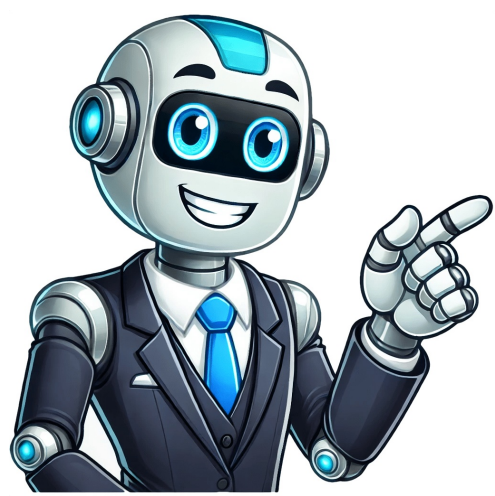


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HowLongToBeatLovers in a Dangerous Spacetime NewsLoad More It's hard to believe but this week marks five years since the release of Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime. We're extremely grateful for all the players who have given our weird game a chance. None of this would have been possible without your support, so from the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU. Now that we have some perspective on selling a video game over the course of five years, we wanted to share some data, because our sales graph didn't take the shape we expected, and we thought it might be of interest to other developers. TL;DR: Lovers had an okay-but-not-great launch, and we expected the game would fizzle out fairly quickly, but in fact sales ended up increasing for a few years, and it ended up being quite successful, thanks in part to updates, ports, discounts, word-of-mouth, and of course luck (don't want to pretend that there isn't a TON of random chance affecting how games fare). Launch and Year 1 We launched the original 2-player version of Lovers on Steam and Xbox One on September 9, 2015. It's a niche game in that it features local co-op, not online. We knew that would limit its sales, but we didn't know by how much. There were a few other local multiplayer indie games getting buzz back then, like TowerFall, so we figured there could be a market for it. But we had no way to gauge it. Here's the shape of our first year of revenue: Our biggest spike was our launch. We hired a PR company to help us get blog and review coverage, which more or less worked, but our second week of sales declined by half and it continued to drop from there. We ran some 33% discounts after only a couple months to take advantage of Steam's Autumn and Winter sales (plus we were extremely fortunate to get some front page rotation in Winter) and we got some brief boosts, but then quickly returned to baseline. It was disappointing, but not really surprising. 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We kept track of our average daily revenue for each sale, and if it started declining significantly we'd increase the discount percentage. By the end of our second year we were doing 55% off. And just a note — even though all those spikes make it look like we were constantly on sale, since each platform has their own sales schedule there was actually a lot of time we were just sitting in the stores at full price. Plus there were times when we couldn't get platforms to include us in sales, or give us store placement, leading to little mini spikes where we'd be on sale but not actually have a large revenue bump. Years 3 to 5: Switch time We would never have expected we'd have our highest sales in our 3rd year of release, but hey, thanks Nintendo! We launched on Switch on October 3, 2017, seven months after the console was released. That launch remains our highest sales spike, and the Switch has been our best-selling platform. In a way it was the ideal platform — the audience is open to colorful, approachable games, 2D gameplay, and the base console even came with two controllers! Plus we pushed hard to release in the first year of the console, meaning the storefront was less crowded. It also meant that we got there in time for the Switch's first holiday season, which ended up being our second highest spike... until two weeks later, when we ran a 33% off sale in the first week of January 2018 to reach all the brand new Switch owners. Then that became our second highest spike. There's not a ton more to note in our sales history, just a lot of running our own discounts on all the platforms, and saying yes to any themed discounts that the account managers at the platforms tell us about, plus we kept doing our own sales around Valentine's day. We have been nudging down our discount percent over time, and we found a sweet spot at 60% off. We tried 67%, to get us under the \$5 price point, but for some reason it wasn't as successful, so we went back to 60%. Occasionally the platforms will ask us to go lower, but for now we've been pushing back since this seems to be a good price. One interesting thing (and really it's only interesting for local co-op games) was that in Nov 2019 Steam launched its Remote Play Together service. This service lets people play local-only multiplayer games together online via streaming. Lovers is a perfect candidate to benefit from that, and it even got some placement in the service launch promo. Afterwards, we noticed our baseline Steam sales stopped their slow decline and reversed upwards again, although it's hard to know exactly how much difference it made because there was also the usual noisy year-end sales bumpiness. It doesn't seem huge, but we didn't have to do anything for it — just a lucky break. Thanks Valve! And finally, there was the surreal Covid sales bump in spring of this year, when widespread lockdowns meant people were stuck at home playing video games. Sales went back to normal fairly quickly, though. And that brings us up to date. Overall platform sales breakdown Steam and Switch have been our main breadwinners (even though Switch launched two years later), but Xbox One and PS4 have been solid performers too. Being on all the platforms has been hugely significant. Final takeaways Here's what we believe helped us avoid the immediate sales decay we'd been expecting. • Support! Even though our initial launch was disappointing, we found it was super valuable to keep supporting the game with patches, updates, and translations. • Porting! Despite the long delay between our different launches, it didn't seem to hurt our arrival on subsequent platforms (especially if you can launch early in a console's lifecycle). • Teaming up with other games in similar genres! In our case, the Cozy Couch Co-op Bundle was wonderful for building awareness. It wasn't just a random bundle — it came from seeing what our audience was talking about and looking for. • Run discounts! Run all the discounts! It's also useful to keep track of daily revenue during discounts to inform what percentage to choose for the next discount. • Luck! Always remember to have luck. Good luck! And finally, let us say one more time: THANKS FOR PLAYING. We're super excited to finally be able to announce that we secretly partnered with Super Rare Games to release a physical collector's edition of LOVERS on Nintendo Switch. There are only 3000 copies in existence so get yours before they're gone! GET IT NOW! We're so excited that you can now pick up Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime alongside BattleBlock Theatre, Overcooked, Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes, and Moon Hunters in the COZY COUCH CO-OP BUNDLE on Steam and SAVE 20%! Lover in a Dangerous Spacetime is in the Humble Indie Bundle 17 alongside Super Time Force, Octodad, Nuclear Throne, Galak-Z, Lethal League, The Beginner's Guide, and more! The League of Very Empathetic Rescue Spaceonauts (LOVERS) are looking for new recruits and they need your help! Starting now, you will be able to assemble your crew of up to 3 or 4 players. Yes, you read that right... We're super excited to be able to announce that the free 4-player update for Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime is available now for Xbox One, PS4, PC, Mac and Linux. We made the critically acclaimed couch co-op space adventure twice as crazy with twice the number of players. This weekend, invite some friends over for pizza and video games, stay up all night with your siblings, or go on a double date in space! Woke up this morning to the amazing news that Lovers is nominated for 3 BAFTAs (Game Design, Multiplayer, and Debut)! Thanks so much to our British academy pals. Woo commonwealth! And congrats to all the other nominees! The awesome people at Fangameer have created a LOVERS IN A DANGEROUS SPACETIME T-shirt. Not only is the design super awesome, but it's glow-in-the-dark! Get one before they are sold out of this world! To help you celebrate a very happy Valentine's Day we didn't just launch LOVERS on PS4, we thought we'd add something a little sweeter by putting the game on sale for all platforms!!! What better way to spend this Sunday, than curling up on the couch, turning down the lights and arguing over who has the shield, fighting over the captain's chair, and screaming "OMG, what is that? Run!!" 30% Off on PS4 America 30% Off on PS4 Europe 33% Off on Xbox One 34% Off on Steam After all, nothing says "love" like a barrage of missiles exploding into a giant robotic space beetle. Great news to unbox! Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime is about to enter to our actual reality with a COLLECTOR'S BOX OF ULTIMATE LOVE, thanks to our pals Indiebox. The collector's box contains gigabuckets of love, plus collectibles, a soundtrack CD, colour manual, Steam key and a DRM-free copy of the game. Having a physical edition is super special to us, as the art department of Asteroid Base HQ first learned to draw by copying weird US Mega Man cartridge art. And it's something we never thought would happen, until we met Indiebox. Working on all the secret little collectibles with them has been AWESOME. To get the Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime collector's box, sign up at Indiebox by Feb 18th, 11:59pm. At last! Happy to finally announce that Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime is coming to PlayStation 4 on February 9 — just in time for Valentine's day! Adam's been working like a fiend over the holidays to get the port all spick and span, and we couldn't be happier with our release date. Read more in Jamie's post on the PlayStation blog. Windows mac OS SteamOS + Linux Minimum OS * Windows XP or laterProcessor: 1.7 GHz Core 2 DuoMemory: 2 GB RAMGraphics: 256 MB VRAMDirectX: Version 9.0Storage: 900 MB available spaceAdditional Notes: Gamepad(s) recommended * Starting January 1st, 2024, the Steam Client will only support Windows 10 and later versions. Minimum OS: OS X 10.7 or laterProcessor: 1.7 GHz Core 2 DuoMemory: 2 GB RAMGraphics: 256 MB VRAMStorage: 900 MB available spaceAdditional Notes: Gamepad(s) recommended Page 2 If you are having trouble, email us at feedback@asteroidbase.com. Frequently Asked Questions Where are my save files? Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime uses two save files, one for your game data (save.dat) and one for your system settings (settings.dat). Here is where they are located: Windows C:\Users\{YOUR USERNAME}\Documents\LoversInADangerousSpacetime OS X /Users/{YOUR USERNAME}/Library/Application Support/LoversInADangerousSpacetime Linux (depending on your distro) \$HOME/.local/share/LoversInADangerousSpacetime or \$XDG_DATA_HOME/LoversInADangerousSpacetime Note that the Steam version of Lovers uses Steam Cloud, so if you delete your local save.dat file Steam will automatically replace it with the synced version if you have Steam Cloud enabled. Steam Cloud does not sync the settings.dat file. Help! The game just loads to a black screen! There are number of reasons why this could happen. Here are some potential fixes: Windows Make sure your video and audio drivers are up-to-date. Make sure you have write privileges for your "Documents" directory (e.g. in Windows 10, C:\Users\{USERNAME}\Documents). Unplug any external audio accessories you may have plugged in (including HDMI) and relaunch the game. Close any unnecessary programs you have running (especially things like Skype). Make sure the game is configured properly in NVIDIA Control Panel/AMD Catalyst/other applicable GPU software. If using Steam, disable the in-game Steam Overlay. Try each of the following launch options (only use one at a time). Note that these are not officially supported, so they may make the game misbehave. If you're using Steam, see here for more information on how to set launch options. -force-d3d11 (uses DirectX 11 instead of DirectX 9) -force-opengl (uses OpenGL instead of DirectX) Try using the -popupwindow launch option to make the game run in borderless window mode instead of exclusive fullscreen. OS X Delete the files ~/Library/Preferences/unity.AsteroidBase.LoversInADangerousSpacetime.plist and ~/Library/Application Support/LoversInADangerousSpacetime/settings.dat then relaunch the game. Note that this will not affect your game progress, but it will delete your preferences video settings, controls mappings, etc.). If using Steam, disable the in-game Steam Overlay. Why won't my wireless DualShock 4 work on Windows? Unfortunately this is a limitation of our engine (Unity). There is no way to tell the difference between a DS4 that is connected via USB or Bluetooth. That would be fine on its own, but the button mappings for the two types of connections are contradictory. As such, we can only support one of the ways of connecting and we chose USB. However, there is a fairly straightforward workaround: use the the DS4aWindows utility. This will convince your computer that the DS4 is actually an Xbox controller and everything should work just fine. We strongly recommend you use the "Hide DS4" option to make sure the game doesn't see both your actual DS4 and the emulated Xbox controller. Why is gamepad 1 controlling player 2 and gamepad 2 controlling no one? Please make sure you don't have any other devices plugged in to your computer that the game make think is a controller, for instance a racing wheel, flight stick or drawing tablet. If the issue persists, please try remapping the buttons and sticks on each gamepad through the "Controls" section of "Help & Options". Why is the game acting weird with my multi-monitor setup (especially on Linux)? The first time the game launches it will automatically try to use the same resolution as your computer. If you are using multiple monitors, this may lead to the game be spread across all monitors. There are two ways to change this: If possible, in the game navigate to the "Settings" section of "Help & Options". Here you will be able to adjust a variety of settings, including toggling fullscreen and choosing the resolution. If you are unable to navigate in-game, the settings.dat file (mentioned above) is stored in plain text, so you are able to edit it as needed. The section of the file relevant to fullscreen/resolution will look something like: "fullscreen":true "width":1920,"height":1080 To make the game not fullscreen, change true to false. You may also want to adjust the width and height as needed. Changelog It's hard to believe but this week marks five years since the release of Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime. We're extremely grateful for all the players who have given our weird game a chance. None of this would have been possible without your support, so from the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU. Now that we have some perspective on selling a video game over the course of five years, we wanted to share some data, because our sales graph didn't take the shape we expected, and we thought it might be of interest to other developers. 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It's also useful to keep track of daily revenue during discounts to inform what percentage to choose for the next discount. • Luck! Always remember to have luck. Good luck! And finally, let us say one more time: THANKS FOR PLAYING. Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums Designing a fun 2P co-op powerup system was a big challenge in Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime. Pull up a chair and dig into the process with us in a new Gamasutra Deep Dive, complete with gifs (obviously!). But why was a combo system more engaging than just adding more gem variety? I think it's because we were engaging a player's imagination — they would try to predict what certain combos would result in. If a Beam Turret resulted in a railgun weapon, and a Metal Turret resulted in a swinging space flail, what could a Beam-Metal turret be? Players would want to see if they were right, and fill in that space in their mental chart of upgrades. Full article on Gamasutra. Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums The following is a guest post by Ryan Henwood, who handled all the music and sound for Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime. The soundtrack is available here. The Asteroid Base guys have talked about the inspirations and creation of Lovers at length, but I'd like to talk about the beginnings of the game from the audio perspective. In 2012, I decided to take part in the Toronto Global Game Jam after being encouraged by a close audio friend. Audio people were in short supply, so I was responsible for developing the music and sound effects for an entire room of teams. In the end I composed music and designed sound for 5 games within the 48 hours of the jam. Lovers was the last game that I worked on, and I only had an hour or two to create and deliver. The first renditions of the opening and gameplay music were developed at this time, along with 8 sound effects. Initially the gameplay music (now called "Launch Into Deep Space") was just a one-minute loop. (In the final game, there are 19 pieces of music ranging from 4 to 6 minutes in length.) The genre of the music was completely out of my comfort zone—I had never composed happy spacey dance music before. Most of the time my compositions are kind of dark, so this was new to me. I started experimenting with different synthesizers and fell in love with Arturia's CS80 and Arrp2600 plugins. These plugins are modeled off of the 1970s classics which have been featured in some popular science fiction films and shows such as Blade Runner and Doctor Who. I wanted the music to sound and feel vintage and not "chiptunes", because a lot of games have been composing music in that timbre. The use of the vintage synthesizer rather than chip sounds gives it a 1970s science fiction feeling, which overall matches the design and inspiration of the game. After the jam, Asteroid Base decided that they were going to continue to develop Lovers and I was excited to continue providing the sound design and music. The first thing I wanted to do was revise the music I had written at the jam. It was rushed at the time, so now I could go back and really sink my teeth into it. A lot of time was spent adjusting the performances, changing oscillator wave shapes and just generally messing around with settings until I found the sound I wanted. Before this project, I didn't have much experience in using synthesizers for music. I had used them mostly to create sound effects and ambiences in animation television shows. At first I was slow at being able to compose exactly what I heard in my head, but that's the fun of experimenting and learning. Throughout the composing of Lovers there were many creative mistakes that paid off. There was one instance where I was using a chiptunes synthesizer and I was hoping to make it increasingly harsh so it would stick out of the mix more. I added a bit crusher to the process chain and instead of making the sound harsh, it actually calmed and smoothed it out. This worked better in the song than what I was expecting. So it stayed. The original song from the game jam, "Launch Into Deep Space", was extended to about two and half minutes before I moved on to composing the additional gameplay songs. During the development process we had decided that the music length didn't need to be kept to a minimum, and I had free reign to make the songs as long as I wanted. With "Launch Into Deep Space" being rather short, I decided to try and extend it so that it wouldn't be so repetitive and annoying to the player. I extended the song twice, and it ended up being close to 6 minutes long. While I was lengthening it, I wrote a great melody on the ARP2600 but I felt it didn't particularly fit into that song. Ironically, the melody line cut from the first song became the main theme and inspiration for "Forever Space Love", which is now the game's ending song. Follow Ryan Henwood on Twitter at @DeepRootsSound. Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums The Ceraf enemy uses timers to control its pre-shoot, shoot and post-shoot animations and actions. Warning: Super dry, tool-focused devlog incoming! One of the tasks we find ourselves doing quite frequently while working on Lovers is controlling the timing of things (loop an animation for x seconds, randomize AI behaviour every y seconds, etc.). There are many ways to accomplish these types of actions, for instance you could do something like this: // More Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums When we showed Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime at PAX East last month, we got asked a few times about how we were handling our space backgrounds, so I thought I'd go into a bit of detail. We're aiming for a rich, 2.5D neon fantasy look, and we wanted our backgrounds to fit this world and feel alive. We ended up combining a few different elements for the effect we wanted. // More Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums The simplest approach to pausing your game in Unity is to set Time.timeScale = 0. While the time scale is 0, Update methods in your scripts will still called, but Time.deltaTime will always return 0. This works well if you want to pause all on-screen action, but it is severely limiting if you need animated menus or overlays, since Time.timeScale = 0 also pauses animations and particle systems. // More Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums Whenever I buy a new "Art Of" book, no matter how great the concept paintings are, I often wish I could also see the earlier, rougher, uglier stuff that must exist from when the designers were still battling around ideas and trying to figure out what they were making. On that note, here are some sketchbook pages from the past year-and-a-half of Lovers development. Working on paper, without an undo, helps to focus on the broad decision-making stuff and avoid getting bogged down in details. My sketchbook drawings have gotten rougher over the years as I've moved more mid-stage work to the computer, so with that warning, let's dive in... // More Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums We've had ground-based enemies, which we call Walkers, in Lovers since way back in the days of the GDC 2013 build. Until recently these enemies have been tethered to spherical (well, circular) planets, so programming their movement was simply a matter of ensuring that their distance from the center of the planet was constant and their velocity was tangential to the vector from the enemy's position to the planet's center. However, as we continued to add new scenarios for players to experience we needed Walkers to be able to traverse more exotic terrain. Being the lazy developers that we are, our first attempt to implement a more robust walking algorithm was the simplest and most naive that we could come up with. Luckily for us, it worked out pretty well. // More Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums Following up on Matt's last devlog, I'm going to wrap up our character creation process by discussing how we are rendering the characters in Lovers in a Dangerous Spacetime. Warning: It's very Unity-y. // More Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums I recently had a chance to assemble this screen-cap footage from earlier last year showing our modeling/rigging/animation process for Lovers: Although it's a 2D game, we're creating the assets as 3D geometry, using flat planes with transparent textures (more on that here). This might seem like a lot of trouble for one tiny little bunny friend, but the 3D approach lets us re-use the rig for all the humanoid in the game, including the player characters, just by swapping textures. It's handy. Software: Photoshop, Maya, Unity. Follow the Discussion on the TIGSource Forums in library English & 9 more 13.6913.69 Check out now Add to cart Buy as a gift Check out now Add to cart