

Customer and Developer's Point of Views to Game Cloning

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Abstract— *Game Cloning is an action of cloning games. This non-ethical action reaps many controversial matters from game customer and developer in game industry. As a result, this action is considered a wrongdoing. However, but not all cases of game cloning are wrong. Many recent games have been rooted from game cloning. In case of game cloning, game developers do not commit something illegal or immoral since they revamp and complement the games they imitate.*

Keywords — *Game Cloning, Lawsuit, Creativity, Developer, Customer*

I. INTRODUCTION

With the booming population of Indie game developer in the recent years, many new video game genres have emerged in marketplace and also the free market on online stage. Along with the recent industry development, there are many video cloned games ripped off from famous games. This phenomenon worries many developers. Customers have biased views on this matter despite the fact that there are many video games protected by IT lawsuit. In reality, many customers and developers neglect the lawsuit. However, many people still advocate the original video games. This rejection comes from customers and developers shouting to protect their video games.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Video game cloning is defined as “The action of cloning a game in a whole”. With many recent video cloned games, developers are worried if their games become the victim of this practice. Yet, not many video game clones are bad or merely done for the sake of

easy money. Many video game developers try to imitate and outdo the original one. The rising trend of video game marketplace, such as Steam, Google Play, and Apple Store, is one of the factors that makes video game cloning easy to sell online. Some examples of recent famous video games as products of cloning are Subway Surfer (cloning from Temple Run), True Crime (cloning from GTA III), and King of Fighters (cloning from Street Fighter).

2.1 Point of views from customers

The proverb saying that “The customer is always right” is a twisted one. In reality, many customers willingly shut off their eyes from the existence of video game cloning in our society, since the budget to make a video game cloning is relatively cheaper than creating an original one. But not all customers are the same. There are two kinds of customer, the simple-minded and the open-minded ones. The differences between these customers can create difference point of views to video game industry. For example, the simple-minded customers act rashly and give judgment, including accusation, to a video game without prior knowledge of the matter, while the open-minded ones act differently that is by learning about it and usually give a credit if a game is better than the original one.

2.2 Point of views of video game developers

The producers of video game cloning are commonly identified as law offenders or men without creativity. Yet, many recent and well-known developers started from cloning and making better an original one. However, one needs to keep in mind that video game

cloning remains potential to damage the market and make the original one disappear from the scene of game industry. The critical game cloning developers do not only carbon copy the original, but they revamp and improve the flaws of the original. Therefore, their video games are not just carbon copies, though the original one is the basis of cloning.



Fig 1. True Crime mocking in GTA San Andreas

In their games, game cloners usually put credit to the original one, like in Cameo or give a reference about the game. It differs from the game cloning developers who just want to take quick advantages of famous video games without making any significant changes.

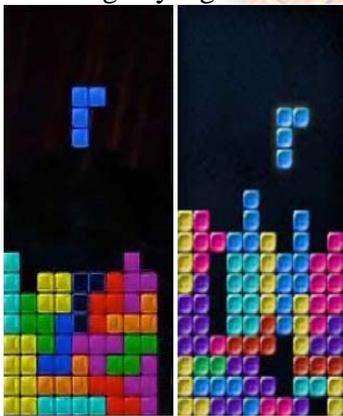


Fig 2. Tetris VS Mino

They only create a cheap knockoff which is then bought by a deceived customer. This fact worries and angers the original video game developers. For them, video game cloning harms their reputation and result in market loss. As long as video games are both entertainment media and Intellectual Property, this problem will keep taking place [1]. As in the case of video game Mino on IOS, the game

developer was inspired by TETRIS video game, and the developer used almost all assets from the game [2]

2.3 Point of views from lawsuit

According to the laws of sanctioned plagiarism (Constitution No. 20/2003), those committing plagiarism are imprisoned for two years maximum/fined for IDR 200 millions (article 70). This sanction is enacted in which is regulated by the provisions of Act 19 of 2002 on Copyright[4]. A plagiarist is a person who steals other intellectual properties. Plagiarism is different from rights offence. A copyright offender uses or sells an original product without permission from its owner, whereas plagiarism is an act of taking over someone else's property and claiming it to be one's own. Video game cloning is included as plagiarism, but at recent development, one is able to distinguish a game cloning which can be categorized as plagiarism and the one which actually bears novelty compared to its original version. The copyrights lawsuit cannot be fully protected. A copyright issue in video game cloning is like what people mean when they talk about a song, "you can take the lyrics, but not the style" [3].

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method of finding data on video game cloning is by using questionnaire from google form. The total respondents participated in this research is 38 people who are asked to answer 20 questions. The research period is 12 to 21 July 2014

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSION

Based on the research finding, we can draw a conclusion that the concept of video game cloning is open-minded. Not many people immediately judge that game cloning is something dangerous or a wrongdoing. They take some time to watch, observe, and value the video game with precaution. The data show

that there are 2 factors applied to measure whether a game is a result of a cloning process, those are, Gameplay- answered by 31 participants- and Aesthetic -by 21 participant (each participant is given 3 choices)

Gameplay is a system or the main factor in producing a video game. With many video game varieties, it cannot be denied that the varieties are obviously derived from video game cloning, for instances, Saints Row, King of Fighters, Pro Evolution Soccer, and many more. These video games are the imitations of their original versions, yet with some changes and innovations, they are able to stay away from the stigma as cloning games. In fact, they are as good as and even much better than the original versions. Originality is required in gameplay so that the customer can identify the difference between one game with the other. In addition to originality, creativity is also paramount in order to make a gameplay fun, user-friendly, and unique. The standard



Fig 3. King Of Fighters 94 and Street Fighter II

of a gameplay is determined by a developer's level of creativity. The video game developed does not have to be totally different from the original video used as its basis. Improving the original one or giving it more comparative advantages to draw more customers' interests is an outcome of creativity, not as a pure imitation prone to be accused as an act of plagiarism. These qualities will make customer appreciate the game made by the ethical video game cloning developer and the original video game developer as well.

Aesthetic or the interface is the second factor to determine if a video game is a clone or not. There are some cloned video games developers who make use of game assets without any changes, and therefore having no ethical concern. This type behavior is not an act of cloning but a crime. Such a developer commits a criminal offence and ignores ethics. In the figure no 4 , the first picture is a game entitled "five nights at freddys Five Nights at Slender" that uses asset from the game entitled "Five Nights at Freddy's"

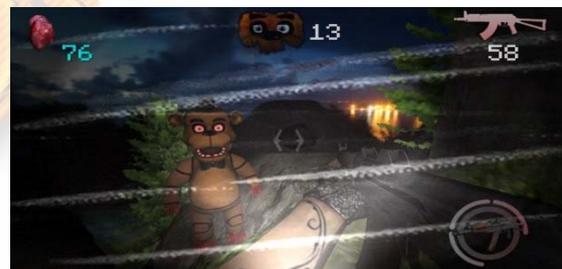


Fig 4. The action of game cloning (First) to the original game (Second)

Law enforcement should be present to fight against the video game cloning developers who take advantages of other video games without legal or ethical considerations. However, law is unlikely to provide adequate

protection, as it is implied by an answer from a participant, stating that, "it is still biased if the game is developed with the same engine and inspired by the same game. The probability of similarity [between the cloned and the original games) is high...". That statement describes the uncertain situation in video game lawsuit when it deals with the unethical video game cloning trends. As many as 31 participants (or 81%) answer 'no' when they are asked "Is it wrong to clone a game?"

The customers have known that not all cloned video games are necessarily bad. It is proven by the result of the questionnaire on participants' knowledge about video game cloning. There are some reasons, such as "As long as the video game cloning is better than the original, then why not?" and "Though the gameplay of three kinds of game is almost the same, it is not a big deal as long each of them performs originality. For me, cloning is not problematic at all as long as originality is there." This statement represents recent customers' behaviors and point of views. When participants are asked, "Do you still play game after you know that video game is a clone?" 19 participants (50%) said "no", 16 participants (42%) said "neutral" with the a margin of 7% , and 3 participants said "no" kind of dangers in front of us and when it are going to happen.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The paradigms of both customer and developer in terms of video game industry exist in a grey area. In one hand, they are against the unethical video game cloning developers who commit crime. In the other hand, they appreciate efforts, ideas, and originalities in the video game cloning, especially when the quality of a video game cloning is far-away better than the original.

However, one has to keep in mind that in game industry, video game cloning remains a

wrong behavior since it discourages efforts and jeopardizes creativity in creating video games.

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