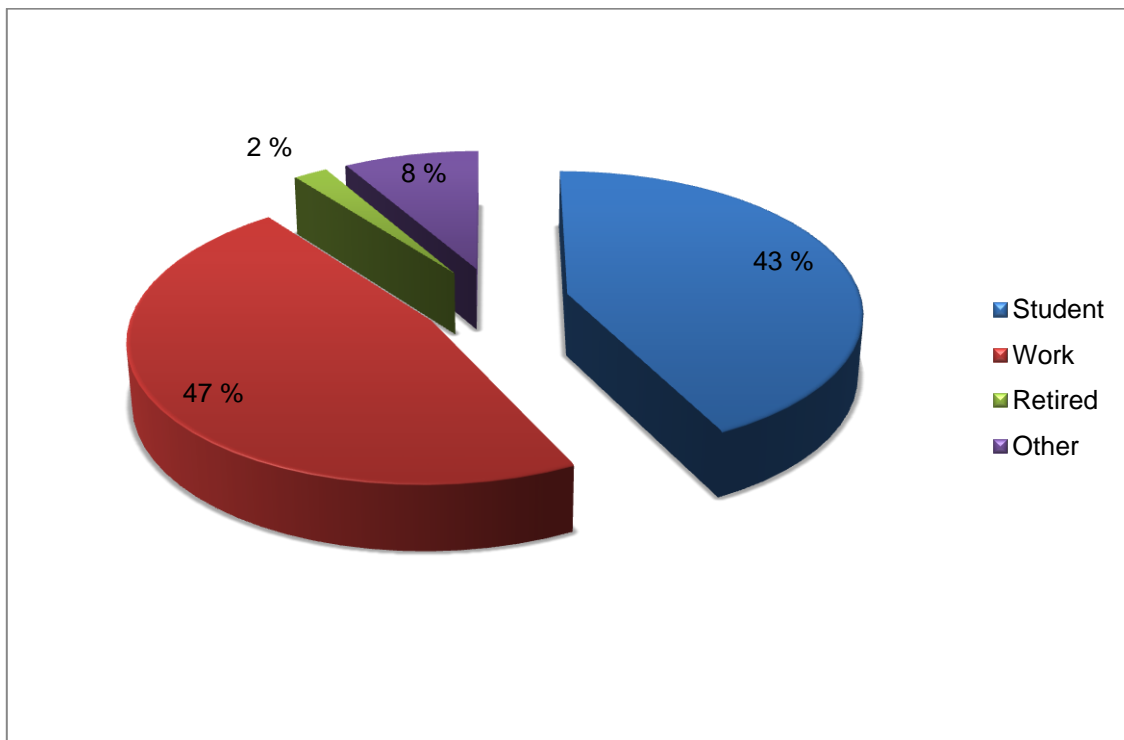
Out of all the respondents, 47% of them are working and 43% of them are studying. This is somewhat of a surprise since the stereotype gamer is a young male student, while this shows that more of the people playing Guild Wars are actually working than studying.

Looking at Yee's research in 2006 (Yee, The Demographics, Motivations and Derived Experiences of Users of Massively Multi-User Online Graphical Environments, 2006), of the 6675 respondents on his survey 50% of them was found to be working, while 22.2% of them were students.

The amount of players that are working in Yee's research is pretty much the same amount of players working in Guild Wars. The biggest difference here is in people that study. In Guild Wars, the amount of people that study is almost twice the percentage of people that study in Yee's research.

What is your occupation?	Total
Student	61
Work	67
Retired	3
Other	12

Table 4: What is your occupation



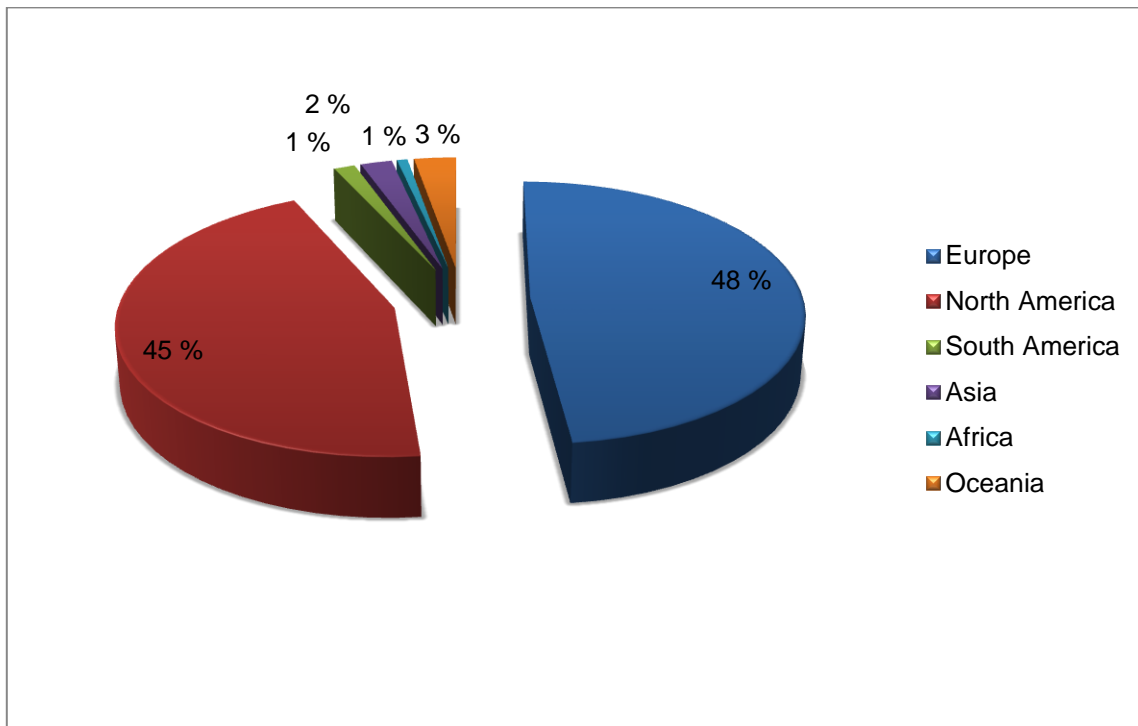
Graph 6: What is your occupation

Where are you from?

Most of the respondents are from Europe or North America. This is not a surprise because these are the places where Guild Wars has been most popular since its release.

Where are you from?	Total
Europe	69
North America	64
South America	2
Asia	3
Africa	1
Oceania	4

Table 5: Where are you from



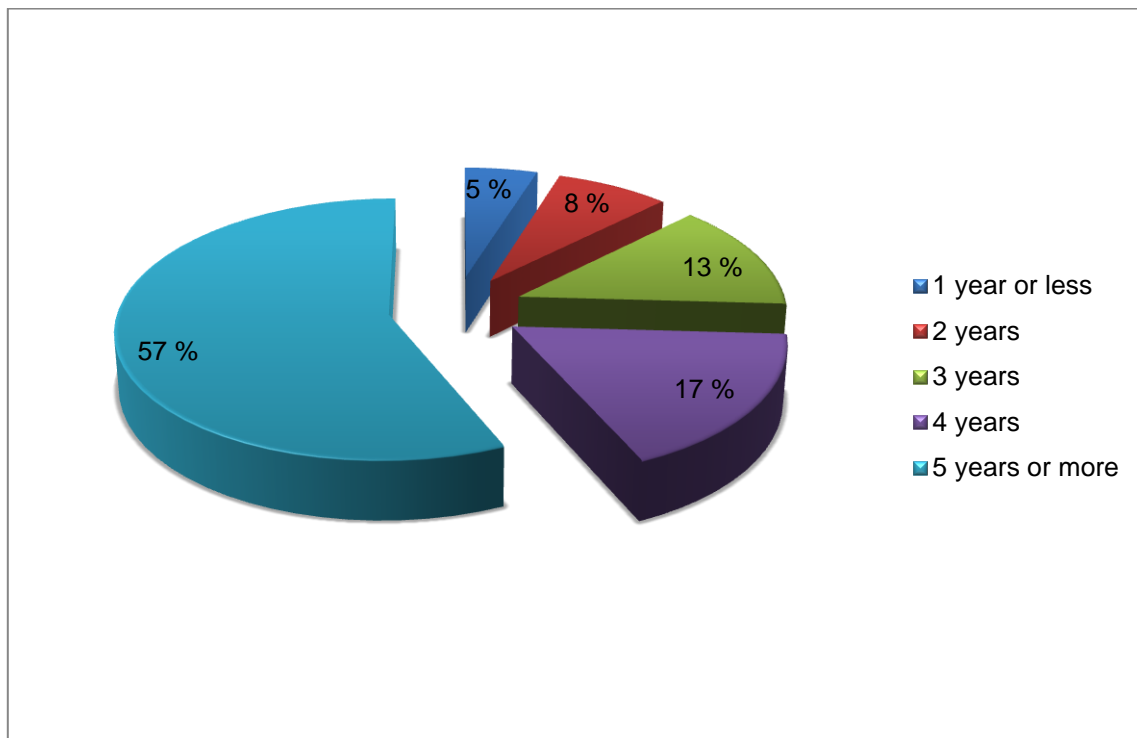
Graph 7: Where are you from

How long have you played Guild Wars?

Guild Wars just had its six years anniversary, and as we can see, 57% of the respondents have been playing Guild Wars since its beginning. This shows a great loyalty from the players to the game.

How long have you played Guild Wars?	Total
1 year or less	7
2 years	11
3 years	19
4 years	25
5 years or more	81

Table 6: How long have you played Guild Wars



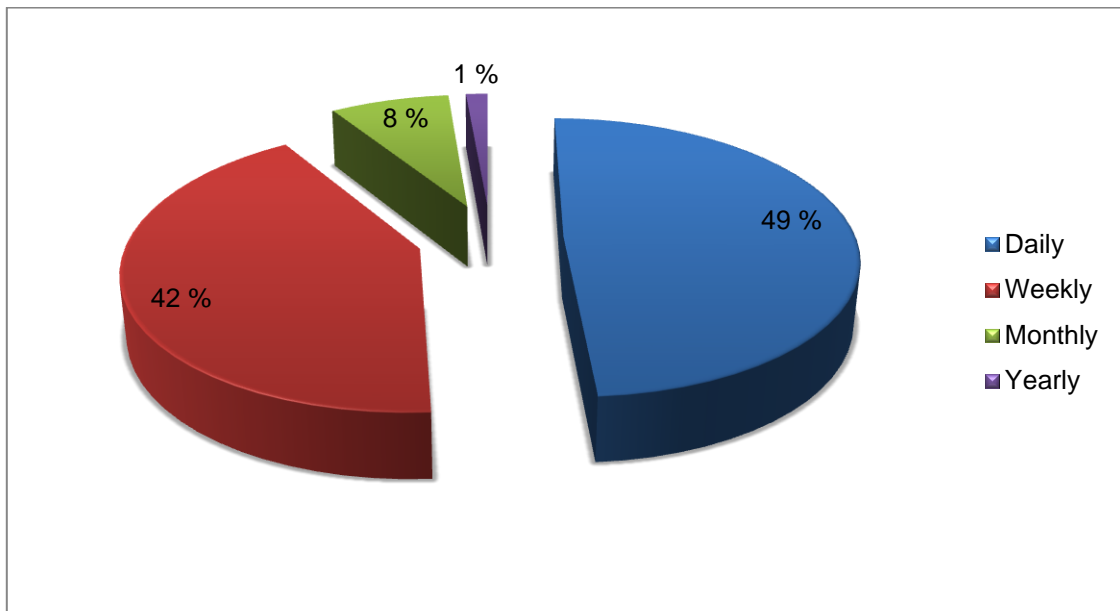
Graph 8: How long have you played Guild Wars

How often do you play Guild Wars?

As we can see, 91% of all the respondents play Guild Wars on a daily to weekly basis. For a game that has been around for six years, it is astonishing that Guild Wars still gets so much play time. Considering the fact that over 50% of the players have played since the beginning, makes it that more surprising.

How often do you play Guild Wars?	Total
Daily	70
Weekly	60
Monthly	11
Yearly	2

Table 7: How often do you play Guild Wars



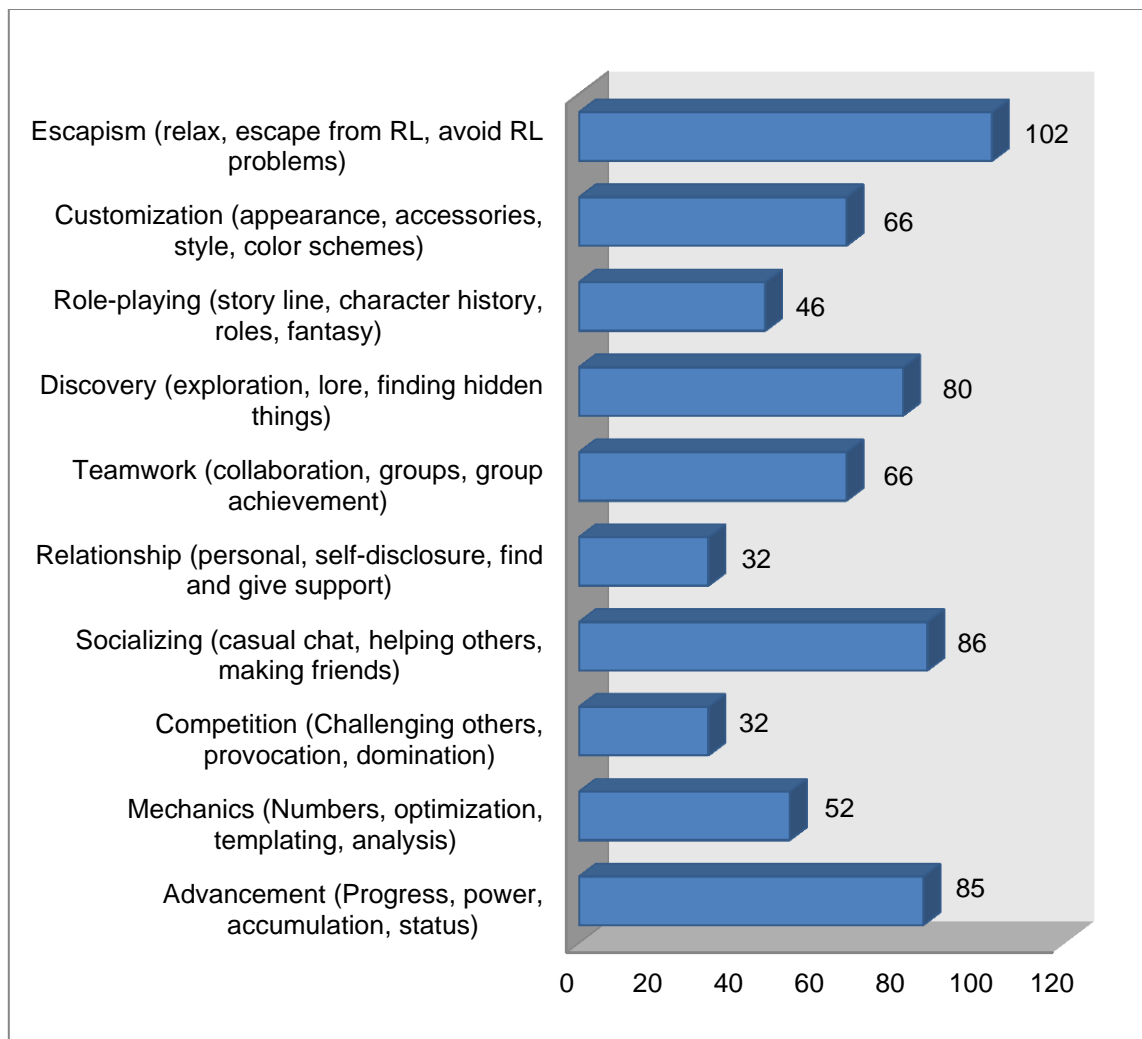
Graph 9: How often do you play Guild Wars

What motivates you to play Guild Wars?

On the question about what motivates you to play Guild Wars, the respondents were able to select more options. As we can see, the motivations that were selected the most are escapism, socializing, advancement and discovery.

What motivates you to play Guild Wars?	Total
Advancement (Progress, power, accumulation, status)	85
Mechanics (Numbers, optimization, templating, analysis)	52
Competition (Challenging others, provocation, domination)	32
Socializing (casual chat, helping others, making friends)	86
Relationship (personal, self-disclosure, find and give support)	32
Teamwork (collaboration, groups, group achievement)	66
Discovery (exploration, lore, finding hidden things)	80
Role-playing (story line, character history, roles, fantasy)	46
Customization (appearance, accessories, style, color schemes)	66
Escapism (relax, escape from RL, avoid RL problems)	102

Table 8: What motivates you to play Guild Wars

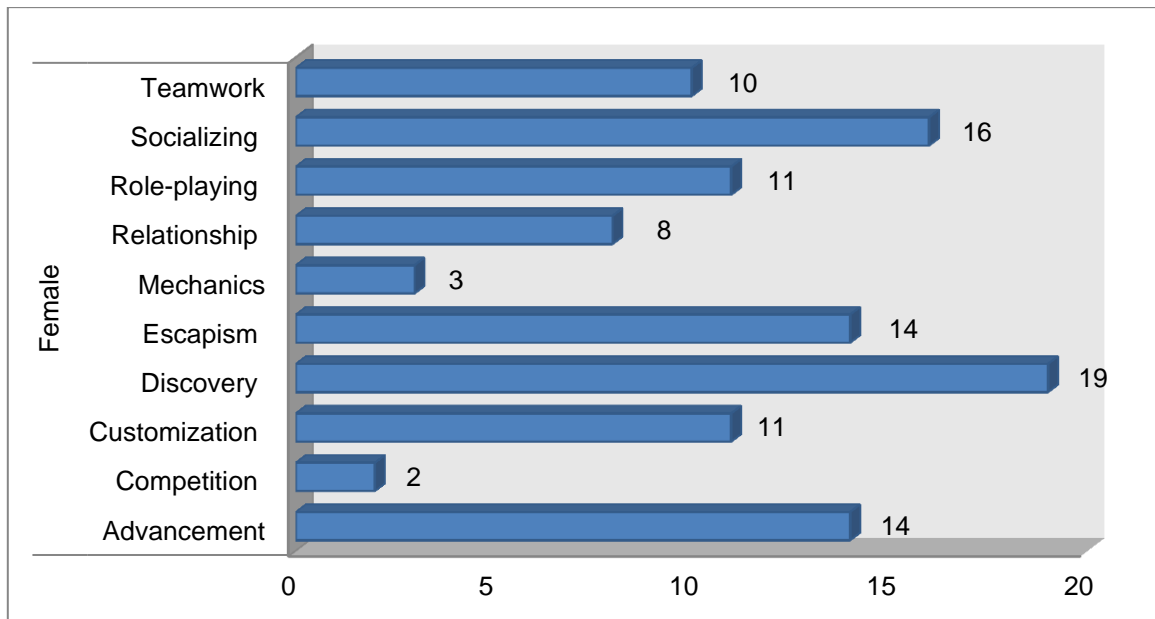


Graph 10: What motivates you to play Guild Wars

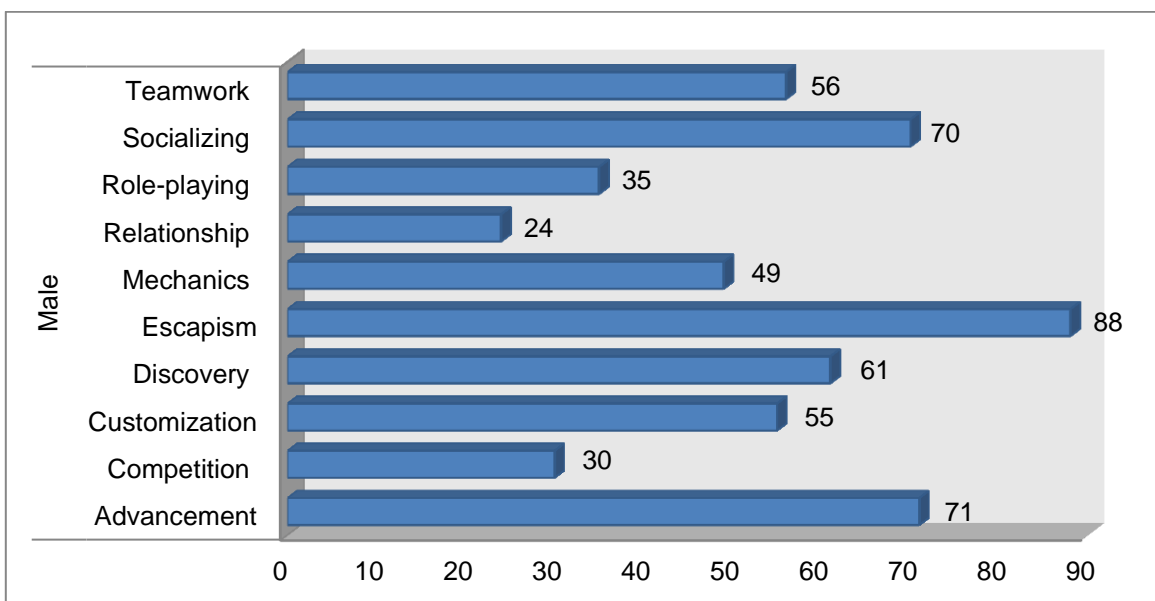
The next graphs show if there is a difference between the females and males in what motivations they selected. As we can see, the motivations females selected the most were discovery and socializing, while males selected escapism, advancement and socializing.

Also according to Yee's research report from 2009 (Williams, Consalvo, Caplan, & Yee, 2009), there are differences in what motivates females and males to play games. He found that male players are more motivated by achievements in the game, while the female players are more motivated by social aspects. The respondents to his survey were all players of the game EverQuest2.

The result is somewhat similar to the result found in Guild Wars players. For male players achievements in the game rank high, but escapism is the motivation that ranks highest. For the female players socializing is ranked as the second most important motivation while discovery is the highest. This tells us that there are differences in the motivations of players depending on the game they are playing.



Graph 11: What motivates females to play Guild Wars



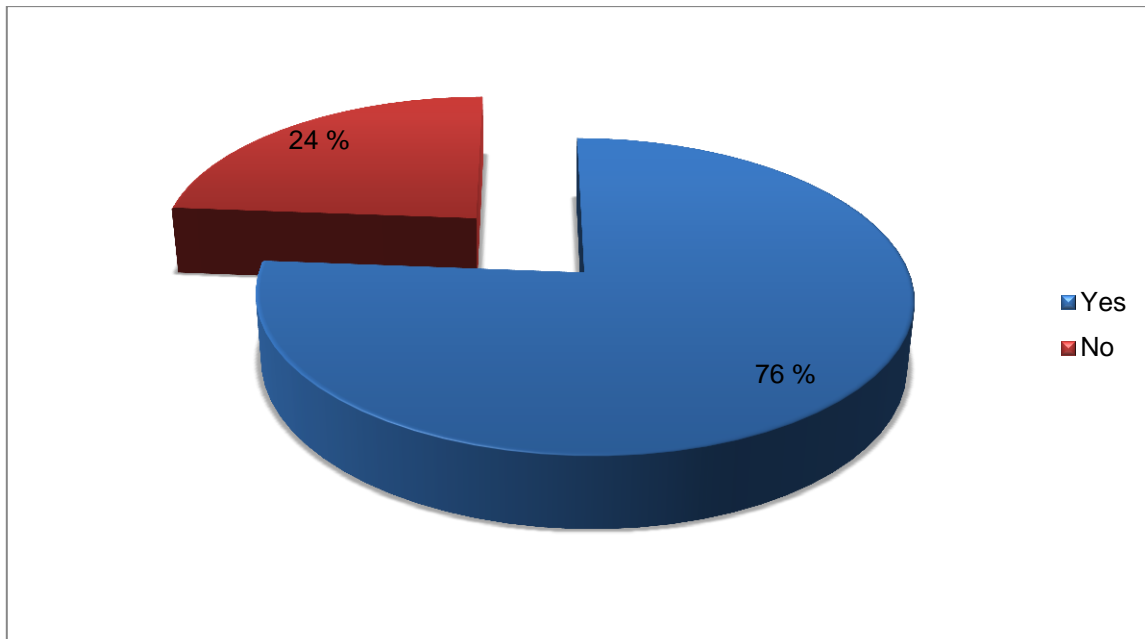
Graph 12: What motivates males to play Guild Wars

Are you involved with online/offline Guild Wars communities?

Most of the respondents, 76% of them, are involved in Guild Wars communities. With so many players being involved in the community, it shows that it is an important part of Guild Wars.

Are you involved with online/offline Guild Wars communities?	Total
Yes	109
No	34

Table 9: Are you involved with online/offline Guild Wars communities



Graph 13: Are you involved with online/offline Guild Wars communities

Why are you involved with those communities?

Here are some of the statements people made about why they are involved in Guild Wars communities. For the full description of their statements, I refer to the appendix.

Note: Instead of placing [sic] after each error in the statements underneath, I am making this note. The quotes stated below are quoted directly from the source. Any spelling or grammar mistakes are intentionally so written.

"Because it is fun to interact with and discuss game related (and non-game related) things with like-minded people"

"Best place to find info."

"Chatting about the game, about life and understanding better game mechanics."

"Currently I am active on a Guild Wars 2 forum, where I can stay up to date on the latest Guild Wars 2 news as well as discuss potential updates and share opinions on the upcoming game. None of my friends are interested in the Guild Wars series so I can't really discuss it with them. There is also a socializing aspect, and a real life escape aspect to being part of a new social group."

"Discussing game mechanics, tactics, new ideas and getting up to date information."

"Guild Wars communities are both supportive and fun, whether you are in-game or out. If you need help with a Guild Wars mission, or want to discuss off-topic matters in a forum, these communities always make the experience enjoyable."

"I enjoy reading others' observations and thoughts on the game."

"I like chatting about all the new content that comes out, the future of Guild Wars, and general discussion of builds⁶ and enjoying a common interest with others!"

"It extends the experience and allows you to stay with the game when you can't play or when you can't find things to do in-game."

"It is a great opportunity to hone my skills, and it is generally fun to hang out with people who share an interest in the game."

"It is good for finding details on Guild Wars, great place to meet new people, get some inside information and so on."

"The online communities tie into the game, allowing me to organize groups and get easier access to information."

"They are good communities to be a part of. It is great that despite so many differences, such as location, age, time-zone and occupation, Guild Wars gives the community so much in common."

"To enrich the guild wars experience; discuss, share and enjoy the different aspects of the game"

"To get the latest news on features coming up in future updates and keep up on the second game."

"To have some more people to talk with about the game, to read their discoveries and ideas for builds and to read about news concerning the game."

"To meet other gamers, get and give advice and to keep up with game updates and the best builds."

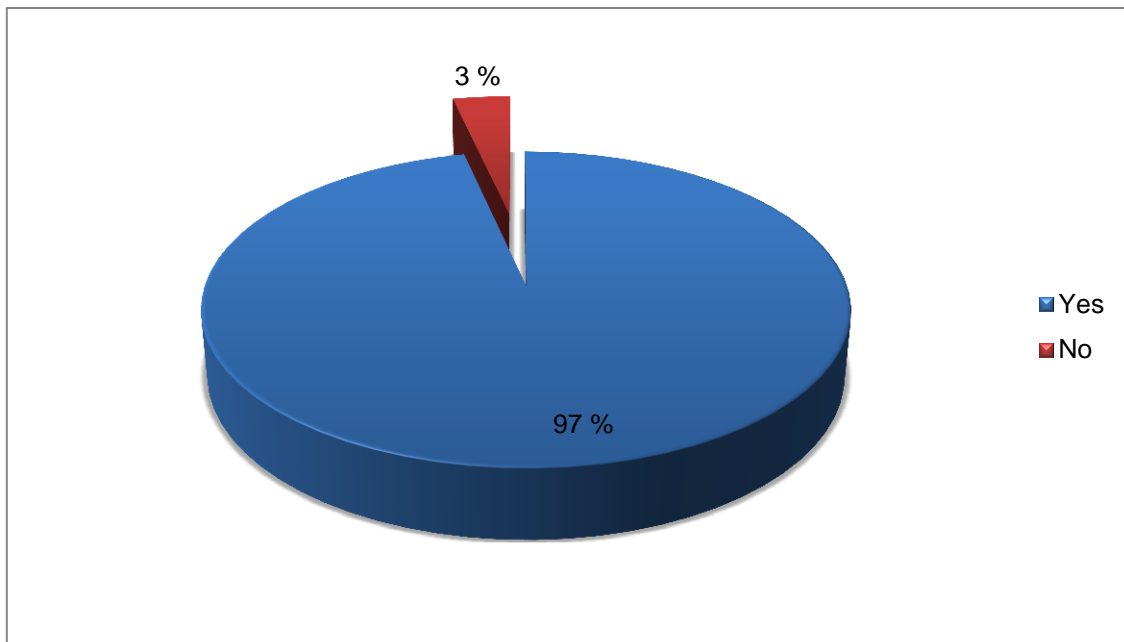
⁶Builds – When players are talking about builds they mean different sets of skills used together in the best way possible.

Are you going to play Guild Wars 2?

Pretty much all, 97%, of the respondents are saying that they are going to play Guild Wars 2 when it is coming out. Again, this shows a great loyalty to Guild Wars amongst the respondents.

Are you going to play Guild Wars 2?	Total
Yes	138
No	5

Table 10: Are you going to play Guild Wars 2



Graph 14: Are you going to play Guild Wars 2

4.3 Online forums

Here are some of the comments people had on the online forums.

Note: Instead of placing [sic] after each error in the statements below, I am making this note. The quotes stated below are quoted directly from the source. Any spelling or grammar mistakes are intentionally so written.

JohnnyV said:

“Is it because you have friends there? Real life friends or online friends? You want to meet new people?”

I wouldn't necessarily say solely "because" of friends, but certainly Guild Wars is enhanced by playing with friends. Meeting new people is one of the great prospects of playing any MMO, and especially Guild Wars for PvP.

You like to escape into a fantasy world? You want to be someone you are not?

Honestly, I believe MMO's really drop the ball in this area. When I play an MMO I rarely, if ever, feel like I am being someone else. Guild Wars changed this up a bit and I did find myself immersed in the story compared to other games in the genre.

You are stressed from work/school and want to de-stress when you come home?

Lately this has become my reason to play any game, but during my time play Guild Wars...no.

You want to achieve titles? You like to follow the storyline?

Never have been big on achieving titles, as to me it distracts from just simply enjoying playing through the game. As for the storyline, that was one of the huge draws to me with Guild Wars. A MMO with an actual story to progress through, excellent!

So many reasons to play Guild Wars, but what motivates you?

When I first got into Guild Wars it was the innovating gameplay and battle system that drew me in. The back and forth counter system between professions, mixed in with the teamwork aspect to PvP really made it one of the more addictive games to me. Especially when I got into an active GvG guild(Guild Wars 2 Forum)."

Centaur said:

"Here's my take on this. No, I didn't start playing Guild Wars because I had friends here (though that was the reason why I originally started playing MUDs... way back when... um... never mind). Meeting new people, yes. Until that point I had mainly been playing single player RPGs and I thought it would be fun to find something that would be just as fun to play solo (and with a nice story), while at the same time being able to meet other people, team up with other people, and help each other out. So yes, that definitely was a reason for me to try Guild Wars. Then again, things change. I am still playing mostly solo. So I do most of my adventuring solo with heroes and henchmen⁷... though I occasionally do help out less experienced players in need. That is definitely something I like to do.

As for escaping into a fantasy world, and being away from the stress at work, in my case, I think those two are more one and the same. And yes, that is why I like fantasy RPGs so much (realistic war games and alike are not spent on me... I'd much rather play a game where I look like a cartoon character, a superhero from a fantasy world or an assassin in the middle ages than a game with photo realistic images and situations that are modeled on our here and now. After a day at work, I like to just switch off and do something completely different. And whenever I have time and I'm not out with my wife, that means diving into the fantasy world online.

⁷Heroes and henchmen are NPCs, non-player characters that you can add in your group while you play.

As for achievements, well, yes and no. I am not the type that absolutely has to have that unique weapon or that unique piece of armor to show off in front of other people. But, I do like to explore every area in the game, do every quest possible and try out different variations of the storyline (where available). I am the type who plays through a game like Dragon Age multiple times, just to see how different decisions work out. And, if that comes with being able to obtain a title, all the better.

So overall, I guess why I play Guild Wars, is a combination of all these (plus, no monthly fee! Regardless of how great they might be, I just don't see myself ever playing an MMO that charges a monthly fee). I guess Guild Wars just happens to have a good combination of all the aspects I'm looking for in my gaming time(Guild Wars 2 Forum)."

ComplexNuber said:

"Is it because you have friends there? Real life friends or online friends? You want to meet new people?"

No, socializing (for MMORPGs at least, not forums) is a side benefit for me at the most. I always take all measures possible to achieve as much as possible without teaming up or chatting with others. I am not a social person by nature, and I really enjoy the satisfaction of achieving through independence. Forums are a whole other kettle of fish, I find I join forums due to information but social aspects keep me coming back.

You like to escape into a fantasy world? You want to be someone you are not?

Yes and for the latter no not really. I enjoy the escape from the real world, because it gives escape from real world problems. I say no to the latter because I am secure with whom I am, I have no reason to believe I need to change - only improve. But I do enjoy the escape, yes.

You want to achieve titles? You like to follow the storyline?

No and no. I enjoyed the storyline somewhat, but I am not a lore fan in a game until I really like it and have already worked my way through most of it. I enjoy reading some lore now, as it helps compliment the Guild Wars 2 hype, as well as the two Guild Wars novels being simply an enjoyable read. I don't care for titles at all, only on a very minimal level so I can earn Hall of Monument points (which carry over to Guild Wars 2 as item rewards - there is nothing other I find interesting in titles).

So many reasons to play Guild Wars, but what motivates you?

Other than escape, I love the satisfaction of progressing a character. Normally this is in the form of increasing levels and/or stats in an MMO. Due to Guild Wars's nature, this is replaced by the discovery of better builds and having a better knowledge of the game (which allows more effective gameplay, e.g. interrupting correct skills). The last thing that motivates me is in game achievements. Although, I don't care for titles (too much needless/fruitless grinding for the most part), I love working for the next thing and having the satisfaction of getting it: be it making a better build, a new weapon/hero, more money, unlocking a hero, finishing a difficult mission/dungeon, and so on(Guild Wars 2 Forum)."

VoiceOfLyssa said:

"Is it because you have friends there? Real life friends or online friends? You want to meet new people?"

I started playing Guild Wars because a friend recommended it to me. I had moved away from that friend so I figured playing a MMORPG would be the only way to hang out again.

You like to escape into a fantasy world? You want to be someone you are not?

I enjoy having a story told by myself unfolding in my mind. As I play I imagine the conversations had by party members as they travel. Wondering why a certain person they travel with always collects

everything, even the undigested lumps of...something. To have a story within the story we see is the fantasy world I like to enjoy.

You are stressed from work/school and want to de-stress when you come home?

I play Guild Wars when I am not stressed and already relaxed. I prefer to play Minecraft when I need to de-stress.

You want to achieve titles? You like to follow the storyline?

Yes and Yes. I also make personal achievements that I plan on accomplishing again and again (completely full material storage for example).

So many reasons to play Guild Wars, but what motivates you?

At first it was playing with a friend. Then it came to lore and understanding the world. Now it is all about getting that foot hold on making a mark for my guild and allies in Guild Wars 2(Guild Wars 2 Forum)."

Analysis of the online forums

Motivations

On the online forums, I posted some questions and asked people to answer them or comment on other things related to them. The focus of the questions that were asked lay on what motivates them to play Guild Wars. The motivations mentioned by the users on the forums were as follows:

- Friends
- Meeting new people
- Immersed in the story
- Storyline
- Innovating gameplay and battle system
- The back and forth counter system between professions
- Teamwork
- Help out others
- Escape into a fantasy world
- Explore every area of the game
- No monthly fee
- Escape the real world
- Progressing a character
- Personal achievements and titles

By using Nick Yee's factor analysis the mentioned motivations can be divided like this:

Achievement	Social	Immersion
Advancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progressing a character ○ Personal achievements and titles 	Socializing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting new people 	Discovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore every area of the game
Mechanics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Innovating gameplay and battle system ○ The back and forth counter system between professions 	Relationship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Friends 	Role-playing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Immersed in the story ○ Follow the storyline
	Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teamwork ○ Help out others 	Escapism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Escape into a fantasy world ○ Escape the real world

Table 11: Motivations mentioned on the online forums

One of the motivations that was mentioned in the forums was that there are no monthly fees to play Guild Wars. This is one reason to play Guild Wars instead of similar games where you have to pay a subscription in order to play. This motivation is not mentioned above in Table 12: Motivations mentioned on the online forums, because it does not fit into Nick Yee's factor analysis and the motivations he found in his research (Yee, Motivations of Play in MMORPGs, 2005). Yee talks about the motivations when playing a game, so after it has been purchased. Not having to pay a monthly fee is a motivation to play Guild Wars instead of another game, but has no influence on the motivations during play.

4.4 Interviews

In order to get a more in depth view into what people think about Guild Wars, their motivations, the community and what ArenaNet can do in order to motivate its players, I asked several people to answer some questions for me. Since the people involved in Guild Wars live all over the world, I approached them by email and kept the communication over email. I contacted several people that are highly involved in the community and some people working for ArenaNet, but because of time restraints and people being very busy I could only get four interviews.

Note: Instead of placing [sic] after each error in the interviews, I am making this note. The quotes stated in the interviews are quoted directly from the source. Any spelling or grammar mistakes are intentionally so written.

Here is what they answered to my questions.

Interview 1 – Relics of Orr

What is your role in the Guild Wars community?

I primarily am the producer of a podcast (online broadcast) of a weekly show that updates people on what is happening in Guild Wars and what is coming in Guild Wars 2. I also administrate a website and community that go by the same name as the podcast.

How can the communities motivate players to play Guild Wars?

A company that develops a game, or any product really, is somewhat shackled by the need to remain inoffensive to various demographics that they want to turn a profit with. This usually results in a tight spot between remaining interesting yet not objectionable. A community can conduct themselves in a fashion that specializes toward a specific style, and can be more blunt, honest, or even dishonest should they choose, about that which they focus on. This is a win in three different ways: for the developer, the community organizer, and the members of the community.

What do you think motivates players to play Guild Wars?

The timeframe and the individual all impact the answer to this question differently. Some people have nothing else to do, some people have friends that already play, and although a very small minority, there are those that are obsessed. These latter few shouldn't always be looked down upon though. Often times these sorts of obsessions come from medications for neurological conditions and an improper balance of dopamine. (Gambling also) What am I on about?

What motivates you to play Guild Wars?

I think you could say community. I don't really even play as much as login, and occasionally come back to see if any chatting is happening. It is a little frustrating to friends.

Do you think player's motivations will change in Guild Wars 2 from Guild Wars?

If yes, why?

I do think it will a little bit. Guild Wars was highly catered to people that did not have as much money or time to sacrifice for their gaming hobby. It appears Guild Wars 2 bends a little more toward those that have more time to spend on gaming, so it will demand more of their resources than the prequel. For this reason, we will probably see a little more elitism and drive to be "the best" like many other MMO's. Fortunately, ArenaNet has made it clear that they don't intend to foster this culture, unlike developers of most modern MMO's. So if it comes into play, it'll be brought by the players and kept in check by the developers.

What do you think ArenaNet can do to keep their players motivated to play Guild Wars and Guild Wars 2 and attract new players?

That is a delicate line to walk. What seems to work best is bringing in new content to experience, but as you do that more and more, you create a game with more and more to not only "do", but "have to do". I think what is optimal, in this case, is to create new alternative content. Content that won't make you necessarily better, but definitely different in terms of aesthetics most especially. People are really vain in MMO's. Probably because they can't be in real life. OH SNAP, WENT THERE!

What do you think motivates people to play Guild Wars over other similar games?

The motivation to play Guild Wars is most definitely the free to play aspect of the game. There used to be more reasons, but at its age now, that is the game's strongest attribute. This is probably followed by it still being the most populous free to play game. The motivation to play Guild Wars 2 will be to play a game that changes the entire MMO philosophy from the ground up, beautiful art, a more casual nature, and the professional podcasts.

Why do you think people are involved with the communities around Guild Wars?

It depends on the community really. It can be for the size, the media offered, the atmosphere, or for in game benefits like guild websites. Some communities are built with intent to get in tight or a job with developers. I would argue that your likelihood to get a job via a community site is inversely proportional to how much you want that to happen. Last, but certainly not least, some people get involved because they feel that they have something to offer, which is usually optimal.

Interview 2 – GW-X

What is your role in the Guild Wars community?

I am just a player who loves playing the game and interacting with people. I have a site for anyone who plays Guild Wars. The site is purposely designed so that people can join and make their own community, groups and have a free way of communicating with in game friends, guilds etc. I hope that the site acts as a source of communication and collaboration between in game friends as well as new people. Once membership reaches a threshold, I intend to take a backseat and just allow the members to self-manage their own mini communities in the site etc.

How can the communities motivate players to play Guild Wars?

This is indeed a complicated question. This is because each “member” of the community will have different answer. I do not personally think the community SHOULD motivate players to play the game, rather the game should motivate players to play the game. The community in my opinion should be a structured and coherent approach to allow for people to interact with each other. Currently Guild Wars lacks this facility in game compared to other games such as <https://steamcommunity.com/>. We are in the age of social networks and social media and this facilitates collaboration and communication even and especially for games and when it comes to Guild Wars, in my opinion, Guild Wars is still in the dark ages.

What do you think motivates players to play Guild Wars?

I do not know what motivates players however I can respond from my personal experience and maybe of others that I know in game. Personally it was the difficulty of soloing the game (heroes/henchmen) up to God Walking Amongst Mere Mortal⁸ that motivated me. I set challenges that I wanted to achieve and once achieved, I set new challenges. Now that I have completed all challenges, my new challenge is to do speed clears⁹ and Heroes Ascent¹⁰ and once that is done, I will quit playing the game because there will be no other challenge left for me. I realize that this is my motivation and it definitely does not reflect the motivation of others in the game. I can say that some in game friends play the game for the laughs on voice chat as voice chat allows for a different level of friendship, camaraderie and more! Some just play the game to make money and have rare items. A lot of Speed Clear players just play the game to be Pro Gamers at elite missions. Some play the game to have the best guilds and alliances with most factions and even quit when that goal cannot be achieved. Motivation like in real life depends on the individual and cannot be generalized in my opinion.

What motivates you to play Guild Wars?

I first played Guild Wars as a dare because I never played MMORPG and my Counter strike source clan members dared me to play it. I then got motivated to play it because of the beauty, tranquility and ability to explore a whole world. I then realized that there were titles and tasks (quests and missions) and decided to get the maximum title... being vain at heart. I quickly researched the titles to get and made a plan for the fastest way to achieve it. During my title hunting period, achieving a new title a week or x titles per month was my sole motivation. Once done, helping others, chatting with people I met in game and just having a laugh became more of a motivation to play the game.

Do you think player's motivations will change in Guild Wars 2 from Guild Wars?

If yes, why?

As a huge promoter of Guild Wars, I think player motivation will change in Guild Wars 2 due to the fact that it is a totally different game. I predict that some people will return to Guild Wars because they will not be satisfied with Guild Wars 2. I also predict that many will play Guild Wars 2 who never and will never contemplate playing Guild Wars! This is because it is a totally different game.

⁸ God Walking Amongst Mere Mortal is the highest title rank you can have in Guild Wars.

⁹ Speed clears is when you finish certain objectives in an area in a small amount of time.

¹⁰ Heroes Ascent is the high-end PVP area in Guild Wars.

What do you think ArenaNet can do to keep their player's motivated to play Guild Wars and Guild Wars 2 and attract new players?

ArenaNet need to get players to be involved in updates, new storyline and the production or maintenance of the game to keep people motivated in continuing to play the game. Updates reduce and can increase the community. Having the capacity for anyone and everyone to have a say and a portal for this would really increase motivation and acceptance of the game.

What do you think motivates people to play Guild Wars over other similar games?

I do not know. I do not play any other RPG or MMORPG apart from Guild Wars. The simplest answer will be that Guild Wars has no monthly fee.

Why do you think people are involved with the communities around Guild Wars?

I do not know.

Interview 3 – Rubi Bayer

What is your role in the Guild Wars community?

My role in the Guild Wars community -- I hope -- is to be a voice and a leader. Certainly not the one and only, there are so many wonderful and talented fans out there with great things to say. Within the game I have held an officer position in one guild for over two years, and have been the leader of Massively's official GW guild for just over one year. I see that as a constant opportunity to help people enjoy themselves, introduce new people to the game, and get comfortable and accomplished within the world of Tyria¹¹. At Massively I am press, but hopefully much more than that. I strive to maintain a balance between keeping the hardcore, longtime fans informed and up-to-date and providing a foundation of knowledge and information for potential and new players. I also try to act as sort of a liaison between the fans and the developers -- finding out what they want to know regarding what is coming and what is going on behind the scenes. At Guildcast I simply kick back and have fun. Shawn and I pore over the news, dissect it, and talk over different opinions that we hold and that we have heard in the community. I hope that between those various platforms I provide something useful and helpful to each member of the community.

How can the communities motivate players to play Guild Wars?

Time! Give players your time -- it is more valuable than any amount of platinum or gear that you could throw at them. Entering an old game as a new player is so much more overwhelming and confusing than it is if you begin playing in early days. It's even more so now that people are picking up the game in order to work on their Hall of Monuments for Guild Wars 2 -- when you haven't even taken your first step toward 50/50 in the Hall of Monuments it can look hopeless. Spend time teaching them, showing them around Tyria, joining them for gameplay.

What do you think motivates players to play Guild Wars?

For new players, there is no doubt in my mind that the Guild Wars 2 hype is what is motivating them. So many people either did not hear of Guild Wars or dismissed it way back when, but Guild Wars 2 is shaping up to be one of the two biggest launches in the near future. Even better, there is a Guild Wars 2 advantage if you play Guild Wars now, and people are flocking to get a head start on the game. For long-time players I think it is the combination of familiarity, socialization, and a low barrier to entry. You can walk away from Guild Wars for six months, come back, and not be out any sub fees -- plus you can pick up right where you left off without being behind your friends much, if at all. The Hall of Monuments is a powerful current incentive for longtime players too, of course. Socialization and progress, certainly. I really am a completionist, like I said above, and I am driven to finish my Hall of Monuments and the God Walking Among Mere Mortals title. My playtime is limited due to my real-world responsibilities and activities, so it has been a long, long road since I cannot just sit down for a marathon gameplay session. It is a long-term goal that has kept the game interesting to me for a long time. The socialization is the other half of this equation. In my years in Guild Wars I've made some great virtual friends and I get sincere enjoyment out of spending time playing, chatting, and laughing with them.

What motivates you to play Guild Wars?

This is a hard one to answer, because every player is different. For myself, socialization and progress are my motivations. I love playing with my guild and alliance mates and my completionist self is chasing title like mad. However, others have completely different motivators, and that is the beauty of Guild Wars. Each thing motivation is a valid and important point and I view them all as equal -- it's what I love about Guild WarsW (and MMOs in general, to be honest). There is literally something for everyone.

Do you think player's motivations will change in Guild Wars 2 from Guild Wars?

If yes, why?

I am not sure. I think the heavy focus on player cooperation and dynamic events will cause a shift in gameplay style, but overall player personalities and motivations are what they are. People who gravitate toward this particular genre and game type already share a certain preference, which is why they are here in the first place. That will carry over into Guild Wars 2 -- the social players will continue

¹¹Tyria is the name of the virtual world that Guild Wars is based in.

grouping and seeking out active guilds, the loners will continue going about their own way, and the PvPers will head for that as soon as they are able! Any shift in motivation will be minimal, I think.

What do you think ArenaNet can do to keep their players motivated to play Guild Wars and Guild Wars 2 and attract new players?

I think the company has already done it. Linking Guild Wars and Guild Wars 2 via the Hall of Monuments, the books, and Guild Wars: Beyond¹² was a stroke of genius. It reinvigorated the older player base and brought a huge new one as well.

What do you think motivates people to play Guild Wars over other similar games?

The business model is a big part of it, in my opinion. Once you've paid for the game initially, that is the end of the pressure to play on the financial side. You don't feel like you're wasting your subscription fee if you get bored and walk away for a few weeks. I think the setup of the gameplay is the other big factor. There's no huge level grind, no pressure to accumulate tons of intricately-twinked gear, and you won't come back to find that your friends have advanced to a place it will take you hours of heavy grinding to catch up to.

Why do you think people are involved with the communities around Guild Wars?

I think there are two reasons. The first, and the one I don't like as well, is a desire for either attention or employment. There are quite a few community members who desire fame and respect, even the virtual kind, and they seek it through creation of gaming blogs, videos, podcasts, and so on, or by creating an in-game persona for themselves with in-game events and such. I've said in the past that if more people know the name of your character than the name of the event you are creating, then it's an indication that you are doing it to get attention rather than to enhance the community. The same holds true for community members who hope to be hired by ArenaNet and choose this method of creating a sort of resume to gain the company's attention.

The other reason is a genuine love of the game and a desire to provide something for the community. (Mantlecon¹³ is an excellent example of just this sort of thing.) So many players just have so much to say about the game and so much they want to do beyond simple gameplay that they create their own outlets to discuss and celebrate it.

¹²Guild Wars: Beyond is a series of new quests in the game.

¹³ Mantlecon was an event in the game created and run by the community for the community.

Interview 4 – Angel Leigh McCoy

What is your job description at ArenaNet and more specifically what was your involvement with Guild Wars?

I'm a writer/designer on the Design Team at ArenaNet. I did some freelance lore writing for Guild Wars, but I was not hired permanently at the company until they started working on Guild Wars 2.

In the course of my job, I do the following tasks:

- Create interesting characters.
- Write dialogue, lore, and UI elements.
- Edit material others have written for correct punctuation and grammar.
- Input text into the database.
- Assist with voiceover processes, including directing voice actors and reviewing voiced lines after recording.

In addition, I contribute to decisions regarding story direction, character design, race characteristics, character voice, etc.

How can you motivate players through your job?

I see three ways that I motivate players:

- I create fun, scary, and interesting characters to populate the world so players enjoy exploring it.
- I make character dialogue fun, scary, and/or interesting.
- I ensure that the voices of the races and characters are consistent so the player never feels "dropped out" of the world.

What do you think motivates players to play Guild Wars?

There are many reasons players play Guild Wars. They enjoy the community that surrounds Guild Wars, and have fun with the player-versus-player competition. They enjoy exploring a diverse and interesting world, and they like having a story that they can follow and become a part of. Some players enjoy challenging themselves to reach high levels of achievement in the game, and some just want to spend time with their friends doing something fun.

All players have their own reasons for playing, usually some combination of the above.

At ArenaNet, we make it our priority to ensure that all these aspects are present for our audience, so that everyone finds what they most want in the game.

As a writer/designer, I am more involved in the Discovery/Roleplaying/Escapism elements. We do, however, also have teams that address the other aspects, and they work hard to give players what they need to have a good time in the game.

When you play Guild Wars what motivates you?

I love a good story. I play to escape, to discover, and to socialize. I explore, and I follow the story closely.

Do you think player's motivations will change in Guild Wars 2 from Guild Wars? If yes, why?

I do not think players motivations will change, no, but I know that we have taken great strides toward not only meeting, but exceeding player expectations. We acknowledge that we are making a "tool of fun" for a very diverse audience. It is a challenge to provide everyone with what they need from the game in order to have fun, but it is not insurmountable. There are many strategies, and as the games industry evolves, we learn more and more about how to do that. Guild Wars 2 is being made with a great deal of experience, knowledge, and wisdom gleaned from the making of Guild Wars.

What do you think ArenaNet can do to keep their players motivated to play Guild Wars and Guild Wars 2 and attract new players?

ArenaNet is aware at every level of design that the audience is made up of individuals. We embrace that diversity and encourage it. By keeping it in mind throughout the design process, at every point along the path, we naturally make a game that will appeal to many different people. Those people who love the game will tell their friends, thus attracting new players. It is all about the love. We love our

players. They love us back. We are making a game that we truly want people to be delighted with. We are all gamers here at ArenaNet also, so it is like making a game for our best friends.

What do you think motivates people to play Guild Wars over other similar games?

I can think of many things, but here are three:

- Quality. ArenaNet has a world-class team of artists who make our game incredibly gorgeous. This is just one example of the quality bar by which we judge our work. Quality speaks loudly to gamers. They know what they like, and they know quality when they see it.
- No Monthly Fee. Guild Wars has never charged a monthly fee for playing.
- Regular New Material. We are always creating new material for Guild Wars, whether it be storylines, clothes, items, or evil villains. We have special events that keep players engaged and extend the replay ability of the game. A lot of energy and thought goes into this updated content, and we're always striving to make the next big thing even cooler than the last one.

Why do you think people are involved with the communities around Guild Wars?

First, ArenaNet is plugged into the Guild Wars communities. By this, I mean that we regularly share information and answer questions from people within the community. We do not distance ourselves from our fans, but join in on the community with them. We are part of it.

Also, Guild Wars players are passionate about the game, and they want to share their passion with others who are equally passionate. Whether they are arguing or discussing or sharing ideas, they have one thing in common: they all love Guild Wars.

Analysis of the interviews

Motivations

During the interviews several questions about player motivations, their view on what is motivating players and what makes them motivated so they play themselves were answered. Here are some of the motivations they mentioned:

- Challenge myself and others
- Achieve titles and reach goals
- Chatting with the other players
- Form friendships
- Make money and have rare items
- Guilds and alliances
- Community
- Exploring
- Follow the story and be a part of it
- Reach high levels
- Escape
- Discovery

By using Nick Yee's factor analysis the mentioned motivations can be divided like this:

Achievement	Social	Immersion
Advancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieve titles and reach goals ○ Reach high levels ○ Make money 	Socializing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chatting with the other players 	Discovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have rare items ○ Exploring ○ Discovery
	Relationship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Form friendships 	Role-playing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follow the story and be a part of it
Competition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Challenge myself and others 	Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guilds and alliances ○ Community 	Escapism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Escape

Table 12: Motivations mentioned during interviews

Community

According to the interviews, the reasons for being involved in the Guild Wars community are many. First of all the community is a nice way for people to interact and help each other out, in game or with other Guild Wars related activities. People join communities because of the size, which consists of more people to get acquainted to and share info and knowledge with. They also join for the so called 'in game benefits' such as websites for guilds and alliances or for the atmosphere in the whole community.

One thing that makes the Guild Wars community so appealing to its players is that ArenaNet itself is a big part of it. They regularly share information and answer questions for the people in the community and they talk to them and get to know them. ArenaNet is a part of the community.

"A company that develops a game, or any product really, is somewhat shackled by the need to remain inoffensive to various demographics that they want to turn a profit with. This usually results in a tight spot between remaining interesting yet not objectionable. A community can conduct themselves in a fashion that specializes toward a specific style, and can be more blunt, honest, or even dishonest should they choose, about that which they focus on. This is a win in three different ways: for the developer, the community organizer, and the members of the community."(Relics of Orr)

ArenaNet's role

What is ArenaNet's role when it comes to motivating players to play Guild Wars?

According to one of their employees, these three aspects help motivate players to play Guild Wars:

- **Quality.**
ArenaNet has a world-class team of artists who make our game incredibly gorgeous. This is just one example of the quality bar by which we judge our work. Quality speaks loudly to gamers. They know what they like, and they know quality when they see it.
- **No Monthly Fee.**
Guild Wars has never charged a monthly fee for playing.
- **Regular New Material.**
We are always creating new material for GW, whether it be storylines, clothes, items, or evil villains. We have special events that keep players engaged and extend the replay ability of the game. A lot of energy and thought goes into this updated content, and we are always striving to make the next big thing even cooler than the last one.(McCoy, 2011)

ArenaNet can motivate the players by getting them more involved with the new updates in the game; create new storylines with quests and missions. Guild Wars is a six years old game, which can make it seem harder to keep the players around, to maintain the initial appeal, but as long as they create new content now and then for the players, people will keep coming back.

4.5 Answering the research questions

By answering the sub questions that were made, it will be possible to answer the research question. By looking at the research that has been conducted the sub questions can be answered.

SQ1: Who plays Guild Wars?

According to the online survey, Guild Wars have both male and female players, although there are considerably more male players than female players. The players range from all ages, but the average player is in his early/mid-twenties. Most of them live in Europe or North America; this is also where Guild Wars has been most popular. Guild Wars players are mostly working or studying.

SQ2: Why do people play Guild Wars?

There are several reasons why people play Guild Wars and by using Nick Yee's motivations (Yee, Motivations of Play in MMORPGs, 2005), we find Guild Wars players are mostly motivated by:

- Escapism
- Socializing
- Advancement
- Discovery

We could see during the survey that there is a bit of a difference in what motivates the different genders. Females ranked socializing and discovery highest, while males ranked socializing, advancement and escapism highest. Both genders have socializing high on their list of motivations to play Guild Wars.

Another reason that motivates many people to play Guild Wars instead of a similar game is that there are no monthly fees to be paid.

SQ3: Why be involved in Guild Wars communities?

When it comes to the Guild Wars community, there are also many reasons why people are involved. Socializing also ranks high as a motivation here, together with gathering info and news about both Guild Wars and the upcoming Guild Wars 2. They also like to discuss topics, may that be in or outside of the game, and hear the opinion of others on various matters. Learning from others' skills and strategies is something many players value in the community. By being involved in a community, you are surrounded by other people that have the same interests as you and that is what holds people together.

Having answered the sub questions, the research questions will be answered.

RQ1: What motivates people to play Guild Wars?

Thousands of people, both male and female from all over the world, play Guild Wars every day. People have different reasons and goals for playing games, and these reasons even differ between genders. By using Nick Yee's motivations, we see that four motivations stand out from the research conducted in this paper: escapism, socializing, advancement and discovery. Both genders had these four motivations ranked highest, females ranked socializing and discovery highest, while males ranked escapism, socializing and advancement as their highest. If we look at Bartle's player types we can conclude that the average Guild Wars player is either an achiever, a socializer or an explorer. Another motivation that was mentioned during the research, which does not fit into Nick Yee's motivations or Bartle's player types, is the fact that there is no monthly fee to pay for playing Guild Wars. This is something that separates Guild Wars from most of the other popular MMORPGs out on the market.

Overall, people like to play Guild Wars because:

- They like to escape from their RL and the problems that come with that.
- They like to chat with other players and form stronger relationships.
- They like to help each other when others need help.
- They like to discover new areas and items.
- They like to have progress with their characters and earn titles and finish missions and quests.
- There is no monthly fee to pay. Once you have bought the game you can play it as much as you want.

RQ2: What motivates people to be involved in the community around Guild Wars?

Of the 143 respondents to the survey, 76% of them said that they were involved in a Guild Wars community. Amongst these people, many different reasons were given for why they were involved. Some of the mentioned motivations were:

- Sharing and obtaining new information about the game from others.
- Being around like-minded people.
- Socializing.
- Discussing game mechanics, tactics and new ideas.
- Having a place to communicate with each other.

By looking at Bartle's theory of why communities are formed, the reasons that were mentioned by the Guild Wars players fulfill some of his criteria for people to form a community:

- Having the means and opportunity to communicate with one another.
- Having some reason for communicating with one another.
- Sharing a cultural context. (Bartle R. , Designing Virtual Worlds, 2003)

They also fit into the characteristics Bartle mentioned a strong community should have, such as:

- Members have a shared pool of knowledge.
- Members share a vision of the community's future.
- Members work together on projects that are for the benefit of the community. (Bartle R. , Designing Virtual Worlds, 2003)

Overall, people join communities to have a place to communicate with people with common interests; they form relationships, share and gather information, help each other out in game and outside of the game, and just have fun together. Another reason for why many people join the community is that ArenaNet is actively involved in it as well. This way you can communicate directly with the creators of the game and maybe get some inside scope now and then. You can also propose game enhancements to the developers and help co-create the game. This is highly appreciated by the players in the community.

5.Recommendations

This paper is written in order to solve ArenaNet's problem and answer their policy question. The problem definition ArenaNet had is the following:

'Every year so many new games are coming out on the market, while free time becomes a scarcity. It is hard for game developers to make games that catch the eye and attract the attention of players. ArenaNet wants to know how to make their games stand out and motivate their players to keep playing them',

Their policy question is; How can ArenaNet keep their players motivated playing Guild Wars and the upcoming Guild Wars 2?

During the conducted research in this paper, there were several 'themes' that reoccurred and that can be helpful for ArenaNet to know about. The 'themes' that were repeated are motivations, community and their business model. There will be given recommendations for each of the three 'themes';

- Motivation
- Community
- Business model

During the last few years, many MMORPGs coming out on the market, but few of them have been really successful. Guild Wars comes in the category of the successful ones. Since Guild Wars first came out in spring 2005, millions of people have been playing it, and still six years later many still play and enjoy the game. So why change such a successful game?

In order to keep people motivated to play Guild Wars now, six years after it first came out, it is important to keep the recommendations given here in mind, especially the motivations. These are the things that will keep the players coming back. Keep updating the game and create new content to make sure the players have new things to do.

For the new game, it is important to keep the hype and interest around the game up. This will generate many consumers to buy the game and try it out. By linking stories, quests and rewards from Guild Wars to Guild Wars 2, the old players will have a bigger reason and motivation to play, and hence buy the new game as well. This will also get new players to try out Guild Wars before Guild Wars 2 comes out, because they also want the special advantages you get from having played Guild Wars. In addition, a lot has changed in the quality and capabilities of computers since Guild Wars came out, so for Guild Wars 2 the graphics and mechanics should be of higher quality than in Guild Wars

5.1 Motivation

As with everything people do, they have different motivations for doing it. With Guild Wars, this is also the case. According to the research conducted, people that play Guild Wars, do it because of several different motivations. The motivations that were highest ranked were:

- Escapism
- Socializing
- Advancement
- Discovery

There were a few differences when looking at the two genders. Female players ranked discovery and socializing highest, while male players ranked escapism, advancements and socializing highest. Knowing what motivates the players the most is valuable information to know for any game developer. This is especially valuable since they are still creating Guild Wars 2. By knowing that these four motivations are the ones that ranked highest they can incorporate these and highlight them in their new game.

When it comes to keeping their current players motivated to play Guild Wars, ArenaNet can use these motivations for upcoming changes and updates in the game. By knowing that socializing is such an important part of the game, they should put more effort into making better and easier ways to communicate in the game. Guild Wars currently only has a small chat window, but there are no means to chat with people that are not in the game. Most people play games in full screen mode and therefore it is annoying to switch windows in order to chat with people that are not playing at that moment. They should update their current chat function and add voice chat capabilities to the game. Voice chat makes communicating much easier for players, as it is often hard to type because Guild Wars is played using both hands. If they do not include this option in Guild Wars, then it is a thing to keep in mind when creating Guild Wars 2. With socializing being important and social networks becoming more and more popular, they should also have a way to directly connect with your social network profiles from within the game.

When it comes to being motivated by advancement and discovery there are some ways for Guild Wars to keep their players motivated. People that like advancement like to achieve titles and finish missions and quests. Therefore, by making new titles available to the players or changing the difficulty on missions and quests that are already there or adding new ones, they can keep these players motivated. For people that enjoy discovery, it is important to keep revealing new areas of the game or new items that they can find. Alternatively, they can add random events in existing areas, so that you might stumble upon something new when playing through content multiple times. By knowing that there is always something more to be discovered, these players will keep coming back to the game.

Players that play Guild Wars in order to escape real life, like the game because they can relax and have fun while being immersed into an amazing fantasy world. By creating intriguing stories and environments that draw the players into the game the players will keep playing. Since Guild Wars is a six years old game, the main storyline that carries through the game might not still be intriguing to players anymore. That is why it is important to keep introducing new, smaller stories to keep them interested. As for Guild Wars 2, the story will be completely new and exciting so that it will interest many players, both current Guild Wars fans and players new to the Guild Wars series.

Recommendations:

- Improve ways to communicate with others while in the game.
- Integrate with social media.
- Add new types of player advancement such as new titles to achieve and harder quests and missions.
- Add new areas, items and random events in order for people to discover new things.
- Create intriguing stories.
- Incorporate and highlight the four motivations in Guild Wars 2.

5.2 Community

Most of the players that have been a part of this research have said that community is a very important part of why they play Guild Wars. In addition, the name of the game, Guild Wars, indicates that guilds, which is a form of community, are important in the game. The players have mentioned several reasons for why they are involved with the community and here are some of those reasons:

- Sharing and obtaining new information about the game from others.
- Being around like-minded people.
- Socializing.
- Discussing game mechanics, tactics and new ideas.
- Having a place to communicate with each other.

The main reason for being involved in a community is to communicate and socialize with other players. Therefore, as said already mentioned before, having means to do this in an easy and efficient way in the game would be great.

ArenaNet is already involved in the community and this is something the players really appreciate. Socializing with the players, showing up on events in the game, listening to what the players like and do not like about the game and considering it when creating the game, helping out and encouraging the players to create more community events are some things that would make the community feel important. This will make them feel that they take part in actually forming the game that they love so much. ArenaNet is already doing some of these things, but by doing it even more the community will grow even bigger and stronger and this way there will already be a strong base of players when Guild Wars 2 comes out. At this time all the fans of Guild Wars are doing all they can to find more information about Guild Wars 2, so if ArenaNet share some exclusive information with the community first this would really make them feel appreciated.

Recommendations:

- Creating a platform where the community can easily and efficiently communicate and socialize.
- Involve the players more in the creation and forming of the games.
- Help out with community events
- Share exclusive information with the community about upcoming game updates or news about Guild Wars 2.

5.3 Business model

One of the things that has been mentioned several times as a reason to play Guild Wars, was the business model. Most other games that can be compared to Guild Wars use the pay to play business model where the players first have to purchase the game, after which they have to sign up for a subscription and pay a fee frequently in order to play. If they do not want a subscription, they have to purchase playtime, which can be done by buying a prepaid card with a set amount of time. Guild Wars is currently using a buy to pay model, where the players only have to buy the game one time and then they are free to play it as much or as little as they want. If you want the expansions in the Guild Wars series, you also have to purchase them but as soon as you have done that, they are free to play as well. The game also has an online game store that you can connect to through the game. Here you can buy downloadable content such as costumes for your characters, extra storage space and a bonus mission pack amongst other things. However, it is important to make sure all the content of the game is in the game pack when you buy it and just use the store for extra content with no real influence on the rest of the game. Players should not feel obligated to buy every product in the store in order to keep up with the game.

The fact that this model was mentioned several times during the research shows that this is how the players like it to be, both for Guild Wars and for the upcoming Guild Wars 2. By not having an extra monthly fee to pay, it gives the players more freedom. They do not feel like they have to play since they are frequently paying for it, rather they feel that it is a nice thing to do without any added pressure to play. One of the reasons that so many players have been playing the game since the start and still play it is because of this business model.

While many games similar to Guild Wars are moving their games to the free to play model, where the game is free with a limited available free content or with a lesser quality, it is important that ArenaNet maintain their current model. This is important when releasing their new game, Guild Wars 2, because keeping the same model in Guild Wars 2 will bring already loyal players over to the new game and it will also attract new players. Players are more open to try out new games when there are no 'strings attached', meaning if the game comes with a subscription people will be more reluctant to try it out than if it comes without any extra costs.

Recommendations:

- ArenaNet should keep using their current business model for in the future with Guild Wars and with Guild Wars 2.

6. List of footnotes

Footnote 1.	MMORPG - Massively multiplayer online role-playing game	3
Footnote 2.	PvE – Player versus Environment	4
Footnote 3.	PvP – Player versus Player	4
Footnote 4.	MUD - Multi-User Dungeon, the predecessor to today's MMORPG	9
Footnote 5.	RL – Real life	16
Footnote 6.	Builds – When players are talking about builds them mean different sets of skills used together in the best way possible	31
Footnote 7.	Heroes and henchmen are NPCs, non-player characters that you can add in your group while you play	33
Footnote 8.	God Walking Amongst Mere Mortal is the highest title rank you can have in Guild Wars	39
Footnote 9.	Speed clears is when you finish playing an area in a small amount of time	39
Footnote 10.	Heroes Ascent is the high-end PVP area in Guild Wars	39
Footnote 11.	Tyria is the name of the virtual world that Guild Wars is based in	41
Footnote 12.	Guild Wars: Beyond is a series of new quests in the game	42
Footnote 13.	Mantlecon was an event in the game created and run by the community for the community	42

7. Bibliography

29 business models for games. (2008). Retrieved from <http://lsvp.wordpress.com/2008/07/02/29-business-models-for-games/>

Guild Wars Players. (2011). World wide.

Top 10 entertainment software industry facts. (2011). Retrieved from The Entertainment Software Association: <http://theesa.com/facts/>

ArenaNet. (n.d.). *ArenaNet*. Retrieved from ArenaNet: www.arenanet.net

Bartle, R. (1996). *Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suits MUDs.*

Bartle, R. (2003). *Designing Virtual Worlds.*

Bartle, R. A. (n.d.). *Richard A. Bartle: Biography*. Retrieved from <http://mud.co.uk/richard/biog.htm>

Bartle, R. (n.d.). *Virtual Worlds Why People Play.*

Bayer, R. (2011, May). (N. Sandberg, Interviewer)

Davies, M. M., & Mosdell, N. (2006). *Practical Research Methods for Media and Cultural Studies - Making People Count.* The University of Georgia Press.

Guild Wars. (n.d.). Retrieved from Guild Wars: www.guildwars.com

Guild Wars 2 Forum. (n.d.). Retrieved from Guild Wars 2 Forum: www.guildwars2forum.com

Guild Wars Exclusive. (n.d.). Retrieved from Guild Wars Exclusive: www.gw-x.net

Guild Wars Guru. (n.d.). Retrieved from Guild Wars Guru: www.guildwarsguru.com

Guild Wars INC Gamer. (n.d.). Retrieved from Guild Wars INC Gamer: www.guildwars.incgamers.com/forums

GW-X. (2011, March). (N. Sandberg, Interviewer)

McCoy, A. L. (2011, March). (N. Sandberg, Interviewer)

Nishi, D. (2011, April). *Industry Heavyweights Say the Future of Gaming is Console-less*. Retrieved from The Wall Street Journal: <http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2011/04/27/industry-heavyweights-say-the-future-of-gaming-is-console-less/>

Relics of Orr. (n.d.). Retrieved from Relics of Orr: www.relicsof Orr.com

Relics of Orr. (2011, March). (N. Sandberg, Interviewer)

Survey Pirate. (n.d.). Retrieved from Survey Pirate: www.surveypirate.com

Twitter. (n.d.). Retrieved from Twitter: www.twitter.com

Williams, D., Consalvo, M., Caplan, S., & Yee, N. (2009). Looking for Gender: Gender Roles and Behaviors Among Online Gamers. *Journal of Communication*.

Williams, D., Yee, N., & Caplan, S. E. (2008). Who plays, how much, and why? Debunking the stereotypical gamer profile. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*.

Yee, N. (2005). Motivations of Play in MMORPGs.

Yee, N. (2006). *The Demographics, Motivations and Derived Experiences of Users of Massively Multi-User Online Graphical Environments*. Department of Communication Stanford University.

Yee, N. (n.d.). *Nick Yee's HomePage*. Retrieved from Nick Yee's HomePage: <http://www.nickyee.com/index-bio.html>

8. Appendix

8.1 Online survey

What is your age?

What is your gender? Male Female

What is your occupation? Student Work
Retired Other

Where are you from? Europe North America
South America Asia
Africa Oceania

How long have you played
Guild Wars? 1 year or less 2 years
3 years 4 years
5 years 6 years

How often do you play Guild
Wars? Daily Weekly
Monthly Yearly

What motivates you to play Guild Wars? (more options possible)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advancement (Progress, power, accumulation, status) ○ Mechanics (Numbers, optimization, templating, analysis) ○ Competition (Challenging others, provocation, domination) | <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Socializing (casual chat, helping others, making friends) ○ Relationship (personal, self-disclosure, find and give support) ○ Teamwork (collaboration, groups, group achievement) | <p>Immersion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discovery (exploration, lore, finding hidden things) ○ Role-playing (story line, character history, roles, fantasy) ○ Customization (appearance, accessories, style, color schemes) ○ Escapism (relax, escape from RL, avoid RL problems) |
|---|--|--|

Are you involved with
online/offline Guild Wars
communities? (if no on this
question skip next one) Yes No

Why are you involved with those communities?

Are you going to play Guild
Wars 2? Yes No

8.2 Why are you involved with those communities?

Why are you involved with those communities?
Socializing.
Because I have no reason not to.
Because I like Guild Wars.
Because I like to exchange about the games, discuss last news, etc. :)
Because I love to discuss about Guild Wars.
Because it is a fun way to get to know other players and how they play Guild Wars.
Because it is fun to interact with and discuss game related (and non-game related) things with like-minded people.
Because my guildmates are also my friends in real life. For the online community (forum), my other guild has members from all over the world so it is our venue to meet" since we have become friends over time."
Because they are friendly, helpful and it's just another community like others: it's not because they are a Guild Wars community that i want to be with them, but it gives us something in common, that makes it more fun to be in that community than in others.
Because we have fun together and share a common interest.
Best place to find info.
Better understand the game and friends.
Chatting about the game, about life, understanding better game mechanics.
Common interest.
Connecting with other like-minded people who are also interested in the game. We talk about everything on our forums about life, the universe, and everything.
Contact with other players.
Currently I'm active on a Guild Wars 2 forum, where i can stay up to date on the latest Guild Wars 2 news as well as discuss potential updates and share opinions on the upcoming game. For the record, none of my friends are interested in the Guild Wars series so I can't really discuss it with them. There's also a socializing aspect, and a real life escape aspect to being part of a new social group. This isn't what brings me into joining forums, but it may be what keeps me there as a side benefit.
Discussing game mechanics, tactics, new ideas and getting up to date information.
Discussions and arguments are interesting. they also facilitate learning.
Enjoy having more people to play with who share my view on the game and play the same things i do (gvg)
Everyone else is?
For fun ...and more socialization
For information.
Fun, hanging with guildies, makes the game more fun, discus tactics, future speculations, & lots of laughs
Further socializing, sharing/finding information, entertainment.
Gather information, I'm arrogant, and a limited amount of socialization.
General chat...
Getting to know the people i play with some more outside the game
Guild Wars communities are both supportive and fun, whether you're in-game or out. If you need help with a guild wars mission, or want to discuss off-topic matters in a forum, these communities always make the experience enjoyable.
Guild wars guru forums.
Helps me keep up with the game.
Http://www.elisair.com/ because it is our guild website.

I am in a guild with my friends.
I contribute to one of the fan run sites for Guild Wars.
I enjoy forum-based interaction with other players, not to mention keeping abreast of new developments within and for the game.
I enjoy meeting people with the same interests as myself, and keeping up to date on what's happening in Guild Wars.
I enjoy reading others' observations and thoughts on the game.
I enjoy talking to members of my guild online and following various blogs which i sometimes contribute to.
I like being aware of what's going on in the game. You can't be part of all of it. Logging into Guild Wars Guru is something like turning on the news in real life.
I like chatting about all the new content that comes out, the future of Guild Wars, and general discussion of builds and enjoying a common interest with others!
I like reading or participating in their discussions.
I like to be associated with people directly 'outside' the game who share a similar interest to me (Guild Wars). It helps me keep up-to-date with the game while I'm busy with other in real life issues.
I rarely write anything on those forums and wikis, but I read them a lot, and I doubt I'd have played the game for this long without them. In most cases if I have a question about anything, so has somebody else - and asked about it and gotten an answer, so there's rarely a need for me to do it. Good luck on the bachelor project.
I regularly contribute to inc gamers, the gw wiki and pvx.
I'm involved with said communities because I'm the leader of the largest faction guild/ally for the last 3.5 years owning both #1 capitals. We have a numerous amount of guilds that we're associated with so we can hook up, basically any player with a good guild depending on what type of game play they desire. I sound like such a nerd.. Haha.
I'm moderator on a guild wars forum - I like to keep up to date with all guild wars related news, and with my knowledge I can help out other people who have questions.
I'm not entirely sure.
I'm not highly involved, but what I like is just the ability to chat with others about what's going on in the game and I really enjoy user created events.
Info on Guild Wars 2.
Initially when I first started playing, it was to find out more about Guild Wars. I then joined a guild which was formed based on one of the Guild Wars community forums, and this keeps me involved in that community.
Interesting conversations and I like to see what other people think of certain topics.
It allows me to find out more about the people playing it and about the game itself.
It extends the experience and allows you to stay with the game when you can't play or when you can't find things to do in-game.
It is enjoyable, it extends my gaming experience, and it is helpful and supportive to others.
It keeps me casually connected to friends in game without having to log into the game.
It's a great opportunity to hone my skills, and it's generally fun to hang out with people who share an interest in the game.
It's good for finding details on guild wars, great place to meet new people, get some inside information and so on.
It's in the name of the game. Guild Wars is about the guilds. I couldn't find the one I wanted to be in, so I made one.
Just because.
Just chatting and commenting on the forums.
Keeping friendships going and just being part of the community makes sense since I'm playing the game.
Keeps me in the loop on new information.
Knowledge/ information, and discussing.
Like most web 2.0 social networking platforms out there, I see it as a way to find out what other players find interesting. e.g.: cool builds to play, the latest Guild Wars(2) news, upcoming events, other (not

necessarily similar) games these people like, ...
Mostly just the concept of connection. I thought being a forum moderator on teamquitter.com would be awesome, but it hasn't really changed anything. Now I kinda just go through the motions, since the community is dying.
Mostly to look for answers to in game questions. My guild/alliance also has offline activities.
News, patch discussions and generally finding new friends.
People with same interests make good friends.
Provides additional enjoyment to my online in-game activities.
Read news and random talks about the game.
Right now just for info about the sequel. Earlier it was about getting game insight, and chatting with my guild. Having laughs with the silly pictures and videos people posted is worth mentioning too.
Simple reason. On different communities I can learn about more tactics, I can chat with people about lore, I can exchange ideas about game etc. Plus I can find some good companions to play this game with.
Socialization.
Socializing. Improving my Guild Wars experience.
The game gets boring if you don't have anyone to talk to or group with. I've found that, in a guild, even if I am not grouped up with them, it makes the game more enjoyable to have some people to talk to.
The online communities tie into the game, allowing me to organize groups and get easier access to information.
The social aspect.
They are composed of my friends.
They are good communities to be a part of. It's great that despite so many differences, such as location, age, time-zone, occupation Guild Wars gives the community so much in common.
They expand my knowledge of the game, and allow me to help others with the game.
They help me spend time and help playing the game.
To discuss the game and other things, mostly other things nowadays (Guild Wars 2, politics, music)
To enrich the Guild Wars experience; discuss, share and enjoy the different aspects of the game
To find like-minded guild members.
To get help on what i need.
To get more information.
To get the latest news on features coming up in future updates, and keep up on the second game.
To have some more people to talk with about the game. To read their discoveries and ideas for builds.
To read about news concerning the game.
To learn more about the game, to help others, general entertainment.
To learn more and see other perspectives of the game.
To meet other gamers, get and give advice and to keep up with game updates and the best builds.
To share what I have found, to report bugs (and get help) if I need it, and to see what others are working on.
To voice my opinion and to discuss the latest updates.
Why not? It's something I enjoy so why not be involved with other people who enjoy it as well. It's like asking little old librarians why they are involved in book clubs.
Wiki for information, guild for companions.