

DoubleFine's initial breakdown of money

Kickstarter raised: \$3,446,371

After Kickstarter and Amazon each take 5% (less failed transactions): \$3,099,660

After removing money needed for backer rewards: \$2,626,429

After removing money needed for documentary: \$2,232,465

Source: <http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/6443/>

Broken Age had a little over \$170,000 in "slacker backer" contributions.

Source: <http://www.doublefine.com/dfapay/>

Getting More Funds

Tim's thread on the subject: <http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/9788/>

- The game's planned scope was over-budget and they knew it well in advance
- Because they wanted to keep the scope as large as possible, they looked at other ways to fund the game without having the backers pay more.
- "Asking a publisher for the money was out of the question because it would violate the spirit of the Kickstarter, and also, publishers."
- "Clearly, any overages were going to have to be paid by Double Fine, with our own money from the sales of our other games."
- Proposes the 2-act split for early Steam release so sales from Act 1 can go towards making Act 2
- Without the split, the game scope would have to be cut much more drastically
- But since the game is larger in scope, it would take longer to finish than originally proposed
- Backers would still get early beta access before the Steam release, as promised
- The game is still going to be finished no matter what
- From this thread, pieces were leaked to the media (even though it was supposed to be backers-only), who often spun an incorrect story from them, saying Double Fine was not going to complete the game, were out of money, etc.

Backers were asked to respond to this thread saying if they were in favor of the split or not:

- No/I do not approve/poorly managed project: ~5%
- "It sucks to wait longer than originally said, but do it anyway": ~3%
- Yes, do this/full support: ~92%

Most quoted on the thread: "Take as long as you need to make it right."

Note: I purposefully rounded the "negative" percents up and the positive down, also I had to read hundreds of posts for this so APPRECIATE YOUR STATISTICIANS PEOPLE.

One possibly legitimate complaint at the time that got repeated a lot: Double Fine deliberately waited until after their Massive Chalice Kickstarter was over to announce this, because they knew there would be PR backlash.

- However, here in the future, Massive Chalice released successfully on-budget and pretty much on expected time, with frequent backer updates (I was a backer).

Did Double Fine ask for more money?

Fact: Double Fine never asked backers for more money and never even asked if they would be willing to donate more.

Fact: Double Fine created a “tip jar” where people could donate extra money because the backers asked for it - they received over \$11,000 in “tips”.

<http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/8380>

User-started polls asking if backers would willingly give more money (not DF asking):

<http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/7322/>

<http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/8280/>

Double Fine took money from the sales of other games + a Humble Bundle to add ~2 million more of their own money to the budget for Broken Age, bringing the total budget to a bit over 4 million.

From Tim Schafer: <https://twitter.com/timoflegend/status/352471341552762881>

“Double Fine is NOT asking for more money. We are fine, financially. We are using our OWN money to deliver a bigger game than we Kickstarted.”

Industry comparison from 2010 (game-making costs have only risen since):

The average budget for a multi-platform next-gen (meaning current generation) game is between \$18 million and \$28 million. A single platform game is reported to cost an average of \$10 million.

Note that Broken Age **is a multi-platform game** - PC (all OSs), Playstation, iOS, and Andriod. Some AAA publisher games use more than Broken Age’s entire budget on advertising alone for a single game.

Source: <http://www.escapistmagazine.com/news/view/97413-Study-Claims-Average-Game-Budget-Is-23-Million>

Transparency

From April 2012 to July 2015, DoubleFine posted in backer forums:

48 2-Player Documentary videos (20 full episodes), ~ once a month

Over 120 backer updates, one roughly every 10 days

(this does not include the dev Let’s Plays)

Act 1 Production Statistics: <http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/13509/>

Some of the more relevant ones:

Number of man-months: 339

Project duration: 22 months

Average team size: 15.4

Lines of code (MOAI + DF): 207605 (average: 231.9)

Number of animations: 6091

Number of cutscenes: 1181

Length of cutscenes: 3.09 hours (!!!)

Length of fully animated cutscenes: 1.13 hours

Where are the boxed sets? Waiting on 2 Player Productions, out of Double Fine’s hands. The delay seems to be mostly because 2PP asked backers what ‘extras’ they’d like to see and so committed themselves to more content.

Puzzle Difficulty

Act 1 Difficulty Reception

Backer user poll on making Act 2 more difficult: <http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/12310/>

Almost all said to make it harder, general backer consensus was the first half was too easy.

Backer user poll: Did the game Act 1 meet your expectations?

<http://www.doublefine.com/forums/viewthread/12360/>

Majority said 'yes', the main complaint was that puzzles were too easy.

Kotaku Review: <http://kotaku.com/broken-age-act-1-the-kotaku-review-1502827212>

"The puzzles aren't super-tough brain teasers and seem more designed to make you laugh than to torture your problem-solving skills."

PCGamer Review: <http://www.pcgamer.com/broken-age-act-1-review/>

"The one minor disappointment is that Broken Age doesn't offer much in terms of puzzles. It presents amusing ideas and fun results, but absolutely no challenge."

Act 2 Difficulty Reception

Gamespot Review: <http://www.gamespot.com/reviews/broken-age-act-2-review/1900-6416099/>

"When Act 1 was released early last year, the primary complaints against the game were its short length and overly simple puzzles. Act 2 is a clear response to those complaints on Double Fine's part. The game clocks in at over twice the length of Act 1, while the puzzles are often brain benders in the best Monkey Island/Grim Fandango tradition. But in the transition, Broken Age also succumbs to some of the worst obfuscation and backtracking found in classic point-and-click games."

The Telegraph: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/video-games/video-game-reviews/11580309/Broken-Age-review.html>

"Critics of the first half had suggested the game was a little too easy; the second proves you should be careful what you wish for. Which isn't to say the puzzles are bad – in the main, they're quite the opposite, though some mistake effort for challenge, requiring a little too much busywork as you traipse back and forth across the same environments."

The Verge: <http://www.theverge.com/2015/4/28/8507967/broken-age-act-two-review>

"Fine, I lamented that the developers hadn't added in some sort of hint tool to make the more onerous puzzles less frustrating. And that was for a game made in 1998. For a modern successor like Broken Age, not having a hint option just feels antiquated. Most players will end up using a walkthrough anyway; why force them to leave the game to do it?"

USGamer: <http://www.usgamer.net/articles/broken-age-act-two-pc-review-childhood-lost>

"Broken Age Act 1's puzzles were rather easy; there might have been a few that stumped players for a few minutes, but nothing particularly difficult. Act 2 has some real stumpers, as if Double Fine took that particular criticism of Act 1 to heart."

Backers: Although there were many more 'help, I'm stuck!' threads for Act 2, there were basically no backer complaints about the second half being too hard versus all the comments about Act 1 being too easy (perhaps they were all too busy doing puzzles :P)

Extras

Broken Age has sold over 300k copies on Steam: <http://steamspy.com/app/232790>