

# A case study on the promotional animation of the mobile game 'Honour Of Kings'

QIANQIAN JIANG<sup>1</sup>, Jean-Hun Chung<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dept. of Multimedia, Graduate School of Digital Image and Contents, Dongguk University, Doctor's course

<sup>2</sup>Dept. of Multimedia, Graduate School of Digital Image and Contents, Dongguk University, Professor

## 모바일 게임 <왕자영요>의 홍보 애니메이션 사례연구

강천천<sup>1</sup>, 정진현<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>동국대학교 영상대학원 멀티미디어학과 박사과정, <sup>2</sup>동국대학교 영상대학원 멀티미디어학과 교수

**Abstract** With the development of OSMU mode in the game industry, the most popular 3D mobile game 'Honour Of Kings' in China, in addition to the entertainment effects of the game itself, has paid more attention to the production of promotional animation video contents in recent years. The huge animation market is generating abundant game revenue for 'Honour Of Kings'. This paper selected the most popular game promotional animations 'MU BIAO' and 'Bu Ye Chang'an' through a survey of 30 CG promotional animation in the official story station of 'Honour of Kings'. Important elements such as rich stories and the special effects of the gorgeous scenes, etc are summarized. Through the research of this paper, grasped the importance of promotional animation content in the game industry, and can expect the common growth of the game industry and the animation industry, which is one of the ways to create high profits in the game market.

**Key Words** : OSMU mode, Game promotion animation, mobile game, 'Honour Of Kings', 'MU BIAO' and 'Bu Ye Chang'an', Animation features

**요약** 게임산업 OSMU모델의 발전으로 중국에서 가장 인기가 높은 3D 모바일 게임 '왕자영요'는 게임 자체의 엔터테인먼트 효과 외에, 근년에 홍보 애니메이션 영상 콘텐츠의 제작을 더욱 중시하고 있다. 거대한 애니메이션 시장은 모바일 게임 <왕자영요>에 풍부한 게임 수익과 함께 많은 신규 이용자들이 발생하고 있다. 본 논문은 <왕자영요> 공식 스토리 스테이션 내 30개의 CG 홍보 애니메이션 단편영화에 대한 조사를 통해 최근에 가장 인기 있는 게임 홍보 애니메이션 <목표>와 <불야장안>을 선정하였고, 애니메이션의 특징 분석으로는 풍부한 스토리, 화려한 장면의 특수효과 등 중요 요소들에 대해 정리하였다. 본 논문연구를 통해 게임 산업에서 홍보용 애니메이션 콘텐츠의 중요성을 파악하였으며, 또한 이를 통해 게임 산업과 애니메이션 산업의 동반성장을 기대할 수 있으며 게임시장의 높은 수익을 창출하는 방법 중 하나임을 알 수 있었다.

**주제어** : OSMU모델, 게임 홍보 애니메이션, 모바일 게임, <왕자영요>, '목표'와 '불야장안', 애니메이션 특징

\*Corresponding Author : Jean-Hun Chung(evengates@gmail.com)

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background

With the development of digital media, mobile games have become an indispensable part of the entertainment industry. Mobile games have the characteristics of portability, fun, short time-consuming, light experience, etc., which leads to faster upgrades of mobile games on the market. In order to increase the popularity of the game, in recent years, 3D mobile game platforms have gradually launched various related CG game character animation short films. These CG game animation short films have been played and reproduced on various short video platforms, blogs, web pages, etc., and have been paid attention to by more game players and animation audiences, which greatly increased the popularity of the game. These promotional animation short films derived from games are deeply supported by game enthusiasts and non-game players, and therefore drive the continuous development of the game industry.

### 1.2 Research purpose and method

As a phenomenal mobile game in China, 'Honour Of Kings' has hundreds of millions of users.[1] CNG GAMMA DATA shows that the 'Honour Of Kings' ranks among the top 1 in China's mobile game turnover calculation from January to March 2021, up by one place compared to the same period last year. The benefits brought by the game are considerable. As the most popular MOBA mobile game in China, 'Honour Of Kings' in addition to the entertainment effect of the game itself, what is more important is the production of game content promotion.

This paper selected 30 different types of promotional animation short films released in the official story station of 'Honour Of Kings' for investigation, and selected the most popular CG

Ranking	Game name	Game type	Turnover calculation of the whole platform from January to March (100 million yuan)
1	Honour Of Kings	MOBA	
2	Game For Peace	Shooting	
3	Dream Journey to the West	Turn-based RPG	
4	San Guo Zhi - Strategy Edition	Strategy (SLG)	
5	Genshin Impact	ARPG	
6	MOONLIGHT BLADE	MMORPG	
7	Rise of Kingdoms	Strategy (SLG)	
8	CF mobile game	Shooting	
9	A Chinese Odyssey	Turn-based RPG	
10	Call of Duty: Mobile	Shooting	

Data source: Gamma data

Fig. 1. Gamma data mobile game turnover calculation lists TOP10[2]

promotional animation short films released in different ways of recent years for analysis. To understand how to achieve the effect of game promotion through the production of game animation and the future prospects of the game industry and animation industry.

## 2. Analysis of the CG animation on mobile game 'Honour Of Kings'

### 2.1 Theoretical Research on Game CG Animation

CG is a combination of computer technology and art. It covers almost all visual art creation activities carried out by computer technology.[3] In recent years, with the continuous expansion of the CG concept, its application fields are also expanding. The most widely used industry of CG is game animation designs.[4] At present, CG technology is commonly used in game transition animations, opening and ending, and promotional films.[5]

### 2.2 The Theoretical Background of 'Honour Of Kings' Promotional Animation

In 2017, 'Honour Of Kings' began to push its popularity to the peak through its own unique operating advantages.[6] Among them, the production of promotional animation has also become a boost to promote the development of the 'Honour Of Kings' game. Animation is not a genre, but an art formed.[7] In 2017, 'Honour Of

Kings' began to launch an animated short film of game characters of promotional purposes. Now, the production technology of the 'Honour Of Kings' promotional animation has become more and more mature. Among them, the purpose of promotional animation mainly includes the promotional of new hero characters, the promotional of the new season, the promotional of new gameplay in the game, and so on. The length of the promotion animation is also uneven.

### 2.3 Analysis of CG animation of 'Honour Of Kings'

Table 1. 2D and 3D promotional animation statistics for the 'Honour Of Kings' story station in 2017–2021

Time	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
2D	3	4	0	2	0
3D	0	3	12	3	3

Animation designs needs to be changed in form and content to adapt to the spread of new media.[8] Table 1. Statistics show that the propaganda animation of 'Honour Of Kings' in 2017 mainly appeared in 2D forms. With the advancement of 3D technology, starting in 2018, the 3D propaganda animation of 'Honour Of Kings' began to appear. By 2019, it has completely tended to the production of 3D promotional animation. Even if there are 2D promotional animations in 2020, they are still presented in 3D visual effects. In terms of production quantity, due to the change in the content style of promotional animation production in 2020, the number of animations has been relatively reduced, but by the beginning of 2021, it has begun to show an increasing trend.

### 3. Research on popular promotional animation of 'Honour Of Kings'

As the No. 1 moba competitive game in

China's game rankings, 'Honour Of Kings' has attracted players of all ages to join. According to statistics, the age group of the players of 'Honour Of Kings' game is mainly concentrated between 18–44 years old, and the most players are between 35 and 44 years old, accounting for 47.7% of the total number.[9]

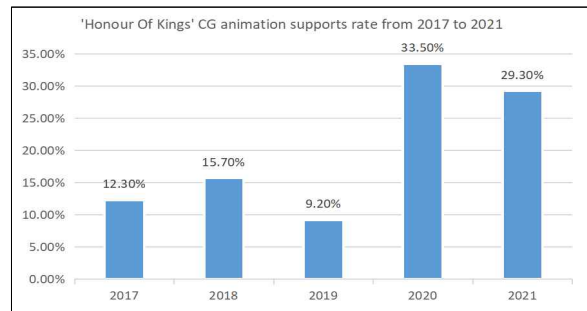


Fig. 2. 'Honour Of Kings' CG animation supports rate from 2017 to 2021




The author selected a small-scale questionnaire survey of 100 males and female gamers and non-gamers aged 18–44 years old. According to the survey results, Fig 2. show that the support rate of promotional animation of 'Honour Of Kings' in 2020 is 33.5%, which accounts for the highest proportion of promotional animations released over the years. The second is 2021. Only at the beginning of the year, the popularity rate reached 29.3%, showing a trend of surpassing. Among them, the most popular in 2020–2021 are 3D animation <Mu Biao> and <Bu Ye Chang'an>, which the support rates were 27.6% and 22.1%, respectively.

#### 3.1 A case analysis of promotional animation <MU BIAO> in "Honor of Kings"

3D animation <Mu Biao> is mainly released in the way of promoting new characters. In December 2020, CG animation and the new in-game hero 'Lan' was launched at the same time.

3D animation <Mu Biao> lasts 9 minutes . [10] The whole process are mainly 3D animation , among them are 42 seconds of 2D animation

Table 2. Analysis of the 3D animation <Mu Biao> content

Analysis of the 3D animation <Mu Biao> content		
	type	3D
	duration	08:59
	objective	New role promotion
Special effects	Pay attention to the display of role skills, enlarge and extend the special effects of role skills, and show the visual sense of the movie	
plot	Assassin 'Lan' accepts the order to assassinate "Cai Wenji" and snatch imperial jade seal, and then fall into the sea to be rescued by "Cai Wenji". The whole story are dominated by emotional lines. The end, "Lan" saved "Cai Wenji" with his life.	
scene	In order to cater to the background of the story and the psychological changes of the characters, mainly based on the dark background of the rainy day.	
Game character restoration degree		
game character	Animation	
		
The characters are almost the same in appearance. In contrast, the character model in the game is rougher, and the appearance details of the animation character are more delicate and beautiful. The animation completely restores the character's skill display and makes the character's skills display more perfects.		

showing the dream . The scene is mainly divided into three parts : inside a grass boat , an isolated island , and the sea . The special effect rendering combined with the skills have great visual impact and enriches the plot performance . In Table 2 , there is no difference between the appearance of game characters and 3D animation characters , except for subtle differences in details . The shape of the game is rough , and the shape of the animated character is more delicate .

Compared with the 3D animation before 2020, the appearance of the character is highly restored. In addition to character shaping, the more important point of 3D animation <Mu Biao> is shaping the plot of the story. The story background is based on ancient Chinese history and adapted. The storyline content of the animation is rich , making it easy for players to immerse in character animation derived from the game. There is no gorgeous scene decoration in


the animation, and the overall scene color is mainly converted between rainy weather and sunny weather according to the psychological changes of the characters. Give players a sense of sight of a movie.

### 3.2 A case analysis of promotional animation <Bu Ye Chang'an> in "Honor of Kings"

3D animation <Bu Ye Chang'an> is mainly released to promote the S22 new season. It was being released after the 3D promotional animation <Po Xiao> of the new hero character Si Kongzhen in January 2021. There is a partial connection with the content of the story.

The whole story are made in 3D , the animation time is short , and there are many hero characters of the animation . The animation scene is dominated by prosperity , showing the city of Chang'an that never sleeps during the

Table 3. Analysis of the 3D animation <Bu Ye Chang'an> content

Analysis of the 3D animation <Bu Ye Chang'an> content		
	type	3D
	duration	03:56+00:42
	objective	New season promotion
Special effects	Pay attention to the display of role skills. Skills and special effects are more gorgeous.	
plot	The female emperor Wu Zetian cruised on the huge ship, and the city of Chang'an was very lively and the whole city were carnival. After that, many game characters appeared and caused riots, and Gongsunli led Di Renjie into the dark alley. At the end of the animation, another Wu Zetian walked out of the dark alley, causing suspense for the plot.	
scene	Take the ancient city of Chang'an as the creative background. The animation is mainly based on the brightly lit and lively night streets.	
Game character restoration degree		
game character	Animation	
		
There are many game characters of the animation, and their appearance is almost the same as the game. The emotional changes of the characters in the animation are more abundant, which is more vivid than in the game.		

heyday of the Tang Dynasty.[11] The special effects of character skills in the animation are more splendid than those in the game. Only part of the plot is shown, mainly suggestive, and the ending is full of suspense. In Table 3, the appearance of the game characters and the 3D animation characters are the same, only some characters differ in costumes. The animated character display is more delicate and the character expression is more realistic.

Compared with CG animation <Mu Biao>, the time is shorter, and it is released in two episodes. <Bu Ye Chang'an> was produced with the background of the ancient Chinese Tang Dynasty. In order to create a lively and prosperous scene atmosphere, the scene design is very gorgeous. The visual immersion is strong. The whole animation is mainly fighting, and it is biased to show the purpose of character skills in the game, which has a good game promotion effect. The content of the animation hides mystery, and finally space is left for the audience to associate.

#### 4. Research result

Through research, the common points of the 3D promotional animation short film <Mu Biao> and <Bu Ye Chang'an> are mainly manifested in the following aspects: 1. The animation time is relatively long. 2. The storyline content is rich, which can easily drive the emotional investment of the audience. 3. With ancient Chinese history as the story background, incorporate historical and cultural features that have been forgotten in the past into the background and character settings.[12] 4. Show the personality and abilities of the new game characters well in the story. 5. The game character has a high degree of restoration in animation. The appearance is not much different from that in the game, is more delicate and

realistic than the game. The main differences are: 1. <Mu Biao> has a longer duration and richer content. 2. Compare with 3D animation <Mu Biao>, 3D animation <Bu Ye Chang'an> special effects and scenes are more gorgeous. 3. Compare with <Mu Biao>, <Bu Ye Chang'an> has more characters, and the picture is rich. 4. Promotional purposes are different. The form of animation has become a new bright spot on game development.[13] Most of the supporters of <Mu Biao> and <Bu Ye Chang'an> are game players, but there are also a small number of CG animation fans.

#### 5. Conclusion

A complete film and television animation, the main constituent factors are the role, plot, and environment. [14] Research shows that after 2020, the production of the 'Honour Of Kings' promotional animation pays more attention to the length of the animation time, the production of special effects for the scene, the storyline and the degree of reproduction of the game's characters. The length of time is related to the richness of the content of the storyline. And too long time will also cause the player's visual fatigue. The smaller difference between the characters appearing in the CG promotional animation and the characters appearing in the game, the sense of substitution will be higher. The rich animation scenes will also enhance the viewer's visual immersion. Therefore, when making CG animations for game promotion, while maintaining the original CG animation visual effects, appropriate adjustments to the production of the promotional animation timeline will also become an important link.

After the game characters are processed through the art of animation, can better and more intuitively show their game characteristics to the audience. For players, it is a wonderful

experience for a favorite character to enter the animation world.[15] Similarly, for animation enthusiasts, an excellent promotional animation short film can drive their curiosity about the game and become a new game player. Games and animation are the two major carriers of the virtual world, and the relationship between the two is complementary. The emergence of CG animations for game promotion can perfectly combine the intuitiveness of animation with the interactivity of the game. While making game players become animation enthusiasts, it turns animation enthusiasts into game players. Thereby driving the two-way benefits model of the game industry and the animation industry.

The emergence of game-derived promotional animations has brought many new faces to the game industry. This will also become the new development trend of the game industry and animation industry in the future. Through the research of this paper, it is hoped that the game industry can pay more attention to the production of CG promotional animation content, so as to promote the common development of the game industry and animation industry.

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강 천 천(Qian-Qian JIANG)

[정회원]



- 2013년 9월 ~ 2015년 6월 : 중국 산둥 예술대학교 시각전달디자인전공(BFA)
- 2015년 9월 ~ 2017년 8월 : 우송대학교 미디어디자인학부 디지털디자인 전공(BFA)
- 2017년 9월 ~ 2019년 8월 : 우송대학교 Culture-Technology융합대학

원 디자인·게임·영상융합학과 석사졸업

- 2019년 9월 ~ 현재 : 동국대학교 영상 대학원 멀티미디어학과 박사과정
- 관심분야 : 3D Computer Graphic, Computer Animation, Contents Design, Visual Effect 등.
- E-Mail : qq13075335680@163.com

정 진 현(Jean-Hun Chung)

[정회원]



- 1992년 2월 : 홍익대학교 미술대학 시 각디자인학과(BFA)
- 1999년 11월 : 미국 Academy of Art University Computer Arts (MFA)
- 2001년 3월 ~ 현재 : 동국대학교 영상 대학원 멀티미디어학과 교수

- 관심분야 : VR, Contents Design, 입체영상, 3D Computer Graphic, Computer Animation, Visual Effects 등.
- E-Mail : evengates@gmail.com