



Exercise 2 – Live Ops - Wiz Khalifa's WeedFarm

A) Describe the game structure and gameplay



Wiz Khalifa's Weed Farm is a plant growing simulation game from the “clicker” game genre in which players can harvest weed plants to earn increasing amounts of currency within a positive feedback loop.

To play the game, players will need to use currency to plant “strands” of weed plants which they can tap to “harvest” to earn coins or, when certain conditions are met, “pick buds” to earn a higher tier currency.

As players progress through the game, they will use the earned currency to upgrade the already purchased plants to return higher profits, increase the speed of their growth and unlock new weed strains.

The player will need to reset their progress multiple times for them to dramatically increase their progression rate, as resetting will add a progression multiplier in the form of currency.

For retention purposes, the game has multiple parallel instances of the same game mechanic where players can switch between various farm locations, each with its own unique set of strands and currency. One of these instances will be a limited time event from which players can earn new strands and perks for their other farms.

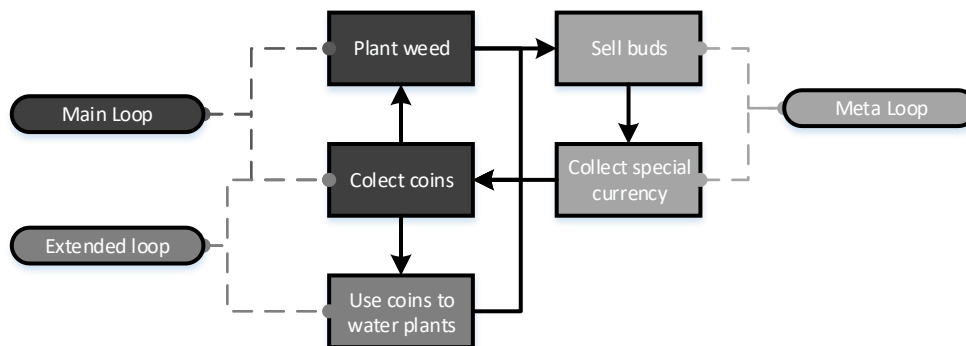
B) Create a flowchart of one of the gameplay loops.

The game has several gameplay loops. Below I've presented 3 of them:

Main loop – is the first loop players encounter and acts as the backbone of the game as players start off with enough gold to make their first weed plant purchase which will grant them more currency to buy more weed plants. This is a positive feedback loop with no self-mitigation

Extended loop – is the second loop presented to players in which they can increase the currency multiplier of a purchased plant by using the same currency plants provide. This is a positive feedback loop with no self-mitigation.

Meta loop – is the third loop presented to players during mid-game, in which they can sell the plants and reset their progress. This in turn, gives them enough gold coins to start over



C) Explain how monetization works in the game that you chose.

Monetization is done in 2 ways:

- Premium currency
- Targeted ads

Premium currency can be purchased in various bundles with localized pricing values. This currency can be spent in-game on an assorted array of loot crates and various “income booster” packs, with varying mechanics.

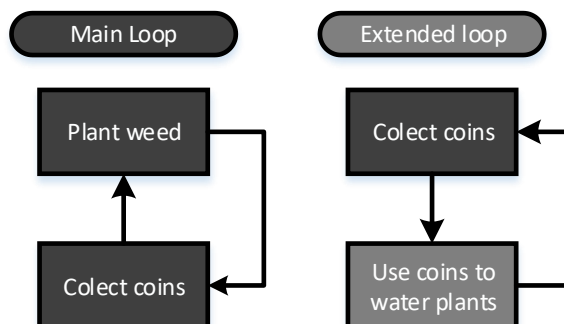
Players can purchase the premium currency using the premium currency tab at the top right of every item sale or upgrade window. Currency sales and purchase suggestions are scattered throughout the interface to highlight and incentivize the sale.

Targeted ads are opt-in on every time players switch between levels, when they need to boost production and when they need to harvest the weed buds using the meta game loop.

D) Pick one feature of the game that you think it does best. Explain why.



The game does a good job at early user retention as it has a very simple main game loop, with a very simple extended loop that keeps the player engaged. Add to that the speed at which players need to collect their coins early on, players will feel the urge to stay for “one more tap”.



E) If you were to cut a feature of that game, what feature would it be? Explain why.

I would cut part of the weed harvest meta loop as it adds to the initial confusion for new players.

The part I'd cut is the secondary currency used in the meta loop. This is a remnant of the old clicker games who needed a way to avoid using absurd number length and it's confusing for players having to keep track of so many currencies (unique for each level).

Removing it would also cut down on development time by not needing new art assets and code for every new event. On top of that, it's yet another currency that can risk hitting absurd values and crash the player's account.


On the development side, it would also push for the design of a new type of negative currency feedback loop in the game using the current assets.

F) Create a Live Ops event for the New Year's Eve.

The cookie cutter version (same same):

A new level which has the normal elements of all the other locations but with Christmas themes:

Category	Description
Environment and decorators	North pole snowy setting with a special 9x9 game grid. A corner of Santa's cabin visible with a weed leaf decoration on it and part of Santa's sleigh visible nearby with presents next to it. To the left of the area, a dedicated space must be made for the interactive currency booster.
	An animated snowfall overlay must be added
	A total of 1 animated and 3 non-animated assets are needed for decorators
Plants	A set of Christmas themed plant assets need to be made similar in theme with the one below:

	 <p>The animation should include snow particles flying off the plants when players swipe over them.</p> <p>A total of 9 animated assets are needed for plants</p>
Drones	<p>Drones will be swapped with either “weed fairies” or flying north pole “weed elf” sprites</p> <p>A total of 1 animated asset is needed for drones</p>
DJ booth	<p>An animated “weed fairy” or “weed elf” will be present in front of a line of Christmas bells of different sizes</p> <p>A total of 1 animated asset is needed for the booth</p>
Sky lights	<p>Christmas decoration lights will hang overhead.</p> <p>A total of 1 non-animated asset is needed for the</p>
Weed bud vehicle	<p>A pimped out convertible with a Santa’s sleigh theme</p> <p>A total of 1 animated asset is needed for the vehicle</p>

The fresh take (same same but different... but still the same)

A fresh take on an already existing mechanic, with slight modifications.

Category	Description
Environment and drones	<p>Instead of a new level, a snowfall overlay will be added, while drones on all levels will be replaced with an animated “weed fairy” or “weed elf”. Tapping on that elf will take the player on a separate slice of the same level where the UI will be removed as it is in the case of the weed bud collection minigame but with the plants removed as well. A swarm of “weed fairies” or “weed elves” will invade the player’s screen and they’ll be able to tap them and collect currency as they would with the normal drones.</p> <p>This will ensure the continued cycling of the usual events without interruption, as well as something fresh for this yearly special event.</p> <p>A total of 2 animated assets would be required for this event.</p>

The Advent Calendar

In addition to the above options, the daily calendar will be converted into a special advent calendar which rewards players with items every day, for the event duration.

The advent calendar will roll a random item a reward for the entire week, and each passing day will simply award players with persistent increase in quantity for that item until the end of the calendar week.

Item	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Jars	1	1	1	2	3	4	5
Coins	2k	4k	8k	25k	7b	12b	230
Jars	1	1	X	1	2	x	3

Players can choose to use premium currency to reroll the random item reward for that week at any time

Players can also use premium currency to obtain all the rewards they've missed for the week

The monetization:

During the event, the game can be monetized in several ways:

- Event deals
- Gem sale
- Ads
- Daily reward recovery

Event deals will provide players with the opportunity to buy permanent boosters (1 per player).

Gem sales will be in the form of the "Pack of The Day" which allows players to buy one pack cheaper than others. A different item will be on sale every day for the event duration.

Ads will be more frequent for players and allow them to "double up" on their usual ad income boost when switching levels.

If players miss their **advent calendar daily rewards** they can use premium currency to purchase the lost rewards and be "up to date" so they won't be left behind with the daily item counter