

# To Play or Not to Play? Gamification Features on Arts Organizations' Websites

MSc program in Corporate Communication

Master's thesis

Hanna Ruokomäki

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Department of Management Studies  
Aalto University  
School of Business

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**Objective of the Study**

The aim of this thesis is to fill a gap in research and study a phenomenon that has thus far been neglected in corporate communication: gamification. Gamification is classically defined as incorporation of game-like elements into non-game environments. Gamification has been researched mostly in game studies, but also business is now entering the field. However, the communication contexts that utilize gamification and the multimodal ways of implementing gamification features have not been studied. The present thesis pioneers the exploration in this field. The case companies are chosen from the arts industry, as arts are struggling now in the increasingly digital era. Gamification can help these companies to engage customers in new ways.

**Methodology**

The thesis uses a qualitative approach. To research the communication contexts gamification is used in, four case companies are chosen. The companies are from the fields of publishing, games, museums and performing arts to get a wide perspective on the industry; they are selected from among the biggest in the world and according to the amount of gamification features present on their websites. The companies are Penguin Random House (publishing), Activision Blizzard (games), Louvre (museums) and Vienna State Opera (performing arts). To research the multimodal implementation of gamification features, theories on gamification, multimodality and interaction are used as the basis for the analysis and the framework that is built in the thesis.

**Findings and conclusions**

Gamification is mostly used in communication contexts that introduce the company or its history one way or another. The most common gamification features on the case companies' websites are 1) Narratives and Terminology, 2) Exploration, 3) Quests and Challenges, 4) Feedback and 5) Making Choices. The most used mode is written text, which proves that even during the era of videos and images, written text is required to anchor visuals with meaning. However, many of the gamification experiences on the websites do not utilize gamification to its full potential, indicating that even though gamification features are utilized in corporate communication, even the communicators themselves do not always recognize them as gamification. Thus the subject demands more attention and research in order to truly educate communicators in the meaningful use of gamification, engage customers and provide value for the organization.

**Keywords:** corporate communication, gamification, multimodal communication, interactive communication, arts industry, museums, publishing, games, performing arts, engagement

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**Tutkielman tavoitteet**

Tämän pro gradu -tutkielma tutkii ilmiötä, joka on tähän päivään saakka jäänyt huomiotta yritysviestinnän saralla: pelillisyyttä. Klassisen määritelmän mukaan pelillisyyttä merkitsee pelielementtien sisällyttämistä ei-peli ympäristöihin. Pelillisyyttä on tutkittu erityisesti pelitutkimuksen kentällä, mutta yritysmaailmakin on vähitellen liittynyt leikkiin. Pelillisyyden kasvavasta suosiosta huolimatta pelillisiä viestintätilanteita eikä multimodaalisia keinoja toteuttaa pelillisyyttä ole kuitenkaan tutkittu. Tämä tutkielma raivaa täten tietä tutkimukselle mainitulla kentällä. Esimerkkiyritykset ovat taidealalta, joka sinnittelee selvitäkseen nyky maailman digitalisoituessa. Pelillisyyttä voi tarjota keinoja sitouttaa asiakkaita uusien keinoin.

**Tutkimusmenetelmät**

Tutkimus on suoritettu kvalitatiivisin menetelmin. Pelillisten viestintätilanteiden tarkastelemiseksi on valittu neljä esimerkkiyritystä. Yritykset ovat kustannus-, peli-, museo- ja esittävän taiteen aloilta; ne lukeutuvat alallaan kansainvälisesti suurimpien yritysten joukkoon, ja ne valitaan verkkosivuilla esiintyvien pelillisten elementtien perusteella. Tutkittavat yritykset ovat Penguin Random House (kustantamo), Activision Blizzard (peliyritys), Louvre (museo) ja Wienin valtionooppera (esittävät taiteet). Pelillisyyden multimodaalisten keinojen tutkimiseksi tutkielma tukeutuu teorioihin pelillisyydestä, multimodaalisuudesta ja vuorovaikutuksellisuudesta: nämä teoriat toimivat analyysin sekä tutkielmassa rakentuvan teoreettisen kehyksen pohjana.

**Tulokset ja johtopäätökset**

Tutkittavien yritysten verkkosivuilla pelillisyyttä hyödynnetään enimmäkseen tilanteissa, jotka esittelevät yritystä tai sen historiaa. Hyödynnetyimmät pelielementit yritysten verkkosivuilla ovat 1) Tarinat ja terminologia, 2) Tutkiminen, 3) Tehtävät ja haasteet, 4) Palaute ja 5) Valintojen tekeminen. Kirjoitus on käytetyin viestintäkeino, mikä osoittaa, että kirjoitettua tekstiä tarvitaan yhä kuvien ja videoiden merkitysten osoittamiseksi. Pelillisyyden hyödyistä ei kuitenkaan oteta esimerkkiyritysten verkkosivuilla kaikkea irti, mikä viittaa siihen, etteivät edes viestijät itse aina tunnista hyödyntämiensä keinojen edustavan pelillisyyttä. Täten aihetta on syytä tutkia lisää, jotta voitaisiin kouluttaa viestijöitä merkityksellisen pelillisyyden hyödyntämisessä, sitouttaa asiakkaita ja lisätä yrityksen liiketoiminnan arvoa.

**Avainsanat:** yritysviestintä, pelillisyyttä, multimodaalinen viestintä, vuorovaikutuksellinen viestintä, taide, museo, kustantamo, esittävä taide, pelit, sitouttaminen

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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Photos, videos, stories – the world is practically getting lost under all the content that is shared by everyone who is anyone these days. The screen has replaced paper, and writing has been drowned under the sea of images and sounds that now permeate our everyday lives (Wingstedt et al. 2010, 193–194). Thus it is becoming ever more crucial for companies to catch consumers' attention and engage their customers.

The rise of Internet and social media has provided ever developing possibilities for corporate communication. Online, organizations are able to communicate in an authentic and interactive manner, engaging consumers and empowering them to become true advocates for the company (Cornelissen 2014, 258): immersion in a website can even lead to the will to purchase (Cho & Kim 2012, 37). With the growing trend of interaction, experiences and social media, it did not take long until games and gamification popped up and became the new trendy ways to increase consumer engagement.

Gamification has traditionally been defined as the addition of game mechanics or game elements into non-game settings to drive certain behaviour (Hsu et al. 2013, 428; Pilgrimene et al. 2015, 454). Opening this definition a bit more, we can say that gamification is used everywhere, where some elements or designs have been extracted from games and put in another context to create an experience of gameness (Deterding & Walz 2014, 7). Playfulness and the atmosphere of games are vital, and the feelings of adventure and exploration are not far behind. However, more often than not, gamification and game elements are confused with games. Simply put, the difference lies in the fact that gamification consists only of the elements of games, but a full-fledged game to do something – for example to learn – is a game, not gamification (Bogost 2014, 68).

As a rising trend, gamification opens a research gap in business studies. Until recently, gamification has been discussed mainly in the field of game studies and learning, but in the field of economics and marketing it is quite a new concept (Hamari et al. 2014, 139). Lately however, also business professionals have come to recognize the role of consumer empowerment in increasing profit, and thus gamification has started to gain momentum in business and marketing (Deuze 2007, 257; Hsu et al. 2013, 428). For example, An & Kang (2104) have discussed the meaning of advergimes (games for advertising) targeting

children, presenting the increasing use of games and gamification in the field. However, the change is slow, and in some cases gamification is discussed only concerning an audience consisting of children. Games are perceived as something that are at the core of childhood, and bringing elements from them to adulthood and other contexts is consequently conceived as stripping games of their magic and enchantment (Deterding 2014, 51). Thus it is not surprising that gamification has not been studied in the field of corporate communication, which creates the research gap. In order for a new communications method to spread, communication conventions have to be refreshed and new ways need to be studied (Ryan 2001, 243–244; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 115).

In game studies, on the other hand, gamification research has mainly focused on gamification as technological applications that are used for quantifying the self – receiving numerical data about one’s behavioural habits and their development (Whitson 2014, 349) – or as simple elements and motivations for using games (Chou 2015; Hsu et al 2013). The different ways that these elements are combined to create gamified wholes have not been researched. The playful aspects are implemented multimodally: with playful language, images and sounds (Flanagan 2014, 255, 259). Using all these modes and especially combining them to create gamified communication methods requires further knowledge and understanding of the ways that game elements can be used (Kress 2010, 97). Research on how gamification is used multimodally and in corporate communication is still lacking, however, and thus another research gap can be identified.

The field of the research is the arts industry. The reasoning for that is threefold:

- 1) virtual reality and thus also gamification provide great possibilities for the arts (Ryan 2001, 65);
- 2) like the arts, gamification is about making pleasurable products (Deterding 2014, 28); and
- 3) having a literature and arts managements background, I have a personal interest in the industry.

Especially point 2 is important since the research at hand will deal mainly with those fields in the arts industry that produce stories. Having said that, I want to note that, as a concept, what ‘the arts’ is conceived to include, usually varies depending on the person. I will, however, refer to the definition on UK’s career site Prospects (2015): summing up



their list, we can say that the arts industry includes literature, museums, television and film, music, performing arts and games. This research will discuss publishing houses, arts museums, performing arts organizations and game companies for reasons that will be explained more thoroughly in Subsection 2.1.

All the arts are facing similar problems that gamification can provide help with. Museums need to come up with mysterious communication methods online in order to engage their visitors, performing arts organizations have to turn to innovative web strategies to tackle decreasing visitor numbers, and publishing houses are struggling in the digital era (Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013; Preece & Wiggins Johnson 2011; Chi 2014). All in all, what is common for the whole arts industry, is that it is struggling in the modern digital times: gamification as a communication method can help with this issue by immersing the audience in the story filled worlds of the organizations and bringing about long-term behavioural change (Rigby 2014, 132).

Let us illustrate the situation with an image. Figure 1 represents traditional communication situation: C is the company, U stands for the users (because of the interactive nature of the research at hand) and CW is the company's world.

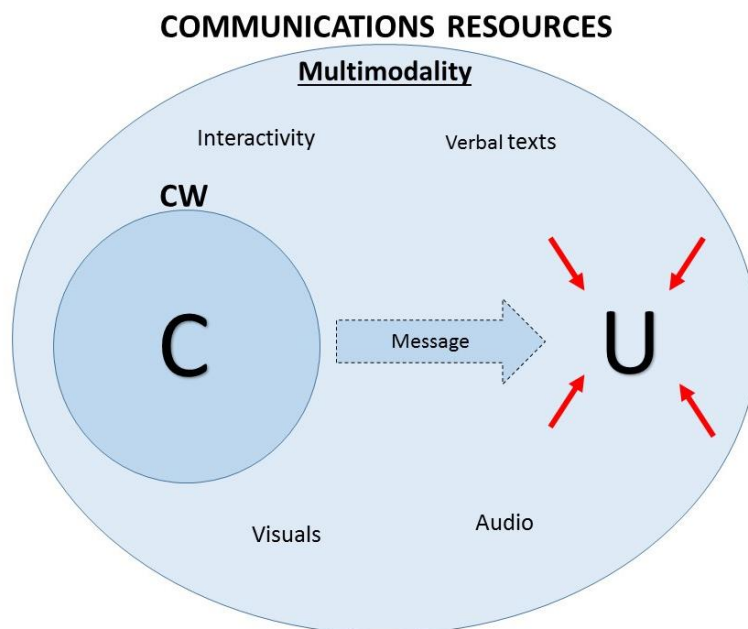


Figure 1. Traditional communication situation.

Multimodal communication theory consists of the modes used – the elements that surround the company and the users in Figure 1, representing the communication resources available to them – and the situation that the resources are used in (Kress & van

Leeuwen 2001, 111). Traditionally communication has been realized from top to bottom, meaning from the company to the users, but social media has changed the game (Cornelissen 2014, 258). However, a successful communication situation requires an understandable message, an appropriate selection of modal resources fitting the message and, more than anything, the attention and engagement of the recipient (Kress 2010, 42; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 13). Figure 1 illustrates the difficulty of the task: the company aims to send its one-way message to the users, but the users are most likely distracted by all the stimuli coming at them from all directions and thus their attention may not be caught or at least not engaged.

Figure 2 illustrates the same communication situation with gamification elements: I argue that by incorporating game elements in the communication situation the company has more chances of catching the users' attention among all the stimuli, engaging them and consequently immersing them in the company's world and making them a true advocate (Cornelissen 2014, 258).

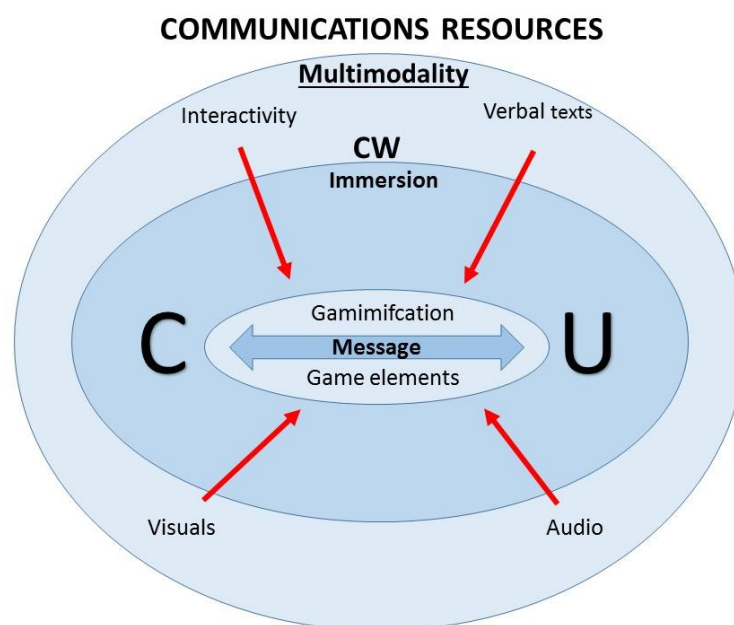


Figure 2. Gamified communication situation.

An immersive text provides a space that the audience can relate to, and games online are a new form of presentation, offering new ways to engage in society's narratives, and thus also the elements extracted from them can offer refreshing ways to immerse in the world of an organization, its values and its products (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 110; Ryan 2001, 14–15). The atmosphere of a game brings about the promise of experience, magic

and mystery (Alfrink 2014, 541; Cheng 2010, 59; Flanagan 2014, 252). Every action and reaction by the users are events in that gamified communicational world, making the users the authors of the adventure (Ryan 2001, 65, 218). However, when there is a screen, as is the case with online communication, the gamified situation becomes only a world-in-a-world, not complete and authentic immersion (ibid. 58). This is still not to say that the communication situation suffers from this dualism: the dual role of an adventurer and consumer provides the users excitingly with both sense and sensibility – reality with a hint of mystery.

## **1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

In this subsection I will present the objectives of my research and the research questions with which I will fill the gaps in previous research. Basing on the background introduced in the previous section, I have identified the research gaps in the field of gamification. As mentioned previously, gamification stems from game studies and thus the term does not fit marketing seamlessly (Hamari et al. 2014, 153–154). Despite some research and practical uses, gamification is still a new phenomenon in marketing – not to mention corporate communication studies that have barely acknowledged the growing trend. Thus research on gamification in the area of corporate communication is seriously needed.

Moreover, even though some researchers have aimed to list the game elements that gamification consists of, none of them get much farther than listing the elements. Gamification and its playfulness are created with images, writing and sounds, and using these modes in gamified communication requires knowledge on how these modes works (Flanagan 2014, 255; Kress 2010, 97). There is no research going beyond the lists of gamification elements and researching how gamification is realized with different modes.

Lastly, there is a lack of research discussing the arts industry as a whole: the research focuses mostly on individual cases. My research aims to fill this gap, but as the thesis will focus only on certain areas in the industry, it will offer only a beginning for wider research in the future. As I mentioned in the previous section, because of the immersive and story-filled nature of gamification, I will only focus on the field of the arts industry that also provide stories: according to Prospects (2015), these fields are literature, museums, television and film, performing arts, games and also music to some extent. They all

produce stories and products that Hamari et al. call experience goods – products, the quality of which can only be ascertained after having consumed the product (Hamari et al. 2014, 146–147). However, I will exclude television, film and music from my research, thus focusing on literature, games, museums and performing arts. The exclusion is due to having to limit the scope of the research. Television and film provide the same kind of stories as performing arts but performing arts offer those on a higher level since they offer both live experiences and recordings.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, music is excluded because both performing arts and games include music in their offerings. Thus all the storytelling fields of the arts industry will be included in the thesis one way or another. It is also important to note that even though the thesis studies arts industry, it is not the main focus of the research: arts industry provides only a relevant and creative setting that is vital for studying gamification methods used in corporate communication.

Based on these notions, I formulated two research questions, one with a subquestion, to guide me through my research.

- 1) In what kind of communication contexts is gamification used on arts organizations' websites?
- 2) What are the different gamification features on arts organizations' websites?
  - a. How are the gamification features implemented on the websites?

RQ1 aims to find out in what kind of contexts is gamification used in the arts industry, and that way it is possible to draw preliminary conclusions on the opportunities of gamification in corporate communication in general. The same goes for RQ2 and RQ2a: the modes and elements that are used help to make meanings material (Kress 2010, 114). Consequently, studying the ways that gamification features are used in arts organizations provides knowledge on how to use them in corporate communication elsewhere.

## **1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

To answer the research questions presented in the previous section, the thesis is divided into 6 chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Data & Methods, Analysis & Findings, Discussion and Conclusion. Literature Review will discuss the previous research that

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<sup>1</sup> Operas and theatres offer recordings of their shows, not to mention live broadcasts in movie theatres.

serves as the basis for the analysis. Data & Methods presents the selection of the four case companies – one from each field: literature, games, museums and performing arts – and the research methods used to analyse the chosen gamified cases on their websites. In Analysis & Findings, the websites and the gamified communication situations on them are then put under the microscope in order to analyse them in detail. Discussion provides comparative analysis of the cases and their implications concerning gamification in corporate communication. Lastly, Conclusion wraps up the research by summing up the process, findings and implications.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

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In this chapter I present the literature that is the backbone for the analyses in my research. To answer my research questions, I need to look at three important lines of theory: 1) gamification, 2) multimodal communication and 3) interaction and immersion in virtual environments. Firstly, gamification theories give perspective on the background and key factors of the subject. Secondly, theories on multimodality provide means to answer RQ2a since gamification features are mostly realized multimodally, using images, language and other modes simultaneously (Flanagan 2014, 255). I will focus mostly on Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's multiple studies on multimodality and its uses. Thirdly, Marie-Laure Ryan's study on interaction and immersion (2001) provides knowledge and background on how interaction can be realized in an immersive manner in virtual environments – a research that comes very close to gamification and the subject of my thesis. Fourthly, I say a few words on the arts industry to shed some light on the setting of the present research. Lastly, based on presented theories, I construct my own gamification framework to guide me through the research process. All in all, in this chapter, I will present the most important background for the theory and then refer to that while conducting the analysis in Analysis & Findings.

### 2.1 GAMIFICATION

During the last few years gamification has started to become more and more of a trend in research and practice, despite the fact that the reality of the concept still remains somewhat unclear – not only for the audience but also for theorists (Brigham 2015, 473). There is what one can call a fight about the definition as everyone tries to have their own say defining the concept, and I will now present some of these definitions and theories in this chapter (Deterding & Walz 2014, 6; Hamari 2015, 4). Gamification stands for non-game objects or experiences that use elements from games and/or provide gameful experiences, sometimes to achieve a particular goal, such as marketing a product (Deterding & Walz 2014, 7; Föhlich 2014, 564). This correlates with the definition presented already in the Introduction: gamification refers to the use of game mechanics in non-game settings, with the aim to increase users' engagement, drive game-like

behaviour and enhance focus and immersion in particular situations (Hsu et al. 2013, 428; Nam & Kim 2011, 87; Piligrimiene et al. 2015, 454; Robson et al. 2015a, 412, 418; Robson et al. 2015b, 352). Thus gamification takes game elements, relocating them in new contexts to create gamified experiences (Carrol 2014, 199).

However, even though gamification has experienced a rise in popularity these past years, the use of game elements to make non-game experiences more fun is not new (Holopainen & Stain 2014, 420): already postwar generations have perceived the value of games for well-being and self-expression, and companies have also previously motivated their customers and employees with game-like incentives (Deterding 2014, 33). Despite this fact, the virtual and digital environments of 2000s and 2010s create a much more fruitful arena for gamification, which is why its growing popularity may seem never ending. (Robson et al. 2015a, 411.) Technology enables the users to make inputs (what the users do) and receive outputs (how the system reacts to the users' activity) (Nova 2014, 401). It has also been argued that there is a natural connection with social media, since both social media and gamification enable user activity with social and technical architectures (Lampe 2014, 463). This is quite a limited view, though: gamification, like games, does not necessarily have to be social or technical (think of Sudoku, for example). Nonetheless, the gamified nature of social media should not be underestimated.<sup>2</sup>

The gamified experiences can be divided into four categories, according to the dimensions of experiences presented by Pine II and Gilmore (1998, 102–103).

*Table 1. The four gamified situations presented by Pine II & Gilmore (1998)*

<b>User</b>	Absorbs information	Immerses in the situation
is passive	Entertainment	Esthetics
is active	Education	Escapism

Also Robson et al. (2015a) discuss the aspects of player participation (do the users contribute to the experience) and player connection (do the users only absorb information or are they also immersed in the situation). (Robson et al. 2015a, 413–414; Robson et al. 2015b, 352.)

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<sup>2</sup> Gamification and social media, despite its interesting perspective, is not the subject of this research. However, it has been studied and can provide fruitful subjects for further research as well.

Moreover, Robson et al. present the actors in a gamification situation. Players are the ones who compete in the experience; designers design, develop and maintain the experience; spectators do not take part in the experience but their presence influences it; and observers are passively involved. In addition to the actors, gamified situations consist of mechanics, dynamics and emotions. Mechanics are the decisions that designers make to specify the rules, goals and boundaries of the experience: setup mechanics specify the premises of the gamified experience, rule mechanics specify the rules, and progression mechanics specify how the experience progresses. Dynamics are the types of player behaviour and interpersonal relationships that emerge during the experience, and they are difficult to predict. Emotions are the different mental states that arise in the users during the experience, and they are also difficult to pinpoint, as they are very subjective. (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–416; Robson et al. 2015b, 352.)

The concept of gamification can be misleading, (Robson et al. 2015a, 412): the most confusing aspect of gamification for a non-expert is that it is very often mixed with games themselves. The confusion is understandable, since as a concept gamification is subordinate to games (Khaled 2014, 316). Because the gamification trend is still new, people may not be prepared to see game elements where they do not expect them. The difference between game and play, on the other hand, is that play is perceived as something open-ended and game as a goal-driven activity. Artists have questioned this definition by creating games with unreachable goals. (Flanagan 2014, 262.) I do agree that goals are not necessary for gamification: immersing the users in the world of the organizations can be just about the play. However, it should be noted that unreachable goals do still have goals: the fact that they are unreachable does not make them non-existent. Nonetheless, the difference between gamification and games can thus be said to lie behind their end goals. Games are enjoyed as entertainment, whereas gamification usually has a more definite goal located outside the game context (Brigham 2015, 473). (Whitson 2014, 354.) Moreover, the difference consists of dividing games into elements and rearticulating them in new contexts, as the present thesis will propose.

Despite all the popularity, in business gamification is still quite new. It has been discussed mainly in the area of game studies, with economics remaining on the outskirts (Hamari et al. 2014, 139). The concept has its roots in gaming, not marketing theory, which is why the definition does not yet fit marketing without problems, and its implementation can in



most cases be too simplistic to truly immerse the users (ibid. 153–154; Hamari & Lehdonvirta 2010, 27). The same goes even more so for corporate communication theory, which proves that the topic of this thesis is truly called for. Nonetheless, gamification can be applied easily in a business context, where it has two goals (Robson et al. 2015b, 352): providing the company with a profitable outcome and the consumer with an individual experience (Hamari et al. 2014, 156–157). Gamification is used to drive consumer engagement and change behaviour (Brigham 2015, 474; Robson et al. 2015a, 413). Such consumer engagement can create economic (profitability), social (good reputation) and functional (suggestions for improvement) value for the company. (Piligrimiene et al. 2015, 455, 457.) In some gamification models, especially in some applications, users are lured to reveal a lot of useful data: demographics, behavioural habits, consumption behaviour and other important factors for marketers (Whitson 2014, 344). In addition to economic, social and functional values, engagement provides consumers with emotional value (Piligrimiene et al. 2015, 458).

Overall, the aim of gamification is to provide the consumer with experiences that convert them to make decisions they would not have made otherwise, since people's behaviour in a game may reflect their behaviour outside it (Hamari et al. 2014, 140, 148). In the scope of this research, it can thus be argued that gamification may get more people interested in the arts by immersing them in the world of the arts, because gamification and games can acculturate users to the company (Mollick & Werback 2014, 443). This kind corporate citizenship can be enhanced by gamifying simple tasks (ibid. 449): by handing out rewards or actions that make the tasks appealing, for example (Hamari et al. 2014, 147). However, business professionals also need to keep in mind that presenting rewards for just about anything has proved to decrease motivation to re-engage in the long run (Rigby 2014, 123): gamification should not be treated carelessly only as quick fix to a bigger problem (Brigham 2015, 474). Thus it is important to have a deep understanding of users' motivations, so that the gamified situation would have real meaning and be truly worthwhile for the target audience (Hamari 2015, 43; Mollick & Werback 2014, 447; Robson et al. 2015b, 355).

On the one hand, human beings are rational actors that need incentives and feedback systems, such as rewards, but on the other hand, they are also driven by other motivations than rational ones (Deterding 2014, 39). Gamification professionals are thus in dire need

of deeper understanding of what drives user engagements and provides lasting value (Rigby 2014, 115). It becomes a question of extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation: extrinsic motivation leads to a pursuit of an activity for its instrumental value whereas intrinsic motivation means the pursuit of an activity for its own sake (ibid. 125–126; Robson et al. 2015a, 413). Both of them should be utilized to achieve full impact (Brigham 2015, 475). Behavioural psychology has started to observe gamification in order to learn what maintains user engagement and drives motivation (Linehan et al. 2014, 81). For example, some gamification models utilize the mechanisms of positive and negative reinforcements, with positive reinforcements encouraging the users to go through an action to gain something and with negative ones encouraging them to act in order to prevent a negative consequence from taking effect (ibid. 85–86). Also the schedule and intervals of the reinforcements have proved important (ibid. 87). However, Linehan et al. point out that there should be a variety of different types of rewards, following a careful consideration and analysis of what kind of rewards have the most meaning for each user type (ibid. 90). Moreover, since meaningless rewards decrease engagement in the long run, meaning should be added by enhancing the initial engagement, linking the core of the rewards to earlier activity and providing unexpected feelings of achievement (Rigby 2014, 123–125). Nonetheless, behavioural psychology is purely extrinsic and cannot thus be used for researching intrinsic motivations (Linehan et al. 2014, 100). Despite the extrinsic nature, coupled with other kinds of research methods, it can provide valuable insights. Consequently, gamification in business needs to be studied with a multidisciplinary perspective.

In his Octalysis Framework, Yu-Kai Chou (2015) takes a look at the motivations that drive people in games and combines them with elements that are key for gamification. He focuses on human-based factors and motivations of gamification, arguing that game elements appeal to certain core drives (ibid. para 7).

- Epic meaning and calling: users' belief that they do something with great meaning or something that they were chosen to do
- Development and accomplishment: the drive to progress, develop and tackle challenges

- Empowerment of creativity and feedback: the creative process of figuring things out and getting feedback for it.
- Ownership and possessions: the need to accumulate wealth.
- Social influence and relatedness: influencing and identifying with others.
- Scarcity and impatience: the need to own something that has only a limited amount or that can be gained only after a certain time.
- Unpredictability and curiosity: the need to know what will happen next.
- Loss & avoidance: avoiding something negative. (Chou 2015, The 8 Core Drives of Gamification section).

Chou goes very deep into the process and stages of games, which is outside the scope of my research. Thus I will focus only on the elements presented by him, although I do not agree with his division completely, as will come up later when I introduce my framework.

Another research that lists game elements that are at the core gamification is the research by Hsu et al. (2013). The article studies gamification in collaborative storytelling websites and as such my interest lies again purely in the classification of the elements that are divided into three main components: 1) achievement, 2) interpersonal relationship and 3) role-playing. *Achievement* means that the users are motivated by accomplishments and it consists of rewards (points, badges etc), goal setting (staging the progress), reputation (actions that create good reputation) and status (being recognized for achievements). *Interpersonal relations* refers to forming and maintaining social networks, and it includes instruction (knowledge sharing), competition (the best user wins) and altruism (goodwill towards others). *Role-playing* means seeing the world from the perspective of a certain role, and it entails group identification (sharing similar attributes with others), self-expression (differentiation) and time pressure (having a limited amount of time to do something). (ibid. 429–430). Similarly to Chou, I do not agree with the whole classification but it provides vital insights for creating my framework, as we will see later.

There are also multiple other researchers that have defined a few or more gamification elements. Khaled's (2014) list is very similar to both Hsu et al. and Chou's divisions. She divides the elements into 1) gamification design elements consisting of points, achievements and rewards, and 2) interpersonal gamification dynamics comprising differentiation, competition, community cohesion, knowledge sharing, interdependence

and normative action. (ibid. 306–312). Deterding talks about gaining status and reputation through games. Gamification is communal, entails exploring other realities and roles and overall makes the users feel like being a part of something bigger. (Deterding 2014, 41–42). Moreover, the joys of games and thus gamification arise from making meaningful choices (Deterding & Walz 2014, 5). Gamification can provide closures – meaningful changes that afford the sense of achievement or failure (Holopainen & Stain 2014, 432). Föhlich, on the other hand, defined gamification mechanics as the use of narratives, progress tracking methods, rewards and stages (Föhlich 2014, 575). Moreover, gamification can also borrow from game-terminology (e.g. “gods” and “quests”) to create the atmosphere of games (Lampe 2014, 475–476). All in all, gamifying an environment, such as a website, surrounds it with a sense of magic and mystery that is the substance of gamification (Alfrink 2014, 541; Cheng 2010, 59).

Most of the researchers discussing gamification perceive it as technological appliances or digital applications. For them gamification almost always seems to be a tool for self-mastery and development, such as a sports or health application. It is a way to quantify the self, to get feedback for habits in numeric forms. (Whitson 2014, 352.) There is no research looking at the ways that the different gamifications elements are combined, even though the play elements of gamification are realized multimodally with language and images, for example (Flanagan 2014, 255): visuals and written text can take the design out of the ordinary (Cheng 2010, 64–65). Playfulness is something that can permeate our lives both digitally and non-digitally, and thus technological wonders are not always necessary: only the idea of a game brings about the promise of something special (Flanagan 2014, 250, 252). When the language and terminology of games are used, the relationship between the world and games is newly discussed. Language and imagery enable constructing our everyday lives more like games. (ibid. 256.) Gamified language reveals the essence of games by framing unexpected situations and objects with its aura (ibid. 259): for example, fantasy-like terminology or commands can frame a situation (ibid. 160; Lampe 2014, 475–476). Language invokes players’ experiences from games, and as such it can gamify the human experience (Flanagan 2014, 261).

Nonetheless, gamification is not all fun and games, as it has received its share of criticism as well. For example, Ian Bogost (2014) states that when something is made into a game – even though it is for other reasons than entertainment, like learning – it is still a game,

not gamification (Bogost 2014, 68). I agree that there is some confusion concerning this: sometimes even experts forget that gamification as a concept is much wider than games, as it can exist almost anywhere. Moreover, Bogost claims that game elements are nothing new when they are broken down (ibid. 74). This argument rings true: even such simple things as cooking or applying for a job are gamification, if we think of them from the perspectives of development or competition. However, Bogost forgets that in gamification, playfulness and mystery are key factors. Gamification features can be everywhere without being gamified, but the key is to imbue them with affordances to highlight the gamified experience (Huotari & Hamari 2012, 19). Gamification can teach organizations and individuals, how to take normal phenomena and make them more engaging with gamified features. Consequently, I aim to study the features in order to find the ways that traditional communication situations can be thought anew. As previously said, gamification is about discussing the relationship between the world and games to see the construction of our everyday lives with a fresh set of eyes (Flanagan 2014, 256). However, there is lack of understanding of what gamification is, how it works and how it can be done, which is why I will use multimodal analysis to learn the ways of constructing gamified communication (Robson et al. 2015a, 412).

## 2.2 MULTIMODALITY

As it has already been mentioned, gamification consists of different elements, and I aim to study the ways those elements are used to construct gamified wholes. The multiple studies written by the pioneers of multimodal and visual communication, Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, provide a fruitful framework for the analysis, especially when combined with the theories on gamification that I presented in the previous subsection. Multimodal theories combine the studies of different modes instead of focusing on just one, such as writing, and as such they are a relatively new phenomenon (Kress 2010, 5). “What is a mode,” one might then ask, and this subsection will hopefully shed some light on the mystery. In communication, there is always a meaning that the communicator wants to mediate, and a mode is the means for realizing or materializing that meaning: for example an image, a sound or written language (ibid. 114). Thus multimodality is the study of the combinations of all the modes, and most of the communication is admittedly multimodal. A spoken text is not just language, but also facial expressions; written text is

not just words on paper, but also font styles and colours (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 41). In gamification and interactive designs, on the other hand, the play elements are constructed with different modes: audio, visuals, graphics and text (Cheng 2010, 65; Flanagan 2014, 255). Consequently, multimodal analysis of gamification is called for.

The core of semiotics – the study of meaning making – is the sign that fuses meaning and form together (Kress 2010, 54). The form of the sign is the signifier, such as colour, a line or another element that is used to realize meaning. Meaning, the other half of the sign, is then called the signified – that what is meant with the signifier. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 6). The means that the sign maker utilizes to construct the sign, is up to their interest and the cultural (multimodal) resources that are available to them (Kress 2010, 10). Gamification, as a new multimodal interaction method, creates new signs and uses them in new ways. Thus provenance – the act of importing signs from one context to a new one – is at the core of gamification (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 10): gamification extracts signs from the context of games and imports them to new contexts, such as corporate communication in the scope of this research.

In semiotic studies, text is the largest unit that is complete in its meaning, as opposed to a sign that is the smallest one: the text and its meaning are the combination of the different signs and their meanings (Kress 2010, 147). In the scope of the present research, the gamification situations constitute the texts, and different modes add layers of meanings to these textual wholes (ibid. 118): thus it is clear that the text does not only mean text as language but also text as image or sound. The texts, signs and their combinations realize also different metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual functions. The ideational function represents the world as it is experienced (narrative processes in images), the interpersonal function represents the relationships between participants (the position of the viewer in an image), and the textual function proposes the different ways the elements within the text are connected (the composition of an image). (ibid. 88; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 42–43.) In the present thesis all of these functions complement each other and will thus be studied together. Every researcher, communicator and receiver brings their own knowledge and values to the text, which affects their level of engagement (Claffey & Brady 2014, 340; Kress 2010, 45; Pauwels 2012, 261). Thus also the gamification professionals bring their own values and knowledge of games to a given communication situation.

As Kress states, semiotic resources cannot easily be organized into a grammar: grammar is fixed, but social resources that are in constant movement are not. Also multimodality is ever changing, and thus it is impossible to create a fixed grammar for it. (Kress 2010, 6–7.) Nonetheless, Kress and van Leeuwen have aimed to describe a visual grammar that does not follow a fixed set of rules but represents guidelines and regularities that have been established in Western history.<sup>3</sup> By uncovering these guidelines and structures they present how different elements are combined to create meaningful wholes. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 1.) Said structures provide the guidelines also for my analysis.

We can start uncovering these structures by looking at the semiotic logic of image. An image consists of the space that it takes up and the objects that are spread around that space. These elements – or participants as Kress and van Leeuwen call them – have different kind of relations to each other, to the users and to the space of the image. (ibid 47–48; Kress 2010, 81.). The participants are usually non-linearly represented and can thus be read in any order depending on the user, as opposed to written language that in Western cultures is read from left to right (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 27). Written language next to the image anchors the image with a more specific meaning. If there is no text, however, the image can be attributed with different interpretations depending on the reader, albeit guided by the composition of the image. (ibid. 26–27.)

Another important concept introduced by Kress and van Leeuwen is the vector that is also an integral concept in my research. Vectors represent the meanings that are in language represented by verbs (ibid. 46). They are narratives that are formed by lines of action: vectors embody doing something to another participant. In order for the narration to happen, the image needs an element of directionality that is the vector. (ibid. 59.) Thus vectors are a kind of deixis, pointing directions within the text. Such semiotic cues orient the viewer and help them navigate in the textual world. (Kress 2010, 117.)

The vector and other participants can be combined in different ways to create diverse narratives. In action processes, that are the most common processes in my data set, the Actor is the participant from which the vector emanates, and the Goal is the participant the vector is directed to. For example in Appendix 1, the hands and feet form vectors that all point to the centre of the image, creating a circle and representing unity: the Actors

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<sup>3</sup> Thus also this research will focus on gamification and multimodality in Western communication.

are the people that the hands are connected to and they are metonymically in the image, represented by parts of their body. In reactional processes, on the other hand, the vector is formed by a gaze and its direction: the Reacter is the one who is looking and the participants that are looked at are Phenomena (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 67). Lastly, in speech and mental processes, the Actors are the Speakers and the Sensors, and the vector is formed by the ways that the Content is linked to them – for example, speech bubbles in comics (ibid. 68). In multimodal analysis of gamification, vectors and directional guides will provide relevant when guiding the users.

I also want to point out that the gaze can be directed to the viewers as well. With a direct gaze the participant in the image addresses the viewers and creates an imaginary relationship with them (ibid. 89). The direct gaze acknowledges the viewers with a visual “you”, demanding something of them (ibid. 118; Kress 2010, 117). In other cases – when the gaze is not turned directly at the viewer – the viewer is the subject, not the object, of the gaze: the image itself is offered for analysis instead of demanding something of the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 119).

When some of the participants fit together to make whole, they form part-whole structures, where Carrier is the whole and Possessive Attributes are the parts (ibid. 87). These structures can be either exhaustive or inclusive. In exhaustive cases, the whole of the Carrier is taken up by its Possessive Attributes, and all of it is accounted for. In inclusive cases, on the other hand, the Possessive Attributes take up some parts of the Carrier, but not all, leaving some areas of the Carrier unanalysed. (ibid. 95–96.) For example, if you think of a map, it is exhaustive if everything up to small rivers and little towns is attached to it, but it is inclusive if only the relevant parts, such as big cities, are represented. The part-whole structure is provides interesting insights for gamification in organizational contexts, as will be discussed in Analysis & Findings.

The elements in an image are naturally composed in various ways. Kress and van Leeuwen divide composition analysis into three interrelated systems: information value, salience and framing (ibid. 177). Concerning information value, what comes first in an image orients interpretation (Kress 2010, 169). In horizontal elongation, the image is read from left to right: the elements on the left represent what is Given and thus already known, and the elements on the right embody what is New and should thus be afforded



special attention (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 57, 181). The place of the New is also the place of something problematic that needs to be solved, and in an interactive context, the place of the New constitutes usually the place where the users realize their actions (ibid 190, 213). Composition is also somewhat relative: what to one element is New, can then become Given in relation to another element (ibid 185).

In addition to horizontal elongation, an image can also be divided into top and bottom, according to vertical elongation (ibid. 57). In this case, the image is divided into heaven and earth: What is at the top, is Ideal and constitutes the essence of the information. The bottom, on the other hand, embodies what is Real and provides details. (ibid. 178, 186–187.) Lastly, if one element is in the middle, it constitutes the Centre, the elements around it being Margins, between which the Centre acts as Mediator (ibid. 196, 198).

The other layers of composition to be discussed are salience and framing. Foregrounding means bringing something to the fore – making some elements stand out more than others (ibid. 225). Salience can be realized with size, contrasts, sharpness, placement, perspective and other methods (ibid. 202). As for framing, it is created by connecting or disconnecting elements, which makes them seem belonging together or being separate from each other (ibid. 176). The absence of framing stresses group identity, whereas its presence highlights differentiation (ibid. 203). The frame can be anything from dividing lines and actual frames to lighting and distance (ibid. 177). As will be proved in Analysis & Findings, framing is an integral part of the gamification situations.

Distance and the angles created by the size of the frame affect interpretation as well. For example, equal distance between participants of the same size represents their equality in relation to each other (ibid. 79). The size of the frame can also express social distance: a close shot of a person is framed so that the head and shoulders are visible, medium close shot cuts off from the waist, medium long shot presents the full figure, and in a long shot, the height of the person is half the height of the frame (ibid. 124). Distance can also be applied to objects and landscapes. In a close shot only part of the object is shown, middle distance presents the whole object but not much around it and long distance places the object out of reach. When discussing buildings, we can say that if the whole building is not presented, the framing indicated that someone is about to enter the building, whereas if the whole building is shown with not much around it, the building is identified as

destination. Bringing some objects more to the fore than others indicates that the viewer is located within the landscape. (ibid. 128.) Moreover, if the object or building is shot from a high angle, the power is given to the viewer, but a low angle affords the power to the object. An eye-level perspective stands for equality. (ibid. 140.)

Colour creates meanings and associations, and thus colours are an important factor in some of the cases in the present research (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 27). Ideationally colour denotes people, objects and spaces, and thus for example company colours can denote the company and its values. Interpersonally it affects people, and textually separates and creates unity between objects. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 229–230.) Colour can be perceived from six perspectives. 1) Value is the greyscale embodying the experiences of light and dark. 2) Saturation is the continuum of intense and soft colours, representing intensity and tenderness. 3) Purity refers to whether the colour is one of the basic colours or a hybrid of different ones: pure colours are modern and hybrids are postmodern. 4) Modulation deals with the flatness of a colour; flat colours are simple, whereas modulated colours have textures. 5) Differentiation refers to the amount of different colours. A very restricted use of the colour palette symbolizes timidity and different colours represent adventurousness. 6) Hue stands for the red-blue scale, where red symbolizes energy and warmth and blue calm and distance. (ibid. 233–235.)

Also sounds create meanings within multimodal texts, and a few of the cases in the present thesis utilize sound: sounds include music, voices and non-linguistic sounds (special effects). Auditory salience can be highlighted with contrasts between long and short sounds and between loudness and softness. Now that adding sounds is a possibility, also silence is a choice, and thus according to McKee, the four elements of sound in multimodal texts are vocal delivery, music, special effects and silence; music is often accompanied by other sounds. (McKee 2006, 337). Also the first elements within an auditory sequence get more attention than the following ones, unless those are foregrounded with other salient attributes. (Kress 2010, 201.) Sound is an abstract level of expression that helps to increase narrative immersion (Cuny et al. 2015, 1031; Wingstedt et al. 2010, 206). For example, music affects users' intentions to revisit the site, and immersion through music increases e-loyalty (Cuny et al. 2015, 1026, 1031). Sound has six narrative functions within a text. 1) The emotive function invokes emotions and the atmosphere. 2) The informative function is cognitive and provides information

about the time period, for example. 3) The descriptive function is similar to the informative one, but it is more focused on a particular object. 4) The guiding function directs attention to certain objects, creating an integral part of advertising and games. 5) The temporal function is the rhythm of the story, organizing structure. 6) Lastly, the rhetorical function acquires a commenting role. (McKee 2006, 347; Wingstedt et al. 2010, 195.) The functions may overlap and work simultaneously on varying levels of the text.

In this subsection, I have presented the basics of multimodal theory. However, in addition to the multimodal representations, communication involves interaction that takes place online in the scope of the present research and is not fully studied by Kress & van Leeuwen. Consequently, before going deeper into the analysis, we need to take a look at virtual interaction and immersion.

## **2.3 INTERACTION AND IMMERSION**

In addition to studies on multimodality and gamification, also interaction, virtual environments and immersion are important concepts for the research at hand. As I argue for the engaging and immersing nature of gamification, interactive methods of communication are a given in many situations – situations that take place online. Thus Marie-Laure Ryan's study *Narrative as Virtual Reality. Immersion and Interactivity in Literature and Electronic Media* (2001) forms the basis for the interactive and immersive aspect of my study. Ryan states that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the rise of postmodernism, texts adopted a more playful role than previously (Ryan 2001, 5). This notion corresponds also with the rise of gamification. In virtual environments, texts consist mostly of hypertexts that are responding texts (Cassidy 2011, 294): the users determine the way that the text unfolds by clicking on links and certain areas in the order of their choice (Ryan 2001, 6). The choices are limited but reading and interpreting get more freedom when the text is open and does not have to be read linearly (ibid. 7; Nam & Kim 2011, 87).

Ryan talks a lot about narratives and texts in her research: in interaction, texts are presented as games and language as the plaything integral to them (Ryan 2001, 16). These notions reflect the ideas behind gamification as well: gamified situations are new texts, and different features – language among them – are the playthings incorporated in them. Narratives form a cognitive framework that human beings use to organize and make sense

of information and events (ibid. 19). However, for Ryan narratives mean mostly fiction, which is why I will discuss them only to the extent that they are relevant for my research.

Similar to multimodal theories, Ryan defines texts as sets of different signs, but she also goes further, stating that texts open a window to something beyond language (ibid. 6, 91): texts are windows to the worlds that they represent, for example the worlds of various organizations or the world of the arts. The role of language, on the other hand, is to orient the users and direct their attention to certain objects and elements within the text, attach them with properties and stimulate imagination, thus enhancing immersion and providing great opportunities for gamification as well (ibid. 193). Intertextuality is a form of textuality: elements, comments or direct quotes concerning one text are transported to another one, creating layers of meaning. Intertextuality is also one aspect of gamification: texts from games are imported to other contexts. However, in gamification, the extent to which the users can recognize gamification features rests upon their familiarity and experience with games (ibid. 160).

Virtual reality is another key concept in Ryan's research. She claims that for example images are real objects in space and time (representing the objects that they are in reality) but also virtual objects that create their own space and time (being out this world) (ibid. 42). I agree with the claim, as also gamified situations are both communicative situations and windows to their own world – or that of the organization – simultaneously. What Ryan means by virtual reality, however, extends somewhat beyond the scope of my research: for her, the ideal virtual reality means almost physical immersion into the presented virtual world. Nonetheless, I will discuss her notions of virtual realities to the extent that they correspond with my research. A virtual reality can be many things: 1) active embodiment, 2) spatiality of the display, 3) sensory diversity, 4) transparency of the medium, 5) dream of natural language, 6) alternative embodiment and role-playing, 7) simulations as narrative and 8) a form of art (ibid. 52–65). We can recognize some elements that are common with gamification, such as role-playing.

Let us elaborate on those aspects of virtual reality that are most relevant for the present thesis. *Spatiality of the display* refers to the sense of depth and the sense of being surrounded with a roving point of view. People's material bodies can be fixed in one location, but their consciousness can take on multiple roles in multiple locations. (ibid.

53, 71.) *Simulation as narrative* is exploration that can lead to self-discovery. Every action by the users in the virtual and hypertextual reality become events in that reality. (ibid. 63, 65.) Thus the users become immersed in the virtual world of the organization, bringing about events with their choices. However, when there is a screen, the immersion is only partial, because the virtual world becomes a world within the real world: that is what Ryan means by *transparency of the medium* (ibid. 56, 58).

Like Ryan, I am going to take into account a particular kind of immersion, in which the immersive experience is created by an imaginative relationship to the company's world, as opposed to immersion in doing just about anything, like fixing a car. (ibid. 14.) Imaginative immersion, that is discussed in this thesis, requires three subconscious actions from the users: 1) imagining themselves as a member of the presented world, 2) pretending that the propositions in the text are true and 3) constructing a mental image (ibid. 108). The same actions are needed when interacting with an organization's world: in the best case scenario, engaged users become faithful members and advocates for the company. Even during these mental operations, however, it needs to be remembered that every user interprets the text from the perspective of their own personal reality (ibid. 105).

There are three ways the users can immerse in texts: spatial, temporal and emotional (ibid. 121). In spatial immersion, the text is a space that the users can relate to and that has different objects scattered around (ibid. 14–15). For example, architecture is immersive by nature, and especially in virtual environments where the users are placed in a first-person perspective, they are inscribed in that game-like world (ibid. 290, 309). Particularly panoramas, that provide the users with the roving first-person point of view and the possibility for exploration with the mouse, are spatially immersive and act as story-navigating devices. *Navigation* refers to user activity, and it is composed by travel and wayfinding; *navigability*, on the other hand, is afforded by technology and composed by traversibility and guidance. *Traversibility* means travelling in a virtual environment depending on steering controls and environmental constraints, such as walls. *Guidance* helps wayfinding. (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 166–169.) Clicking around activates different objects around the space, creates textual screens or does something else: the key is that the consequences are unpredictable with an element of surprise, much like in games. (Ryan 2001, 69, 266.) Moreover, using real place names and proper nouns activate

the users' cognitive frames: proper nouns provide a sense of reality, enabling the users to tap into their knowledge or experiences of the place or object in question (ibid. 128–129).

Temporal immersion, on the other hand, is a consequence from the desire to learn what is going to happen next (ibid. 140). The users form their own horizon of possibilities, constructing cognitive scripts with the anticipation for the events that are yet to take place, which increases suspense. Moreover, while the range of possibilities decreases, the temporal suspense increases. (ibid 142.)

In emotional immersion, the immersive suspense depends on the users' interests in the fate of the hero (ibid. 142). In order for the attachment to the imaginary world, its objects and its characters, to happen, the border between what is real and what is fictional has to be crossed (ibid. 149). In the immersive virtual world, the users get the opportunity to experiment and explore other identities and realities (ibid. 311). Both temporal and emotional immersion can be enhanced with language: the present tense immerses temporally more than the past, and second-person address can have immersive effects when used in small doses (ibid. 136, 138).

Interactive texts can also be perceived as games. Interactivity steps inevitably into play when the users are put in the role of players (ibid. 191). Resembling gamification, Ryan argues that in interactive texts all the required conditions for an activity to be a game may not be fulfilled, but there may be some more or less central attributes that define the “gameness” of the text. An interactive text can be like a game in three ways: literally, metonymically and metaphorically. Firstly, the literal interpretation includes riddles, rhymes, word-plays and tongue teasers – all game-like constructions that have language as their material and require verbal skills. Secondly, the metonymic interpretation means that the text follows the mechanism of a standard type of a game, for example throwing dice or shuffling cards. Also exploring the hyperlinks in a virtual environment is included in the metonymic game-like construction. The metonymic construction uses elements and structures borrowed from games but does not necessarily create a game in itself. Thirdly, in the narrow metaphorical interpretation, the game is transported verbally – for example when the game is described. (ibid. 179–180.) All in all, hypertexts are types of puzzles that require solving. However, all the options and paths are equal: the virtual environment does not form a strict labyrinth but an interactive playground. (ibid. 183–184.)

Technologically, the virtual playground consists of submitting inputs and receiving outputs. In a virtual and interactive communication situation, inputs are what the receiver does to receive or to react to the message or the output that is mediated by the sender. (ibid. 14.) This input-output model was discussed also in the context of gamification (Nova 2014, 401). Ryan goes further, categorizing the different types of inputs and outputs. The users, submitting inputs, can

- determine the plot,
- shift perspective,
- explore the possible,
- keep the textual machine going,
- retrieve documents,
- play games and solve problems,
- evaluate the text,
- participate in the writing of the text or
- engage in dialogue and play roles.

The author of the interactive text, creating the outputs for the users, can

- control the users' progress,
- let the users explore,
- suggest relations between segments,
- allow the users to zoom in and get a closer look,
- interrupt the flow of the text or
- provide background information. (Ryan 2001, 210–213.)

Overall, virtual environments afford communications professionals with opportunities to interact and create gamified experiences. People in commercial positions need to understand the effect that an immersive narrative has on the success of an interactive text (ibid. 243–244). The users should be afforded the freedom of navigation, with the hypertexts generating little surprises on the way (ibid. 258). Immersive reading is exploration; it is an adventure, since every session is different and the users become the heroes with the power of choice (ibid. 194, 218). On the other hand, immersion deprives the users of the distance needed in critical judgement of the overall narrative. The users become so focused in their adventure and their actions that they forget to evaluate the text as a whole, and thus Ryan argues that an interactive narrative does not need to be as good as that of a book, for example (ibid. 328). I agree to some extent, but as discussed earlier, I also believe that the success of the narrative and the interaction becomes from providing the users with greater meaning and choice (Deterding 2014, 42); and that meaning comes

out of the unpredictable personal associations of the users, affecting their level of engagement (Claffey & Brady 2014, 340; Ryan 2001, 193).

At the end of the day, one needs to be able to immerse and deimmerse from an interactive text to be able to appreciate them (Ryan 2001, 199). This kind of a dual role is the one that I need to adopt while conducting the analysis: the full understanding of gamification requires both the ability to identify with the immersive features of the text in order to recognize them and the power to disengage for the purpose of external analysis.

All in all, Ryan's theory on interaction and immersion complements Kress and van Leeuwen's grammar of visual design. While multimodal studies guide me in the quest of analysing the different elements and their relations on the websites, the theory on interaction sheds light on how those multimodal elements interact with each other and the users' actions on a hypertextual level.

## **2.4 ARTS INDUSTRY**

As mentioned previously, the aim of this study is to research the arts industry – especially those fields of the industry that produce stories. Art is about producing experiences and engaging stories worlds that the consumers can immerse in (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 511; Pitsaki 2010, 398; Reaney 1999, 184). What is common for the whole industry, is that the digital environment poses threats for it (Moyon & Lecocq 2015, 83). However, the Internet is not only a threat but also an opportunity: with the use of games increasing, also the arts industry can be enriched by them, which will be discussed in the present thesis (Pallud & Straub 2014, 368). All in all, the industry is only the area of the research. The main focus lies in gamification, but this subsection briefly presents the chosen fields of the arts industry – publishing, games, museums and performing arts organizations.

Like all of the arts industry, publishing companies are facing challenges due to technological advancements, the explosion of content all over different media and the outdated image of book publishing (Chi 2014, 345–346). However, there are also opportunities: the companies can enhance their products, expand their networks, experiment and engage (ibid. 347–351). As early as 1988, interactive stories and games have been proved to enhance literacy and reading skills of people who have shown little



interest in reading (Lancy & Hayes 1988, 42–46). Thus also gamification can help publishing companies encourage and educate readers. For example, a book hunt is one way to implement a marketing campaign for a new book (Robson et al. 2015b, 353–354).

Game companies provide experiences that are separate from the everyday life. Ludology, one of the two schools of game analysis, argues that there is a gameness in games that separates them from everyday experiences. The other school, Narratology, claims that games are focused on stories and the meanings that they convey. (Malaby 2007, 96, 101.) Games indeed are narratives that happen in the present, and during the game the player is both the protagonist and a collaborative author, modifying the narrative according to their own actions (Cassidy 2011, 296–297). However, game companies are not always so known, because game series tend to attract more behavioural loyalty among players than individual companies. Internet with its forums and engaging possibilities can thus be used to inspire a sense of community and engagement in the company instead of only the games. (Burgess & Spinks 2014, 43–45.) Gamification can help drive the engagement.

Museums are struggling with decreasing financing due to low visitor numbers and need to start understanding the rules of the web in order to attract more customers (Hume & Mills 2011, 276). However, marketing and promotion have long been shunned in the museum and arts industry, and only lately has the industry come to realize the benefits that good marketing and communication can have for brands (Rentschler 2002, 8, 10). Previous elitism against commerciality may even make some potential customers uncomfortable with museums (Quinlan-Gagnon 2013, 27). Websites can help to increase awareness of the brand, decrease the aura of elitism around museums and increase tourism (Hume & Mills 2011, 177; Pierroux & Skjulstad 2011, 206). Lepkowska-White & Imboden (2013, 285) have even research that websites inspire customers to visit the museum itself. However, museums need to also account for the fact that museum visits and website visits create a cycle: visitors go to the website both before and after the visit to the museum, looking for different kinds of information at different times (Marty 2007, 337, 356). Overall, the museum website has significance: many studies have acknowledged that if potential customers perceive the website favourably, they are more inclined to visit the museum itself (ibid. 339; Pallud & Straub 2014, 367). Thus interesting gamification features can encourage to visit the museum and engage visitors both before, during and after the visit.

Performing arts include such art forms as theatre, opera, dance and music (Cuadrado et al. 2000, 16). They are difficult brands, which means that they are not available all the time everywhere and their outcomes are uncertain, depending on the success of each production. The organizations have traditionally tried to tackle the issues by cultivating the audience and staying in the minds of the audience even when there are no shows. (Preece & Wiggins Johnson 2011, 19–23.) Relationship building is easier online, but performing arts organizations should also make sure that their product reflects the market needs and sensibilities (Nytch 2013, 87): for example, with new virtual technologies, the audience can be immersed in a theatre piece (Reaney 1999). The biggest issue for performing arts is the cycle of decreasing audience and financial aid, and like publishing companies, they tackle with the outdated image of the industry, failing to attract younger audience (Nytch 2013, 87–89). Thus gamification and attractive website design could help: there needs to be something new and interesting to draw the audience in (Preece & Wiggins Johnson 2011, 30). Gamification is of course not for everyone, but it can encourage inexperienced and young visitors to view the industry from a new perspective.

All in all, the arts industry produces intangible experiences, which is why the increasingly digital environment poses threats and competition (Moyon & Lecocq 2015, 83; Pitsaki 2010, 398). However, the technological world can also provide opportunities, and the situation may not be as pressing and gloomy as it seems: even in the 1950s, the television was seen as threat to the arts (Scheff & Kotler 1996, 28). What is true and common for all organizations in the industry, however, is the fact that funding and visitor numbers are decreasing (ibid. 29; Colbert 2003, 33). The age-old debate between high and popular culture and the elitism on the industry needs to be torn down to make arts more attractive and accessible to others than the traditional arts consumer – a well-educated female (Colbert 2003, 32). People should be educated into the arts and the industry should be made part of their everyday lives. (Scheff & Kotler 1996, 34–35, 39–40, 42.) Moreover, partnerships across the different fields of the industry – such as games, movies and literature – should be extended to add value (Cassidy 2011, 300–301; Moyon & Lecocq 2015, 99). Overall, communication with the audience is integral, and in the digital times it is more crucial than ever (Scheff & Kotler 1996, 46). Gamification can help with the task by bringing new approaches and engagement to the field.

## 2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the theories that I have presented and especially on the different lists of gamification elements that were listed in the subsection Gamification, I will formulate my own framework of gamification features. That framework will then function as the guideline for my analysis: while analysing the multimodal and interactive aspects of various gamified wholes – according to Kress & van Leeuwen and Ryan, among others – I will acknowledge which gamification elements from my framework are realized in different multimodal ways. If we think of the Figure 2 presented in Introduction, the framework of elements that I am about to introduce would be situated in the innermost circle named ‘gamification elements’.

When building the framework, I base it on Hsu et al.’s research and their division of different elements into three categories. Influenced by their division, I divide my framework into four categories: 1) Achievement, 2) Interpersonal and Interactive Dynamics, 3) Role Play and 4) Elements of Adventure. All these categories have different, more specific features subordinate to them, as can be seen in Figure 3 that represents my framework.

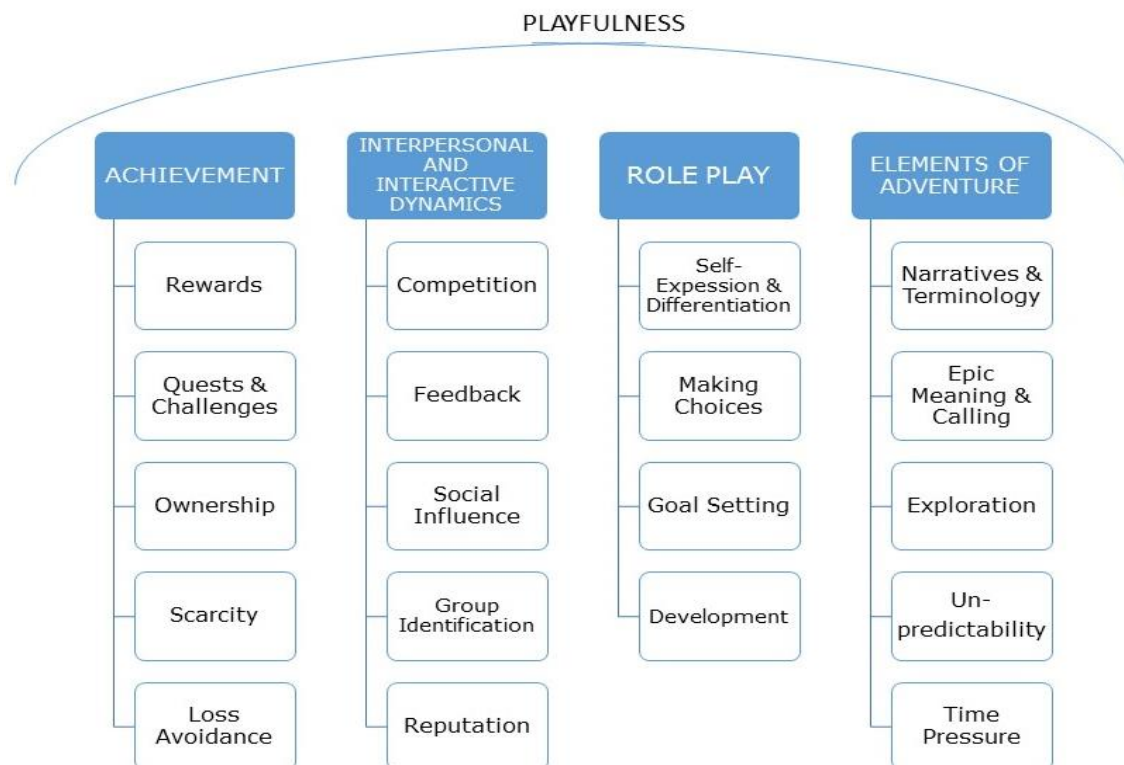


Figure 3. The comprehensive framework of gamification features.

Many of the elements stem from Hsu et al. and Chou, but there are influences from other researchers as well. In earlier research, there are inconsistencies, and thus I have divided and moved around some of the elements to combine all the relevant previous research into a comprehensive framework that makes sense both for my study and for future research. Some of the elements under each of the four categories overlap with each other, but as we will see, the overlaps illustrate how gamification can and needs to be observed from varying perspectives. In this subsection, I will define the meaning and origin of the elements in my framework.

*Achievement* is divided into five elements.

1. **Rewards** are points, badges and other prizes that are granted for an activity and for succeeding in it (Chou 2015, The 8 core drives of gamification section, para 2; Hsu et al. 2013, 429; Khaled 2014, 306; Robson et al. 2015b, 354–355).
2. **Quests & Challenges** highlight the perspective on progress, stages and challenges that are given for the users to carry out. Moreover, Quests are an important aspect in many games and create a sense of achievement. (Cheng 2010, 59; Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 2; Föhlich 2014, 575; Holopainen & Stain 2014, 432.)
3. **Ownership** means the possibility to own and accumulate wealth: currency or objects. Along with Ownership, the users' status improves. (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 4; Deterding 2014, 41; Hsu et al. 2013, 430.)
4. **Scarcity** refers to the fact that there is a limited amount of objects on offer and the need to get them for oneself is stirred in the users. Scarcity may also be coupled with a time limit, but that is not always the case. (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 6.)
5. **Loss Avoidance** leads to performing an action to prevent a negative effect from taking place (ibid. para 8).

*Interpersonal and Interactive Dynamics* refer mostly to getting comments and identifying with other people, but the category also refers to interaction between the users and the system/machine, since also the system may provide feedback for actions. Interpersonal and Interactive Dynamics is divided into five elements as well.

1. **Competition** is somewhat self-explanatory: the users compete for prizes with competitors and aim to outperform them in some activity (Hsu et al. 2013, 429; Khaled 2014, 308).
2. **Feedback** is an element where other people or the system react to the actions performed by the users (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 3). Feedback is provided through the actions of the users, the actions of other non-player characters or the surrounding space (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515).
3. **Social Influence** stands for the users' ability to affect others: to influence them and to provide them with information or instructions (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 5; Hsu et al. 2013, 430; Khaled 2014, 310).
4. **Group Identification** creates the sense of being part of a team, relating to others and sharing similarities that differentiate the team from the rest. Hsu et al. categorize Group Identification under Role Play, but in my interpretation the social aspect is vital, and thus I place Group Identification beneath Interpersonal and Interactive Dynamics. (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 5; Deterding 2014, 42; Hsu et al. 2013, 430; Khaled 2014, 311.)
5. **Reputation** is something that users accumulate through their actions and in relation to other people. Hsu et al. think of Reputation as part of Achievement, but I group it under Interpersonal and Interactive Dynamics, as Reputation deals with how the users are perceived by others. (Deterding 2014, 41; Hsu et al. 2013, 429.)

*Role Play* extracts elements from role-playing games where individuality and personal development are key factors. I divide Role Play into four elements.

1. **Self-expression and Differentiation** refers to actions that highlight the individual characteristics and creative perspectives of the users (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 3; Hsu et al. 2013, 430; Khaled 2014, 307).
2. **Making Choices** refers to the users' ability to make their own decisions, thus bringing their own interests and actions into play (Deterding & Walz 2014, 5). Making Choices is one core factor in role-playing games.
3. **Goal Setting** provides the users with the option to divide their actions in separate goals in order to reach an end goal. Hsu et al. discuss Goal Setting in relation to Achievement, but I move it Under Role Play, because Goal Setting is an individual

activity based on personal preferences. It is somewhat related to tracking progress but more concerned with the planning phase. (Hsu et al. 2013, 429.)

4. **Development** is about making personal progress: the users gain abilities and knowledge. The internal aspect of Development places it under Role Play instead of Achievement that is a bit more external in its meaning. Development is an especially integral part of role-playing games. (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 2; Ramirez & Squire 2014, 636.)

*Elements of Adventure* is a concept that I have formulated based on earlier research. Elements of Adventure is vital for gamification, since such elements provide the sense of being somewhere else and being a part of something bigger: they afford the users with the exciting atmosphere of games, with magic, fantasy and mystery (Alfrink 2014, 541; Cheng 2010, 59). In a virtual environment, every session is different for the users, making them the heroes of their own adventures (Ryan 2001, 218). Elements of Adventure is divided into five features.

1. **Narratives and Terminology** consists of Narratives, that are intrinsic to games and transport the users into another world, and Terminology that is borrowed from games, thus constructing reality in a game-like manner (Flanagan 2014, 259; Folkerts 2010, 107; Föhlich 2014, 575; Lampe 2014, 475–476; Moser & Fang 2014, 146; Ryan 2001, 193).
2. **Epic Meaning and Calling** creates the sense of being a part of something bigger and doing something that one is meant to do (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 1; Deterding 2014, 42).
3. **Exploration** refers to the option and the curiosity to explore spaces and to discover objects and information; it increases immersion. Exploring other roles is included in Exploration as well. (Cheng 2010, 59; Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 7; Deterding 2014, 42.)
4. **Unpredictability** is created by the uncertainty about what is going to happen next but especially by hidden elements that are surprising and unexpected. In most cases the surprises are generated by the users' actions. (Chou 2015, The core 8 drives of gamification section, para 7; Nam & Kim 2011, 89; Ryan 2001, 69.)
5. **Time Pressure** takes place in situations where the users have a limited amount of time to do something or otherwise has the sense of being in a rush. Hsu et al.

discuss Time Pressure under Role Play, but I have moved it under Elements of Adventure, because Time Pressure does not have so much to do with the individual aspects of role playing as it does with the atmosphere of adventure. (Hsu et al. 2013, 430.)

As can be seen in Figure 3, the overarching factor concerning all these elements is playfulness: like Bogost said, gamification features are nothing when they are broken down like this (Bogost 2014, 74). However, game features coupled with the sense of magic and play take the gamified whole to another level.

As I already mentioned, some of the elements overlap each other. For example, both Quests and Challenges and Scarcity may include Time Pressure, but they also may not, which is why they are classified as separate elements. The framework that I have introduced will function as the guideline for my analysis: I will use the theories on multimodality and interaction that I presented in previous subsections to observe how the elements in the framework are realized.

## **3 DATA & METHODS**

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Before moving on to the analysis, I present the methods for gathering data and analysing it. The chapter is divided into three subsections. Data Collection, Analysis Methods and Trustworthiness of the Study. In Data Collection I present the case companies and selection methods for them, in Analysis Methods I explain how the analysis will be conducted and lastly in Trustworthiness of the Study I discuss some limitations arising out of the data and methods used.

### **3.1 DATA COLLECTION**

In this subsection, I will give a reminder of the reasons that arts industry and online communication have been chosen as the setting of the study and present the case companies. Like I have mentioned, I want to focus on arts industry, because virtual and immersive communications methods are especially good for them for their creative nature (Ryan 2001, 65). For the same reason, I will focus on those fields of the arts industry that incorporate stories in their products. When we look at the Prospects' (2015) listing of the fields in the arts industry, such fields are literature, television and film, museums, performing arts, games and music to some extent. I will exclude the disciplines of film and music for the scope of my research: both of them have elements from performing arts and games – such as acting, changing perspective and narrative music – and thus we can say that they are covered with the analysis on those fields.

Moreover, studying literature, games, performing arts and museums gives a comprehensive perspective because the disciplines in question have both similarities and differences. Literature provides products with written language, games interactivity, museums visual arts and performing arts live experiences. Thus they all afford a slightly different perspective. However, they share similarities, since they are part of the arts industry and provide stories and immersion in their offerings. Thus analysing all of them gives a comprehensive view on the arts industry, but they also have enough similarities to be relevant for the immersive and interactive nature of this research.



The thesis focuses on online communication because, due to digital and interactive nature of gamification, it is more probable to find gamification on companies' websites. This is not to say that gamification does not exist in corporate culture and everyday working life, since playful aspects are part of both digital and nondigital cultures (Flanagan 2014, 250). However, the experiences afforded by gamification are mostly mediated through technology, which is why online communication is the most fruitful playground for the study (Sicart 2014, 232).

I have studied the websites of the biggest companies in each of the four chosen fields in order to find the companies that present the most interesting gamification cases. I aim to analyse the websites and gamification situations of four companies – one from each field. For the scope of my research I exclude social media, because it would create a whole new thesis subject in itself. I will also exclude those communication situations that clearly market a certain product, since my study does not focus on marketing communication, as interesting as that would be. Moreover, I will not include those gamification situations that offer monetary or equivalent prizes as rewards, because external and irrelevant rewards decrease the motivation to re-engage and thus do not support long-lasting engagement with the organization (Rigby 2014, 123). I also exclude gamified wholes that are explicitly targeted at children (i.e. are on separate page intended for children). Lastly, before presenting the case companies, I want to highlight, that since my theoretical background focuses on visual grammar and compositional regularities in Western societies, I limit the data to Western organizations (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 1, 4).

From the field of literature, I have gone through the websites of some of the biggest publishing houses in the world, and the most interesting cases were found on Penguin Random House's website(s). Penguin Random House (PRH) happens to be also the largest Western publisher of fiction by revenue (Publisher's Weekly 2015): I focused only on fiction publishers in my research, as I perceive it to be a key factor considering that the focus of the analysis concentrates on those art disciplines that tell stories. PRH is a large international book publisher, consisting of the combination of two corporations: Penguin and Random House. In my research I will go through the relevant cases found on either of their websites.

On the field of games, I observed the websites of the largest and best known game companies that are known only for their games – not for producing electronics, for example – and do not produce only mobile games but also games for consoles, which is important for getting a wider perspective. The game company that had the most interesting gamification results on its website(s) was the Western Activision Blizzard (AB) and with its revenue of 3.32 billion euros counted as the fifth largest game publisher in the world in 2015 (Statista 2016). Like PRH, AB comprises also a few companies that have merged together: Activision, Blizzard and the mobile game producer King.

When researching the websites of museums, I concentrated on the most popular Western museums that work in the field of visual arts, not science for example. The most interesting gamification features were found on the website of the French Louvre that was among the top museums by popularity in 2015 (CNN 2015).

Lastly, on the field of performing arts organizations, I chose to concentrate on opera houses instead of theatres, because the fewer number of opera houses around the world makes the data more manageable. Of all the Western world's famous opera houses, the most interesting case for the analysis proved to be the Austrian Vienna State Opera that ranks among the most appreciated opera houses in the world (National Geographic n.d.).

I will present the chosen gamification cases in Analysis & Findings, where I briefly introduce the companies' websites in general and then analyse their use of gamification in more detail. However, in relation to each company, I will also present briefly some cases that do not host enough gamification features to make it to the in-depth analysis but provide interesting insights on the contexts that gamification is used in. Having presented the data collection, I will next discuss the methods for analysing the data.

## **3.2 ANALYSIS METHODS**

Gamification is a new concept, and thus it is important to study how gamification and its elements are used in different contexts. New ways of communication are arising and require understanding the tools and the way they work (Kress 2010, 97; Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 47). For this reason I concentrate on gamification contexts and features in corporate communication: knowing them grants the opportunity to use them

successfully and engagingly. Gamification can be used in countless of ways in multiple contexts. I do not claim to give an exhaustive report on gamification in corporate communication but a starting point and an overview on how it is and can be used.

As I have already mentioned in the previous subsection, I will go through the websites of Penguin Random House, Activision Blizzard, Louvre and Vienna State Opera in order to assess the use of gamification on them to answer RQ1. Secondly, I will select 1–3 interesting and different cases harnessing gamification elements and analyse those cases according to the theories on multimodality, interaction and immersion to answer RQ2. I conduct the analysis by looking for multimodal and interactive realizations of the gamification features presented in Theoretical Framework. In relation to each case individually, I will categorize all the elements and their realizations in tables. In order to identify the ways and times each gamification feature is implemented, the tables are divided into the gamification features and their multimodal realizations.

Some may argue that the game companies – Activision Blizzard in this case – should be used as a reference point for the rest of the analysis, because gamification is intrinsic to games. However, game industry does not offer a valid reference point, since games and gamification are not the same thing, albeit they are often confused with each other. Gamification is all about game features in non-game contexts, and thus there are no grounds for drawing the conclusion that game companies would use gamified communication more than any other company. I do admit, however, that game companies may use gamification features slightly differently, and I will take this notion into account in my analysis, if such a finding should occur.

It would also be interesting to study the motivations and perceptions of users, but there are several limitations concerning this approach. Firstly, motivations are mostly intrinsic, but behavioural psychology, for example, is vastly extrinsic and cannot be used to study intrinsic motivations (Linehan et al. 2014, 100): thus conducting a survey would not be enough to get to the bottom of gamification perceptions, and studying physiological reactions, on the other hand, would be beyond the scope of this research. Secondly, semiotic resources are interpreted differently by different people, which would provide interesting grounds for a survey on user perceptions on gamification (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 112). However, since gamification as a communication method is still

new and has not been researched, it is important first to analyse and study the ways gamification is really used in communication, before going deeper into the subject.

### 3.3 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Studying gamification features does not come without problems, and in this subsection I will address a few of the limitations that affect the trustworthiness of the study. Firstly, we can say that one issue with gamification is the fact that the concept is not clear for all – not even for all gamification professionals (Deterding & Walz 2014, 6). Consequently, the problem with combining business and gamification studies stems from the fact that there is not yet one definition of gamification that would seamlessly fit business (Hamari et al. 2014, 153–154).

Secondly, there has also arisen critique on gamification. Gamification is seen as something that strips games of their enchantment and makes them only instrumental (Deterding 2014, 51). However, gamification can also drive engagement in communication and the world of the organization, when it is meaningful and makes sense in the context (Rigby 2014, 124, 132). Moreover, it has been claimed that gamification features are nothing when they are broken down like I have done in Theoretical Framework. Truth is that gamification can be found anywhere. (Bogost 2014, 74.) For example, shopping for a shirt can become a Challenge or a Quest. The difference is the overarching playfulness that characterizes gamification: it is about making the elements fun, magical or taking them out of the ordinary. This is not to say that gamification and playfulness are always the answer: they need to be used sparingly and when relevant.

Thirdly, it needs to be noted that gamification and game elements are more familiar to some than to others: the ease of decoding game elements and noticing them stems from the level of which the users are familiar with game design (Ryan 2001, 41). People see communication from their own perspective and bring their own experiences and values to the situations, which orients them to pay attention to certain things. Thus when analysing gamified communication, the differing interpretations of multimodality make it difficult to make exhaustive statements of gamification features, since no theory can account for the differences and it is difficult to know if someone has had a gamified experience (Hamari 2015, 46; Huotari & Hamari 2012, 19). (Kress 2010, 41, 161.)

However, I am not researching user experiences as such but analysing the multimodal aspects as objectively as possible with the help of the grammar of multimodal design (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006). For this reason the study is trustworthy despite the differing interpretations that different users may have.

Finally, the scope of the research creates limitations for the study: because the perspective is Western, it is possible to make conclusions about the multimodal use of gamification only in Western corporate communication (ibid. 1, 4). The number of the companies is also quite small, because the thesis focuses on case studies, and thus it is difficult to draw conclusions about the arts industry as a whole, even though all the four companies are in that industry. Consequently, it is arguable, if it is possible to generalize the findings on the arts industry to corporate communication in a wider sense. However, gamification is still such a new concept in corporate communications that studying how it is done at all provides a vital starting point for further research.

## 4 ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

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In this chapter, I will introduce the gamified communication situations on each of the case company websites and analyse the findings. In the first subsection I discuss gamification on Penguin Random House's websites, then I move on to analyse Activision Blizzard's gamification features, thirdly I present the findings on Louvre's website and finally, in the fourth and last subsection, I discuss Vienna State Opera. All the subsections are structured so that first the company and its gamification features will be roughly presented, including some features that do not make it to the detailed analysis. The aim is to provide an overview of the communicational contexts that gamification can be used in. After the general introduction, 1–3 chosen gamification cases will be analysed underneath subsections that are dedicated to each of them individually.

### 4.1 PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

Penguin Random House (PRH) is a Western international publisher of literature and fiction. It consists of two major names: Penguin and Random House. PRH has a lot of small subsidiaries in different countries for serving local needs and tastes. However, the corporate look is the same for Penguin subsidiaries and Random House subsidiaries.

The websites of both Penguin and Random House have been researched: the websites host some playful elements but deeper gamification situations are scarce and thus all the playful elements did not make it to the analysis. For example, the company timeline is playful, with a few surprising images 'jumping' into view unexpectedly, but further interaction and gamification is lacking.

I want to make a special mention of the Readathon campaign, in which Penguin Random House participates in cooperation with the American Library Association. The campaign will not be studied in detail, because the main campaign website is external and because it is done in partnership and thus does not purely reflect PRH's communications. Moreover, the campaign is too wide for the scope of the research at hand. The campaign credits a mention for its gamification elements and special context, however. Readathon campaign invites people to support early literacy development and encourage literature

use by reading. The gamification context is framed especially by the name of the campaign: ‘readathon’ creates an association with ‘marathon’ that is a game. The donation context provides the campaign with a higher meaning. Thus the following gamification elements are present: 1) Epic Meaning for the donation context, 2) Social Influence for promoting literacy, 3) Loss Avoidance for avoiding the loss of literacy and 4) Narratives and Terminology for the campaign title.

The rest of the PRH section will discuss three chosen cases in detail and is structured into two subsections. The first subsection deals with a virtual map introducing Penguin classics. The second subsection discusses a Book Bingo and a Reading Challenge: both of these gamification situations share so many similarities that it makes sense to analyse them together in the same subsection.

#### **4.1.1 MAP OF PENGUIN CLASSICS**

This subsection discusses a virtual map of Penguin classics and the gamification features that it provides. As can be seen in Figure 4, the map is a black-and-orange map of the world: it can be dragged around with the mouse. There are drop-shaped icons on each of the countries: if you click on the icons, a list of all the classics authors in that country and their classic works appear. On the left of the map, there is a text box explaining what the map is, and there is a list of all the relevant countries: the users can go straight to a certain country by using that list as well. If the users click on the name of the author on the list, a new tab opens and leads them to a new page introducing the author and all of their works. If the users click on the name of the work on the list, they are taken to a new tab introducing the work in question and presented with the option to buy it. Thus the users can navigate ‘around the world’ in the order of their choosing: the elements are non-linear and the reading can happen in many ways (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 27).

The composition of the map is changing, since it can be dragged with the mouse. What is Given to one element becomes New in relation to another (ibid. 185): thus none of the countries can be divided into those of more or less interest. However, the text box is situated on the top left, whereas the options to zoom in and out and share the map in social media are on the bottom left. The fact that all of them are on the left indicates that they

are already known and not worthy of special interest: consequently, the map is the new element that the users' focus is directed to (ibid. 57, 181). The text box on the top is the essence of information. It explains the world of Penguin classics, framing the situation from the top. (ibid. 178, 186.) Moreover, the text box is in fact a box: it creates a frame that separates it from the map and opens a window to the information: it creates a different kind of a view on the map, frames it and gives it a story (ibid. 130; Kress 2010, 149).

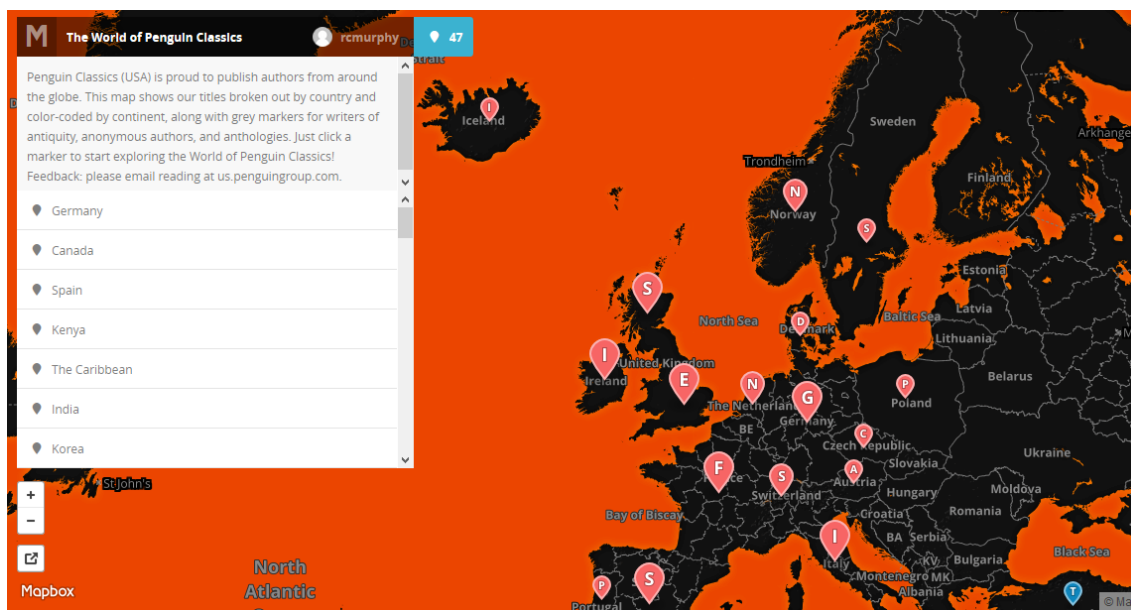


Figure 4. A map of Penguin classics.

The text box itself is also divided to top and bottom. On the top there is the title of the map that anchors the whole communication context with meaning: “The World of Penguin Classics” (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 26). The travel aspect is highlighted with the word “world” coupled with the visual world map. The text and the country list below are the Real: they give details. The narrative text is in the middle, working as the mediator between the Ideal title and the detailed list of the countries. The text box is thus hierarchically organized. (ibid. 178, 186, 198.) Moreover, the narrative text ends with a game-like command: “Just click a marker to start exploring the World of Penguin Classics!” Commands are part of games, and also the use of present tense and an implicit second person address immerse the users in the *world* of the organization quite literally in this case. Such language use invokes the users' agency in the gamification situation at hand and highlights Exploration that is mentioned in the command itself (Flanagan 2014, 160; Ryan 2001, 136, 138). The language narratizes the context, attuning the users to the



goal of the activity and imbuing it with a deeper purpose (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 646). Thus Narratives and Terminology enhances the sense of Epic Meaning and Calling.

The icons on the map are shaped like drops, with the thinner end pointing to the country. Thus they form vectors, encouraging the users to explore the countries. The users are the Actors because the line of the vector is directed from top to bottom and the users are looking at the map from the top; the countries on the other hand, are Goals. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 59, 63–64.) In this sense the icons are deictic semiotic cues that orient the users in their Exploration (Kress 2010, 33, 117).

Also the sizes and colours of the icons catch the users' attention. The sizes of the icons do not vary according to the size of the country but according to how many authors come from that country. Moreover, the icons are colour-coded for continents: colour creates associations and unity within objects (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 27; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 230). There are also grey icons on the sea. They represent Anonymous (marked with A on the icon), Antiquity (marked with an antique structure on the icon) and Anthologies (marked with an open book on the icon). The fact that the icons, that are at sea, are grey and not connected to any special country, creates an experience of history and freedom. All in all, the icons on the map represent goals and destinations: they remind of the Quests and Challenges and locations marked on maps in role-playing games (Appendix 2), thus creating game-like constructions (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 197; Flanagan 2014, 256). Maps are at the core of games, as they provide possibilities for imaginative travel and Making Choices (Deuze 2007, 253).

The icons also have the first letter of the country that they represent on them: letters create meanings and direct the users (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 76). The country objects on the map are inclusive: they explain only those parts of the map where there are relevant authors, and the other parts are left unanalysed. Thus the map is not exhaustive since it shows only the important countries in that context, not the whole world. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 96–97; Ryan 2001, 6–7.) Moreover, what is interesting about the countries, is that even mentioning a country can transport the users mentally there: proper nouns make the users tap into their own experiences and knowledge of the mentioned place. They orient themselves mentally in the landscape of the country, which enhances the feeling of adventure and Exploration. (Ryan 2001, 123, 128.)

As mentioned, the links on the lists lead either to pages introducing the authors or pages introducing the book in question with the option to buy it. The book and author introductions enhance the atmosphere of narratives, since they afford each country on the map with a multitude of narratives on. Thus the virtual reality of Penguin presents the users with potential stories, creating a feeling of deeper meaning in them (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 646; Ryan 2001, 65). Moreover, learning about the authors and their classics provide the opportunity for Development: gamification is about self-improvement, among other things (Whitson 2014, 354). The most fascinating factor on the pages is, however, the option to buy the books. The country icons lure the users with Exploration, interaction and the sense of adventure in order to persuade them to buy the book. The decision remains with the users: the gamification situation shows only the path the users can take if they so choose. (Hazzenzahl & Laschke 2014, 172, 180.) This opportunity taps into the users' need to accumulate wealth and represents Ownership and Making Choices.

The map is looked from high up, and it has a first-person perspective, inscribing and immersing the users into that world (Ryan 2001, 309). The map forms a kind of panorama that can be dragged and explored with the mouse: panoramas are filled with different objects that may animate text screens – like the list of authors in each country. Thus the map utilizes the interactive element of Feedback: the users are provided with information everytime they click on something (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515). (Ryan 2001, 266.) The angle from which users are looking at the map is from the top, affording them with power in relation to the world below: they have the power to make choices in the adventure.

The colour scheme of the map is simple: the land areas are black and the seas are orange, which means that colour has a textual function, separating sections and creating unity between them. On the grey scale the map is situated at the very dark end, and the colours are intense, making the atmosphere dramatic and exiting, albeit the adventurousness is restrained by low differentiation since there are only two dominating colours. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 230, 233–235.) Most importantly, however, the orange-and-black colour scheme promotes Penguin's world since those are the Penguin colours, as can be seen in Appendix 3. Company colours create associations: they denote company and its values, and in the map, the associations are created by provenance of the colours since the users associate the colours with those used on Penguin book covers (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 27; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 229, 233). Thus the colours enhance the

users' journey in the organization's world and the gamified situation acculturates the users to it. Taking simple tasks – such as learning about books – and gamifying them increases consumer loyalty. (Mollick & Werback 2014, 443, 449.)

In addition to the company colours, the metaphorical playground provided by the visual map is a significant factor in immersing the users. The map is a part-whole structure, where the company is the Carrier represented by the map and the works of literature are the Possessive Attributes represented by the icons. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 87–88.) The map lures the users to interact with the brand, and by gamifying the situation affords it with mystery that is reflected in the dark intense colours, for example (Hamari et al. 2014, 155; Alfrink 2014, 541).

The map presents a textual world that opens a window to the company and the world of literature beyond, and the users form an imaginative relationship to that textual world, which could evoke the will to purchase (Cho & Kim 2012, 37; Ryan 2001, 14, 91). The travel metaphor is created by the world map and the fact that electronic texts can be thought of in a spatial sense: the text is a space where the links are roads transporting the exploring users to different destinations (Ryan 2001, 218). They can explore other roles by traveling from the home country of one author to that of another. Every action is an event, and the users are the authors of their own adventure that is taking place in the company's world. Gamification happens through Exploration on a hypertextual playground, and the joy of the gamified situations arises from freedom of Making Choices between different paths (ibid 184; Deterding & Walz 2014, 5).

Having presented all these elements and factors, it is possible to identify the mechanics and the inputs and outputs of the interactive map. The users can 1) shift perspective by dragging the maps and clicking on the links (setup mechanics), 2) explore the field of the possible by exploring the countries (setup mechanics), 3) keep the textual machine going by clicking around to get more information (progression mechanics) and 4) retrieve documents by reading the information provided (progression mechanics). The system 1) lets the users explore the map (setup mechanics), 2) allows the users to blow up screens to learn more about each of the countries and their offerings (rule mechanics) and 3) provides background information by introducing the authors and the works of literature (rule mechanics). (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–415; Ryan 2001, 210–213.)

To conclude, the map can be read as a metonymic game: clicking on the links on the immersive playground that is the map (Ryan 2001, 180). The users are active and absorb the information, making the gamified situation educative (Pine II & Gilmore 1998, 102). The gamification features in play and the multimodal elements representing them are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Gamification features and multimodal elements in Penguin Random House classics map.

	Quests and Challenges	Ownership	Feedback	Making Choices	Development	Narratives and Terminology	Epic Meaning and Calling	Exploration
Verbal					author and book introductions	map title map introduction author and book introductions	map introduction	naming countries map introduction
Visual	icons			icons high angle				world map icons
Audio								
Interactive		page with the option to buy	information provided by icons	option to buy				travel metaphor

From Table 2 we can conclude that the gamification features, in the order of importance and relevance, are

1. Exploration (5 multimodal occurrences),
2. Making Choices (3 multimodal occurrences),
3. Narratives and Terminology (3 multimodal occurrences),
4. Quests and Challenges (1 multimodal occurrence),
5. Ownership (1 multimodal occurrence),
6. Feedback (1 multimodal occurrence),
7. Development (1 multimodal occurrence) and
8. Epic Meaning and Calling (1 multimodal occurrence).

The communication context in this gamified situation is a product and company introduction, in addition to which the context includes shopping elements since the users can buy the books they want. The users are presented with the classics works by Penguin and immersed in the company world with the colours and lure of literature.

#### 4.1.1 READING CHALLENGE & BOOK BINGO

In this subsection I discuss two cases that are so similar to each other that they provide more insight when they are analysed together: PRH Reading Challenge and PRH Book Bingo. As can be seen in Figures 5 and 6 on the next page, they are printable forms that

challenge the users to read. The idea is that the users read some or all of the books suggested on the forms and tick their progress on the sheets as they go. They can then take photos of their progress and post them on Instagram or Twitter, using a determined hashtag. PRH publishes new Reading Challenges and Book Bingos every once in a while, and I have chosen the latest ones for the scope of this research.

When discussing composition, there are two factors to be taken into account: first of all, the forms' position on the page, and second, the composition of the forms themselves. Both of the pages hosting the forms have instructions on what to do at the top, as you can see in Appendices 4 and 5. Thus on the page, the instructions are the Ideal, whereas the forms themselves represent the reality; the instructions provide the essence of information and the forms show the details (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 178, 186–187).

It is noteworthy that the title of the Reading Challenge includes indeed the word 'challenge', representing Quests and Challenges. Moreover, on the Reading Challenge page, the books are also listed below the form so that there is a picture of the cover and an introduction of the plot. Thus the form constitutes a Mediator between the Ideal of the

instructions and the reality of the books: it is the Centre (ibid. 196, 198). With the plot description, there is also a CTA button saying "I want it": when clicking on that button, the users are taken to a page where they can purchase the book in question. Thus the users are afforded with the opportunity of Ownership: using a first person sentence on the CTA increases identification with the need to own the book.

The composition of the print forms are mostly the same, as can be seen in Figures 5 and 6: the essence of

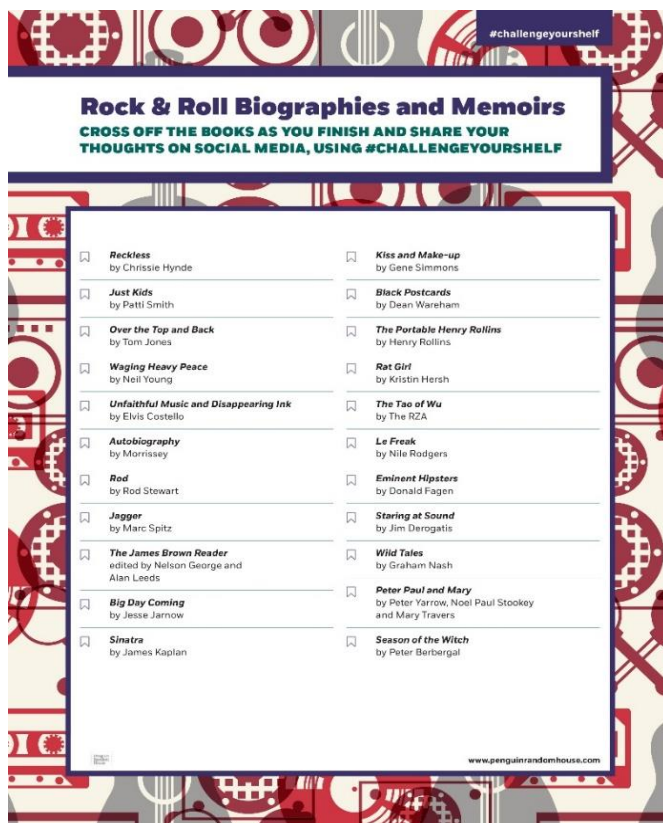


Figure 5. Penguin Random House Reading Challenge form.



Figure 6. Penguin Random House Book Bingo form.

the information is provided in the title and the reality – meaning the actual action – is below (ibid. 178, 186–187). However, in the Book Bingo, all the reading options are scattered around one Centre that is foregrounded with the pink colour (ibid. 202, 225): that box, saying ‘free space’, functions as the Mediator between all the other boxes that are its Margins. ‘Free space’ is at the Centre because it incorporates everything that the Book Bingo is about: Self-Expression. The other boxes give guidance about what to read (e.g. ‘main character gets married’), but

the one at the Centre provides ultimate freedom. (ibid. 198.)

All in all, the Book Bingo represents Challenges and Self-Expression: the guidelines for what to read are very vague. For example, ‘main character gets married’ may invoke different kinds of interpretations in each reader: based on their knowledge of literature they may associate the guideline with anything from Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* to a newer novel representing chick lit – or anything else (Kress 2010, 41, 45). Thus the box including the guideline within it is what Kress and van Leeuwen call a Token that can be attributed with an identity (name of a book) that is then the Value: on the form, the Token remains the same but the Value is circumstantial, depending on each reader and the unpredictable pattern of their associations (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 109–110; Ryan 2001, 193). The joy of the gamification situation at hand arises from tackling a Challenge by Making Choices and having the possibility for Self-Expression, with a hint of Unpredictability.

The differences of composition and the level of freedom is represented also by framing in both forms. In the Reading Challenge, all the books that are suggested are specified

and they are inside one big frame, whereas in the Book Bingo, the users are not only able to choose what they read from a list of options but also to make their own list by interpreting the guidelines presented in separate little frames. Consequently, the options in the Reading Challenge are offered by PRH and thus they are inside a frame that creates unity within them. The options in the Book Bingo provide more interpretative freedom, and thus all the guidelines are their own windows to the associations of each reader and separated from each other by frames. In the Book Bingo, Making Choices and Differentiation are represented not only by the verbal guidelines but also the visual framing. However, in both forms, the distance between different options is equal and the compositions are symmetrical, which highlights the equality of the options (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 79).

As it has already been discussed, in the Reading Challenge the users can Make Choices from the options provided by PRH: there are little badges next to each book, so that the users can tick a badge next to the books they have read. The icons next to the options resemble badges, affording the icons with symbolic value: they are deictic cues that can be used to track progress and give symbolic rewards to oneself. (Kress 2010, 117; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 70–71; Föhlich 2014, 575.) Ticking a new symbolic badge is a reward equivalent to reaching a next level in a game and thus creates the feeling of having accomplished a goal (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 636): the little badges represent Rewards, Quests and Challenges and Goal Setting all at the same time. The same kinds of Goal Setting and Rewards are provided when the users achieve a full row of bingo in the Book Bingo. All in all, both forms encourage reading with the feelings of Achievement. The forms also change time after time, which means that the encouragement and reinforcement are afforded with a variable interval: renewing the challenges every once in a while reinforces the reading of different books, thus enabling Development and creating Time Pressure (Linehan et al. 2014, 87; Whitson 2014, 354).

In both cases, there is a social element that can influence the users' actions positively (Hamari 2015, 43): the users are encouraged to take photos of their progress and post them on Instagram or Twitter with particular hashtags. In social media, other users can then give Feedback on the progress: nowadays it is common in gamification that people get prizes or Reputation for posting images or otherwise being active (Deterding & Walz 2014, 3–4). Hashtags also create a feeling of similarity with others: even though everyone

is playing individually and to some extent against others, they are also together in the game, and comparing badges or progress with the others can have a positive effect (Hamari 2015, 38). Reading becomes communal and enhances Group Identification by defining groups, which makes the users part of something bigger and has a positive effect on their future commitment intentions (Cairney 2011, 118–119; Claffey & Brady 2014, 339; Deterding 2014, 42). However, in the Reading Challenge there is also an element of Competition, which comes up in the instructions: “Who said reading can’t be competitive?” In the Book Bingo, Competition arises out of the fact that the users may want to achieve their bingo row before the others. However, the Bingo is more about Social Influence, since by checking what the others have put as the Value of each Token – eg. how they have interpreted each guideline – can afford the other readers with ideas. Nonetheless, the social and interactive aspects of both cases create Time Pressure: seeing others’ progress may invoke the need to read quicker.

Some of the language use is gamified in both cases. In the Reading Challenge, the first sentence of the instruction is “Who said reading can’t be competitive?”, whereas in the Book Bingo it is “Let’s play Bingo!”. Both use game-like language that frames the context and gamifies the reading experience (Flanagan 2014, 259, 261). “Let’s play Bingo” uses not only the word “bingo” but also a command that is usual for games: direct requests for action generate most answers, and thus the command invokes the users’ agency and action (ibid. 260; Lampe 2014, 435). Moreover, in the Book Bingo, the core of the famous game – ‘bingo’ – is repeated both in the title of the page and the title of the form – not to mention the hashtag #bingoreads, enhancing gamification with Terminology. Also the title of the Reading Challenge commands the users to challenge themselves directly – once again, PRH uses a command. It is noteworthy that the command reads “Challenge your shelf”, linking the challenge with the association of a bookshelf; reading and the users become one in the game. The wordplay is repeated in the hashtag #challengeyourshelf.

The fact that the Reading Challenge focuses more on Competition than the Book Bingo and that the Book Bingo deals more with Self-Expression and Social Influence is also reflected in the colour scheme of the forms. The colours on the Reading Challenge form are more saturated, which means that they are more intense than the soft pastel colours of the Book Bingo. Moreover, there are more colours on the Reading Challenge form, making the colour scheme more adventurous. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 233–235.)



Thus the more competitive nature of the Reading Challenge is reflected in the intensity and the adventurousness of the colours, whereas the softer values of the Book Bingo is represented by the pastel colours. Furthermore, the material of both forms is important. Both of them need to be printed out which adds its own metaphorical meaning: the values of physical action and handwriting are highlighted (ibid. 225; Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 118). As a real object – as printed paper – the forms exist in space and time, but as images in social media they create their own space and time: they are out of this world, in a sense, and thus immerse the users in the gamified virtual reality (Ryan 2001, 42).

The forms present potential Narratives, and the users are temporally immersed in these narratives, desiring to know what is going to happen next. The Exploration in different narrative worlds – the world of literature and thus the world of PRH as well – can lead to self-discovery. (ibid. 63, 65, 142.) Narratives are at the core of PRH's business and getting users to participate through a game immerses them also in the company's narrative: interaction with the brand becomes a personal Quest (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 110; Hamari et al. 2014, 155). When such a simple task as reading is turned into a game-like structure, it enhances corporate citizenship, increases the will to purchase and acculturates users to the company (Cho & Kim 2012, 37; Mollick & Werback 2014, 443, 449).

When it comes to mechanics and inputs, the users can 1) shift the perspective on the textual world by posting their progress in social media (rule mechanics), 2) explore the field of the possible by choosing books (setup mechanics), 3) keep the textual machine going by reading and posting images (progression mechanics), 4) play games (setup mechanics), 5) participate in the writing of the text by posting in social media (setup mechanics) and 6) engage in dialogue and play roles when commenting in social media (progression mechanics). As outputs, PRH 1) controls the reader's progress in discovery of key facts (rule mechanics), 2) lets the reader explore alternatives (rule mechanics) and 3) provides background information (rule mechanics). (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–415; Ryan 2001, 210–213.) Moreover, the social aspect increases the probability that versatile player dynamics and emotions arise during the experience (Robson et al. 2015a, 415–416). However, researching them is difficult and out of the scope of the present research.

Both forms are metonymic games: they borrow mechanisms from standard types of games – such as bingo – and take them to new contexts. Moreover, they can be interpreted

as games metaphorically, which requires a verbal transposition of a structure of a nonverbal game: the instructions describe the gamified forms, even though the forms themselves would be quite understandable even without the instructions. (Ryan 2001, 180.) The users are active and immersed in the activity, which makes the experience escapist (Pine II & Gilmore 1998, 102). The gamification elements and their multimodal realizations can be viewed in Tables 3 and 4 on the next page.

Summarizing the tables, we can conclude that the gamification features, in the order of importance and relevance, are

1. Narratives and Terminology (8 multimodal occurrences),
2. Time Pressure (4 multimodal occurrences),
3. Quests and Challenges (3 multimodal occurrences),
4. Self-Expression and Differentiation (3 multimodal occurrences),
5. Making Choices (3 multimodal occurrences),
6. Rewards (2 multimodal occurrences),
7. Ownership (2 multimodal occurrences),
8. Competition (2 multimodal occurrences),
9. Feedback (2 multimodal occurrences),
10. Group Identification (2 multimodal occurrences),
11. Reputation (2 multimodal occurrences),
12. Goal Setting (2 multimodal occurrences),
13. Development (2 multimodal occurrences),
14. Exploration (2 multimodal occurrences),
15. Social Influence (1 multimodal occurrence) and
16. Unpredictability (1 multimodal occurrence).

The communication context in question is a challenge to read and compete: however, there is no other rewards except status, development and the feeling of accomplishment. Thus the context immerses the users in the company's world through celebration of the literature industry in general: the common factor for the company and the users is the love of books, and the reading challenges highlight that fact, enhancing corporate citizenship.

## **4.2 ACTIVISION BLIZZARD**

In this section, I analyse gamified communication on the websites of Activision Blizzard that is an international game company consisting of three diverse game companies: Activision, Blizzard and a mobile game company King. Contrary to PRH, the websites

Table 4. Gamification features and multimodal elements in Penguin Random House Reading Challenge.

	Rewards	Quests and Challenges	Ownership	Competition	Feedback	Group Identification	Reputation	Making Choices	Goal Setting	Development	Narratives and Terminology	Exploration	Time Pressure
Verbal		title	first person CTA	instruction		hashtag		book options		reading	title instruction hashtag narrative books	Exploring books	
Visual	little badges	little badges							little badges				
Audio													
Interactive			CTA to buy		posting in some		posting in some	CTA to buy					reading quicker than others challenge renewal

Table 3. Gamification features and multimodal elements in Penguin Random House Book Bingo.

	Rewards	Quests and Challenges	Competition	Feedback	Social Influence	Group Identification	Reputation	Self-Expression and Differentiation	Goal Setting	Development	Narratives and Terminology	Exploration	Unpredictability	Time Pressure
Verbal		guidelines				hashtag		guidelines	book options	reading	titles instruction hashtag narrative books	exploring books	guidelines	
Visual								free space in the center framing						
Audio									bingo row					
Interactive	bingo		bingo	posting in some	some	posting in some								reading quicker than others bingo renewal

of each of the three sections have their own look. Especially the website of King, that is known for the Candy Crush Saga for example, is very colourful and playful, which is usual for children's websites (Kress 2010, 139): King's website does not target only children but the main audience of the mobile games they produce is quite young.

Before going deeper into the analysis, I want to mention a few of the playful and somewhat gamified communications on the websites, to give a wider perspective on the different communicational contexts. However, it should be noted that these cases did not make it to the analysis due to the limited scope of the thesis and the fact that they provided only glimpses of gamification features. First of these cases is on King's website: on the About Us page they encourage the users to read their values by asking whether the users agree with them and by giving the option to read more with a CTA saying "Test it out!". It is a Challenge that uses game-terminology ("Test"), in addition to which clicking on hyperlinks takes the reader further, enhancing Exploration. However, the reading direction is linear, there are not many choices for Exploration and the word "test" is misleading because instead of a test there are just introductions of King's values.

The second example is also from King's website, introducing the benefits King offers for its employees. There is a game character looking at the users, thus addressing them, and next to it is the text "An adventure in employee benefits is about to begin." and the CTA "Let's go!". The benefits themselves are presented on a line that the users can traverse by clicking on arrows forwards and backwards: the line itself takes surprising turns. Thus the communication situation is an adventure both literally and visually, using Quests and Challenges, Narratives and Terminology, Exploration and Unpredictability. What is interesting is that the communication situation is clearly directed at adults, but the layout of the design is colourful, playful and surprising, which indicates children's websites (Kress 2010, 170–172). This case is an excellent example of the fact how playfulness can be used to convey company culture and to engage audience. The small amount of gamification features, however, means that the case is not suitable for deeper analysis.

Lastly, I will present the page introducing Activision Blizzard's (AB) company culture. The first thing on the page is an image of a group of different game characters – characters from Activision's, Blizzard's and King's games, which highlights the unity of the three sections. Next to the image reads "You are only as great as the characters on your team",

making a metaphorical comparison between game teams and AB's employees. The image and the written text together host the elements of Group Identification and Terminology. It also makes the whole company culture a game, which is enhanced lower on the page where the culture is introduced in more detail. Once again, game terminology is used: for example, the option to "level up" has the meaning of Development. "Pay & Perks" constitute Rewards and "Giving Back" is related to Social Influence. Thus AB makes teamwork and work a game, which is highlighted by the fact that Blizzard's employees are rewarded with game-objects, such as swords and rings, for their years of service. Gamified company culture opens extremely fascinating perspectives that I will leave out of the scope of my research, because it stretches far beyond online communication.

The rest of the section is divided into two subsections with two cases in total. In the first subsection, I conduct a detailed analysis of a section on Blizzard's career page that hosts interesting resemblances to role playing games. In the second subsection, I analyse King's recruitment application that is available in App Store and Google Play.

#### **4.2.1 BLIZZARD CAREER PAGE**

The hero banner on Blizzard's career page is the first thing that the users see when entering the page. It is a video, with the question "Live and breathe games? Come on in". Excluding the vocabulary, the hero is not quite gamified, which is why it is ignored and the analysis moved lower on the page. In total, the page consists of the hero, a section introducing different roles, a section introducing the company and sections presenting the location and vacancies. The section with role introductions is a fruitful arena for analysis, and it is even more so for the fact that it does not strike the users as gamification at first glance. As can be seen in Figure 7 on the next page, there are five icons, each representing a different department, and when you move your cursor over one icon, it lights up and becomes slightly bigger, indicating that it is a link leading to a more detailed description.

Firstly, let us look at the section's placement on the page. The only thing above it is the hero. Thus the verbal text "Live and breathe games? Come on in," becomes the Ideal that dominates and frames the whole page: it invites the users in to immerse in the company's world (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 57, 178, 186–187). Right below there is the section

with the role introductions, and there are more sections even below that. Therefore, the role section is in the Centre, acting as Mediator between the hero and other sections (ibid. 198). It stands out due to the high placement on the page and because it differs in colour from the sections surrounding it, which creates a frame around the section and unites the elements within it (ibid. 176, 230; Kress 2010, 149). Furthermore, the role icons are potent symbols that increase salience and draw attention. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 202.)

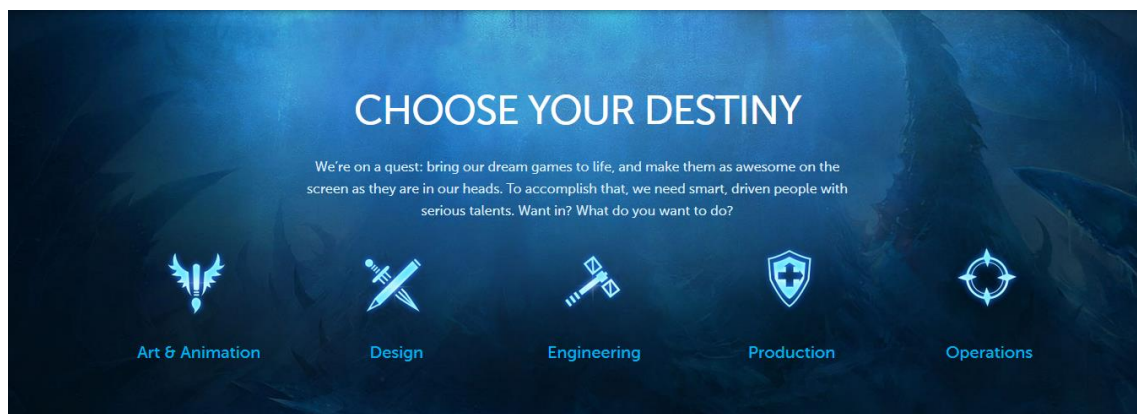


Figure 7. Role introductions on Blizzard's career page.

The frame around the section creates a window to the different roles (ibid. 130). There are no frames inside the section itself, which unites the five departments (ibid. 203). When it comes to the composition within the section itself, the big title “Choose You Destiny” is at the top with the text. “We’re on a quest: bring our dream games to life, and make them as awesome of the screen as they are in our heads. To accomplish that, we need smart, driven people with serious talents. Want in? What do you want to do?” Below there are the icons representing different roles that the users can identify with. The icons are the details and the Real, whereas the title and the introductory text are the essence of the information that frames the communication situation and the icons. The top part of the section welcomes the users to that world – to a new world where the users have the option to choose their destiny. (ibid. 178; 186–187.) The question in the introduction highlights freedom of Making Choices: what do the users want to do with their destiny?

The icons, on the other hand, are symbolic in their presentations. Firstly, they resemble guild-like structures that are familiar from role-playing games (Hamari et al. 2014, 148). Secondly, guild-like structures invite the users to choose their identity and the group (“guild”) that they belong to – to Make Choices – which again is common in role-playing

games where choosing the character's class and other attributes are chosen right at the beginning (Wowwiki n.d.). Furthermore, the icons resemble the icons on the Skyrim game map that can be reviewed in Appedix 2. Using this kind of aesthetics in recruitment is not surprising, considering that Blizzard is the maker of the widely popular massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG), and thus role-playing games are integral to the company culture.

Thirdly, the icons carry out symbolic provenance, since images for each department reflect the nature of that department; the art is fantasy-like and thus gamified, importing signs from a game context to a career context (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 10). The icons represent at the same time each department and the work that the images stand for in a game-world (ibid. 56–57). Thus the icons give visual form to each department and bring them to life (Woodside et al. 2008, 105). 1) Arts and Animation department is represented by a pencil with wings, illustrating the flight of imagination. 2) Design is represented by a crossed dagger and pencil that is a provenance from the known symbol with two crossed swords; the icons highlight drawing and carving that are integral to design. 3) Engineering is illustrated by a hammer that symbolizes building the basic structure holding the game together. 4) Production's icon is a shield, which highlights the fact that the producers secure the peace and time that their team needs for the work. 5) Operations is represented by a circle that is marked with stages, which illustrates knowing the whole self-contained circle of operations from the beginning to an end (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 55). All in all, the icons provide means for Group Identification and Differentiation not only visually but also interactively, since the users are encouraged to apply.

When taking a look at the composition of the icons themselves, it is noteworthy that the symbolism of the art is not expected to be understood without guidelines: below the icons there is a written text naming each department. Thus the visual icon is dominant on top and the written text below is subordinate to the icon, anchoring it with meaning (ibid. 26, 57). The icons are equal in relation to each other: the composition is symmetrical, the distance between the icons is of equal length, and the icons are all the same size and otherwise positioned similarly (ibid. 79). Thus none of them are valued more than the rest, and the decision and identification is completely up to the users. On the other hand, when the cursor is moved over one of the icons, the icon lights up and becomes slightly bigger than the rest, bringing it to the fore with motional transformation (Eikenes &

Morrison 2010, 13). The movement is a semiotic cue that orients the users to click on the link, and thus the icon becomes a deixis (Kress 2010, 117). In moving images the movement constitutes the vector: the icons with their movements become Actors, whereas the users are the Goals of the action (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 63–64, 258). The icons pulse, immersing and inviting the users.

When it comes to language, the large title “Choose Your Destiny” transports the users to another world and activates the imagination with the possibility of fulfilling one’s destiny. Destiny is something that many game characters fulfil when there is a challenge only they can tackle, and thus the game-language in this case frames career paths (Flanagan 2014, 259). The users’ agency is invoked and their life newly constructed when they are encouraged to follow their calling (Flanagan 2014, 256, 260): Epic Meaning and Calling takes place. The text below the title, on the other hand, elaborates and directs the users’ attention to the icons (Ryan 2001, 193). The Blizzard staff introduces their Quest, thus narrating the situation, attuning the audience to Blizzard’s goals and enhancing the deeper purpose presented already in the title (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 646). Thus Quests and Challenges takes place especially verbally, and using present tense and a second person address increases immersion (Ryan 2001, 136, 138). Furthermore, the use of Narratives thematises the action in a game-like manner (Föhlich 2014, 575; Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 18): by applying for a job in the department of their choosing, the users select their role, fulfil their destiny and become part of the company’s world and the game.

As mentioned, the icons and the guild-like structures that they represent offer possibilities for Making Choices and Differentiation that are integral to role-playing games (Wowwiki n.d.). This effect is enhanced on the pages that the icons lead to: there each department is described with “Elements of Blizzard Design”, for example: the “class” that the users are about to review is introduced so that the users know what the attributes of each “class” are, much like in role-playing games (ibid.). The descriptions invoke images and open a window to a possible future (Ryan 2001, 65, 91). Thus the description on the role pages can increase the experiences of Narratives, Group Identification and Differentiation.

The colour of the section being analysed is blue, and also the icons and some of the text are a lighter shade of blue, making it clear that the differentiation of the colour palette is low and shows restraint. On the other hand, on the red-blue scale, blue is associated with



coldness and distance and red with energy and warmth. However, there is also red on the page, and the reason that this particular section is blue can be attributed to the fact that it highlights the users' destiny and Calling that are in the distant future. Moreover, the background is gradient, resembling a mountain surface, which creates a setting for a fantasy-like world and inspires imagination. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 234–235.)

The section discussed forms a part-whole structure of Blizzard and AB: the icons are Possessive Attributes that formulate the whole Carrier that is the company (ibid. 87). The different departments are what make the company what it is, and the users are invited to create an imaginative relationship to the company and cross the border from the fictional to the real by applying for a position of their choosing (Ryan 2001, 14, 149). In a recruitment situation, the interaction with the brand becomes personal, and the simple task of applying is afforded with mystery, aiming to enhance the probability that the users send applications and become corporate citizens (Alfrink 2014, 541; Cho & Kim 2012, 37; Hamari et al. 2014, 140; Mollick & Werback 2014, 449); gamifying a recruitment situation acculturates future employees, since when considering the company, users also create a narrative of themselves working in the company (Jiang et al. 2014, 420; Mollick & Werback 2014, 443). The joy of games comes from making meaningful choices, which is highlighted by framing the career choice with destiny and a game-world (Deterding & Walz 2014, 5; Hamari et al. 2014, 140–141). Moreover, the recruitment situation is connected to the elements of Rewards, Quests and Challenges, Scarcity and Competition: landing a job is the potential Reward that the users can achieve by participating in the recruitment Quest, and because only one can achieve that reward, Scarcity and Competition are implied. Naturally, in this sense it is possible to argue that every recruitment situation includes gamification – which they do to some extent – but the gamification is enhanced here by the elements discussed.

As inputs on Blizzard's career page, the users can 1) participate in the writing of the text by submitting an application (progression mechanics) and 2) engage in dialogue and play roles when choosing the department and the “class” that they belong in (setup mechanics). As outputs, Blizzard 1) suggests relations between the departments (setup mechanics), 2) allows the users to get a closer look on each of the departments (rule mechanics) and 3) provides background information (rule mechanics). (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–415; Ryan 2001, 210–213.)

In conclusion, it is justified to say that the role section is a game in a literal sense: it is formed mostly by language and visuals that frame the communication situation (Ryan 2001, 180). The users are passive or active, depending on whether they choose to apply, and immersed in the text, making the situation aesthetic (Pine II & Gilmore 1998, 102). The gamification features and the multimodal elements can be viewed in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Gamification features and multimodal elements on Blizzard career page.

	Rewards	Quests and Challenges	Scarcity	Competition	Group Identification	Self-Expression and Differentiation	Making Choices	Narratives and Terminology	Epic Meaning and Calling
Verbal		narrative introduction			role descriptions	role descriptions	question	title narrative introduction role descriptions	title
Visual					role icons	role icons	role icons		blue colour
Audio									
Interactive	recruitment situation	recruitment situation	recruitment situation	recruitment situation					

From the Table 5 we can see that the gamification elements in this case are

1. Narratives and Terminology (3 multimodal occurrences),
2. Quests and Challenges (2 multimodal occurrences),
3. Group Identification (2 multimodal occurrences),
4. Self-Expression and Differentiation (2 multimodal occurrences),
5. Making Choices (2 multimodal occurrences),
6. Epic Meaning and Calling (2 multimodal occurrences),
7. Rewards (1 multimodal occurrence),
8. Scarcity (1 multimodal occurrence) and
9. Competition (1 multimodal occurrence).

The literal aspect of the gamified situation at hand is reflected in Narratives and Terminology that is at the top of the list. The communication situation is recruitment: games are integral to the AB company culture, which is enhanced by gamifying their recruitment communication in order to attract like-minded applicants.

#### 4.2.2 KING CHALLENGE

The King Challenge is a recruitment mobile application for iPhone and Android. The users can choose their area of expertise from Java, Data Science C++ and ActionScript,

and if they score 90% or higher, they get the chance to apply for a job. The fields of Marketing and Product/Business are also available but only as a “just for fun” option. When the area of expertise is chosen, the app poses a series of questions with four answer choices each; if the users do not get enough of them correct, the game stops and offers the option to play again. If the users make it to the end, on the other hand, they get to see their results, and if they have passed certain points, they get badges. The very best users also receive the option to apply for a job, but the option is only to apply; the application does not guarantee a job opening or an interview. All in all, the challenge is divided into three sections with two bonus rounds in between.

On King’s website, the King Challenge is on the Roles page that presents the different roles that they have at King – similarly to but not quite as gamified as Blizzard Career page. The application section is beneath the section introducing the roles. As can be seen in Appendix 6, the King Challenge app section is very colourful with an orange background, with a game character looking at a phone on the left and with an introductory text on the right. Thus, situated low on the page itself, the section is the Real in comparison to the rest of the page. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 178, 186–187.) In the section itself, the character and the phone on the left are Given and thus previously known, whereas the text introducing the app is on the right and New (ibid. 57, 181). The character’s glance to the phone is a vector where the character is the Actor and the Phone is the Phenomenon (ibid. 67): on the screen there is the application, orienting the users. Furthermore, the position of the written text on the right does not only make it New but also represents it as something to be solved, encouraging to download the app (ibid. 190).

When discussing the composition of the app itself, there are three kinds of screens that need to be looked at: 1) the first screen, 2) the screen where the users choose their expertise and 3) the questions screen. On the first screen, at the top, there is the text “Put your skills to the ultimate test!”, after which there is a green CTA in the middle with the text “Take the Challenge”. Below the CTA there is another text with smaller letters: “Score 90% or higher to open the gates to the kingdom.” At the very bottom, there are three CTA buttons, introducing “Jobs”, “About King” and “Games”. Thus it is clear that “Put your skills to the ultimate test!” is the Ideal essence of information, framing all the rest, and the CTA in the middle is the Mediator between all the elements: the CTA is the most salient and important element on the screen, since it is the path to the challenge. All

the other elements are subservient to it. (ibid. 178, 186–187, 196, 202.) Moreover, the CTA is throbbing, adding to its salience and creating a cue and a deixis for the users (ibid. 202; Kress 2010, 117). The throbbing movement is a vector, the Goals of which are the users (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 258): the throbbing movement is a motional transformation that encourages the users to take the Challenge that is literally spelled out in the CTA (Eikenes & Morrison 2010, 13).



Figure 8. The expertise screen in King Challenge.

The screen where the users can choose their expertise can be viewed in Figure 8. The image is from Google Play store, which explains the blue stripe on the left corner; the stripe is missing from the actual app. Moreover, the image presents such a situation where the users have already achieved a badge in Product/Business, as you can see the crown on the box. On this screen, it is notable that that the question “What’s your skill?” frames the situation on the top, and the option boxes beneath are the details and represented equally to each other, as they are same size and within equal distance from each other (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 179, 78, 186–187). The option boxes create frames that

differentiate them from each other (ibid 130); thus they also provide the users with the possibility of Differentiation that is enhanced by the question at the top. In this sense the boxes function similarly to the icons on the Blizzard Career page. However, in addition to Differentiation, the texts anchored to the boxes introduce each area of expertise and increase the experience of Group Identification with professionals from that same area.

As can be seen in Figure 9 on the next page, on the question screen the question is at the top and presented in a speech bubble. The speech bubble is a vector: the Actor is the person asking the question and the Goals are the users that the question is directed to (63–64, 68). The fact that the Actor is a real person working at King personalizes the message and immerses the users to the company’s world. The question is at the top and is thus the

essence of the information, while the answer boxes below are the details that the users pick according to their knowledge (ibid. 178, 186–187). The question area and the answer area are also clearly cut off from one other by colour: the question section is blue, whereas the answer section is orange. Thus the options in the answer section are united with each other in a bigger frame but also cut off from each other by individual frames, which illustrates Making Choices: there can be only one correct answer among the options that are equal in size and distance. (ibid. 79, 176; Kress 2010, 149.)



Figure 9. Question screen in King Challenge.

While evaluating answers and clicking on the choices, if the users know the correct answer, the app makes a happy special effect sound, the box flashes green and there is male voice saying different comments, such as “delicious”. The contrary elements apply if the users are wrong: the app makes a special effect indicating a wrong answer, the box flashes red and the same male voice says, for example, “oh oh”: Feedback is provided by the surrounding environment (special effects), the motional transformation (colour) and non-player characters (the male voice) (Eikenes & Morrison 2010, 13; Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515). If the users do not get enough correct answers, the game stops. If, on the other hand, the users reach the end and a certain amount of correct answers, they are afforded with badges (crowns) – one crown for breaking the first limit and two crowns for breaking a second one, which creates an experience of accomplishing goals (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 636). The crowns reflect the company’s name (King) and are attached on the edge of the respective expertise box at the beginning, assigning goals for the users, as was seen in Figure 8 (Hamari et al. 2014, 152): the fact that the crowns are on the right indicates that they are New (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 57, 181). The crowns are Rewards that show Development. Thus the system provides Feedback: reinforcement methods are integral to games in order for the users to evaluate their success. After each question the system also informs, how many questions of the total number of questions are behind, which helps to

track progress (Föhlich 2014, 575). If the users take the challenge many times, the questions change and their order varies, bringing Unpredictability into play.

The Feedback and positive reinforcements lead to the feeling of success; when reaching one level and accomplishing a crown, it reinforces the users to take the test again (Linehan et al. 2014, 85). The temporal schedule of the app is thus interesting, since there is a bonus round after every 7<sup>th</sup> response, implementing fixed ratio and calming down the users between segments (ibid. 87). Moreover, as mentioned, the system informs, how many questions the users have gone through. Therefore, the fixed ratio of the bonus rounds and tracking of progress form stages in the game (Föhlich 2014, 575).

Temporality is at issue also when the users have a limited amount of time to answer each question, which is represented by a circle in the question section, below the question itself: the circle diminishes by each second. Circles are complete in themselves, and thus the full circle represents the moment when everything is possible for the users (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 55). Consequently, the smaller the circle gets, the less of a circle it is, the smaller users' chances are and the fewer their possibilities get – and the less there are possibilities, the more intense the Time Pressure and suspense grow. The reason that the users can enjoy the test time and time again results from the fact that they set their “narrative clock” back at the beginning, starting all over again (Ryan 2001, 147).

The background music is one of the audio elements in the Challenge and paces the users' journey (McKee 2006, 337): it consists of different kind of fun special effects that together make a melody. Background music is external in the sense that the music constitutes a story in itself (Levinson 2004, 432). The background music conforms to the three sections of the test: the sections divided by the bonus rounds. The background music in the first section sets the beginning, in comparison to which the music in the second round is faster and adds intensity. The background music in the third round is the calmest one, which can be attributed to the fact that the test is coming to the end. Therefore, we can say that the background music has an emotive function, because it increases and decreases the users' tension. It has an informative function, since it represents progress and Development. Lastly, it has a temporal function, because it illustrates the rhythm and the structure of the test. (McKee 2006, 347; Wingstedt et al. 2010, 194–195.)

As mentioned, there are also other sounds than the background music (McKee 2006, 347). The system makes a happy or a sad special effect depending on whether the users' answers are correct. The same change in intonation goes for the male voice commenting on the answer, constituting vocal delivery. (ibid. 337.) These sounds are internal, since events in test act as the basis for the sounds (Levinson 2004, 432). The special effects and voices are foregrounded from the background music, as they are shorter and somewhat louder (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 201, 225). Both the male voice and the accompanying effects are higher in intonation when the answer is correct as opposed to when the answer is incorrect: intonation adds to the meaning and highlights the result (Kress 2010, 80–81). These voices and effects have an emotive function, because their message creates an emotion in the users. They have a descriptive function as well, because they describe the situation. Lastly, they have a rhetorical function, commenting on the progress and giving Feedback on how the test is going; the Challenge reacts through the actions of the users and the non-player male voice (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515). Moreover, the system makes a ticking special effect sound when there 10 seconds left to answer, and when the time is up, it rings like an alarm clock. In addition to emotive, rhetorical and descriptive functions, the special effect indicating time has a guiding function, since it orients the users to do something, and a temporal function, because it acknowledges Time Pressure. (McKee 2006, 347; Wingstedt et al. 2010, 194–195.)

The language use in King Challenge is extremely interesting, as with its Narratives and Terminology it stimulates imagination. The language truly creates a window beyond the application. (Ryan 2001, 91, 193). On the first screen, below the challenge CTA, there is the text “score 90% or higher to open the gates to the kingdom”. Thus the King company and AB are put in the position of a kingdom, the gates of which are closed, but the users with enough cunning and knowledge can open the gates and “claim the throne”, as it says on the last screen. On the second screen, if you choose one of the “just for fun” options, the system opens a window, asking: “For this category the Kingdom gates are currently closed and sealed with wizardry. Do you wish to continue playing just for fun?” Thus the app borrows from typical game and fairy-tale terminology, narratizing the app and recruitment process (Flanagan 2014, 259; Lampe 2014, 475–476). The narrative provides Epic Meaning and Calling for the activity: the users become the heroes embarking on a Quest when they cross the boundary between the fictional and the real, creating an

imaginative relationship to the app (Ryan 2001, 14). (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 646.) The immersion is enhanced by the present tense and second person address (Ryan 2001, 138).

The playfulness of the language is reflected in the colour palette. Websites targeted at children usually have more playfulness and colours than those targeted at adults (Kress 2010, 170–172). The fascinating factor in this case is that the intended audience for recruitment is adults, but the adventurous colours indicate children. Thus the app denotes the company and its values and immerses the adult users in its playful world (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 229). It is noteworthy, however, that the colours change slightly in each round: the blue of the question area gets darker and darker, as if symbolizing sundown and the end of the test. Thus the changing colours separate sections from each other (ibid. 230). The orange colour is also very intense, highlighting the tension of the test, and the differentiated adventurous colours reflect the Narrative and the Challenge.

The Challenge is mostly about testing the users' knowledge on a certain subject in order to playfully ascertain their qualifications. Like Blizzard Career page, King Challenge affords such a simple task as recruitment with enchantment: the users explore roles when they think about working in a company (Alfrink 2014, 541; Deterding 2014, 42; Mollick & Werback 2014, 449). However, in the King case it becomes evident that the users bring their own knowledge into the situation (Kress 2010, 45; Ryan 2001, 105): it affects how they perform and whether they get the chance to apply. Scarcity and Competition are implied, since the amount of vacancies is limited. However, the app offers only the option to apply, it does not evaluate the users any higher than regular applicants, although good scores may lead to Reputation within the company and increase Goal Setting, if the users put their minds to getting good scores. Moreover, a recruitment game may not be indicative of how the employee would work in reality (Woźniak 2015, 267). Thus the app is more of a way to acculturate new employees and provide interaction with the firm and its values, increasing the possibility that the users send applications when they imagine themselves as employees of the company (Cho & Kim 2012, 37; Jiang et al. 2014, 420).

As inputs, the users can 1) determine the plot by their answers (rule mechanics), 2) explore the field of the possible to see how far they can go (progression mechanics), 3) keep the textual machine going (progression mechanics) and 4) play games and solve problems (setup mechanics). As outputs, the system 1) controls the users' progress (rule



mechanics) and 2) interrupts the flow of narration by providing Feedback and bonus rounds (progression mechanics). (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–415; Ryan 2001, 210–213.)

In conclusion, the app is a game both in a literal and metonymic sense: literally since the problems are represented verbally, and metonymically since it borrows its mechanism from a standard trivia game (Ryan 2001, 179–180). The users are active and immersed, thus making the gamified experience an escapist one (Pine II & Gilmore 1998, 102). Table 6 on the next page presents all the gamification features and their multimodal realizations. We can deduct that the gamification features present in King Challenge are

1. Quests and Challenges (3 multimodal occurrences)
2. Feedback (3 multimodal occurrences)
3. Narratives and Terminology (3 multimodal occurrences)
4. Time Pressure (3 multimodal occurrences)
5. Self-Expression and Differentiation (2 multimodal occurrences)
6. Making Choices (2 multimodal occurrences)
7. Goal Setting (2 multimodal occurrences)
8. Development (2 multimodal occurrences)
9. Epic Meaning and Calling (2 multimodal occurrences)
10. Rewards (1 multimodal occurrence)
11. Scarcity (1 multimodal occurrence)
12. Competition (1 multimodal occurrence)
13. Group Identification (1 multimodal occurrence)
14. Reputation (1 multimodal occurrence)
15. Unpredictability (1 multimodal occurrence)

The multimodal realizations are quite spread out due to the audio elements. Similar to the Blizzard Career page, the communication context is recruitment: games are at the core of what King does, and thus gamification is incorporated into recruitment to attract suitable applicants.

### **4.3 LOUVRE**

Louvre is a famous French museum carrying a wide collection of art from different eras, and it is also one of the most popular museums in the world. In the present thesis Louvre's website has been researched and analysed in English, which has proven not to be an issue, since the website is the same in English as it is in French. As a matter of fact, some of the pages on the site are provided only in English.

Table 6. Gamification features and multimodal elements in King Challenge.

	Rewards	Quests and Challenges	Scarcity	Competition	Feedback	Group Identification	Reputation	Self-Expression and Differentiation	Making Choices	Goal Setting	Development	Narratives and Terminology	Epic Meaning and Calling	Un-predictability	Time Pressure
Verbal		CTA kingdom narrative				expertise area		question about skills				"ultimate test" kingdom narrative	"ultimate test" kingdom narrative		
Visual	crowns	adventurous colours			red/green colour crowns			expertise frames	expertise frames answer frames	crowns	crowns	adventurous colours			circle
Audio					sound voice						background music				clock sound ringing sound
Interactive			recruitment situation	recruitment situation			good scores for recruitment			good scores for recruitment				order of questions	

The gamification features on Louvre's website are few, and once again some of the gamified communication situations needed to be left out. For example, one learning situation – Focus – provides the users with the option to focus on a few of the paintings with the voice of an expert guiding them: by clicking around the painting they can blow up information screens and watch documentary videos. Thus the gamification elements are Feedback, Development, Making Choices, Narratives and Exploration. However, there are not that much gamification and playfulness since the situation does not inspire imagination and it is more about learning. In learning situations, the connection between the multimodal object and the viewer is lacking, which leads to disengagement and is the reason, why learning situations are excluded from the present research, unless they provide imaginative engagement (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 120).

The section is divided into two subsections, the first of which discusses two cases: an interactive floorplan and a virtual tour. These two cases are separate on Louvre's website, but they are analysed in the same subsection, because they share similarities and together they form a kind of a continuum. The second subsection discusses Tales of the Museum, which is an interactive cartoon representing different events from Louvre and its history.

#### **4.3.1 INTERACTIVE FLOOR PLAN & VIRTUAL TOUR**

In this subsection, Louvre's Interactive Floor Plan and Virtual Tour will be analysed together for their similarities. The Interactive Floor Plan presents the different sections of each floor and the locations of some famous works of art with a simplified map. The Floor Plan starts with an intro hosting a drawn image of Louvre with animated birds flying over the building and small icons pointing the place for public transportation. After clicking on "Enter the museum", the users get transported to the actual Floor Plan.

The Virtual Museum, on the other hand, takes the users inside the real museum – or at least some limited areas. The users can rotate the view 360° and move around by following arrows that appear on the museum floor indicating the routes the users can take. The users can also read more about some objects and works of art by clicking on them, which is indicated by the cursor turning into a small letter i. The area that is open for Exploration is limited and small in comparison to the whole of the museum, however.

Nonetheless, since many museums do not utilize the benefits of virtual tours, Louvre is thus able to differentiate itself (Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 296).

As can be seen in Figure 10, the composition of the Floor Plan is mostly horizontal. On the left, there are a list of floors and the CTA “Play intro again” – the intro will be analysed a little later – and on the right there is a list of the famous paintings on the floor in question. When clicking on a painting, its location appears on the map, indicated by a vector, which reflects the fact that the paintings are on the right and thus in the place that is common for interaction (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 190, 213). The floors and the intro are already known and the paintings are New, whereas the map in the middle is the Mediator between the two sides (ibid. 57, 181, 185, 196). The map is colour coded; the colours and their meanings are presented below the map. The map is the essence of information and the codes are the details (ibid. 178, 186–187).

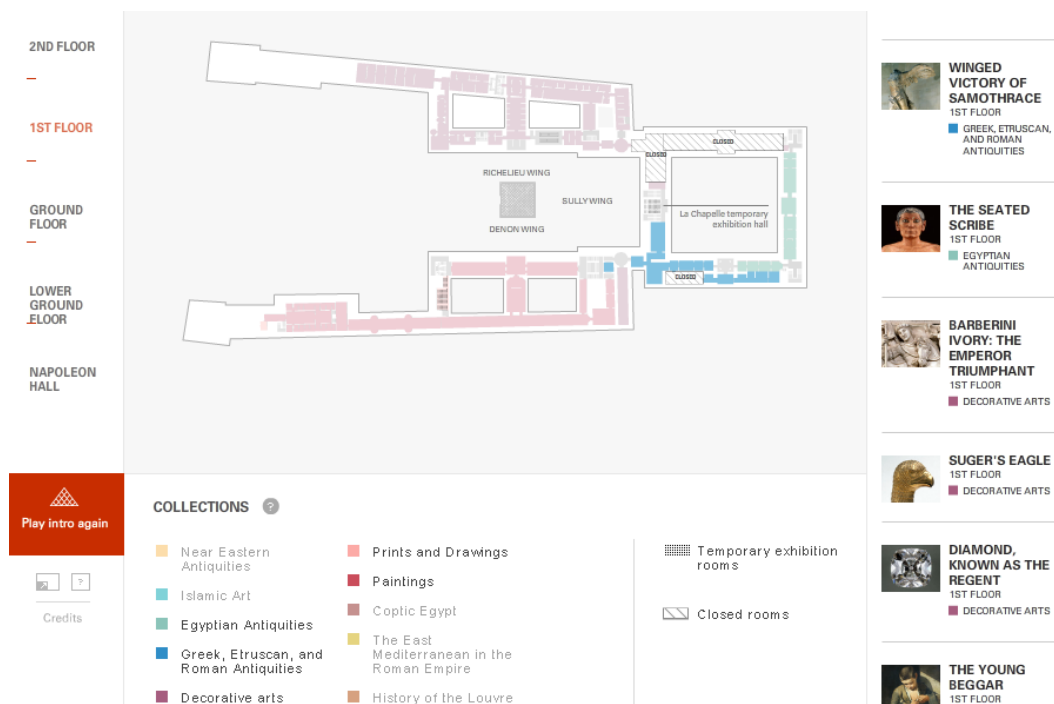


Figure 10. Louvre's Interactive Floor Plan.

The composition of the Virtual Map, on the other hand, can be viewed in Figure 11. The map immerses the users in the real museum that takes the whole top area in the composition. Beneath it, there are a sketch of the map showing where the users are currently located (on the left) and a written text describing each room (on the right). Thus the room itself becomes the Ideal and the essence, while the location map and the written

text provide details (ibid. 178, 186–187). The location map is on the left and thus already known: the map illustrates the users' location that is already somewhat Given, whereas the written text provides New information about each room (ibid. 181, 185, 190).

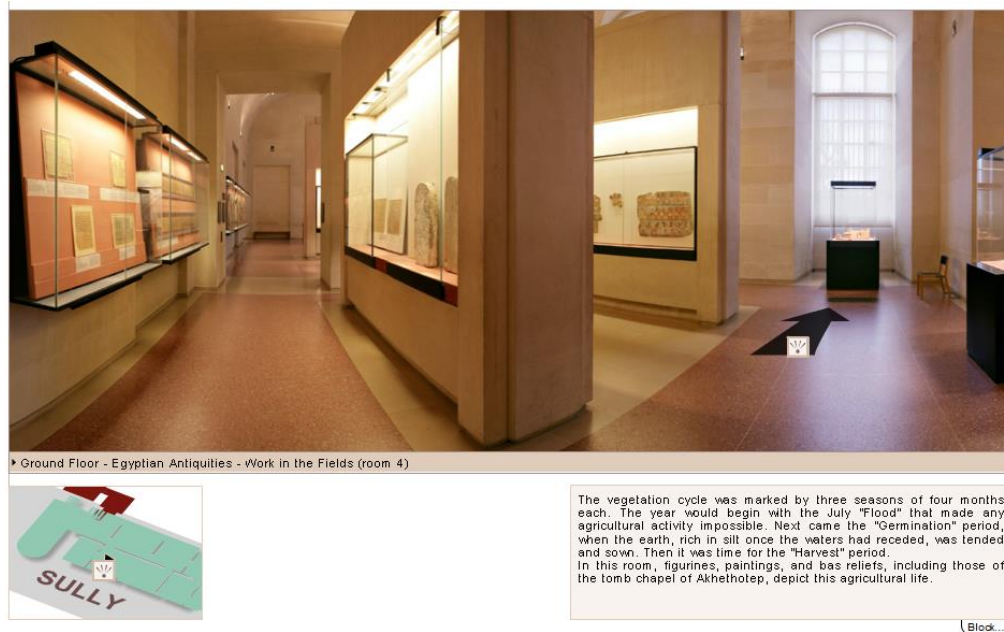


Figure 11. Louvre's Virtual Map.

Figure 12 illustrates the Floor Plan intro, the immersion into which is highlighted with animated birds flying over the museum.



Figure 12. Intro of the Louvre Interactive Floor Plan.

The city around the museum is white, foregrounding the building and the transportation icons as navigation cues for the users (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 225). The written command “Enter the museum” is highlighted by the arrow next to it: the arrow is a vector encouraging the users – the Actors – to enter the museum that is the Goal (ibid. 59, 64). A command structure is common for games, and a second person address increases immersion (Flanagan 2014, 160; Ryan 2001, 138). There is not much space around the building, which identifies it as the destination (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 128): the Quest is highlighted visually and verbally. Despite the command, the high angle affords the users with the power to choose, whether they want to enter or not (ibid. 140).

The Virtual Tour has more navigation cues than the Floor Plan. When the cursor rests on the screen, it takes the form of a two-headed arrow, representing simultaneity: the users can rotate the view in both directions (ibid. 66). When the cursor passes over an object that can be observed more closely, the arrow transforms into the letter *i*, representing “information”; the motional transformation lets the users know there is something behind the icon (Eikenes & Morrison 2010, 13). Moreover, around doorways the cursor changes to an icon that represents viewing a painting: thus the icon orients the users to move to another room where there are more objects to observe. All these elements are deixis that direct and guide the users within the gamification situation (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 169). (Kress 2010, 117.)

Moreover, around the doorways, there appears an arrow on the floor, directing the users to the right direction and to the next space, as can be seen Figure 11. They are also steering controls that guide the users according to the environmental constraints: the users cannot move through walls, for example (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 168, 169). In addition to semiotic navigation cues, the arrows are also vectors that represent the movements of the users: the users are the Actors and the rooms are the Goals, and movement along the vertical line mimics walking and creates a sense of space (ibid. 170; Eikenes & Morrison 2010, 12; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 46, 63–64). Moving around and reaching new areas invoke the sense of accomplishment, and thus the navigation cues and vectors represent Challenges and Exploration (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 636). Moreover, the users can move around in any order they want, because the rooms and the elements are non-linearly represented (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 27): they Make Choices about where to move next, which is also represented by the navigation cues.

Both the Interactive Floor Plan and the Virtual Tour host a colour coded map illustrating different sections around the museum. In the Floor Plan, it is the map in the middle, as can be seen in Figure 10, and in the Virtual Tour, it is the map on the bottom left in Figure 11. On both of the maps, the colour codes create frames, uniting and separating rooms according to themes (ibid. 176). Moreover, in the Virtual Tour the map becomes bigger when the users place the cursor over it: it shows the users' location in relation to the surrounding rooms, which is shown in Appendix 7. There is a small arrow on the map, indicating the users' location at all times, and the painting icons that are scattered around the map represent some of the most interesting paintings around. A map showing the location of the player and the quests enhances user-friendliness and is common for role-playing games (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 197; Deuze 2007, 253; Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 291): it increases sense of spatial presence, which leads to immersion and enjoyment (Sundar et al. 2015, 388–389). Thus the painting icons on the map constitute icons for Quests and Goal Setting. The map is a gamified construction of the museum, using game-mechanics to track progress (Flanagan 2014, 256; Föhlich 2014, 575). The map represents Exploration and Making Choices as well, and the users need guidance in their Exploration so that they do not get frustrated (Carrol 2014, 198). The map provides that guidance and Feedback by framing the users' movements (Kress 2010, 191): it reveals in what direction the users need to move to reach certain paintings (Quest).

The first person perspective of the Virtual Tour is integral for immersion because that is how the users become inscribed in the company's world (Ryan 2001, 309). In games, first person perspective is used to make the users identify with a character and to see through their eyes (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 261): in the Virtual Tour, the characters that the users are identifying with are the users themselves. However, it is not the real user but a mental model of the user that is the object of identification: the users identify with the museum space, take the role of a museum visitor and orient themselves in the landscape (Ryan 2001, 121, 123). Architecture is immersive by nature; even though the users' bodies are fixed in front of a computer, their minds occupy multiple places (ibid. 71, 290).

Also the multiple objects enhance immersion into the Virtual Tour. Spaces that can be explored with a mouse become story-navigating devices and are populated with objects: by clicking on objects the users can animate screens or something else surprising (Ryan 2001, 14–15, 266). When the users traverse the virtual museum, the mouse turns into an

i when passing over an object that can be viewed. Clicking on the object opens a window that hosts the image of the object and a written text describing it takes place on the bottom right. Thus the small icon *i* is a deixis that directs the users while navigating in Louvre's story: it is Feedback and increases Unpredictability as not all the objects can be viewed. The users do not know which objects are hyperlinks and which are not, and thus the system generates little surprises that are integral for the adventure (ibid. 258). Consequently, the users Explore the space and achieve a sense of Reward when noticing the icons: they have found something!

Moreover, the objects generate Feedback, since clicking on them opens a frame with written text (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515). There is also a text box on the bottom right of the screen, describing each room. All in all, the boxes with written text are framed and thus separated from their surroundings (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 54, 130): they create a window beyond the visible by providing information and framing the Exploration with Narratives, thus enhancing immersion and imagination (Föhlich 2014, 575; Ryan 2001, 193). Furthermore, when clicking on the paintings on the Interactive Floor Plan, the system provides a link to a page to learn more about the painting in question. Thus the hypertexts include intertextuality, as they provide Narratives and rewrites of the objects and the rooms, affording the users with the chance for new knowledge and Development, which is integral for museums (Hume & Mills 2011, 276). (Ryan 2001, 6–7.)

Both the Interactive Floor Plan and the Virtual Tour create part-whole structures of Louvre. They offer glimpses only of some spaces: the museum is the Carrier, whereas the sections and the objects are the Possessive Attributes. The whole communication situation is inclusive, since only the most relevant parts are presented. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 87, 96.) Online the users can visit only certain areas but if they thirst to see more, they need to visit the museum physically (Hume & Mills 2011, 276; Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 285; Marty 2007, 337, 339): in this sense the Floor Plan and the Virtual Tour shape the behaviour of the users and inspire them to do something new by providing good design and interaction with the brand (ibid. 277; Cho & Kim 2012, 37; Hamari et al. 2014, 140, 155; Hazzenzahl & Laschke 2014, 172; Pallud & Straub 2014, 367; Pierroux & Skjulstad 2011, 206). The Floor Plan also dispels the discomfort of some users that are not experienced museum goers, since they can plan their visit ahead (Quinlan-Gagnon 2013, 26). Gamification acculturates consumers and differentiates the museum



(Hume & Mills 2011, 285; Mollick & Werback 2014, 449): every action taken by the users in the Virtual Tour, for example, is an event in that world, making the users the heroes of the adventure while exploring the museum's world (Jiang et al. 2014, 420; Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 110; Ryan 2001, 65, 218).

As inputs in the Floor Plan and the Virtual Tour, the users can 1) shift the perspective of the textual world by moving around and rotating the view (rule mechanics), 2) explore the field of the possible by moving in the surroundings (setup mechanics), 3) keep the textual machine going by keeping in movement (progression mechanics) and 4) retrieve documents by clicking on the objects (rule mechanics). As outputs the system 1) controls the users' progress (rule mechanics), 2) lets the users explore (rule mechanics), 3) allows the users to get a closer look (rule mechanics) and 4) provides background information (rule mechanics). (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–415; Ryan 2001, 210–213.)

The Interactive Floor Plan and the Virtual tour are games in a metonymic sense: clicking on links in a hypertextual world becomes gamification (Ryan 2001, 183–184). The users are active and immersed, making the gamified situation escapist (Pine II & Gilmore 1998, 102). The gamification features and the multimodal tactics used in both the Interactive Floor Plan (IFP) and the Virtual Tour (VT) can be reviewed in Table 7 on the next page.

From Table 7 we can see that the gamification features, in their order of usage, are

1. Exploration (5 multimodal occurrences),
2. Quests and Challenges (4 multimodal occurrences),
3. Feedback (3 multimodal occurrences),
4. Development (3 multimodal occurrences),
5. Narratives and Terminology (3 multimodal occurrences),
6. Making Choices (2 multimodal occurrences),
7. Rewards (1 multimodal occurrence),
8. Goal Setting (1 multimodal occurrence) and
9. Unpredictability (1 multimodal occurrence).

The communication situation in question is introducing the company and its offering.

Table 7. Gamification features and multimodal elements in Louvre Interactive Floor Plan (IFP) and Virtual Tour (VT).

	Rewards	Quests and Challenges	Feedback	Making Choices	Goal Setting	Development	Narratives and Terminology	Exploration	Unpredictability
Verbal		IFP: command				IFP: painting information VT: room descriptions VT: object information	IFP: painting information VT: room descriptions VT: object information		
Visual	VT: icon i	IFP: building VT: arrows VT: painting icons	VT: icon i	VT: arrows VT: painting icons	VT: painting icons			IFP: painting location VT: icon i VT: arrows	
Audio									
Interactive			VT: location map VT: objects	VT: location map				VT: location map VT: objects	VT: objects

### 4.3.2 TALES OF THE MUSEUM

In this subsection, I analyse Tales of the Museum: a cartoon-like animation, where the first director of Louvre, Dominique-Vivant Denon, is in his workshop that is full of various objects, as can be seen in Figure 13 on the next page. The users can click on the objects, opening new windows with videos and stories about Louvre’s art and history of the museum. The tales can be opened also from an index list, but exploring the objects around the play-space makes the situation more gamified: the users acquire the role of a visitor in Dominique’s workshop. There is also background music and the objects make special effect sounds, in addition to which Dominique speaks. However, what is interesting, is that the objects and Dominique’s speeches change from one visiting time to the next. Moreover, on the top of the page, there is a written introduction of the gamified situation.

First I will talk about the composition of Tales. As can be reviewed in Appendix 8, the text above the animation screen itself introduces Dominique and the situation and welcomes the users into Dominique’s workshop. Thus the text is the Ideal that frames the animation and places it within a story (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 178, 186–187). The animation itself is framed with black colour, uniting all the elements within (ibid. 176).

The composition of the animation is such that at first Dominique appears from the top right corner, thus being the New and dominant element in the frame (ibid. 57, 181): in

that place he talks before moving to sit at his desk at the Centre, like in Figure 13 below. Dominique and his desk are the Mediator between all the objects around them: the objects are Margins and subservient to them. (ibid. 196, 198.) Thus also the users are subservient to Dominique in the Exploration of objects.



Figure 13. Louvre's Tales of the Museum.

The room consists of objects that are clickable and objects that are only part of the background: the clickable objects are foregrounded and framed with brighter colours than the background (ibid. 225; Kress 2010, 149): for example the basket in front of Dominique's desk in Figure 13. The colours show that there is something different in those objects and invite the users to explore them. The clickable objects also move and make special effects sounds when the users put the cursor over them: such motional transformation mediates information about the object (Eikenes & Morrison 2010, 13). The special effect is somewhat louder than the background music, and thus the movements and special effects foreground the objects with sharpness and contrasts, providing Feedback through the users' actions and the surrounding space. (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515.) Finding the objects is not always easy and some of them are well hidden in the background, which truly invokes a sense of Quests and Challenges. Moreover, there are objects that do not lead anywhere else but do something playful in the game-space: for example, the hook above the archway on the left switches the lights

on and off, the globe on the bottom right gets Dominique rushing there to tell stories of his many travels and the basket on the bottom left opens up and a doll-Dominique flies out. Thus the objects always do something surprising, representing Unpredictability. The hyperlinks provide little surprises for the users' Exploration, and the users have the option to Make Choices and to Explore in any way they want (Ryan 2001, 6, 69, 258).

As mentioned, the objects make special effect sounds when the users move the cursor over them, and the auditory salience follows from the fact that the objects' special effects are shorter and louder than the background music (McKee 2006, 337; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 201). The object special effects represent internal stories, since the basis for the effect is in the exploration and the object itself (Levinson 2004, 432). The effects serve also a descriptive function because each one describes the object: for example, an earring jingles. Moreover, the effect and the object are connected to the tales and narratives behind them. Because the effect and the movement direct the users' attention, they also have a guiding function that is common for games. However, also a lack of effects can have a guiding effect: the objects that do not lead anywhere but only do something in the play-space are differentiated from the other objects only in that they do not make any sounds. (McKee 2006, 347, 349; Wingstedt et al. 2010, 195.)

Dominique's speeches – vocal delivery – also add to the sound world of the situation (McKee 2006, 337). His lip movements are the vector connecting him – the Senser – to the Content (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 68, 261). His intonation and expressions change depending on the Content. When he receives a letter from his wife, he seems funnily concerned, which is presented both in his fearful facial expressions and movements, adding believability to the character and the gamified experience (Nijholt & Heylen 2002, 347). When he tells about his many travels, he sounds dreamy and waves his hands to imitate the wideness of the world: mentioning different places invokes images and mentally transports there (Ryan 2001, 95). Overall he is relaxed and in a good mood, which is audible in his intonation (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 82–85; Kress 2010, 80, 81). Dominique's speeches have a rhetorical function, because they make small and sometimes humorous comments on the situation (McKee 2006, 347; Wingstedt et al. 2010, 195). His speeches vary from time to time, representing Unpredictability.

The background music, on the other hand, is external because it is a story in itself, which is also reflected in the fact that, unlike the objects, the background music can be turned off. Silence becomes indeed a Choice. (McKee 2006, 337, 349.) The background music is classical, and the object that it can be turned off from is an old music box: the music transports the users away from the modern days and informs that the workshop and Dominique are from around 1800s, creating a sense of place and immersing the users. The music also highlights the sophisticated atmosphere of the workshop and as such has also an emotive function. (Cuny et al. 2015, 1031, 1032; Ryan 2001, 123.) Lastly, the background music has a temporal function, because it provides the setting with a regular and constant rhythm. (Wingstedt et al. 2010, 195.)

In *Tales*, the story is told by the setting with the objects within it: the workshop creates its own space and time that the users are welcomed into (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 113; Ryan 2001, 42). When standing, Dominique takes about half the height of the frame: it is a long shot and presents distance between the users and the character (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 127). However, Dominique is on eye-level and equal to the users (ibid. 148). When it comes to the setting itself, it is shot with a mixture of a medium and close distance and inscribes the users in the workshop, since only part of the workshop is shown and some objects, like the wooden boxes, are in the foreground (ibid, 127, 128).

The setting creates a text that the users form an imaginative relationship with: it becomes an adventure and a puzzle to be solved. However, as the room is on eye-level and the objects are scattered evenly around Dominique, all the options are equal and thus the room is more of a playground than a labyrinth with certain correct answers. (Ryan 2001, 183–184.) Every action taken by the users is an event in the workshop and presents the users with stories (ibid. 65). The fascination with the workshop of wonders arises out of curiosity: the users want to know what will happen next with each object and create their own horizon of expectations concerning different possible results (ibid. 140, 142). Every session is different, since the objects and Dominique's stances and speeches change from time to time and the users can explore in the order of their choosing. The adventure is highlighted also in the colour scheme. (ibid. 218.) The colour palette of the workshop is very rich with quite a lot of different colours with varying levels on intensity. Differentiated use of colours reflects adventurousness and denotes the multiple aspects of

Louvre, differentiating the museum from competitors that do not use memorable colours. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 229, 234–235; Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 296.)

The users are addressed and immersed in Tales in multiple ways, helping them to imagine themselves in the scene (Jiang et al. 2014, 420) First of all, the users are inscribed in the world of Louvre in a first-person perspective. The setting is shot through the eyes of the users, and the fact that they are in the room is highlighted with a sense of depth; some objects are bigger and thus closer to the viewer. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 261; Ryan 2001, 309.) Secondly, the users are addressed in Dominique’s speeches: one time he asks the users to tidy up after they leave and another time he says they cannot stay long, because his wife is waiting. Second-person address is an immersive linguistic device (Ryan 2001, 138). The users create an imaginative relationship with the space and Dominique, trying on a new role in that world (ibid. 61, 149). Thirdly, the users are addressed when Dominique looks at them. Gaze is a visual manifestation of the second person address: it demands something of the viewer and enhances the relationship with Dominique (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 89, 118). With speech and gaze, the non-player character Dominique provides the users with Feedback (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515).

Narratives and Terminology is also present in Tales, in the title and mostly so in the introductory narrative at the top of the page.

*Dominique-Vivant Denon entices young and old into his workshop—an Aladdin's cave of treasures and memories. This emblematic figure was the first director of the Louvre in 1802. He has come back to life for us as a whimsical and exuberant adventurer who may not know everything, but has lived in the Louvre for over two centuries, mingling with artists, curators, museum attendants, visitors—maybe you!—so he's a boundless source of true stories, anecdotes, and memories about the artworks and his own life...*

*Some fifty anecdotes and five stories about the museum and its masterpieces are accessible in his workshop, by clicking on objects that appear at random, by choosing from a list in the portfolio or by using the index mode. As you explore the workshop, the mysteries and secrets surrounding the creation, discovery, acquisition, or restoration of a number of artworks are revealed by these "incredible-but-true" tales.*

The introductory text has both a strong narrative and game-like vocabulary. Firstly, terms such as “Aladdin’s case of treasures”, “adventurer”, “stories” and “mysteries” borrow from game and story vocabulary, thus gamifying the experience and transporting the users

to another world (Flanagan 2014, 261; Lampe 2014, 475–476; Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 291; Ryan 2001, 95). The objects and the whole situation is framed by special language use, based on which the users form connections to their personal experiences (Flanagan 2014, 259; Ryan 2001, 128–129). Moreover, the introductory text forms a narrative: it attunes the users to the situations and gives an Epic Meaning for the activity (Ramirez & Squire 2014, 646). Narratives are also present in the videos and pages that the objects lead to: they offer opportunities for Development (Hume & Mills 2011, 276). Thus Narratives and Development are presented in a visual, verbal and audial form, as the mysteries are videos – on some of which also Dominique makes an entrance.

With its mysteries, Tales does not only offer opportunities for learning and Development but also frames the whole museum. Tales leads the users to learn more about its mysteries. Louvre is the Carrier and the mysteries are its Possessive Attributes (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 87): the fragments make a whole, as the objects and the stories behind them represent the museum and history (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 102). While introducing the users playfully to the history of Louvre, Tales also affords the museum with magic, gamifying every-day experiences and acculturating new and old visitors alike (Alfrink 2014, 541; Cho & Kim 2012, 37; Flanagan 2014, 256; Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 285; Mollick & Werback 2014, 443; Pierroux & Skjulstad 2011, 206). Such interesting design may inspire visitors to come also to the physical museum (Marty 2007, 337, 339; Pallud & Straub 2014, 367).

As inputs, the users can 1) explore the field of possible to see which objects are hyperlinks and test what they do (rule mechanics), 2) keep the textual machine going (progression mechanics), 3) retrieve documents by clicking on the objects (progression mechanics) and 4) engage in dialogue and play roles with Dominique (progression mechanics). The system, on the other hand, 1) controls the users' progress and discoveries by highlighting certain objects (rule mechanics), 2) lets the users explore (setup mechanics), 3) allows the users open new windows to watch videos (rule mechanics) and 4) provides background information (rule mechanics). (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–415; Ryan 2001, 210–213.)

In conclusion, Tales represents a metonymic interpretation a game, since the users explore links (objects) in a hypertextual world (Dominique’s workshop) (Ryan 2001, 180). The users are active and become immersed in the experience, making Tales escapist (Pine II & Gilmore 1998, 102). The gamification features and their respective multimodal realizations can be reviewed in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Gamification features and multimodal elements in Louvre’s Tales of the Museum.

	Quests and Challenges	Feedback	Making Choices	Development	Narratives and Terminology	Epic Meaning and Calling	Exploration	Unpredictability
Verbal				mysteries	title vocabulary introductory narrative mysteries	introductory narrative		
Visual	object movements	object movements gaze		mysteries	mysteries		object colour adventurous colour scheme	object movements setting
Audio	object sounds	object sounds speeches	background music/ silence	mysteries	mysteries			speeches
Interactive			clicking objects				clicking objects	clicking objects

From Table 8 we can deduct that the most used gamification features in Tales are

1. Narratives and Terminology (6 multimodal occurrences),
2. Feedback (4 multimodal occurrences),
3. Unpredictability (4 multimodal occurrences),
4. Development (3 multimodal occurrences),
5. Exploration (3 multimodal occurrences),
6. Quests and Challenges (2 multimodal occurrences),
7. Making Choices (2 multimodal occurrences) and
8. Epic Meaning and Calling (1 multimodal occurrence).

The communicational context in question is a playful and imaginative introduction of the company, its world and its mysterious history.

#### 4.4 VIENNA STATE OPERA

In the last section under the present chapter, I discuss Vienna State Opera (VSO) that is one of the most popular and spectacular opera houses in the world (Prospects 2015). The interesting aspect in studying opera houses is that they are not connected to any certain



opera pieces, but the operas vary from time to time, and as such their prestige stems from the quality of the productions overall and the history of the opera house itself.

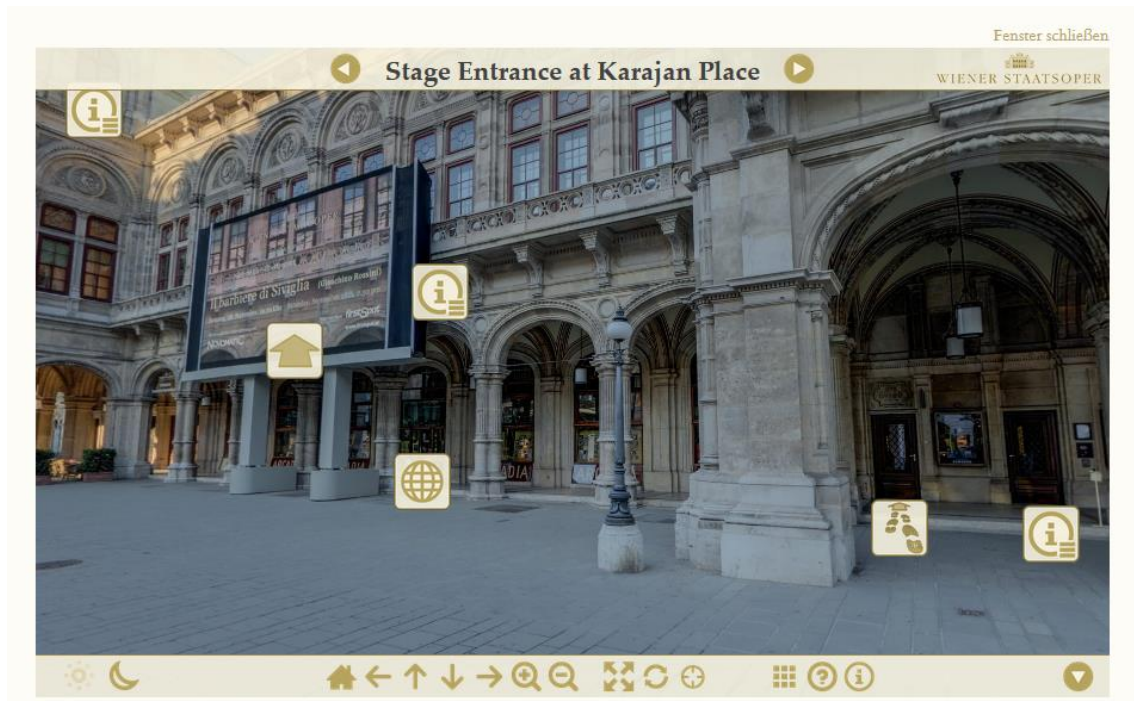


Figure 14. Vienna State Opera Panoramic Tour – first screen.

The historical aspect is present in the gamification situation to be studied: the Panoramic Tour of the building that is the only gamified communication situation on VSO website. It resembles Louvre Virtual Tour in the sense that it is a reproduction of the building and differentiates the opera house from the rest by providing a virtual tour, but it also has some additional gamification features (Kress 2010, 89, 102; Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 296). For example, the Panoramic Tour provides a determined path for the users to follow through the building but the users can also take other routes and shortcuts and browse in the order of their liking, as in Louvre Virtual Tour. There is also a navigational structure at the bottom, which can be seen in Figure 14 above. Thus the game space provides both guidelines and freedom to create one's own adventure (Hazzenzahl & Laschke 2014, 180; Ryan 2001, 6–7). There are also hotspots around the building: they provide information about certain objects, and objects and spaces can be viewed from different angles as the users proceed on the route. The objects shape the users' progress with the interaction they provide (Hazzenzahl & Laschke 2014, 172).

The composition of the Panoramic Tour is such that the name of each room is at the top with arrows pointing left and right on either side of it. Thus the name of the room is the

Ideal, informs the users of the essence of the room and welcomes them to the space (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 178, 186–187). The arrows that point to different directions lead the users to the next and the previous rooms, indicating that there is a recommended path to follow. The arrow pointing left leads to the previous room that is already Given and the arrow pointing right to the room that is New (ibid. 181). The room itself is in the middle of the page and can be rotated 360°, in which case the Given and the New vary. (ibid. 185). At the very bottom, there are navigational icons: they are the details with which the users can navigate their way through the building (ibid. 186–187).

The icons at the bottom serve different functions: they are steering controls and increase the sense of action possibilities (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 168, 196). As listed in Figure 15, they 1) switch the lighting from light to dark, 2) take the users to the home screen, 3) let the users navigate in the space, 4) let the users zoom in and out, 5) make the window larger, 6) stop the slow auto rotation of the view, 7) remove the hotspots on the screen, 8) provide a list of all the areas, 9) offer instructions on how to use the Panoramic Tour, 10) provide information of the system and 11) hide the navigation bar.



Figure 15. The navigation bar in the Vienna State Opera Panoramic Tour.

The list of different spaces can be compared with the similar list in the Penguin Map and the index in Louvre Tales of the Museum: all these cases offer the options to either explore the area by oneself or go straight to a certain place on the list. The users can also Explore and Set Goals, if they want to search for a particular space from the list by moving around the building. It is also noteworthy that the Panoramic Tour is the only gamification case in the present thesis that offers explicit instructions on how to use the system and the different icons at the bottom – similar to a game manual. Thus there is enough guidance so that the users do not get frustrated, and the system forms a game-like structure of the building (Carrol 2014, 198; Flanagan 2014, 256). The navigation icons provide the users with Feedback as they respond to commands, and most of all, they offer opportunities for Making Choices about the lighting, route and other factors (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515).

In addition to the navigational icons, there are hotspots on the screen: they guide the users forward, provide information about the building or generate small information screens. For example, the little globes take the users to other websites (metaphor of travel) and the

letters i provide background information of the objects and surroundings, whereas the footsteps take the users to the next room on the predetermined path and arrows to other rooms (diverging from the recommended order). Thus the hotspots are deixis, because they guide and orient the users with semiotic cues (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 169; Kress 2010, 117). They are clearly framed and cut off from the environment: framing is done both with the light beige colour and the actual square frame around each icon (Kress 2010, 149; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 230). This way the hotspots are foregrounded so that they clearly stand out (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 225). Furthermore, the hotspots that are located outside provide also information about the city: they show where different famous locations lie, thus locating the users mentally in Vienna. Only mentioning an area can transport the users there and get them to tap into their own knowledge and experiences. (Ryan 2001, 95, 128.) For these reasons the hotspots become marks for Quests and Exploration. Moreover, they generate little surprises along the way, as the users cannot predict where the hotspots lead them, what they do or where they are: therefore, they represent Feedback and Unpredictability (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515).

The journey that the users make through the building is highlighted by the arrows that guide them. The arrows show in which directions the users can move, and thus they form vectors and guide the users: the users are the Actors, and the spaces that they are directed to are Goals. The walking movement of the users is represented by the arrows on the vertical line and creates a sense of place. (Balakrishnan & Sundar 2011, 170; Eikenes & Morrison 2010, 12; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 46, 59, 63–64.) However, the arrows represent all the places that the users can access from that area, but the predetermined path is marked with footprints. The footprints are afforded with symbolic value, because they are differentiated from the rest of the vectors (arrows) and given special meaning (ibid. 70–71): footprints can be used as a path to follow in amusement parks and shopping centres, for example. Thus it is clear that they recommend the way through the building, but the users can also choose to go anywhere the other arrows lead as well. The arrows, footprints and the journey that they represent highlight Exploration, and the users maintain a sense of freedom while Making Choices about the route (Ryan 2001, 327).

It is notable that the Panoramic Tour has both first and last stops: the first station is the entrance in Figure 14, whereas the last station is the main entrance. In buildings, front and back have different meanings, and in this case the meanings are start and end (Kress

& van Leeuwen 2006, 257–258). When the users reach the last station and are outside once again, the day has turned into a night. Granted, at the first station the users can change the day into a night using the navigation bar, but the default view is daytime. Thus the users' journey and its duration are illustrated by environmental Feedback – by day changing into a night (Mallon & Lynch 2014, 515): the journey has taken a day and the users are immersed spatio-temporally, in space and time (Ryan 2001, 122, 140). The rooms in between are stages that the users go through, and advancing through those stages they accomplish goals (Föhlich 2014, 575; Ramirez & Squire 2014, 636). The predetermined path with fixed starting and end points makes the building a labyrinth, but since the path can be chosen freely, it is also a playground that the users traverse by clicking around.

The hotspots with the letter *i* generate windows with written text: they provide information and Narratives about the building. The Narratives are framed and thus they create windows beyond, lexicalising the visual world (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 130; Kress 2010, 149). They anchor the objects that they represent with written meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 26). Moreover, in one space – in the rehearsal room – there is a hotspot located on the director's table, like it would be lying on the table: it is a video of an opera, representing the many works produced in that rehearsal space. Thus the Panoramic Tour provides the users with information and the opportunities to Develop (Ryan 2001, 65).

Similar to the Louvre Virtual Tour, the Panoramic Tour inscribes the users into the space with a first person view shot through the eyes of the users, immersing them in the space (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 261; Ryan 2001, 309). A panorama with a roving sense of view creates a sense of depth and becomes a story-navigating device: when the users click around the hotspots and move around the space, they navigate around the story of VSO (Ryan 2001, 53, 266). Moreover, it is interesting that when the users move from one space to another, they are in some cases still able to view the previous spaces from other angles: for example, the stage can be viewed from the audience and on the stage itself. Thus the users are able to link objects and spaces to each other and immerse more (Kress 2010, 119). Another example of changing the perspective is when the users are able to switch the lights on and off in some spaces. Thus the users decide how that particular journey will proceed: they are the heroes of the adventure (Ryan 2001, 218).

In addition to the first person perspective, also the setting immerses the users: it represents a narrative and journey that the users imagine themselves as parts of (Jiang et al. 2014, 420; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 113). A space that is populated with objects is immersive for the users who can explore and create a mental model of the space by orienting themselves within it (Ryan 2001, 14–15, 123). Moreover, architecture is immersive by nature (ibid. 123, 290). Only parts of the areas are shown at one time, which indicates a close shot and thus the users are engaged with the space (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 127). When the users are still outside, only part of the building is visible, indicating that the users are just about to enter the opera house (ibid. 128). All in all, the building weaves the adventure and creates its own space and time (Ryan 2001, 42).

The Panoramic Tour provides interaction with the organization. It is a part-whole structure where VSO is the Carrier and the hotspots and spaces the Possessive Attributes (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 87). The objects count only for part of what VSO is in reality, inspiring customers to visit to see more, since actions in the system may reflect actions outside it (ibid. 88, 96; Cho & Kim 2012, 37; Hamari et al. 2014, 140, 148; Hume & Mills 2011, 276; Ryan 2001, 65). Gamifying the opera house adds a layer of mystery to the brand, engaging customers on a new level (Alfrink 2014, 541; Lepkowska-White & Imboden 2013, 285, 291; Pierroux & Skjulstad 2011, 206).

The inputs that the users feed into the system are 1) shifting the perspective to see the building from different angles (rule mechanics), 2) exploring the field of the possible by searching the surroundings (setup mechanics), 3) keeping the textual machine going by traversing the building (progression mechanics) and 4) retrieving documents by reading (progression mechanics). As outputs, the system 1) controls the users' progress by guiding them (rule mechanics), 2) lets them explore (setup mechanics), 3) suggests relations between segments by showing spaces from varying angles (rule mechanics), 4) provides a closer look by zooming (rule mechanics) and 5) provides background information (rule mechanics). (Robson et al. 2015a, 414–415; Ryan 2001, 210–213.)

To conclude the present subsection, the Panoramic Tour is a metonymic interpretation of a game in two ways: the users click on hyperlinks and traverse the area, but it also borrows from games by providing a navigation bar and instructions on how to use it (Ryan 2001 180). The users are active and immersed in the tour, increasing the escapist nature of the experience (Pine II & Gilmore 1998, 102). The gamification features and their multimodal realizations can be viewed in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Gamification features and multimodal elements in Vienna State Opera’s Panoramic Tour.

	Quests and Challenges	Feedback	Making Choices	Goal Setting	Development	Narratives and Terminology	Exploration	Unpredictability
Verbal		game instructions		area list	information boxes	information boxes	area list	
Visual	hotspots	day / night	navigation icons arrows and footprints			opera video	hotspots arrows and footprints	hotspots
Audio						opera video		
Interactive		navigation icons hotspots					path and building	hotspots

From Table 9 it is possible to summarize that the gamification features in the order of multimodal occurrences are

1. Feedback (4 multimodal occurrences),
2. Exploration (4 multimodal occurrences),
3. Narratives and Terminology (3 multimodal occurrences),
4. Making Choices (2 multimodal occurrences),
5. Unpredictability (2 multimodal occurrences),
6. Quests and Challenges (1 multimodal occurrence),
7. Goal Setting (1 multimodal occurrence) and
8. Development (1 multimodal occurrence).

The communicational context is introduction of the company’s world and its history.

This subsection concludes the chapter Analysis & Findings. In the next chapter, I move on to briefly sum up the findings and discuss some implications they have for using gamification in corporate communication online.

## 5 DISCUSSION

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In the previous chapter, the analysis and the findings of the research were introduced in detail. In the present chapter the findings and their implications will be wrapped up briefly. All the gamification features will be presented in the order of their occurrences. Additionally, each of the four gamification categories (Achievement, Interpersonal and Interactive Dynamics, Role Play and Elements of Adventure) and the different features within them will be discussed in the light of the multimodal elements that they have been implemented with (verbal, visual, audio and interactive).

To begin with, I will present a summary of the communicational contexts to answer RQ1 (In what kind of communication contexts is gamification used on arts organizations' websites?). Among the seven cases that I have presented in Analysis & Findings, the most common communicational context is a company introduction of some kind: 1) Penguin Classics World Map introduces the classic works of the company, 2) Louvre Interactive Floor Plan & Virtual Tour present the physical museum, 3) Louvre Tales of the Museum tells stories from the company's history and 4) Vienna State Opera Panoramic Tour enables users to traverse the opera building, similar to Louvre. The game company AB, on the other hand, presents two gamification cases that both deal with recruitment: 1) the Blizzard career page introduces the different roles within the company and 2) the King Challenge literally challenges the users to test their knowledge in a relevant field. Lastly, the PRH Reading Challenge and Book Bingo represent engagement in the industry: they do not concern only the books of PRH but literature and its enjoyment in general.

However, when also the brief examples presented at the beginning of each company subsection are acknowledged, it is possible to conclude that the communicational contexts that utilize some gamification are: 1) donation (PRH Readathon), 2) company values (King), 3) employee benefits (King), 4) company culture (AB) and 5) learning (Louvre). These examples host some gamification elements but not enough for deeper analysis. They are potential contexts to use gamification in, nonetheless. To conclude the discussion on the communication contexts, it is clear that many of the situations, that gamification is used in, are related to company introductions. Game companies are

different from the rest in the sense that they use gamification to communicate about recruitment and company culture. Since games are at the core of game companies, it is understandable that they use gamification to attract like-minded applicants. However, gamification could be used in recruitment elsewhere as well: the knowledge of potential applicants could be tested and company values could be presented so that the users would have the option to playfully test, how well they fit those values, for example - all the while keeping in mind that recruitment games are not indicative of how a potential employee may act in reality (Woźniak 2015, 267).

To answer RQ2 (What are the different gamification features on arts organizations' websites?), all the gamification features in the order of occurrences are listed below.

1. Narratives and Terminology	32 multimodal occurrences
2. Exploration	19 multimodal occurrences
3. Quests and Challenges	18 multimodal occurrences
4. Feedback	17 multimodal occurrences
5. Making Choices	16 multimodal occurrences
6. Development	12 multimodal occurrences
7. Unpredictability	9 multimodal occurrences
8. Group Identification	7 multimodal occurrences
9. Self-Expression and Differentiation	7 multimodal occurrences
10. Time Pressure	7 multimodal occurrences
11. Goal Setting	6 multimodal occurrences
12. Epic Meaning and Calling	6 multimodal occurrences
13. Rewards	5 multimodal occurrences
14. Competition	4 multimodal occurrences
15. Ownership	3 multimodal occurrences
16. Reputation	3 multimodal occurrences
17. Scarcity	2 multimodal occurrences
18. Social Influence	1 multimodal occurrence

Loss Avoidance is missing altogether, since it was not present in any of the cases. However, Loss Avoidance lies beneath some of them: for example, in the King Challenge it can be interpreted that the users avoid inputting the wrong answer, and in the Reading Challenge they may avoid losing to other people. Thus Loss Avoidance is more of an underlying motive than something that is implemented multimodally.

When looking at the top five on the list, it is clear that Narratives and Terminology is by far the most utilized gamification feature, with 32 occurrences. This phenomenon is evidence of the fact that good stories are called for and that written text is still alive.



Exploration came second, with 19 occurrences, which is not that surprising: hypertextual environments are all about exploring the electronic texts (Ryan 2001, 218). Quests and Challenges, the third feature, is connected to Exploration, as different commands and icons usually point the users to explore certain areas. Feedback is fourth on the list: in an interactive environment the system usually provides the users with Feedback on their actions. The fifth feature on the list, Making Choices, is connected to Exploration and Quests and Challenges, since the users make choices while choosing Quests and exploring the digital environment. Lastly, I would like to say a few words about Development that is sixth on the list. In my analysis, I interpreted Development quite loosely, counting many of the information screens as Development. The criterion was that anything that may teach the users something new can be interpreted to develop them, which explains why Development is so high on the list.

To answer RQ2a (How are the gamification features implemented on the websites?), the order of the multimodal elements can be viewed below.

1. Verbal	40 occurrences
2. Visual	31 occurrences
3. Interactive	21 occurrences
4. Audio	10 occurrences

As can be seen, verbal text is the most common multimodal element. This finding reflects that the most common gamification feature is Narratives and Terminology. Thus it is evident that even though the crisis that written text is argued to have now in the era of images and Instagram, written text is still the most efficient method to mediate information. Despite the multitude of images and videos nowadays, written text is often needed to anchor them with meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 26). Therefore, writing complements the new multimodal forms of communication, such as gamification.

Next I will briefly discuss all the four gamification categories in order to summarize how each element has been implemented multimodally. A combined table of all the cases and their multimodal occurrences concerning Achievement can be viewed in Appendix 9. 1) Rewards is mostly implemented visually, with icons that resemble badges and crowns. 2) Quests and Challenges is mostly implemented visually but also verbally. Vectors and semiotic icons point the way and direct the users to challenges (Kress 2010, 117; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 55). 3) Ownership is in most cases represented interactively:

owning something requires interaction between the users and the system. 4) Also Scarcity is implemented interactively: it is mostly present in recruitment situations that call for interaction with the system and the recruiters. Since Loss Avoidance did not occur in any of the cases, there are no multimodal elements representing it in Appendix 9.

The table in Appendix 10 combines all the cases and their multimodal occurrences concerning Interactive and Interpersonal Dynamics. 1) Competition is mostly represented interactively, since competition happens in relation to other people and is thus interpersonal. 2) Feedback is also implemented interactively, since in many of the cases, the systems or other people react to the users' actions. However, Feedback is also visual and aural, indicating that it can be implemented in a variety of ways – such as voices and flashing colours indicating correct or wrong answers in the King Challenge. 3) Social Influence has only one occurrence and it is interactive, since it happens in relation to other people. In this case, the influence takes place in social media (PRH Reading Challenge & Book Bingo). 4) Group Identification is mostly represented verbally. The reason for this may be that with written text, it is easier to name groups and their overarching characteristics. 5) Reputation is implemented only in interactive ways, as Reputation is gained in communal environments and in relation to other people. All in all, most of the features in Interactive and Interpersonal Dynamics are interactive: interplay between the users and different systems or other users constitutes the premise for the whole category.

The combined features concerning Role Play and their multimodal realizations can be viewed in Appendix 11. 1) Self-Expression and Differentiation is mostly implemented visually but also verbally. The visual implementations are in many cases frames: framing separates entities from others and thus represents individuality (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 176). 2) Making Choices is mostly expressed visually as well. Frames separate options from the environment, and deixis – semiotic icons of different forms – mark the paths that the users can choose by attending to these semiotic cues (Kress 2010, 117). Thus Making Choices resembles Quests and Challenges but takes another approach to the same phenomenon. 4) Also Goal Setting is represented visually with semiotic icons that mark the goals. Overall, Quests and Challenges, Making Choices and Goal Setting create a continuum, which is why they are represented similarly: Quests are presented to the users, who then make the Choice to pursue them and Set Goals. 4) Development is

implemented verbally. As mentioned previously, Development has been interpreted loosely in the present research, and all informational narratives constitute Development.

The table in Appendix 12 depicts all the gamification features and their multimodal implementations concerning Elements of Adventure. 1) As already mentioned, Narratives & Terminology is most commonly represented verbally. Written text anchors other modes with meaning, and gamification features can easily be realized with game-like language and stories. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 26). Written text is usually located at the top in order to name the communication situation, and other modes are at the bottom to depict the details. 2) Also Epic Meaning & Calling is illustrated verbally: meaning and calling are easier to clarify with certain vocabulary, such as the word ‘destiny’. 3) Exploration is shown visually. Similar to Quests and Challenges, semiotic icons lead the users on the path of Exploration, and Exploration indeed is strongly connected to Quests: quests are explored or the environment is explored as a quest. Moreover, Exploration is also connected to a first-person perspective that immerses the user in the space. 4) Unpredictability is interactive, because it is dependent on the system reacting to the actions of the users. 5) Time Pressure is also interactive, since the time is limited due to the constraints of the system or competition. Thus interaction is integral.

Overall, audio is rarely used, which is an area for development in gamified communication: music and sounds are good ways to reinforce the message and provide Feedback. Moreover, with sound it is possible to immerse consumers and thus increase their loyalty towards the brand – both online and offline (Cuny et al. 2015, 1031).

Most of the gamification cases and features studied in the present research are most likely unintentional: the communicators have not implemented them intentionally as gamification, but gamification happens as the result. Moreover, I have interpreted the gamification situations quite loosely. Therefore it is evident that gamification features can be and are inscribed almost everywhere, but their full potential has not been realized yet. For example, Development was a very common feature among the cases, but its reach could have been widened to mark progress with interactive badges and quests. The Reading Challenge and Book Bingo could be implemented digitally so that the users could be provided with interactive badges by the system to show their Development and Rewards. The users could mark which books they own to illustrate Ownership. The

Virtual and Panoramic Tours could be filled with quests to find certain paintings or answer questions about them. Thus, even though the gamified experiences highlight the game-like aspects of our lives, those aspects could be pronounced even more with versatile affordances (Huotari & Hamari 2012, 19).

The fact that these suggestions have not been implemented, however, does not indicate that the cases are not good examples of gamification. On the contrary, the cases go a long way to show that gamification is everywhere, and it does not always have to be fully digital and about gaining Rewards. Even though it can be argued that some gamification features are implemented simplistically, the present thesis proves that gamification can be used to highlight the atmosphere and language of games in order to reconstruct the way we think about brands and our everyday lives (Hamari & Lehdonvirta 2010, 27). Similarly, gamification can help companies stimulate their customers' imagination and encourage them to explore and discover the company from a new perspective.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

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The purpose of this research was to study how and in what kind of situations gamification elements are implemented on arts organizations' websites. The present chapter summarizes the research questions, literature, methods and findings, followed by practical implications that the thesis carries for corporate communication. After the Summary and Practical Implications, some limitations that affect the trustworthiness of the thesis will be discussed. Lastly, based on the findings of the present thesis, suggestions for further research will be provided.

### 6.1 SUMMARY

Gamification can be defined as incorporation of game-like features into non-game settings in order to increase engagement, reach goals or generate certain behaviour (Hsu et al. 2013, 428). Gamification has mostly been researched in game studies and not so much in economics, but lately gamification has been acknowledged also in business and marketing practices (ibid. 428; Hamari et al. 2014, 139). However, comprehensive research on gamification in corporate communication has not been studied at all, even though using any mode in communication requires understanding how it works (Seiffert & Nothhaft 2015, 255; Kress 2010, 97). Moreover, a detailed analysis on how gamification is implemented is lacking. Based on these notions, I formulated three research questions to tackle the gap in corporate communication and gamification research.

1. In what kind of communication contexts is gamification used on arts organizations' websites?
2. What are the different gamification features on art organizations' websites?
  - a. How are the gamification features implemented to engage the audience?

Arts industry was chosen as the research area, since many of the companies active in the industry are facing problems in the digital times (Moyon & Lecocq 2015). Gamification can help to tackle the issues, in addition to which gamification is a good method for arts – especially those fields of the arts industry that produce stories: literature, games, museums and performing arts.

Studies on gamification, multimodality, interaction and arts industry constituted the basis for the research. The most significant theory in the area of gamification was the study by Hsu et al., who divided gamification features into three categories: Achievement, Interpersonal Relationships and Role Play. Also Chou's Octalysis Framework provided a fruitful basis. Basing on Hsu et al., Chou and other gamification theorists, I combined the gamification features into one comprehensive framework, where 19 different features were divided into four categories (Figure 3), similar to Hsu et al: Achievement, Interactive and Interpersonal Dynamics, Role Play and Elements of Adventure.

Studies on multimodality, interaction and arts industry, on the other hand, provided the tools with which I analysed the arts industry and the gamification features on the case companies' websites. Gamification is all about different modes – written text, images, sounds (Flanagan 2014, 255) – and Kress & van Leeuwen's grammar of visual design proved the most important theory to analyse the multimodal ways gamification features are implemented in. However, Kress & van Leeuwen do not concentrate much on interactive communication, which is why I backed up my analysis with Ryan's research on interaction and immersion in virtual environments: the digital world can be explored through hyperlinks that respond and react to the users' actions when clicking on them. The ensuing atmosphere of adventure and exploration is at the core of gamification. Lastly, studies on the arts industry were added to provide perspective on the arena of the thesis, even though the findings do provide fruitful results about the implementation of gamification in any industry.

The case companies were chosen from four fields of the arts industry: literature, games, museums and performing arts were chosen as the scope of the research due to their similarities and differences that together provide a wide perspective on the arts industry as a whole. The websites of the largest organizations in each field were examined and one organization from each field was selected for detailed analysis. Penguin Random House represented publishing houses, Activision Blizzard game companies, Louvre museums and Vienna State Opera performing arts. The websites and the most interesting gamification features on them were analysed, basing the findings and implications on the presented literature.

## 6.2 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Answering my research questions provides practical implications, since they afford valuable answers to the use of gamification features in corporate communication. To answer RQ1, it was found that most of the communicational contexts that gamification is used in are different kinds of company introductions: company values, company culture, history and building, among others. Introducing the company building, its history and environment was especially common in Louvre and Vienna State Opera: opera houses and museums represent magnificent architecture that is part of the company identity and the users are invited and engaged to be a part of it. Game companies, on the other hand, use gamification for recruitment. Games are at the core of what game companies do, and thus they may want to use gamified experiences to attract like-minded applicants. Lastly, PRH introduced a gamified situation where the users were welcomed to celebrate the industry and love of books together with the company: the Reading Challenge and Book Bingo did not only relate to the offering of PRH itself but to literature in a wider sense.

To answer RQ2 and to thus shed light on the gamification features and their use in practice, I list the top five gamification features that were the most common ones in all the analysed cases combined. Also the multimodal realizations of each feature are explained to elaborate on the practical implications of the multimodal use of gamification in corporate communication.

1. **Narratives & Terminology** (32 occurrences) was by far the most common gamification feature. It was mostly realized verbally, because written text anchors images and other modes with meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 26).
2. **Exploration** (19 occurrences) was in most cases implemented visually, with different semiotic icons and cues directing the users and helping them navigate in the hypertextual environment that was usually shot from a first-person perspective (Kress 2010, 117). In this sense, Exploration is linked to Quests and Challenges that also were implemented similarly: after acknowledging a Quest, the users start to explore.
3. **Quests and Challenges** (18 multimodal occurrences) was implemented visually as well, but it also had a fair amount of verbal realizations. Vectors and semiotic icons point the users towards Quests and Challenges that function as prompts for

action (ibid 117; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 55). The visual icons that represent Quests and Challenges are a kind of to-do-list for the users. On the other hand, verbal realizations of Quests and Challenges include commands and challenging vocabulary.

4. **Feedback** (17 multimodal occurrences) was naturally at the top of the features and it was represented interactively, since in a hypertextual environment the digital system reacts to the actions of the users. However, Feedback is also implemented visually and with sounds in the cases that utilize audio. Thus Feedback is provided in varied ways.
5. **Making Choices** (16 multimodal occurrences) was realized mainly visually. Frames were used to separate options from the environment and each other. Also semiotic cues were used to point out the options in some cases. (Kress 2010, 117.)

To answer RQ2a, the multimodal elements that were used are listed below in the order of their occurrences.

1. Verbal (40 occurrences)
2. Visual (31 occurrences)
3. Interactive (21 occurrences)
4. Audio (10 occurrences)

This finding proves that written text is alive, since it is required to explicate meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 26). Audio elements were scarce due to the fact that only a couple of the cases included sound. Even though silence can be considered a choice nowadays, in most of the cases, silence was most probably unintentional (McKee 2006, 349). However, when audio elements were included, they were impactful and effective ways to enhance the gamification features. Sound immerses users effectively, and thus more companies could use it to improve consumer loyalty (Cuny et al. 2015, 1031).

Overall, the findings prove that gamification truly is everywhere and it can be utilized to demonstrate how our lives are constructed in game-like ways. However, some of the gamification cases in question are also unintentional and simplistic (Hamari & Lehdonvirta 2010, 27); the companies may not even be aware that they are using such a method as gamification. As such, the features are not utilised to their full potential and the gamification could be even more pronounced by adding small additional elements (Huotari & Hamari 2012, 19). The reason may be that companies' resources are lacking



when embarking into this new field (Brigham 2015, 478; Robson et al. 2015a, 412; Robson et al. 2015b, 352). Thus more knowledge and education in gamification could help the companies raise their gamified experiences to the next level.

On the other hand, the findings prove that communication does not always need to be gloriously gamified but the features can be implemented also with little effort, like in the PRH Reading Challenge. Gamification should not be implemented just for gamification's sake or as a quick fix (Brigham 2015, 474). It should be integrated with business goals and understanding of motivations in order to provide truly meaningful experiences for the users and employees, and relevant results for the company. (Robson et al. 2015a, 418.)

### **6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

There are some limitations that influence the validity of making very far-reaching conclusions about the results. Firstly, as a concept gamification is still relatively new and even gamification theorists are fighting about its definition (Deterding & Walz 2014, 6). The concept stems from game studies, which is why there is no definition that would seamlessly fit marketing or business contexts, not to mention corporate communication (Hamari et al. 2014, 153–154). The fact that gamification is often also confused with full-fledged games creates more limitations: the understanding of the phenomenon is still limited and there is a fine line between games and gamification. As mentioned, gamification features can be found anywhere and they are simple when they are broken down (Bogost 2014, 74). Moreover, as I have presented earlier, the gamification features and the multimodal elements overlap and look at same phenomena from differing perspectives, which creates limitations for interpreting them. Thus the interpretations of what constitutes gamification in the scope of the present thesis are widely subjective.

Secondly, the qualitative nature of the research poses a limitation for the thesis. The interpretations and analyses are my own. Even though the analysis is soundly based on theories of gamification, multimodality and interaction, there can still lie differences among different users and interpreters about how they perceive the gamified experiences (Hamari 2015, 46; Huotari & Hamari 2012, 19; Kress 2010, 41). Researchers bring their own knowledge and experience into play when analysing websites and multimodal texts, and every user sees communication situations from their own perspective, which orients

them to pay attention to certain things (Claffey & Brady 2014, 340; Kress 2010, 161; Pauwels 2012, 261). Moreover, the ability to understand a text depends on the reader's familiarity with the communicational methods (Ryan 2001, 160). The fact that I have familiarized myself with games and gamification directs my attention and preparedness to observe the case companies: a regular user may perceive them quite differently, and these differences are very difficult to explain with any theory (Kress 2010, 41). Overall, even though the present thesis provides information on multimodal gamification design, companies need to integrate that knowledge not only with understanding consumers' behaviour but also the psychological aspects affecting that behaviour (Hamari 2015, 43).

Thirdly and lastly, the number of the case companies constitutes a limitation for the study. Four case companies, each from a different field in the arts industry, do not provide enough data to make very extensive generalizations, in addition to which all of the companies represent Western communication. Nonetheless, the literature in this thesis is relevant and the subject is new: gamification has not been studied in a multimodal light, and there is no research on gamification in communication (Seiffert & Nothhaft 2015, 255). Thus my thesis paves the way in the areas of gamification and corporate communication studies and provides a lot of fruitful possibilities for further research.

#### **6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

As mentioned, the present thesis presents a starting point in an area that has not been researched previously (Seiffert & Nothhaft 2015, 255): corporate communication studies have remained quiet about the power of gamification, most probably due to the fact that some gamified situations are not perceived as gamification, because it is still such a new phenomenon. The scope of the thesis was limited to four case companies, and poses many opportunities to study gamification situations or multimodal aspects of gamification further in different companies and industries. Moreover, as the present research focused on Western companies, further research in other countries is an option – either focusing on one cultural arena or conducting a comparative study between cultures.

My thesis proved that game companies use gamification in recruitment, most probably to attract like-minded applicants. However, gamification in many forms could be used in other companies as well, in order to assess how applicants would handle different

situations or to playfully provide them with the option to test how well their values fit the company culture, for example. Role play can be used in recruitment, and for example the US Army uses gamification to test their applicants' skills (ibid. 255; Woźniak 2015, 267).

The present thesis was limited to the websites – and not to social media channels, for example – of the case companies and it excluded clear marketing of individual products. However, social media provides excellent opportunities due to its interactive nature. There is a connection between gamification and social media, because both of them use technological and social architecture to shape user experience (Lampe 2014, 463). Thus gamified communication in social media presents a valuable opportunity for research.

To tackle the problems of a purely qualitative research and subjective interpretations, it is possible to conduct a survey, taking into account many users and their perceptions of gamified situations. There may lie differences between different people and their interpretations. Surveys and interviews could account for these differences to some extent, even though the differences are difficult to study objectively. (Kress 2010, 41.)

Lastly, I studied online communication, because digital environment provides most opportunities for gamification. However, as it was noted in Analysis & Findings, AB uses gamification in its corporate culture: employees are rewarded for their service with different kinds of artefacts from games. AB also utilizes game-like vocabulary when discussing their corporate culture; for example, “level up” refers to development in the corporate community. Thus gamification is used to motivate, not only consumers outside the company, but also the employees within it (Robson et al. 2015a, 412). AB is a game company, which explains the use of game-like mechanics also in internal communication and non-digital environments. Nonetheless, it is very probable that different rewards, leaderboards and game-like motivation systems are used by many companies in their work: studying how gamification is present in non-digital environment, internal communication and corporate culture provides great possibilities for further research.

As mentioned, gamification is everywhere and merits further research both digitally and otherwise. Gamifying experiences illustrates that life and business are games; as the thesis has demonstrated, gamification can be implemented also with little effort. Meaningful content and linkage to business goals are at the core, and if companies are willing to start playing, they can raise their brand and consumer engagement to a new level.

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## APPENDICES

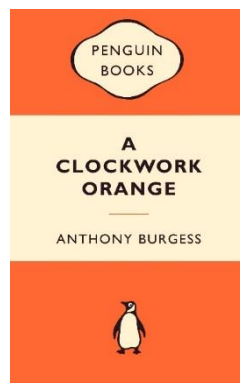
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Appendix 1. The hands and feet represent vectors. Retrieved March 26, 2016 from <http://catholicbenefitstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Teamwork-hands-and-feet-circle-300x225.jpg>



Appendix 3. Map of the role-playing game Skyrim. Retrieved April 5, 2016 from [http://vignette2.wikia.nocookie.net/elderscrolls/images/8/81/Skyrim\\_map\\_Silverdrift\\_Lair.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20111213200928](http://vignette2.wikia.nocookie.net/elderscrolls/images/8/81/Skyrim_map_Silverdrift_Lair.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20111213200928)



Appendix 2. The Penguin book cover carries Penguin colours: orange and black. Retrieved April 6, 2016 from <https://www.penguin.com.au/jpg-large/9780141037226.jpg>

## Challenge Your Shelf: Rock & Roll Reading Challenge

NOV 5, 2015 | READING CHALLENGES

**SHARE:** *Who said reading can't be competitive? Every few months, we'll be challenging you to read a list of selected books. Print out the challenge and cross the titles off as you go. Show off how much you've read by taking a picture and tweeting @penguinrandom or Instagramming (@penguinrandomhouse) with the hashtag #challengeyourshelf.*



Appendix 4. Position of the Penguin Random House Reading Challenge form on the page. Retrieved March 15, 2016 from <http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/blog/2015/11/05/challenge-your-shelf-rock-roll-reading-challenge>

## Romance Book Bingo

APR 11, 2015 | BOOK BINGO

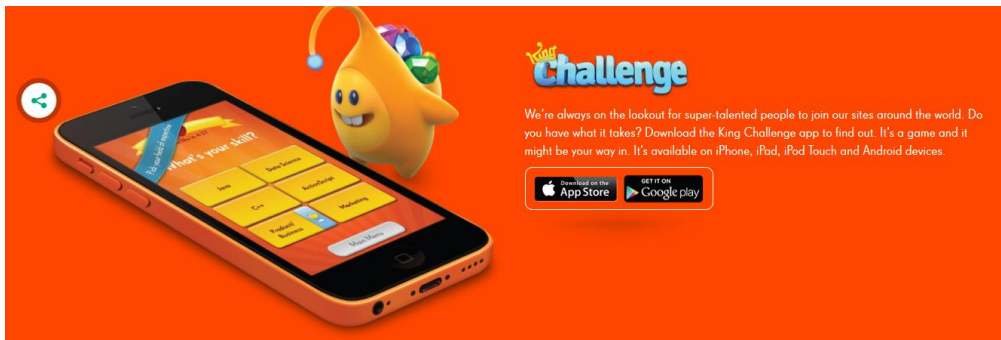
**SHARE:** *Let's play Bingo! We'll be featuring printable, themed Bingo cards seasonally. If you've read a book that matches a trope on one of the squares, cross it off. If you cross off any five squares in a row, that's Bingo! Take a photo and tweet @penguinrandom or post to Instagram with the hashtag #bingoreads. Tell us some of the books you liked! We'll feature the books we read, the books you read, and challenge staff members to play.*



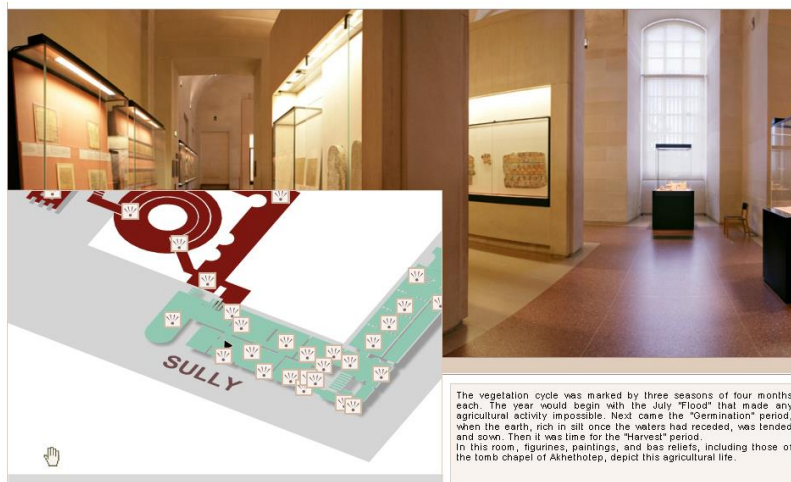
(click image to see full size and print out)



Appendix 5. Position of the Penguin Random House Book Bingo form on the page. Retrieved March 15, 2016 from <http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/blog/2015/04/11/romance-book-bingo>



Appendix 6. The King Challenge application section on King's website. Retrieved March 16, 2016 from <https://jobs.king.com/roles>



Appendix 7. The Location Map on Louvre Virtual Tour. Retrieved March 17, 2016 from <http://musee.louvre.fr/visite-louvre/index.html?defaultView=rdc.s46.p01&lang=ENG>.

## Tales of the Museum

Dominique-Vivant Denon entices young and old into his workshop—an Aladdin's cave of treasures and memories. This emblematic figure was the first director of the Louvre in 1802. He has come back to life for us as a whimsical and exuberant adventurer who may not know everything, but has lived in the Louvre for over two centuries, mingling with artists, curators, museum attendants, visitors—maybe you!—so he's a boundless source of true stories, anecdotes, and memories about the artworks and his own life...

Some fifty anecdotes and five stories about the museum and its masterpieces are accessible in his workshop, by clicking on objects that appear at random, by choosing from a list in the portfolio or by using the index mode. As you explore the workshop, the mysteries and secrets surrounding the creation, discovery, acquisition, or restoration of a number of artworks are revealed by these "incredible-but-true" tales.



Appendix 8. Louvre's Tales of the Museum and the introduction above it. Retrieved March 17, 2016 from <http://www.louvre.fr/en/tales-of-the-museum>

	Rewards	Quests and Challenges	Ownership	Scarcity	Loss Avoidance
Verbal		1) PRH: title 2) PRH: bingo guidelines 3) AB: narrative introduction 4) AB: King CTA 5) AB: kingdom narrative 6) Louvre: command	1) PRH: first person CTA		
Visual	1) PRH: little badges 2) AB: crowns 3) Louvre: icon i	1) PRH: map icons 2) PRH: little badges 3) Louvre: building 4) Louvre: arrows 5) Louvre: painting icons 6) Louvre: object movements 7) VSO: hotspots			
Audio		1) Louvre: object sounds			
Interactive	1) PRH: bingo 2) AB: recruitment situation	1) AB: recruitment situation	1) PRH: option to buy 2) PRH: CTA to buy	1) AB: recruitment situation 2) AB: recruitment situation	

Appendix 9. Combined table of Achievement.

	Competition	Feedback	Social Influence	Group Identification	Reputation
Verbal	1) PRH: instruction	1) VSO: game instructions		1) PRH: hashtag 2) PRH: hashtag 3) AB: role descriptions 4) AB: expertise area	
Visual		1) AB: red/green colour 2) AB: crowns 3) Louvre: icon i 4) Louvre: objects movements 5) Louvre: gaze 6) VSO: day/night		1) AB: role icons	
Audio		1) AB: sound 2) AB: voice 3) Louvre: object sounds 4) speeches			
Interactive	1) PRH: bingo 2) AB: recruitment situation 3) AB: recruitment situation	1) PRH: information provided by map icons 2) PRH: some 3) PRH: some 4) Louvre: location map 5) Louvre: objects 6) VSO: navigation icons 7) VSO: hotspots	1) PRH: some		1) PRH: some 2) PRH: some 3) AB: good scores for recruitment

Appendix 10. Combined table of Interactive and Interpersonal Dynamics.



	Self-Expression & Differentiation	Making Choices	Goal Setting	Development
Verbal	1) PRH: guidelines 2) AB: role descriptions 3) AB: questions about skills	1) PRH: book options 2) PRH: book guidelines 3) AB: question	1) VSO: area list	1) PRH: author and book introductions 2) PRH: reading 3) PRH: reading 4) Louvre: painting information 5) Louvre: room descriptions 6) Louvre: object information 7) Louvre: mysteries 8) VSO: information boxes
Visual	1) PRH: free space 2) PRH: framing 3) AB: role icons 4) AB: expertise frames	1) PRH: map icons 2) PRH: high angle 3) AB: role icons 4) AB: expertise frames 5) answer frames 6) Louvre: arrows 7) Louvre: painting icons 8) VSO: navigation icons 9) VSO: arrows and footprints	1) PRH: little badges 2) PRH: bingo row 3) AB: crowns 4) Louvre: painting icons	1) AB: crowns 2) Louvre: mysteries
Audio		1) Louvre: background music/ silence		1) AB: background music 2) Louvre: mysteries
Interactive		1) PRH: option to buy 2) PRH: CTA to buy 3) Louvre: location map 4) Louvre: objects	1) AB: good scores for recruitment	

Appendix 12. Combined table of Role Play.

	Narratives & Terminology	Epic Meaning & Calling	Exploration	Unpredictability	Time Pressure
Verbal	1) PRH: map title 2) PRH: map introduction 3) PRH: author and book introductions 4) PRH: title x2 5) PRH: instruction x2 6) PRH: hashtag x2 7) PRH: books x2 8) AB: title 9) AB: narrative introduction 10) AB: role descriptions 11) AB: "ultimate test" 12) AB: Kingdom narrative 13) Louvre: painting information 14) Louvre: room descriptions 15) Louvre: object information 16) Louvre: title 17) Louvre: vocabulary 18) Louvre: introductory narrative 19) Louvre: mysteries 20) VSO: information boxes	1) PRH: map introduction 2) AB: title 3) AB: "ultimate test" 4) AB: Kingdom narrative	1) PRH: countries 2) PRH: map introduction 3) PRH: exploring books 4) PRH: exploring books 5) VSO: area list	1) PRH: bingo guidelines	
Visual	1) AB: adventurous colours 2) Louvre: mysteries 3) VSO: opera video	1) AB: blue colour	1) PRH: world map 2) PRH: icons 3) Louvre: painting location 4) Louvre: icon i 5) Louvre: arrows 6) Louvre: object colour 7) adventurous colours 8) VSO: hotspots 9) VSO: arrows and footprints	1) Louvre: objects movements 2) Louvre: setting 3) VSO: hotspots	1) AB: circle
Audio	1) Louvre: mysteries 2) VSO: opera video			1) Louvre: speeched	1) AB: clock sound 2) AB: ringing sound
Interactive			1) PRH: travel metaphor 2) Louvre: location map 3) Louvre: objects 4) Louvre: objects 5) VSO: path and building	1) AB: order of questions 2) Louvre: objects 3) Louvre: objects 4) VSO: hotspots	1) PRH: reading quicker than others x2 2) PRH: challenges renewal 3) PRH: bingo renewal

Appendix 11. Combined table of Elements of Adventure.