

## The Pokemon Franchise

Started in 1995 and the trademark is owned by Nintendo. It began as a pair of video games for the Gameboy but now includes more video games, an animated TV series, a trading card game, 17 films, comics, books and toys.

It is the second best-selling video game franchise behind Mario and is one of the highest grossing media franchises of all time.

It has a huge fan base because of its long history and the way in which it has adapted to include new technology and a changing fan base

### Production Context

*The situation or circumstances in which a media product is produced with significant factors influencing the production of it.*

Pokemon Go was produced by Niantic and Nintendo.

1. Uses **augmented reality** and is playable on iOS and Android devices.
2. Uses the same tech as Google Maps (GPS).
3. Had an extended release: 6th July 2016 USA, Australia and NZ then later in other countries (e.g. South Korea in Jan 2017).
4. Free to download and play but there is the ability to spend real money by purchasing PokeCoins which allow you to get extra items and enhancement

### Cultural Context

*How the product reflects the society and culture in which it was made through aspects of its production, distribution, marketing, regulation, circulation and audience consumption*

1. Part of a very popular global franchise.
2. Many different parts e.g. films, TV, merchandise, theme parks.
3. Given the success of the franchise it was safe to assume it would be successful.



### The Funding model

1. Funding was provided by Nintendo, Google and App distributor for Apple and Android - each would benefit if the game was successful.
2. The game generated a lot of revenue via in-app purchases (pokecoins), in-game events like Halloween where ghost Pokémon and candy (to upgrade and evolve) were more available and distances were shorter. Sponsored Location (Pokestops) - companies pay to show up as prominent locations in the game. This helped businesses to increase/ attract customers



### Regulation

1. Video games are rated by PEGI and based on an age rating system with key areas of focus (e.g. violence, drug use, online).
2. The Video Standards Council uses PEGI to rate all games in the UK. In the UK Pokémon Go was awarded PEGI 3+ but the Apple store states it is suitable for those 9 and over (mild fantasy violence) and the group Commonsense Media recommends 13+ due to privacy and personal safety concerns



## AUDIENCES

### The Target Audience

1. It was aimed at young boys but appealed to a much wider audience.
2. In the first month the average player was a highly educated, well paid 25 white women.
3. Now the average player (according to YouGov) is aged 18 - 34, male, likes Kinder, Smirnoff and fast food especially Domino's Pizza and is 'more likely to be unmotivated'.
4. This information was used to help market the film e.g. MacDonald's, movie theatres and pubs were a Pokestops.

### Uses and Gratification

*Why do audiences use Pokemon? What does it give them?*

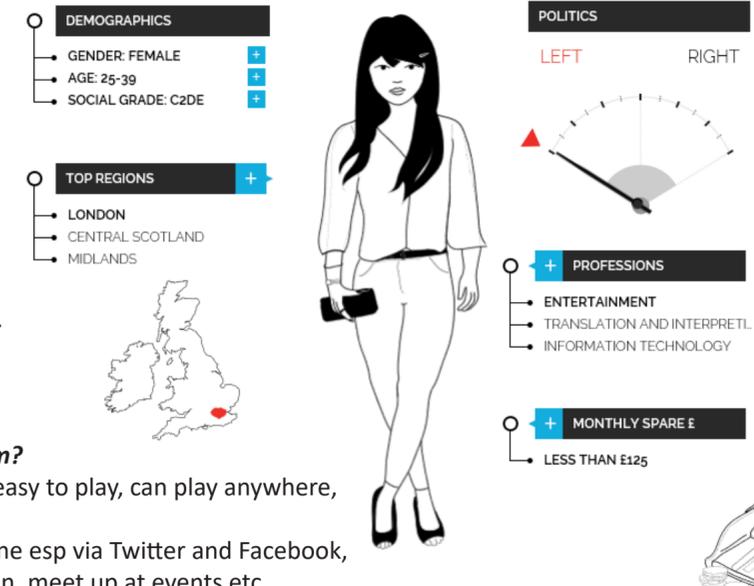
1. **Entertainment/Diversion** - can play the game for fun, easy to play, can play anywhere, can easily progress and feel good about this
2. **Social Interaction** - can interact with other players online esp via Twitter and Facebook, they challenge each other to battle, meet in 'gyms' to train, meet up at events etc.

### Issues around Audiences

Core fan base is those who grew up with the franchise but it has more fans because of its innovative nature. Within the first few days of release there were issues.

1. Every time the game was released in a new place there were issues with downloading it (due to demand)
2. Safety concerns included players getting injured while play due to being distracted, or playing and driving
3. Trespassing - audiences entering on land and places they were not allowed to
4. Players being targeted by criminals due to people being unaware of their surroundings.
5. There was also concern about the risks associated with online social media - not knowing who you are chatting to, keeping personal information safe and concerns around arranging to meet strangers offline.
6. Pokémon character could also be placed in dangerous places as the game just used GPS and did not consider where the location were - it just made them a certain distance from players.

### My Notes



## The Impact of technologies and convergence

**Convergence: The coming together of previously separate media industries and/or platforms; often the result of advances in technology whereby one device or platform contains a range of different features. The mobile phone, for example, allows the user to download and listen to music, view videos, tweet artists etc. All this can be done through one portable device.**



1. For an industry to survive they need to constantly evolve especially video games.
2. Virtual reality and augmented reality are the 'next big thing' and the game uses both.
3. More and more people are gaming (casual gamers) because of mobile devices, Pokémon takes advantage of this and the way phones have many technologies in them (convergence).
4. The mobile gaming market took in an estimated \$38 billion in 2016 - Pokémon Go was part of this (and is still popular now with regular updates).