

Louvain School of Management

Business plan of Form Up

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Executive summary

The thesis aims to evaluate the viability of Form Up, an innovative card game designed to reduce screen time and enhance cognitive skills among children and adults.

Product description

Form Up is an innovative card game designed to provide fun and mental stimulation for players of all ages. The game consists of 66 illustrated cards that improve cognitive skills like pattern recognition, promoting strategic thinking and creativity.

Project rationale

The project addresses the rising concern of excessive screen time and its associated health risks, such as poor sleep, obesity, and mental health issues.

Needs that it fulfills

Form Up meets the need for recreational activities that promote cognitive development and social interaction.

Market

Form Up operates in the recreational card game market.

Opportunity

The market for card games is growing as well as the demand for analog games.

Competition

The card game market has a high overall competitive intensity, with direct competitors such as UNO, Jungle Speed, and Dobble, and indirect competitors including board games and an expanding video game market.

Positioning

Form Up positions itself as a fun, inclusive, and high-quality card game that offers an engaging and entertaining experience for players of all ages.

Competitive advantages

Form Up's competitive advantage lies in its dual gameplay mode and user-friendly design, offering both versatility and accessibility that cater to a wide range of players. Additionally, its portability, eco-friendly packaging, and competitive pricing enhance its appeal to consumers.

Target consumer

The target consumer is a millennial aged 26-45, employed, possibly with a partner and children, who values social, family-friendly games and prioritizes sustainability.

Distribution channel

Form Up will initially target the Belgian market through direct sales on its website, aiming to expand to toy stores, bookstores, and other retailers by 2026, by partnering with a distributor.

Profitability

The structure will generate a total profit after tax of €27.378,11 over the period 2024-2028.

Financing

An initial investment of €6.000 is required to launch Form Up.

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1. Introduction

In today's society, a significant portion of the population is addicted to smartphones, video games, social media, and the internet, leading to various physical and psychological health issues. Excessive screen time is linked to poor sleep, obesity, high blood pressure, and poor vision, while also contributing to depression, suicidal tendencies, antisocial behavior, and attention problems. These issues underscore the need for alternatives that reduce screen time and promote healthier activities.

This is why we created Form Up, an innovative card game designed for both children and adults. Form Up offers a unique blend of competitive and cooperative elements, appealing to a broad audience and encouraging strategic thinking and creative planning. Besides reducing screen time, playing card games like Form Up can improve cognitive skills, reduce cognitive decline, and strengthen familial and social bonds by providing an engaging way for people to spend quality time together.

The purpose of this business plan is to assess the viability of Form Up, including its development, market positioning, and potential for success in the competitive card game industry. First, we will analyze the market trends and consumer preferences to identify the key factors that can drive the success of Form Up. Next, we will outline the unique features and competitive advantages of Form Up, followed by a detailed SWOT analysis. This will help us understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with our venture.

The insights gained from these analyses will guide the formulation of Form Up's marketing strategy, organizational plan, and supply chain management. Finally, to confirm the financial viability of the project, we will conduct a comprehensive financial analysis covering the first five years of operations (2024-2028). This analysis will include projections for revenue, costs, and profitability, providing a clear picture of the expected financial performance and sustainability of Form Up.

By addressing these key aspects, this business plan aims to provide a comprehensive roadmap for launching and growing Form Up, ensuring its successful entry and long-term presence in the card game industry.

2. The Project

In this chapter, we will begin by outlining the purpose of Form Up. We will therefore discuss the societal challenges we aim to address and how Form Up provides solutions to these issues. Following that, we will delve into Form Up corporate culture, including its values, vision, and mission.

2.1 Purpose

2.1.1 Problem

As technology has infiltrated nearly every household, we witness a significant portion of the population becoming addicted to smartphones, video games, social media and internet. Indeed, according to a study covering 2.123.762 individuals from 64 countries, 26,99% of the sample is addicted to smartphones, 17,42% to social media, 14,22% to internet and 6,04% to videogames (Meng et al., 2022).

The World Health Organization (WHO) officially classified gaming as a condition, citing its addictive behavior in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). WHO defines gaming disorder as a pattern of gaming behavior ("digital-gaming" or "video-gaming") characterized by poor control over gaming, prioritizing gaming over other activities to the point where it trumps other interests and daily duties and continuing or escalating gaming despite negative effects (WHO, 2020).

Excessive screen time and video games can be harmful to children, but also to adults. Indeed, excessive screen time and addictive use of social media has been linked with physical, psychological, social and neurological adverse health effects (Lissak, 2018).

A. Physical health effects

Excessive screen time is linked to poor sleep, as they are more likely to have difficulty falling asleep or have an inconsistent sleep cycle. Sleep is critical for the neurodevelopment of newborns and toddlers. Data suggests that insufficient sleep, both in duration and quality, may impact physical and mental health (Falbe et al., 2015).

Moreover, screen time is an inactive activity, which raises the likelihood of obesity, HDL malfunction, and high blood pressure, all of which are major risk factors for cardiovascular diseases (Lissak, 2018). Other physical health concerns include poor vision. Indeed, prolonged computer screen use can cause eye fatigue, impaired vision, eye dryness, headaches, and discomfort. Such symptoms can be caused by glare, bad lighting, or an incorrect viewing setting (Akinbinu and Mashalla, 2014).

B. Psychological effects

Sleep disruption symptoms have been linked to the onset of depressed symptoms and suicidal conduct. Inadequate sleep was proposed as a mediation factor linking digital device use to depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation (Lemola et al., 2015). Low mood, suicidal tendencies, and self-injury are likely to be linked to mobile phone dependence, and frequent message sending, particularly before bedtime (Oshima et al., 2012).

Moreover, early and prolonged exposure to violent content is associated with an increased risk of antisocial behavior and a reduction in prosocial behavior. Excessive exposure to media violence can desensitize children, leading them to perceive violent behavior as a normal method for resolving conflicts (Lissak, 2018).

Screen time may also contribute to ADHD and related behaviors by reducing engagement in activities that better stimulate cognitive abilities and long attention spans. Research involving younger children and young adults has shown that TV viewing and video game playing are linked to increased attention problems later in life (Swing et al., 2010).

2.1.2 Solution and business idea

To help reduce children's screen time and the problems related to it, an effective solution is to engage them in analog games instead of video games. Therefore, we developed Form Up, a physical card game designed for both children and adults.

Besides reducing screen time, card games like Form Up improves cognitive skills. According to a study examining the association between analog games and change in cognitive functions, a higher frequency of playing analog games was linked to better cognitive function at age 70. Additionally, playing more games was associated with a slower rate of general cognitive decline between ages 70 and 79, particularly in memory ability. Overall, these findings suggest that playing more games is associated with reduced cognitive decline over a lifetime (Altschul & Deary, 2020).

Moreover, reducing screen time by playing a card game will strengthen familial and social bonds as it will provide an enjoyable and engaging way for people to spend quality time together. Benefits of secure familial bonds include a stronger sense of identity, higher self-esteem, improved social competence, better emotional adjustment, and fewer behavioral issues compared to peers with less secure attachments (Lee & Lok, 2012).

A. *First version; Fitzy*

Form Up is a card game that can be played in two ways. The first version is named “Fitzy”, and the second is “Game on”. “Fitzy” can be played by three to eight players with 66 “Form” cards and 11 “special” cards. The “Form” cards have two shapes on them, a big one and a smaller one in the middle. They also have a number on them, either 1 or 2, which is not relevant for this version. There are five different “special” cards.

1. **“Change of direction”**, which changes the direction of the game. It is then the next player’s turn.
2. **“Homothety”**, which means changing the size of a shape while preserving its proportions. This card will switch the sizes of the shapes of the cards in play for one turn. It is then the next player’s turn.
3. **“Time”**, which gives the player more time to play and can therefore not be “skipped”.
4. **“Bomb”**, which will blast the game; all cards in the hands of the players will be evenly distributed. The remaining cards are put in the pile in the middle. It is then the next player’s turn.

5. **“Buzzer”**, which means all players must put their hand on the pile in the middle; the last one must draw a card. It is then the next player’s turn.

At the beginning of the game, each player gets 7 cards, and the remaining cards are placed in a pile in the middle. To start the game, the first card must be flipped. To play a “Form” card, the big shape of the card must be identical to the small shape on the card in play, or vice-versa. Each player can only play one card, except when playing the **“Time”** card. A player can “skip” the player before him by placing a correct “Form” card faster than their opponent, thus skipping the opponent’s turn. The "special" cards can be played on any card, and the game continues based on the last "Form" card played. If a player cannot play and is not skipped, they have to draw a card, and it becomes the next player’s turn. The aim of the game is to be the first to lay down all their cards.

C. Second version; Game on

The second version, “Game on”, can be played by 2, 4, 6, or 8 players. If there are more than two players, form teams of two. Each team player is assigned number 1 or 2. In order to play this version, remove all “special” cards except the **“Homothety”** cards.

At the beginning of the game, each player gets 3 cards, and the remaining cards are placed in a pile in the middle. Flip the first card to start the game. The rules to play a “Form” card are the same as the first version. However, the next player of each team is determined by the number on the card played. Players must always have 3 cards in their hands, meaning they must draw a card from the pile in the middle after playing. If the designated player cannot play, the last player wins the stack of cards played during that round and places the cards beside him. The next round starts by flipping the first card of the pile in the middle. The team that won the last round starts. The game ends when there are no cards left to start a new round. The team that won the most cards wins the game.

3. Environmental analysis

The environmental analysis enables us to examine Form Up's external environment by analyzing its "macro-environment" with the PESTEL model and its "micro-environment" with Porter's Five Forces model. Following the completion of these assessments, the competitive advantages of Form Up can be identified, and a SWOT matrix that summarizes all of these aspects can then be developed.

3.1 Pestel

To understand the environment in which the project will develop, a PESTEL analysis is useful. It studies the external factors influencing the company, meaning its macro-environment in terms of political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal aspects. This analysis provides a company with valuable insights into its opportunities and threats, helping to determine whether the project is promising and if there is potential for development. (Gupta, 2013)

3.1.1 Politics

A. Discounts for first-time employees

Employers can benefit from a flat-rate reduction in their basic social security contributions for the first three hires over a period of 20 quarters from the hiring quarter, with an unlimited duration for the first worker. The number of quarters and the amount of the reduction vary for the first, second, and third worker. No specific conditions are required regarding the worker's profile, and the reduction is not tied to a specific worker. Employers can choose freely each quarter which worker the reduction applies to. For the first worker, the salary cap for benefiting from the reduction will be limited to 3,100 euros per quarter, instead of the current 4,000 euros. However, this reduction will remain unlimited in time (Securex, 2024).

3.1.2 Economics

A. Average Belgian expenditure

The average expenditure of households' changes overtime, and more so during the COVID crisis. Statbel, the Belgian statistical office, realized a survey covering the consumer habits of Belgians between 2018 and 2022. The table in Appendix 1 shows the evolution of these expenditures by category. As we can see, most expenditures are back to pre-COVID levels. The categories housing, recreation, horeca, and furnishing did increase compared to 2018. From these categories, only recreation is beneficial for the expansion of the card game industry. Indeed, the share of the budget allocated to culture and leisure has risen the most, from 7,2% in 2018 to 7,7% in 2022 (Statbel, 2023).

B. Evolution of the card game industry

According to a study carried out by Statista Market Forecast the Belgian card game industry is projected to generate €14 million in revenue in 2024. Additionally, from 2024 to 2028, this market is expected to grow annually at a rate of 3,22% (CAGR) (Statista, 2024a).

3.1.3 Social context

A. Trend towards analog games

According to Statista Market Forecast traveling and cooking are the top two hobbies among Belgian consumers (Kunst, 2023). However, there is a notable rise in popularity for traditional card games like bridge and piquet among older generations, as the Belgian population continues to age (Statista, 2024a). The aging population is driven by increased life expectancy and low fertility rates, particularly due to the baby-boom generation born after the war (Vandresse et al., 2024).

The demographic of Belgian board and card games is diverse, with an average age of 34, and includes a significant number of women and individuals working in IT-related sectors. This diversity indicates a broad appeal of board and card games across different age groups and professional backgrounds. Moreover, board and card games remain popular across generations, with many designed to be family-friendly and intergenerational, highlighting their potential as family activities and bonding experiences. Retailers specializing in these games are capitalizing on this trend by creating community spaces for gamers with events and game nights, fostering a sense of community and shared experience. Despite the rise of digital entertainment, the tangible, social aspect of board and card games continues to attract a loyal following, proving their enduring appeal in the digital age (Businesscoot, 2021).

B. Trend towards videogames

Technological advancements have transformed video games into tools for entertainment, learning, and social interaction, appealing to a broad audience beyond the stereotypical young, single, male gamer. The rise of multiplayer, networked, and mobile games, along with broadband internet and digital distribution, has integrated gaming into mainstream culture (Engelstätter & Ward, 2022).

Research shows that gaming is now widespread across various demographics, including different ages, income levels, employment statuses, education levels, and ethnic backgrounds. Notably, the increase in female gamers challenges the traditional male-dominated view of gaming. Overall, video game playing has become a popular pastime across diverse demographic groups (Engelstätter & Ward, 2022).

C. Trend towards sustainability

Concern for sustainability has surged in recent years, especially among younger generations like Gen Z and millennials, who are actively working to reduce their environmental impact (Deloitte, 2024). These individuals are making conscious decisions to limit their consumption of fast fashion, air travel, and animal products, and are increasingly purchasing electric vehicles. Many research a company's environmental policies before purchasing and are willing to pay more for sustainable products. Some have even reduced their relationship with businesses that practice unsustainable methods. This shift highlights the growing demand for sustainable products and the significant influence businesses have to drive positive environmental change (Deloitte, 2024).

3.1.4 Technology

A. Social networks

In January 2024, Belgium had 9,17 million social media users, accounting for 78,4% of the total population. However, there was a decline of 270.000 users (-2,9%) from early 2023 to the beginning of 2024. On average, Belgians spend 1 hour and 35 minutes daily on social media. Additionally, among internet users aged 16 to 64, 49,4% use social media platforms to find information about brands and products, while 30,2% use social networks for the same purpose. Moreover, the most receptive age group to ads on Meta's social media platforms is 25 to 35-year-olds. Therefore, social networks provide an excellent avenue for companies to enhance their relationships with customers, thereby strengthening both brand awareness and customer service (Datareportal, 2024).

B. Integration of Artificial Intelligence in the card game industry

The world of board and card games is diverse and dynamic, with AI technology presenting new opportunities for both designers and players. In the past, AI was largely inaccessible, but today it has become more widespread, including in the board and card game industry. AI can streamline the design process by simulating game mechanics, reducing playtesting time, and generating new ideas. For players, AI can serve as a virtual opponent, offering challenging gameplay experiences even for solo players. Looking ahead, AI has the potential to create adaptive opponents, interactive game boards using AR, and enhance accessibility for visually impaired players. However, it's essential to maintain the social aspect of board games and ensure that AI complements, rather than replaces, human creativity in game design (Medium, 2023).

3.1.5 Ecology

A. Climate change

Climate change involves long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, driven by natural factors and primarily human activities since the 1800s, such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation. These activities release greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide and methane, which trap heat and raise the earth's temperature. Human activities have caused almost all global warming over the past 200 years, leading to a global surface temperature about 1.2°C warmer than in the late 1800s. This warming has resulted in severe impacts, including droughts, water scarcity, wildfires, rising sea levels, flooding, melting polar ice, storms, and declining biodiversity. To address these challenges, the Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 in 2015, aiming to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions, limit temperature increase to well below 2°C (ideally 1.5°C), assess progress periodically, and provide financial support to developing countries for climate mitigation and adaptation (United Nations, n.d.).

3.1.6 Legal

A. Packaging regulations

To be available on the market, a toy must display the CE marking, and include the name, company name, brand, and address of the manufacturer and/or importer on the packaging. Additionally, the toy must come

with clear, legible, and appropriate instructions to minimize risks during use, with warnings and instructions provided in the language(s) of the region where the toys are sold (FPS Economy, 2021).

B. CE marking

European legislation requires products sold in the EU to meet strict health, safety, and environmental standards, which cover aspects like flammability, electrical and hygiene properties, production processes, and product performance, such as energy efficiency. The CE marking signifies that a product complies with these essential requirements and has undergone the necessary conformity assessment procedures (FPS Economy, 2022a). The CE marking is mandatory for certain product categories, including toys, and is required in all countries of the European Economic Area (EEA). Before placing toys on the market, manufacturers must analyze potential chemical, physical, mechanical, electrical, hygiene, radioactive, and flammability hazards and assess the exposure to these hazards (FPS Economy, 2022a).

C. Intellectual property

To secure design rights, proper submission and payment of filing and renewal fees are required, followed by registration and publication. The holder of a Benelux design has the exclusive right to use and prevent others from commercially exploiting an identical or similar design. Application for design registration costs €150 for five years, with renewal fees starting at €102 for an additional five years (FPS Economy, 2022b). For a design to be protected, it must be new and possess individual character, without needing to be aesthetically pleasing (FPS Economy, 2022c).

D. FSC label

An FSC-certified wood or paper product ensures responsible sourcing, stemming from sustainable forest management and/or recycling, along with traceability throughout the supply chain. The high standards and reliability of FSC certification are widely recognized. FSC-certified finished products typically bear the FSC label on the product or packaging, making them easily identifiable as FSC-certified. The packaging itself can also be FSC-certified if indicated on the label. An FSC label must include the FSC "checkmark-tree" logo, the FSC license code, the label type, and a corresponding phrase like "Wood from well-managed forests." This certification ensures the product's sustainable and responsible origin, promoting environmental conservation and ethical sourcing (FSC, n.d.).

3.1.7 Scenario analysis

After evaluating all the environmental factors that could influence the card game market, we can assign a score to each factor based on its potential impact on the market and the level of uncertainty about its future developments. These scores, ranging from 0 (non-existent) to 10 (very high), will be summed up in the "total" column. The two factors with the highest total scores will be identified as our pivotal variables and will be used to develop scenarios.

	Factors	Impact	Uncertainty	Total
P	Discounts for first-time employees	5	3	8
E	Average Belgian expenditure	7	5	12

	Evolution of the card game industry	7	3	10
S	Trend towards analog games	8	4	12
	Trend towards videogames	8	3	11
	Trend towards sustainability	6	3	9
T	Social media	6	3	9
	Integration of Artificial Intelligence in the card game industry	6	5	11
E	Climate change	4	6	10
L	Packaging regulations	5	2	7
	CE marking	7	2	9
	Intellectual property	7	3	10
	FSC label	5	3	8

Table 1 - Measure of the impact and uncertainty of the factors in the PESTEL analysis

As illustrated in Table 1 above, the factors "Trend in analog games" and "Average Belgian expenditure" received the highest total scores. These results can be rationally explained:

Regarding the "Average Belgian expenditure", there is moderate uncertainty, as there is always some uncertainty about future consumer spending and on whether the Belgians will spend their money as before, especially due to potential events like economic crises or shifting consumer preferences. The impact on the card game industry is not negligible, as seen in section 3.1.2 Economics, this market is dependent on the recreation sector, so the Belgians' decision on how to allocate their spending will also impact the turnover of the card game market.

Concerning the "Trend in analog games", there is a relatively small degree of uncertainty, as it remains fairly stable, with some unpredictability due to the potential impact of digital entertainment and changing consumer preferences. This factor has a big impact, as the market shows a growing popularity among diverse demographics and offers opportunities for Form Up to capitalize on social and family-friendly gaming experiences.

Variable 1 (V1) has been designated as "Average Belgian expenditure", while Variable 2 (V2) represents "Trend in analog game" in Table 2.

	V1 (-)	V1 (+)
V2 (-)	Scenario 1: Belgians spend less money on recreation, sport and, culture and the trend toward analog games decreases.	Scenario 2: Belgians spend more money on recreation, sport and, culture and the trend toward analog games decreases.
V2 (+)	Scenario 3: Belgians spend less money on recreation, sport and, culture and the trend toward analog games increases.	Scenario 4: Belgians spend more money on recreation, sport and, culture and the trend toward analog games increases.

Table 2 - Scenario mix

A. Scenario 1

Scenario 1 presents the most pessimistic outlook, suggesting that Belgians will spend less money on recreational activities, sport and culture, leading to a general decrease in spending. In this situation, the

demand for card games will be lower, while the supply remains constant, intensifying competition. Consequently, Form Up may need to lower its prices and launch extensive marketing campaigns to maintain its market share. Furthermore, in this scenario, the trend towards analog games decreases. As a result, Form Up will need to diversify its game offerings, potentially exploring digital options, to cater to the evolving preferences of consumers and reevaluate its distribution strategy.

B. Scenario 2

In the second scenario, the overall recreation market may experience growth, but the demand for card games could potentially stagnate or decline. Form Up might face increased competition from other recreational activities and digital gaming options. To maintain or grow its market share, Form Up could consider diversifying its product offerings, incorporating digital elements into its games. Additionally, Form Up will need to invest in targeted marketing campaigns to emphasize the value and health benefits of its card games to consumers.

C. Scenario 3

In the third scenario, the overall recreation, sports, and culture market may experience a decline in spending, but the demand for analog games, including card games, is growing. Despite the reduced spending in the sector, Form Up could still benefit from the increased interest in analog games. However, we may need to adapt the marketing strategy to emphasize the value and affordability of the card games compared to the competitors. Nevertheless, Form Up should be prepared for potentially lower sales volumes due to the overall decline in spending on recreation, sports, and culture and they may need to lower its prices.

D. Scenario 4

Scenario 4 presents the most optimistic outlook for Form Up, as Belgians are spending more on recreation, sports, and culture, and the trend toward analog games is growing stronger than anticipated. This increased spending and preference for analog games will likely lead to a larger market share for card games and an expansion of Form Up's customer base. To meet the growing demand, the company may need to reassess its supply chain forecasts and accelerate the transition to a more efficient production process. However, the threat of new competitors entering the market will also increase. To stay ahead, Form Up must continue to differentiate and innovate its card game offerings, providing unique and engaging gaming experiences for consumers.

3.2 Porter's five forces

Porter's Five Forces is a popular model that organizations use to assess their competitive environment and make strategic decisions. Developed by Professor Michael E. Porter in 1979, this framework offers a systematic approach for companies to evaluate the forces shaping the future of their industry. The five critical dimensions that influence every industry and shape the competitive business environment are industry rivalry, threat of substitutes, threat of new entrants, bargaining power of buyers, and bargaining power of suppliers (Porter, 1980).

3.2.1 Industry rivalry

A. Direct competitors

Companies that sell products similar to Form Up in Belgium are considered its direct competitors. These are companies that offer card games with similar gameplay mechanics to those of Form Up. To compare Form Up with its direct competitors, we have identified and analyzed three prominent games in the Belgian market in Table 3: UNO, Jungle Speed and Dobble. These were selected due to their significant presence and popularity in Belgium as well as their similar gameplay mechanics as Form Up. Even though the four games are easy to transport with no additional components, except for Jungle Speed, Form Up differentiates itself by having two different ways to play the game and having a lower price. As the market is expanding (3.1.2 Economics), the development of the card game market will be reflected either by an increase in the number of competitors offering similar card games, by an increase in the quantity of card games sold by existing competitors, or by a combination of both.

Direct competitors	Uno	Jungle speed	Dobble	Form up
Average price	14 €	20 €	16 €	15 €
Different ways to play the game	No	No	No	Yes
Components	Cards	Cards and a totem	Cards	Cards
Age group	7+	7+	6+	6+
Time play	15 - 30 min	15 - 30 min	15 min	15 min
Number of players	2 - 10 players	2 - 10 players	2 - 8 players	2 - 8 players
Distributors	- Retail - Toy stores - Online marketplaces	- Retail - Toy stores - Online marketplaces	- Retail - Toy stores - Online marketplaces	Objective: - Retail - Toy stores - Webstores

Table 3 - Direct competitors' comparison

B. Indirect competitors

Indirect competitors are companies that fulfill similar needs but with different products. A consumer of Form Up seeks entertainment, social interaction, and mental stimulation through a physical card game. Therefore, by indirect competitors we understand every company that sells games fulfilling these three needs.

There are many indirect competitors to Form Up, such as board games, like Monopoly and Risk, or video games, like Mario Party and Minecraft. All these games fulfill the same needs, i.e. entertainment, social interaction and mental stimulation. Moreover, the number of indirect competitors is expected to grow in the coming years, particularly those offering video games (Carter, 2023). Indeed, Belgium's video game industry is thriving, with a strong emphasis on creating narrative-driven and visually impressive games. In 2024, the Belgian video games market is projected to generate a revenue of €644,80 million. The market

is expected to grow at an annual rate of 10.59% (CAGR 2024-2027), reaching an estimated market volume of €872,20 million by 2027. By that time, the number of users in the video games market is anticipated to rise to 2.3 million (Statista, 2024b).

3.2.2 Threat of substitutes

A substitute is a product or service that a consumer considers to be equivalent or similar to another product. In simple terms, a substitute product is a good that can be used in place of another (JobPhoning, 2020). Substitute products of Form Up are products offered by the competitors mentioned above, but depending on the need that the consumers seek to fulfill, there are other substitutes.

If consumers are looking for a game which offers mental stimulation, then they have a wide range of choices before them. These substitute products include all puzzle games, such as jigsaw puzzles, sudoku and even chess.

Furthermore, if consumers are looking for games that encourage social interactions, then there are the games considered as indirect competitors as well as other substitutes. The substitutes would be Pandemic, Codenames and charades. These games encourage cooperation and teamwork.

Table 4 below outlines the competitive landscape of Form Up, in order to better visualize the direct competitors, indirect competitors and substitutes.

Competitive landscape	Characteristics	Examples
Direct competitors	Card game	UNO, Jungle Speed, Dobble, ...
Indirect competitors	Board games	Monopoly, Risk, ...
	Video games	Mario Party, Minecraft, ...
Substitutes	Board games which encourage social interactions	Pandemic, Codenames, charades, ...
	Puzzle games which offer mental stimulation	Jigsaw puzzles, sudoku, chess, ...

Table 4 - Form Up's competitive landscape

3.2.3 Threat of new entrants

The threat of new entrants is determined by two factors, namely the barriers to enter the market and the reaction of existing rivals (Porter, 1980).

The card and board games industry presents several barriers to entry for newcomers, but they are not impossible to overcome. Firstly, compliance with toy safety regulations is a critical barrier. The industry is governed by rigid safety standards to protect consumers, particularly children. These regulations cover various aspects, including material safety, design, and manufacturing processes (see 3.1.5 Legal). New entrants must invest time and resources to understand and comply with these regulations, which can be a daunting task.

Secondly, intellectual property (IP) compliance is another important barrier. The card and board games industry is rich with creativity and innovation, making IP rights a crucial aspect. New entrants must ensure

their products do not infringe on existing IP rights, which requires a thorough understanding of copyright, patent, and trademark laws. However, protecting IP and designs is not too costly, as it costs only 150€ for five years (see 3.1.5 Legal).

Furthermore, new entrants need capital to start and maintain a business operation. However, the required capital is not very high, as it is possible to subcontract most of the operations. (see interview with Stijn Vankerckhoven, who works at Cartamundi, in Appendix 19) Moreover, economies of scale play a significant role in this industry. Established players benefit from lower production costs due to their scale of operations and due to their partnerships with manufacturers and distributors. They can spread fixed costs over a larger volume of games, reducing the per-unit cost. New entrants, on the other hand, may not achieve the same level of economies of scale, putting them at a cost disadvantage

Additionally, the industry is characterized by low switching costs. Consumers can easily switch from one game to another with minimal cost or inconvenience. This makes customer retention challenging for new entrants. To succeed, they must continually innovate and offer unique value propositions to keep customers engaged and prevent them from switching to competitors' offerings.

Lastly, as previously stated, the competition within the market is anticipated to increase in the coming years, either through the expansion of existing competitors or the entry of new ones. However, this threat may not significantly impact the industry due to the projected market growth, which is expected to accommodate the increased competition.

3.2.4 Bargaining power of buyers

Customer bargaining power can significantly influence an industry and a company's operations. For instance, it can compel a company to lower its prices, and this power is determined by various factors (Porter, 1982, p27-28). In the case of Form Up, customers wield relatively high bargaining power due to the minimal cost of switching to alternative suppliers or similar products. The abundance of information available online further enhances customers' bargaining power, as they can easily access up-to-date details about Form Up and its competitors, including pricing. However, the substantial number of potential buyers dilutes the individual bargaining power of each customer.

3.2.5 Bargaining power of suppliers

Form Up depends on multiple suppliers, who initially hold significant bargaining power due to the startup's small size. This power dynamic enables suppliers to potentially compromise product quality, increase prices, or extend manufacturing and delivery timelines, as Form Up constitutes only a minor portion of their revenue. However, this supplier bargaining power is anticipated to diminish as Form Up expands its operations.

3.2.6 Conclusion

Porter's five forces model enables the assessment of a sector's attractiveness based on its competitive intensity. To visualize this intensity, a sector pentagon can be created by assigning a score to each of the

five forces, as seen in Appendix 2. These scores, ranging from 0 (not significant) to 5 (highly significant), are determined by the previously discussed factors.

Based on the analysis of direct and indirect competitors, the **rivalry intensity** for Form Up is moderately high. Direct competitors include popular card games like UNO, Jungle Speed, and Dobble, while indirect competitors encompass board games and a growing video game market. Considering these factors, a score of 4 out of 5 is suggested for the rivalry intensity axis in the sector pentagon.

Concerning **substitutes**, we assign a score of 5. The availability of substitutes significantly intensifies the competitive landscape, as consumers seeking mental stimulation and social interaction can choose from various products. In addition to the direct and indirect competitors, other games like puzzle games, and more cooperative games can be considered substitutes for Form Up. Consequently, the high number of substitutes contributes to a more competitive market for Form Up.

We assign a moderate score of 3 for the **threat of new entrants** in the card and board games industry. Barriers like toy safety regulations and IP rights exist but are surmountable. Although, new entrants may face cost disadvantages due to economies of scale, and customer retention is challenging due to low switching costs, it is within the reach of everyone to introduce a new game on the market. However, the projected market growth is expected to accommodate increased competition, mitigating the threat's impact.

Concerning the **bargaining power of buyers**, we consider it high and therefore give it a score of 4. The high bargaining power stems from the low switching costs, allowing customers to easily choose alternative products, and the readily available online information that enables price comparisons. Although the large number of potential buyers weakens each customer's individual bargaining power, the overall bargaining power of buyers remains high.

Lastly, we assign a score of 4 for the **bargaining power of suppliers**. Initially, suppliers hold significant bargaining power due to Form Up's small size, which could lead to compromised product quality, increased prices, or extended manufacturing and delivery timelines. However, as Form Up grows and expands its operations, the supplier bargaining power is expected to decrease, making the situation more balanced in the long run.

Based on the Porter's Five Forces analysis, we can conclude that the card game industry is a highly competitive market. The analysis reveals a moderate threat of new entrants, a high intensity of competitive rivalry, high bargaining power of buyers, and initially high but decreasing bargaining power of suppliers. The high availability of substitutes also contributes to the competitive landscape.

Considering these factors, Form Up should focus on differentiating its product and low price, maintaining strong customer relationships, and offer an innovative game to stay competitive in the market. As the company grows, it can leverage its increased bargaining power with suppliers and benefit from economies of scale to improve its competitive position.

3.3 Competitive advantages

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), competitive advantages refers to the unique advantage a company has over its rivals, achieved either by providing superior value to customers, offering products or services at lower prices, or by having distinctive attributes that justify charging a premium price.

Form Up boasts several competitive advantages that set it apart in the card game industry. One of its key differentiators is the dual gameplay mode, offering players two distinct ways to enjoy the game, thereby catering to a wider audience with varying preferences. This versatility in gameplay ensures that Form Up's card game appeals to both casual and seasoned gamers alike.

Form Up's card game also comes with easy-to-understand rules, ensuring that players of all ages and skill levels can quickly grasp the game mechanics and dive into the fun without any hassle. This accessibility broadens the game's appeal and contributes to its potential for widespread adoption. Another significant advantage is the game's portability. Designed with ease of transport in mind, Form Up's card game is compact and lightweight, making it an ideal choice for gaming on the go. This feature is particularly appealing to consumers who value convenience and flexibility in their gaming experiences.

In addition to its user-friendly features, Form Up's card game is competitively priced, offering great value for money compared to other games in the market. This affordability makes it an attractive option for budget-conscious consumers, further expanding its potential customer base.

Another competitive advantage lies in its eco-friendly packaging, which sets it apart from other card games in the market. By prioritizing sustainability, Form Up appeals to environmentally conscious consumers who are increasingly seeking products that align with their values. Form Up's eco-friendly packaging provides a unique selling point that resonates with consumers and contributes to its overall success in the market.

To further enhance its competitive advantages, Form Up will focus its efforts and resources on two key areas. Firstly, the company aims to build and maintain strong relationships with its manufacturers and distributors, which is crucial in the competitive card game industry (see interview with Stijn Vankerckhoven, who works at Cartamundi, in Appendix 19). By fostering trust and collaboration, Form Up can potentially reduce its production costs and, in turn, offer more competitive pricing to its customers.

Secondly, Form Up plans to allocate approximately 7% of its revenue to marketing initiatives (see 5 Marketing plan). In a highly competitive market, a robust marketing strategy is essential for raising brand awareness and establishing a trusting relationship with consumers. By investing in targeted marketing campaigns, Form Up can effectively reach its target audience, showcase the unique features and benefits of its card game, and ultimately secure a larger market share.

3.4 SWOT analysis

The previous analyses can be condensed into a SWOT matrix (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), which offers a comprehensive view of a project's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats in its environment. The following Figure 1 presents Form Up's SWOT

matrix, with the most significant elements highlighted in bold. Additionally, the corresponding section or chapter for each element is specified in parentheses.

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Innovative (Section Competitive Advantages) - Easy to understand rules and the game's portability (Section Competitive Advantages) - Lower price (Section Competitive Advantages) - Marketing possibilities (Section Competitive Advantages) - Possibility to reduce costs with good suppliers and distributors relationship (Section Competitive Advantages) - In line with the growing trend of analog games (Section Competitive Advantages) - In line with the growing trend towards sustainability (Section Competitive Advantages) - The only one to have a dual gameplay mode (Section Competitive Advantages)	- The start-up is still in its concepting phase: (Chapter Operational Plan) • No brand awareness • No suppliers and distributors yet • No investors yet (Chapter Financial Plan) - In the future: • Highly reliant on suppliers as production process is outsourced (Chapter Operational Plan)
Opportunities	Threats
- Discount for first-time employees - Increase in recreational budget (Section PESTEL) - Growing trend towards • Analog games (Section PESTEL) • Sustainability - Social media (Section PESTEL) - AI (Section PESTEL) - Revenue evolution of the card game industry (Section PESTEL)	- Growing trend in videogames (Section PESTEL) - Climate change (Section PESTEL) - Packaging, FSC and CE regulations (Section PESTEL) - Competitive intensity of the market (Section Competitive Advantages)

Figure 1 - SWOT analysis

4. Market research

To supplement our market analyses, we conducted a survey aimed at understanding the purchasing behavior and preferences of our potential customer base, which is essential for developing a well-rounded action plan for Form Up. In order to obtain additional insights not available from external sources, we surveyed respondents who had either played card and board games or other similar games to Form Up, as well as those who had not. The responses to this questionnaire prove valuable across multiple aspects, including marketing strategies, operational planning, strategic decision-making, and financial planning for Form Up. Furthermore, this survey serves as an initial point of contact with potential Form Up customers, allowing us to introduce the games to them and gather their opinions about the game.

4.1 Methodology

We developed a questionnaire using Google Forms, as it facilitates easy sharing, simplifies result collection, and is widely recognized. The questionnaire was distributed across various platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, email, and WhatsApp, yielding 125 responses. We used convenience sampling for this study. Convenience sampling involves collecting data from a population that is easily accessible and willing to participate. This method is characterized by its simplicity and speed, as it gathers responses from those who are most readily available. The compiled results can be found in Appendix 3. To encourage honest feedback, respondents remained anonymous, ensuring candid answers and unrestrained criticisms.

The questionnaire began with an introduction to the game. To maintain structure and clarity, the questionnaire was divided into four sections: the first focused on the product itself, the second on respondents' habits, the third on general and socio-demographic questions, and the fourth on an open-ended question inviting advice or specific requests.

4.1.1 Questions on the product Form Up

This section aims to gather the genuine opinions of potential consumers about Form Up. We have organized it into four subsections based on the marketing mix model: product, price, place, and promotion (Bathelot, 2020).

A. Product

The first question was designed to know who the competitors of Form Up are. The respondents were asked which card games they already have played with. The question was asked in the form of a multiple-choice questionnaire and several answers were allowed.

The second question focused on determining the extent to which specific attributes, such as price or packaging, impacted a consumer's decision to purchase a card game. This helped identify which attributes should be highlighted the most. To accomplish this, a multiple-choice grid listing all the relevant attributes of card games was created. For the columns, a Likert scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important) was used to gauge the consumers' preferences and priorities.

The third and fourth questions were related to the concept of Form Up. Indeed, the respondents were shown the rules of Form Up and they were asked if the concept of the game was appealing and if the rules were easy to understand. A Likert scale from 1 (not very appealing) to 5 (very appealing) was used for the third question. The answer possibilities for the fourth question were either yes or no.

The fifth and sixth questions of this subsection were about the packaging of Form Up. The goal was to determine which packaging material they prefer in the form of a multiple-choice question. Moreover, the respondents were shown the packaging of Form Up in order to know what they thought about it. This question was presented in a multiple-choice format, allowing respondents to select multiple answers. A Likert scale was employed for the columns, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to capture the respondents' varying levels of agreement with the given statements.

B. Price

The first and only question in this subcategory focused on the price the respondent was willing to pay for the Form Up card game. It was presented as a multiple-choice questionnaire, allowing only one response per participant. The price options were based on the prices of competing products.

C. Place

The first question in this sub-category focused on determining the respondent's preferred location to purchase Form Up's card game. The objective of this question was to identify the most important sales points for Form Up. This question was presented in a multiple-choice format, allowing respondents to select multiple answers.

D. Promotion

The first question in this sub-category focused on the communication of Form Up's brand. It aimed to gather respondents' opinions on the game's brand name and slogan: "Form Up - Shape Your Fun." This question was structured as a multiple-choice questionnaire, allowing for multiple responses. A Likert scale from 1 (I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree) was used for the columns.

4.1.2 Questions on the respondents' habits

The goal of this section was to gain insights into the habits of consumers in the market. Specifically, respondents were asked when they purchase new card games. This question enables a more detailed analysis of the demand for games similar to Form Up. This question was presented in a multiple-choice format, allowing respondents to select multiple answers.

4.1.3 Question on the respondents' general and socio-demographic information

The aim of this section was to gain insights into the typical profile of a potential Form Up client. To achieve this, general and socio-demographic questions were asked to the respondents, such as their age, gender, status and so on.

4.1.4 Advice or request

The questionnaire concluded with an open-ended comment section, providing an opportunity for respondents to offer advice or make specific requests related to both the study and the presented project.

4.2 Limitations

A first limitation to note is the format of the questions, which primarily consisted of closed-ended questions. While an open-ended question was included in the advice and request section at the end, respondents may not have provided all the details they would have in a questionnaire with more open-ended questions. However, analyzing responses from an open-ended questionnaire would have been far more complex. To reduce this bias, respondents often had the option to add an answer by selecting the "other" option. Nevertheless, it was observed that not many respondents took advantage of this possibility.

Another limitation to take into account is the potential bias stemming from the respondents' lack of honesty. As the questionnaire was distributed as part of a thesis, some answers may have been given to please the researchers, intentionally aligning with what respondents believed we wanted to hear.

Furthermore, there is a sampling bias in our survey, as the majority of respondents were young, female and from Brussels. This can be attributed to the fact that most respondents were from our social circles or friends of friends, as the questionnaire was primarily distributed through our personal social networks. As a result, the respondents tended to be of similar age to us.

A last limitation to consider is the relatively small number of respondents, totaling only 125. While this number provided us with valuable insights, it may not fully represent the diverse preferences and opinions of the broader population. To obtain a more comprehensive understanding of our target market and capture a wider range of perspectives, it would be beneficial to conduct another survey with a larger and more diverse sample, including respondents from various backgrounds, age groups, and geographic locations. This will help ensure that our findings are more representative and reliable, ultimately contributing to the success of Form Up.

4.3 Key results

The outcomes of this questionnaire significantly contributed to the development of several strategic decisions outlined in this thesis.

Out of the 125 respondents, 120 (96%) found the concept of Form Up appealing and indicated that they found the rules easy to understand. This overwhelmingly positive feedback highlights the game's potential to attract and engage players. Additionally, the analysis revealed that the most important characteristics to highlight in our marketing strategy are the multiple ways of playing, followed by the price and ease of transport.

When presented with various case options for Form Up, the respondents showed a clear preference for a cardboard case, with 62% favoring this choice. The second most popular option was a tin case, accumulating 21% of the votes. The remaining respondents had no preference. As for the packaging

design, the majority of respondents expressed satisfaction. Therefore, the design can be used for the marketing of the game

Our survey revealed that the average price respondents are willing to pay for Form Up is €16. In terms of preferred purchase locations, the majority of respondents expressed a preference for buying the game in a toy store. The second most popular choice was "everywhere," suggesting that respondents would appreciate wide availability of the game across various retail outlets. Following this, large retailers were the third most preferred option for purchasing Form Up.

The results of our survey demonstrated that the name and motto of Form Up, "Stay in Shape," received a positive reception among respondents. This indicates that the slogan effectively resonates with our target audience, which means they can be used for the marketing of the game.

Our survey revealed insightful data regarding the purchasing habits of respondents when buying card games. Over 80% of the respondents indicated that they typically buy a new card game in various situations, such as when searching for a game to play during travel or vacations, as a gift for someone else, when seeking a new game to enjoy with friends and family, or when recommended by friends and family.

Concerning the socio-demographic questions of the respondents, the gender distribution was imbalanced, with 61,6% of the participants being female. The age distribution was also uneven, as 83,2% of the respondents fell within the 18-25 or 26-35 age brackets. Additionally, 60% of the respondents came from Brussels, 52,8% were employees, and 56,8% were single.

We decided to go beyond the results provided by Google Form by analyzing the average price that respondents are willing to pay based on their answers to these general questions. On average, women are willing to pay €0.20 more than men. Regarding age, respondents aged 26-35 and 36-45 are willing to pay the most, with the latter willing to pay €17,4 and the former €17. Our analysis indicates that respondents living in Brussels are willing to pay more for Form Up. Moreover, respondents who are married and have kids are willing to pay more than singles. Furthermore, employed respondents generally show a greater willingness to pay a higher price for the game.

4.4 Correlation analysis

The correlation of 0.55 between the price a customer is willing to pay and how attractive they find the game suggests that there is a moderate tendency for customers who find the game more attractive to be willing to pay a higher price for it. The relationship is positive but not strong, implying that while there is a noticeable link between these two variables, other factors are likely to influence the price a customer is willing to pay.

5. Marketing analysis

The previous research has led to the creation of a comprehensive marketing plan, consisting of two parts, namely strategic marketing and operational marketing. The goal of this section is to determine the positioning of Form Up, along with the product's features, pricing, distribution methods, and promotion of these activities.

5.1 Marketing strategy

The examination of the external environment in Chapter 3, combined with the market study in Chapter 4, enables the formulation of a strategic marketing plan to establish a medium- and long-term direction for the project. The primary objective of this strategic marketing plan is to perform a market segmentation, which will help determine Form Up's target market and positioning.

5.1.1 Segmentation

Market segmentation is essential to ensure that the marketing plan aligns with the market structure. This involves dividing the market into homogeneous groups of consumers based on quantitative or qualitative criteria. A market segment is a group of consumers with similar needs and purchasing behaviors. Segmentation criteria can include demographic factors, socio-economic factors, socio-psychological factors, geographical factors, and factors related to the purchasing act. To effectively segment the market for Form Up, the most relevant factors are demographic, socio-economic and socio-psychological factors. These factors can help create targeted marketing strategies to reach potential customers.

Based on our segmentation criteria, we can define our typical consumer. Demographically, they are likely to be a young adult, aged between 26 and 45 years old with children. Socio-economically, they are typically an employee, socio-psychologically, they value social interaction and mental stimulation, and appreciate high-quality, well-designed, and engaging card games. They also have a keen interest in supporting local products and are drawn to innovative and unique gaming experiences.

5.1.2 Targeting

Based on the insights gathered from the PESTEL analysis we have developed a persona for the ideal Form Up consumer using the relevant segmentation factors. Creating a persona helps us better target, understand, and persuade consumers, enabling us to propose an offer that meets market expectations. It also allows for more personalized marketing campaigns and a customer-centric approach.

The PESTEL analysis suggests that the ideal Form Up consumer is a young social adult with an average age of 34, which falls in the 26-45 age group, or a millennial. This generation has been identified as particularly interested in sustainability issues (see Trend towards sustainability). Furthermore, survey respondents in the 26-45 age group were willing to pay the highest prices for Form Up.

Our persona is employed and living with a long-time partner, without children. The family-friendly and intergenerational nature of Form Up makes it an ideal choice for family activities and bonding experiences. Furthermore, our survey results indicate that employees and respondents living with their partner or with

children are willing to pay more for Form Up. Our persona values social interactions and seeks games that are easy to learn, fun, and engaging for a diverse group of players. They prefer games that can be played in various settings, such as at home, during travel, or at social gatherings, which perfectly follows the PESTEL's trend towards analog games

Our persona is also environmentally conscious, aligning with the global trend toward sustainability. They prefer games with eco-friendly packaging and materials, as sustainability-related consumer goods are expanding rapidly, and consumers increasingly check pack labels for sustainability claims (see Trend towards sustainability).

To appeal to our persona, we will focus on highlighting the social aspects of Form Up, its ease of play, and its versatility in various settings. We will also emphasize the game's eco-friendly features and materials, capitalizing on the trend toward sustainability and the potential for reduced capital costs for environmentally friendly projects. Our persona relies heavily on word-of-mouth and trusts the recommendations of friends and social media influencers, which aligns with the findings from the PESTEL analysis, which indicates that individuals aged between 25 and 35 are the most receptive to social media advertising.

5.1.3 Positioning

Form Up positions itself as a fun, inclusive, and high-quality card game that offers an engaging and entertaining experience for players of all ages. The game's core values align with those of our target persona, who seeks products that prioritize fun, inclusivity, and quality. Form Up provides an excellent alternative to traditional card games and video games, offering a unique and enjoyable experience that resonates with our target audience.

5.2 Marketing mix

After establishing the strategic marketing plan for Form Up, the next step is to develop the operational marketing plan, which outlines the "4Ps" of the marketing mix, namely Product, Price, Place, and Promotion.

5.2.1 Product

As explained in Chapter 2, Form Up is an innovative card game designed to provide fun and mental stimulation for players of all ages. The game consists of 66 illustrated cards that improve cognitive skills like pattern recognition, promoting strategic thinking and creativity. Form Up is not just a game but a tool for enhancing cognitive skills and fostering social interaction among friends and family. The game is packaged in a compact, sustainably sourced paper and cardboard box, emphasizing our commitment to sustainability. Moreover, the majority of our questionnaire's respondents (62%) also liked this packaging better. The format of the cards is the format "Bridge", with a standard size of 56 mm on 87 mm. The packaging will be 6cm x 9cm x 2cm. Each card is printed on high-quality, recyclable paper, and the game itself is produced locally, ensuring a minimal carbon footprint. Form Up is easy to learn but offers multiple possibilities for play, making it a versatile addition to any game night.

5.2.2 Price

To determine the price of a product, it is essential to consider cost-based pricing, competition-based pricing, and value-based pricing. This section will discuss value-based pricing, while the first two methods will be covered in Chapter 8, the Financial Plan.

The value-based pricing strategy considers the consumers' willingness to pay. Based on our market research, the average price that respondents were willing to pay for the card game is €16 (see 4.3 Key results). This price represents the maximum amount that the final consumer is willing to pay. Therefore, the final price of Form Up should not exceed €16 to remain competitive in the market.

5.2.3 Place

The primary market for Form Up is the Belgian market. Initially, we will focus on selling directly through our own website. As we establish our presence, our goal for 2026 is to expand our sales channels to include toy stores and other retailers.

A. Own website

During the first year of Form Up sales, in 2025, we will focus on selling through our own website. This approach allows us to manage smaller quantities of games, which is advantageous for testing the game's reception among consumers and ensuring there is demand for Form Up. Additionally, it provides an opportunity to assess our team's performance and the effectiveness of our operational structures. If Form Up is well-received, it will validate our approach and pave the way for broader distribution to toy stores and board retailers in subsequent years.

B. Toys stores, bookshops and retailers

In 2026, we plan to expand our distribution by selling Form Up in toy stores, bookshops and retailers. This strategic move aims to increase our market presence and make Form Up more accessible to a broader audience. By placing our game in well-known toy stores and retailers, we hope to attract more customers and build stronger brand recognition. This expansion will complement our online sales and will allow us to gain visibility among our target consumers.

5.2.4 Communication

A. Name and motto

Form Up was chosen as the name for the card game because it reflects the game's focus on shapes and their transformations. The name is catchy and easy to remember, making it an excellent choice for a game that aims to appeal to a broad audience.

The motto "Stay in Shape" complements the name perfectly. It not only alludes to the pattern-recognition aspect of the game but also conveys a message about maintaining mental agility and sharpness. Just as staying in shape is crucial for physical health, engaging with "Form Up" helps keep the mind active and sharp. This dual meaning makes the motto memorable and relevant, reinforcing the cognitive benefits of

the game. Furthermore, the global feedback from respondents indicates a favorable opinion towards the chosen name and motto for our card game (see 4.3 Key results).

B. Packaging

The packaging of Form Up was designed by Alexandre when the game was first created. It features a purple cardboard box with the name and motto displayed prominently, along with various shapes in the background that correspond to the shapes on the cards. Purple was chosen for its connotations of luxury, authenticity, and quality. Historically associated with royalty, it conveys dignity and prestige (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). The back of the packaging includes a brief explanation of the game, the estimated play time, the age needed to play the game, and the required number of players. Additionally, the packaging bears the CE and FSC labels, along with other necessary information as detailed in section 3.1.6 Legal. Overall, respondents of the questionnaire have a positive opinion about the chosen packaging. The chosen packaging can be seen in the Appendix 4.

C. Promotion

Effective promotion is crucial for Form Up in order to enhance brand awareness and recognition, especially in the competitive game industry (see interview with Stijn Vankerckhoven, who works at Cartamundi, in Appendix 19). To address this, we have decided to allocate 7% of our income to marketing efforts. Additionally, our plan for 2026 includes hiring a dedicated marketing professional to oversee promotions and overall marketing activities. (see 6.2 Corporate Structure).

- Website

We plan to create a website for Form Up to provide easy and clear access to all relevant information about the game and our company. The website will be divided into several sections. First, an online sales section where customers can purchase the game directly, from B2C. Another section will introduce the project, the team, the product, and its purpose. Additionally, there will be a contact section for feedback or specific requests. Visitors will also be able to leave reviews on the website, which is crucial since eight out of ten millennials never buy anything without first reading a review, and millennials are our target audience (Interbrand, 2015).

- Social networks

Social networks are important as they strengthen both brand awareness and customer service by enhancing relationships with customers (see 3.1.4 Technology). There are multiple ways of doing promotion with social networks, namely a Facebook page and Instagram account, and advertisements on Instagram.

- Facebook page and Instagram account

The goal is to establish a Facebook page and an Instagram account to showcase the brand, product, team, and latest updates. Setting up these accounts is free, incurring no cost to Form Up. However, creating content for each post requires time and effort. Consequently, starting in 2025, a trainee will manage the social networks, posting weekly updates on Instagram and Facebook.

We aim to create a Facebook and Instagram page because the age groups that use Meta's social media (Facebook and Instagram combined) the most are 25-34 years old, followed by 35-44 years old. These age groups are precisely our target audience. For Facebook pages, the engagement rate, calculated based on the number of fans on the page at the time of publication, reached 0,20% for all types of posts combined. Additionally, Facebook is the most popular social network in Belgium (Datareportal, 2024).

According to a study made by Meta, 42% of Instagram users find that brand content helps them discover new products and services. Additionally, 41% of users stay informed through brand content. Our potential customers prefer direct communication with brands, and Instagram facilitates this interaction. Moreover, 83% of users discover new products or services, and 80% make purchasing decisions through Instagram. These insights demonstrate the platform's power in enhancing brand visibility and driving sales, making it a crucial tool for Form Up (Mercado, 2024).

- Advertisements on Instagram

In addition to creating an Instagram account, we plan to run ads on the platform to reach a broader audience. Instagram ads will help us enhance our brand visibility and attract potential customers. Based on current pricing, the cost per thousand impressions (CPM) is \$2,50-\$3,50. Which equates to 2,31€ - 3,23€, assuming \$1 is equal to 0,922€. This means that for every 2,3€ spent, our ads can achieve approximately 1000 viewers. This cost-effective method ensures that a large number of users will see our brand, significantly boosting our marketing efforts and expanding our reach (DeFazio, 2024).

- Free distribution

To boost brand awareness and generate buzz for Form Up, we plan to distribute free copies of our game to six popular board game bars in Brussels: Kings and Queens, La Luck, Le Bar à Jeux, La Tricoterie, Live Central Park, and Meltdown Brussels. This strategy aims to reach a wider audience and create opportunities for social gameplay, leveraging word-of-mouth marketing as satisfied players recommend the game to others. The main cost will be producing and providing the card games, making this a cost-effective approach to increase visibility and engagement for Form Up.

- Game fairs

To further increase our reach, we will participate in the Brussels Games Festival (BGF), a major board game event attracting a diverse audience. The cost to participate is 265€ for three days, which includes, storage, and brand mention in festival communications. This platform allows Form Up to engage directly with potential customers, build brand awareness, and gather immediate feedback from a broad and enthusiastic crowd.

- Word-of-mouth

We also rely on word-of-mouth to promote Form Up. To achieve this, it is crucial to focus on being customer-centric and to aim for impeccable design, packaging, gameplay experience, and brand image, all while staying true to the company's core values.

6. Organizational plan

The organizational plan outlines both the legal and the business structure of the company. The legal structure helps in setting up the financial plan and establishing the company. The business structure introduces the launch team and details how the team will evolve over time.

6.1 Legal structure of the company

The SRL, or limited liability company, was chosen as the company's legal structure. The SRL structure offers significant advantages for Form Up. Its distinct legal personality protects the personal assets of the shareholders, ensuring that they are only liable up to their initial investment. This is particularly beneficial for a startup, minimizing personal financial risk. Moreover, the lack of a mandated minimum capital requirement provides financial flexibility, allowing Form Up to allocate resources efficiently according to the specific needs of its business model and market strategy. This combination of legal protection, flexibility, and financial efficiency makes the SRL structure ideal for Form Up's successful launch and growth (SPF Economie, 2023). Nevertheless, several crucial steps must be taken, including drafting the articles of association in the presence of a notary, registering them with the Crossroads Bank for Enterprises, and addressing the company's financial requirements, among other tasks (notaire.be, n.d.).

6.2 Corporate structure

A. Founders

Form Up originated as a high school project created by Alexandre for a mini-entreprise program. The game was well-received, and a few years later, Alexandre introduced it to me. We found great enjoyment playing Form Up with our friends and family, and it soon became a staple in our gatherings. Our shared interest in entrepreneurship, sparked by our management studies at the Louvain School of Management, further motivated us to turn our passion into a business venture. We decided to collaborate and develop Form Up into a product that could be shared with a wider audience, bringing fun and engaging experiences to card game enthusiasts everywhere.

Starting from September 2024, I will be dedicating my full-time efforts to Form Up, and Alexandre will be a shareholder and a board member. In the initial stages of the business (2024 and 2025), I will manage all aspects of the company independently, including the supply chain, marketing, contacting distributors, and handling administrative tasks. As the company grows over the years, we plan to hire full-time employees to assist us with these responsibilities (see below).

B. Employees

By 2026, we aim to hire a full-time employee with a marketing degree to manage customer relations and oversee marketing initiatives. This will be essential as we plan to expand our sales to large retail chains like Delhaize, which will require substantial effort and time. This individual will be responsible for managing Form Up's marketing efforts, including social media and promotional events, ensuring that our brand grows in alignment with our expansion goals.

6.3 Corporate culture

Corporate culture shapes the workplace as well as influences how customers perceive and value the company. This is especially relevant today, as consumers increasingly focus on a brand's integrity. Form Up's corporate culture is divided into three key components:

1. Its mission, which is to design and produce high-quality card games that are easy to learn, enjoyable to play, and accessible to all ages. They aim to foster connection and joy through innovative gameplay, encouraging face-to-face interactions in an increasingly digital world.
2. Its vision, which is to be the leading creator of fun, engaging, and socially interactive card games that bring people together and create lasting memories.
3. Its values, which are fun, inclusivity and quality.

7. Supply chain

In this section, we will analyze Form Up's supply chain. We will begin by outlining the general supply chain process. Next, we will define which part of the supply chain will be outsourced.

7.1 Supply chain

To provide a clear overview of the production process, we will outline each necessary step in a general manner. First, we will examine the raw materials required to produce the card game, as well as the production. Afterward, we will discuss the storage requirements and, finally, how it will be transported to the customer.

A. Raw materials and production

The production process will be outsourced to a company like Cartamundi to ensure quality and efficiency. In order to outsource our production of card games we have to order a minimum of 1.000 card games, as this is the minimum required by Cartamundi. However, the card games are not perishable so we can spread the sale on multiple months depending on the demand.

The raw materials required to produce a deck of cards include a printing sheet, printing ink, varnish for the cards, and a printed tuck box for packaging. One print sheet is capable of producing 132 cards at once, which is enough for two decks of cards. For the playing cards production, the first step is printing (and varnishing) the print sheets on the front and back. After that the printed sheets will be cut into strips and the strips will be cut into cards in a cutting machine. The cards which were placed next to each other on the sheet are now on top of each other in a deck of cards. Directly after the cutting machine the whole deck gets rounded corners with a corner punch press. The card decks are now ready for packaging; they are wrapped in glassine paper and packed in a cardboard tuck box (see Appendix 5).

B. Storage

To maintain optimal condition, card decks should be stored in a dry environment with a temperature between 18°C and 22°C and relative humidity between 40% and 55%. Paper's hygroscopic nature makes it sensitive to temperature and humidity changes, affecting its shape and strength (Humiscope, 2023). For 1.000 card games, we need a storage of 6 boxes of 26.5 x 30 x 25.5 cm.

C. Transport and sales

Once the card games are printed, Cartamundi will transport them to our storage facility for online sales. As we expand into offline shops, games will also be sent to our distributor, who will manage sales and storage for retailers, toy stores, and bookstores, while we continue to handle online sales and storage.

7.2 Outsourced supply chain

As previously mentioned, the production process will be outsourced to manufacturers. Initially, we will manage the transport, storage, and sales manually, focusing exclusively on sales through our website. As

we expand, we will take on a distributor who will handle the storage and sales responsibilities to toy stores, bookstores and retailers.

8. Financial plan

The financial plan provides a comprehensive overview of the business environment and forecasts the financial future of Form Up. It helps determine if the proposed activity is profitable and viable for launch. If profitable, an analysis of investment needs follows. Based on various assumptions, the financial plan will cover the last quarter of 2024 and the years 2025-2028 for Form Up.

8.1 Methodology

To build the financial plan for Form Up, we first need to calculate our sales forecasts. These forecasts are essential for calculating total costs forecasts, which include both variable and fixed costs. Variable costs then help us determine the selling price per deck, which is crucial for calculating revenue projections. We ensure that the revenue forecast covers the projected costs and that the selling price aligns with the initial sales forecasts. This analysis then helps us define turnover and key financial ratios.

All figures used in this financial plan are based on assumptions explained in each section. These assumptions have been validated by professionals during interviews (see Appendix #7#) and are developed in good faith. We estimate that the average Belgian expenditure will continue to increase, as predicted by Statbel (3.1.2 Economics), and we assume that the trend towards analog games will continue to develop, as stated in the PESTEL (3.1.3 Social context).

8.2 General hypotheses

8.2.1 Inflation

In our financial projections, we have chosen to use nominal prices instead of adjusting for inflation. This is based on our assumption that both costs and revenues will be affected by inflation in a similar manner, resulting in a cancellation effect. However, we acknowledge that inflation rates can vary and may impact our projections in unforeseen ways. We will continue to monitor inflation trends and adjust our assumptions as necessary.

8.2.2 Prices

We base all the costs on today's prices and assume they will not change over time. However, we will be able to decrease some prices because we will order larger quantities over time.

8.3 Sales forecast

To create the sales forecast for Form Up, we have considered both our online sales strategy and the anticipated benefits of partnering with a distributor for retail sales. By splitting our sales forecast into website sales and retail sales through the distributor, we have calculated the projected sales for the next five years. To estimate the number of games we can sell per point of sale, we have made several assumptions. These are based on our interview with Stijn Vankerckhoven, Business Development and Sales at Cartamundi providing prudent sales estimates (see Appendix 19).

8.3.1 Hypotheses

A. Hypothesis 1: First batch printed and ready for sale

By the end of 2024, Form Up will have its first batch of games printed and ready for sale. We anticipate that approximately 100 individuals in our network will have tested the game and provided positive feedback by this time. Additionally, all administrative requirements will be completed by December 2024, including:

- Establishing the company as an SRL (see 6.1 Legal structure of the company)
- Registering the trademark (see 3.1.6 Legal)
- Obtaining the necessary certifications, such as CE and FSC labels (see 3.1.6 Legal)
- Launching our website (see 5.2.3 Place)

B. Hypothesis 2: Sales via website

In 2025, we launch our first sales via our website. We estimate that in our first year of operation, we will be able to sell between 275 and 300 card games per month via our website. This assumption takes into account the feedback and insights we received from Stijn Vankerckhoven regarding the potential demand for our product and the size of our target market (see Appendix 19).

C. Hypothesis 3: Sales via distributor (toy stores, bookshops and retailers)

For our sales projections through the distributor, starting in 2026, we have made the following assumptions: The distributor will double the sales we achieve via our website by placing our games in retail outlets. Additionally, we anticipate that 50% of these retail sales will come from toy stores and bookshops, while the remaining 50% will be from other retailers. These assumptions are based on the expected reach and marketing efforts of our distributor, and they provide a balanced view of our sales potential across different types of retail channels.

D. Hypothesis 4: Market growth

Based on the findings of a study conducted by Statista Market Forecast, we hypothesize that the Belgian card game market will experience an annual growth rate of 3.22% from 2024 to 2028. This projection suggests that the market will continue to expand, providing a favorable environment for our card game startup, Form Up. As a result, we anticipate that the demand for our products will also increase by 3.22%, allowing us to grow our customer base and revenue over time.

8.3.2 Total sales forecast per year

Appendix 6 illustrates the total sales forecast evolution from 2025 to 2028 on an annual basis. In 2025, we anticipate selling 3.600 card games. In 2026, we estimate sales will increase to 11.160, due to the new distribution channels. In 2027, we project selling 11.528 card games, and in 2028, sales are expected to reach 11.928. For a more detailed breakdown, Appendix 7 provides tables that show the monthly sales forecast evolution per point of sale. These tables offer a comprehensive view of our projected sales growth over time, considering both online and offline channels.

8.4 Costs forecast

Thanks to the sales forecast calculated above, we can determine the total costs for Form Up. These costs consist of variable costs, which fluctuate based on the number of games produced, and fixed costs, which remain constant regardless of the company's activity level.

8.4.1 Variable costs

A. Production and transport

The production and transport cost of Form Up is currently set at €1 per deck when ordering the minimum required quantity of 1.000 decks, based on Cartamundi's rates. In a period of six months, the demand is projected to not exceed 5.000 decks, in the first year. We chose this six-month period for ordering new decks to avoid overstocking and to more easily adjust our inventory to match demand. As our sales volume eventually surpasses 5.000 decks in 2026, we anticipate lowering the production cost to €0,75 per deck, taking advantage of economies of scale and enhancing our cost efficiency.

B. Distributor

Starting in 2026, we will engage a distributor to manage the storage and sales of our card games to offline shops, including toy stores, bookstores, and larger retailers. This strategic move will help streamline our operations and ensure efficient delivery to various retail outlets. The estimated cost for this distribution service is €2,70 per deck. This expense covers the logistics of transporting the games from our storage to the distributor, who will then handle the distribution to the retailers.

C. Shipping

Starting in 2025, when we begin selling our card decks, we will use FSC-certified paper envelopes filled with plastibul for added protection. The required envelope size is 150mm x 215mm, costing €0,50 per envelope. Since a deck of cards weighs 90 grams and the envelope is non-standardized, we will need two stamps per shipment, costing €2,86. Therefore, the total shipping cost per deck will be €3,36. This shipping cost applies only to card decks sold via our website. For cards distributed through retailers, shipping will not be handled by us, thus eliminating this expense from our cost structure.

D. Variable cost summary

In Appendix 8, we see that the variable costs for Form Up are categorized into transportation and production, offline sales (distributor cost), and online sales (shipping costs). It should be noted that the costs associated with offline sales will only begin in 2026, as we do not intend to start offline sales any earlier.

8.4.2 Fixed costs

Fixed costs are the expenses that remain constant regardless of the level of production or sales.

A. Legal fees

- SRL fees

As detailed in section 6.1 Legal Structure, the company will be established as an SRL. The total cost for this process is 1.073,26€, considered an initial investment and it will be amortized on a 5 year-time period. This amount is broken down as follows:

- Registration at the Crossroads Bank of Enterprises (CBE): € 105,5 (SPF Economie, 2024)
- Deed registration fee at the FPS Finance: €50 (notaire.be, n.d.)
- Writing rights for the notarial deed: €95 (notaire.be, n.d.)
- Publication costs in the Belgian Official Journal: €222,76 (notaire.be, n.d.)
- Notary's fee: 600€ (notaire.be, n.d.)

- Trademark registration fees

Registering a trademark with the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property costs €150 and provides protection for 5 years (BOIP, n.d.).

B. Tangible fixed Assets

In our expenses for fixed assets, we have allocated 1.000€ annually for various equipment, including tables, storage facilities, computers, cellphones, and other small office supplies. We anticipate that initial costs may be higher in the first year, but we expect these to be offset in subsequent years. These costs are amortized on a 3 year-time period.

C. Operating expenses

- Travel expenses

For travel expenses associated with meetings with the manufacturer and distributors, and attending fairs, we foresee using our car extensively. We estimate an average of three full tanks of gasoline per month, with each full tank for our Ford Fiesta costing around 40€. This results in an annual gasoline cost of 1.440€. Additionally, we allocate 100€ annually for parking fees, bringing the total travel expenses to 1.540€ per year. For the last four months of 2024, we estimate these expenses to be 513,33€.

- Insurance

For Form Up, we need to consider several essential insurance types to ensure comprehensive coverage for our operations. Vehicle insurance is necessary given our frequent travel for meetings and attending fairs, costing approximately €450 annually. Additionally, professional liability insurance (RC Professionnelle) is crucial to protect against potential claims from professional errors or negligence, with an annual cost of around €500 (Sentis, 2023).

- Accounting fee

For Form Up, we have budgeted €3.000 annually for an accountant. This fee covers essential tasks such as establishing annual accounts, managing administrative duties, and handling various tax declarations, including quarterly VAT, income tax returns, and withholding tax. This investment ensures accurate and compliant financial records, allowing us to focus on growing our business (Experts Comptables, 2024).

- Salaries

In 2026, Form Up will make significant strides in expanding its operations by hiring its first employee and paying a salary to one of its founders. The monthly gross salary for both positions is set at €2.200, as this is the average salary of a young graduate in 2024 in Belgium (Michel, 2023). Resulting in a total annual salary cost of €34.604 for each position. However, as a benefit for hiring our first employee, we will receive a reduction of €6.092, bringing the total annual cost after reduction to €28.512. Similarly, for the company's second employee, we will benefit from a specific reduction of €6.200, bringing the total annual cost after reduction to €28.404. These salary costs include various legal obligations for employers, such as the year-end bonus, work accident insurance premium, annual vacation contribution, basic employer contributions and structural reduction, costs for external prevention and protection services at work, social secretariat management fees, and contribution to the existence security fund. This decision underscores our commitment to compensating our team appropriately as we continue to grow and develop our operations (Securex, n.d.).

- Marketing expenses

In the highly competitive gaming industry, it's crucial to differentiate oneself, and marketing plays a vital role in achieving this. To ensure our brand stands out, we aim to allocate 7% of our turnover to marketing efforts, which aligns with the average investment made by startups (Lemercier, 2023).

- Website

At the end of 2024, we plan to launch our website and take on the creation process ourselves. By utilizing the Wix platform, we can keep our costs low while still achieving a professional and functional website. The monthly cost for the website is €34, which includes access to a range of design and customization features. This translates to an annual cost of €408. Since we will only be launching the website in December 2024, we will only need to pay for one month in that year (Wix, n.d.).

- Other operating expenses

In addition to our main operating costs, we have allocated a buffer of €500 per year for unforeseen events. This contingency fund ensures that we are prepared for any unexpected expenses that may arise, helping us to maintain smooth operations and financial stability.

D. Fixed cost summary

As shown in Appendix 9, the fixed costs for Form Up are categorized into legal fees, tangible fixed assets, and operating expenses. There is a significant increase in fixed costs between 2025 and 2026 due to the

addition of salaries. Similarly, there is a big difference between 2026 and 2027 due to the increase in marketing expenses in 2027.

8.5 Selling price

Having determined our expenses, we can now establish a price per card game deck. As previously discussed in section 5.2.2, the variable cost per deck is a crucial factor in setting the price. Additionally, we will take into account the pricing of our competitors and the consumers' willingness to pay.

8.5.1 Cost-based pricing

The cost price of a product sets its minimum selling price. To determine this, we calculated the sum of the variable cost per unit and the fixed cost per unit for each year from 2025 to 2028. As shown in Appendix 10, the price decreases annually, except in 2026 when salaries start to be paid. This reduction is due to increasing sales, which enable economies of scale. Since there will be no sales in 2024, only fixed costs are incurred, and this year is not included in the table.

8.5.2 Competition-based pricing

To set our price, it is essential to examine the pricing of our competitors. Given the high level of industry rivalry, there is significant competition and many options available in the market. Price is a crucial factor for customers when choosing between different products. We analyzed four companies that sell similar products in Belgium, as listed in Table 8 below. These companies were selected because they appear to be the most established in the Belgian market.

In Appendix 11, we have listed the prices of our four competitors, both with VAT and without. The VAT rate is 21%, so we subtracted that from the original price. Additionally, we analyzed the price without the retailers' sales margin, which is about 35%. Finally, we calculated the average price of the three competitors with VAT, without VAT and B2B. We assume that these prices will remain relatively constant over five years. Even if competition is likely to increase (see 3.2 Porter's Five Forces), the number of people attracted to card games is also expected to grow given market trends (see 3.1.3 Social Context).

8.5.3 Value-based pricing

For Form Up, it's crucial to consider consumers' willingness to pay. Setting a product price higher than what consumers are willing to pay will result in insufficient sales, while setting it too low would mean losing out on potential profit margins. To determine this willingness to pay, we relied on responses from our questionnaire (see 4. Market Research). On average, respondents indicated they are willing to pay €16. We anticipate that this willingness to pay will remain consistent through 2028.

8.5.4 Overview

Appendix 12 summarizes the three pricing methods to determine an appropriate pricing strategy. For the value-based pricing, we started with €16, as identified in our market research, then we subtracted the VAT of 21% and the store margin of 35% for the sales made with a distributor.

8.5.5 Strategy

We have decided to adopt a price alignment strategy, positioning ourselves within the lower average price range. Our prices will be comparable to, but slightly lower than, the average of our competitors, ensuring they remain below the value-based pricing to attract as many consumers as possible. In addition, our unit costs for sales via our website will always be lower than the selling price per unit. As for the cost price per unit of card games sold through a distributor, it will be lower than the selling price for the first year. Due to the rise in marketing costs, the cost price will be higher than the selling price in 2027. Nevertheless, as we benefit from economies of scale, the cost price will decrease and will again be lower than the selling price.

A. Offline sales

We have set the price of Form Up at €9.49 (excluding VAT) for sales to retailers. This means that we will sell the game to toy stores, bookshops, and retailers at this price. The retailers will then add their margin and VAT to determine the final selling price to consumers. We estimate that the final price to consumers will be €15,5, based on a 35% retail margin.

B. Online sales

In order to maintain fair competition and demonstrate goodwill towards our retail partners, we have decided to set the price of Form Up on our website to be similar to the lowest price available in the market. This means that consumers will be able to purchase our card game for €15, including VAT, on our website. Without VAT, the price will be approximately €12.40.

C. Overview

Appendix 13 presents an overview of Form Up's B2B selling prices for each distribution channel.

8.6 Revenue

Appendix 14 provides an overview of Form Up's annual revenue based on the number of card games sold through each distribution channel and their corresponding prices. It is important to note that no sales were recorded in 2024. Additionally, there is a significant increase in revenue from 2025 to 2026, primarily due to the sales made through the distributor.

8.7 Profit

Calculating annual profit involves subtracting costs from revenue. For Form Up, this results in a negative profit for 2024, as we can see in Appendix 15. The profit turns positive in 2025 and continues to be positive in the following years. By 2028, the profit after tax is projected to be €6.167,84 and the total profit over the period 2024-2028 is projected to be €27.378,11.

8.8 Financing

To finance Form Up, Alexandre and I will each invest €3,000 to cover the initial costs and provide a small buffer for unforeseen expenses in the first year. Due to our small size and lack of financial history, obtaining a bank loan is not feasible at this stage. We plan to start distributing dividends to the two founders from 2027 when the business has established a more stable financial footing.

8.9 Financial results

This section will provide a summary of the financial plan using three key financial tools: the income statement forecast, the balance sheet forecast, and the cash flow statement forecast.

8.9.1 Income statement forecast

As we can see in Appendix 16, the income statement for Form Up reveals negative results for the first year, 2024, because no sales were recorded. In 2025, Form Up reports a positive net income, marking the first profitable year. The income in 2026 and 2027 shows a decrease due to increased payroll expenses in 2026 and higher marketing costs in 2027. By 2028, the net income improves to €6,006.86, indicating a stabilization and growth in profitability despite the previous fluctuations.

In 2028, Form Up's financial ratios indicate significant improvements. The gross margin is 7%, reflecting better control over production costs. The EBITDA margin is 7%, showcasing effective cost management. The net income margin at 5% highlights overall profitability. Despite earlier challenges, these ratios demonstrate Form Up's stabilized financial health and positive growth outlook.

8.9.2 Balance sheet forecast

Appendix 17 shows Form Up's balance sheet forecast. To create this balance sheet, we calculated our receivables with a DSO (Days Sales Outstanding) of 30 days, for our sales via a distributor. Our DPO (Days Payable Outstanding) is set to be immediate due to our status as a small company working with large suppliers who require prompt payment. Additionally, we estimate that the inventory at the end of each year will be zero.

8.9.3 Cash Flow statement forecast

Appendix 18 shows Form Up's cash flow statement forecast. The total cash flow shows a positive trend and increases to €4,012.47 by 2028, indicating growing financial health and liquidity. However, there is a dip in 2026 due to a lower net income. There is an initial shareholder investment of €6,000 in 2024. Moreover, in 2027 we start to give out dividends, €500 for each founder in 2027 and €1,000 for each founder in 2028, resulting in a dividend yield of 17% in 2027 and 33% in 2028. It is noteworthy that Form Up generates enough cash internally, which indicates that the company currently does not need to use external financial resources for its operations.

9. Risks

Form Up, like many emerging businesses, is exposed to a variety of risks that could potentially impact its operations, growth, and profitability. As a startup, Form Up faces inherent start-up risks, including the lack of established historical relationships with suppliers and clients, limited production experience, and marketing experience. These challenges can hinder Form Up's ability to secure a strong foothold in the market and compete effectively with more established players.

Additionally, economic recessions pose a significant threat, as downturns could negatively affect Form Up's financial results and overall profitability. The company is also vulnerable to fluctuations in raw material costs and energy prices. Such volatility could adversely impact Form Up's bottom line, and there is no assurance that these increased costs can be passed on to customers without affecting sales.

Funding needs present another critical risk. Form Up may encounter difficulties in securing the necessary capital for future growth and operational expenses. This could impede the company's ability to innovate, expand, and maintain a competitive edge. Furthermore, Form Up relies heavily on independent distributors to sell its products, which introduces another layer of risk. Poor performance by these distributors can directly impact the company's sales and financial performance.

Legislative changes represent an additional risk factor. Changes in laws and regulations could restrict or reduce Form Up's ability to produce and market its card game, potentially disrupting its business model. The competitive landscape poses additional challenges. Increased competition could reduce Form Up's margins, increase costs, and adversely affect profitability.

Moreover, public perception and regulation are critical factors; negative publicity and changes in government regulations may have an adverse impact on Form Up's results and profitability. Shifts in consumer preferences and tastes could also adversely affect demand for Form Up's products, making it essential for the company to stay attuned to market trends.

Litigation risk is another concern, with the potential for financial and reputational consequences stemming from legal disputes. As an online operator, Form Up is exposed to cybersecurity threats such as data breaches, hacking, and fraud, which could compromise customer data and trust, affecting the company's reputation and financial standing.

Lastly, key-man risk is a significant concern. The loss or departure of key individuals, such as founders or essential executives, could significantly disrupt operations, strategic direction, and key decision-making, thereby adversely affecting the company's performance and stability.

In conclusion, while Form Up has significant potential, it must navigate a complex array of risks that could impact its growth and sustainability. By recognizing and strategically managing these risks, Form Up can better position itself for long-term success.

10. Conclusion

This thesis has established the marketing strategy and demonstrated the feasibility and viability of the Form Up project until 2028. The rationale for this project is rooted in the growing concern over the adverse effects of excessive screen time and digital addiction, which are linked to physical, psychological, social, and neurological health issues. Excessive screen time can lead to poor sleep, obesity, high blood pressure, poor vision, depression, antisocial behavior, and attention problems, emphasizing the need for healthier alternatives that reduce reliance on digital devices.

Our solution to these problems is Form Up, an innovative card game designed to provide an engaging and stimulating alternative to screen-based entertainment. Form Up combines strategic depth with easy-to-understand gameplay, making it appealing to a broad audience and encouraging strategic thinking and creative planning. By promoting analog gameplay, Form Up aims to improve cognitive skills, reduce cognitive decline, and strengthen familial and social bonds, offering a healthier and more socially enriching alternative to digital entertainment.

The analysis of the external environment revealed an opportunity in the market for a product like Form Up due to the growing awareness of the negative impacts of excessive screen time and the increasing demand for engaging analog activities. Despite the competitive landscape of the entertainment market, the card game market is growing, as well as the demand for analog games, providing Form Up with a unique opportunity to capture a market share.

A market study confirmed the demand for such a game, identified the key attributes to highlight for Form Up and determined the target consumers' willingness to pay. This study, along with the external analysis and the interview with Stijn Vankerckhoven, who works in the Business Development and Sales department at Cartamundi, informed the development of a comprehensive marketing plan to enhance the brand's visibility and market penetration.

This first part, combined with the organizational plan and operational plan, culminated in the financial plan, which confirms the viability and profitability of Form Up with a positive net income from 2025 onwards.

We have noted some limitations during the development of our business plan for Form Up. The limited time available prevented us from conducting a more thorough investigation with a larger and more diversified sample of people. In addition, our operational and financial plans are based on estimates and could misrepresent the real needs of the company once created. Moreover, we have limited public information on the card game industry, which adds a layer of uncertainty to our market analysis and projections.

Looking ahead, our plan is to grow the brand and eventually sell Form Up to a major company like Mattel or Hasbro, capitalizing on their extensive distribution networks and market expertise to further expand the game's reach and impact.

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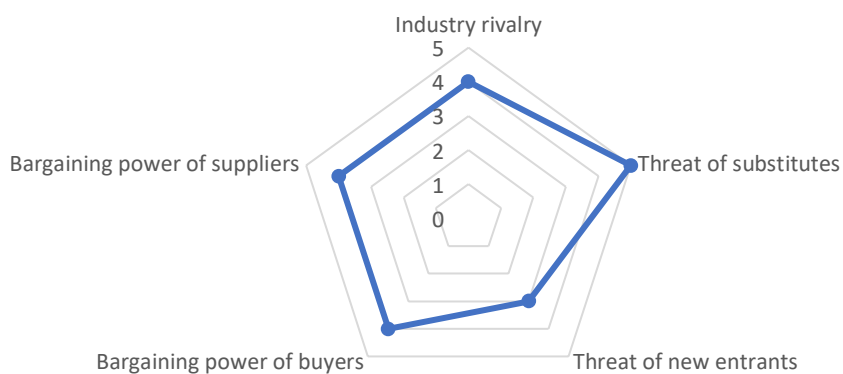
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12. Appendix

12.1 Appendix 1: Average expenditure of Belgians

Expenditure item	2018	2020	2022	Difference 2018 - 2022
Housing	30,3%	31,8%	30,7%	0,4%
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	14,0%	15,9%	13,9%	-0,1%
Transport	11,4%	9,7%	10,8%	-0,6%
Recreation, sport, and culture	7,2%	6,3%	7,7%	0,5%
Horeca	6,6%	4,4%	7,0%	0,4%
Furnishing and household equipment	5,3%	6,7%	5,7%	0,4%
Clothing and footwear	4,6%	3,4%	4,0%	-0,6%
Alcohol beverages and tobacco	2,0%	2,2%	1,9%	-0,1%
Other	18,6%	19,6%	18,2%	-0,4%

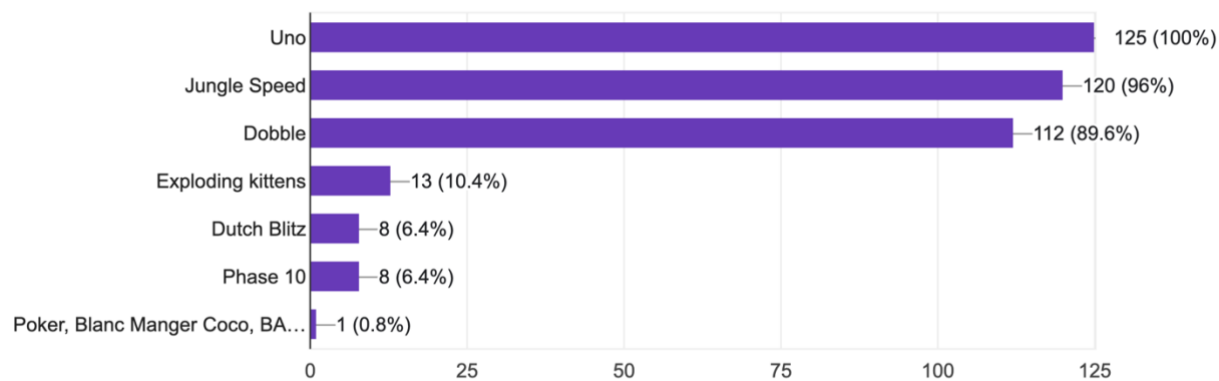
12.2 Appendix 2: Diagram of the 5 forces of Porter applied to the card game industry



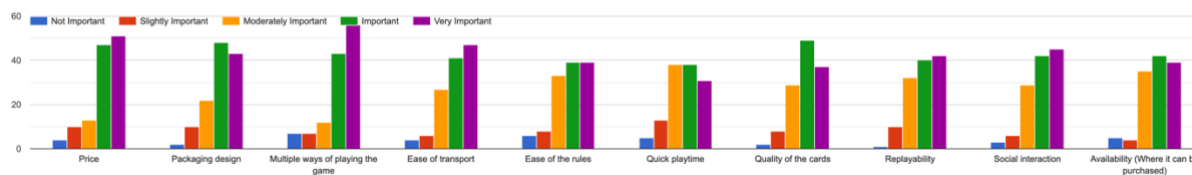
12.3 Appendix 3: Aggregated answers of questionnaire

Which card games have you already played with?

125 responses

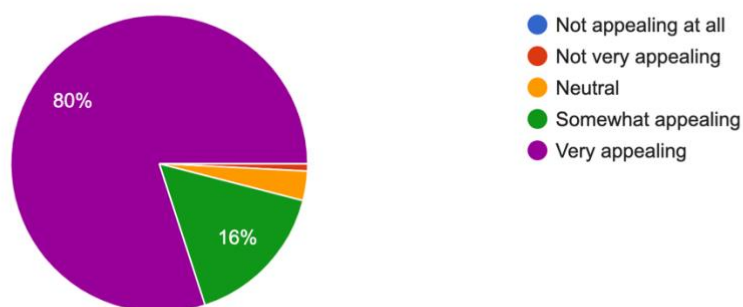


Which factors will affect your likelihood of purchasing a card game?



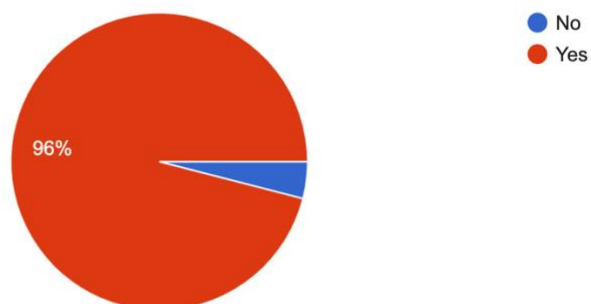
How appealing do you find the concept of Form Up

125 responses



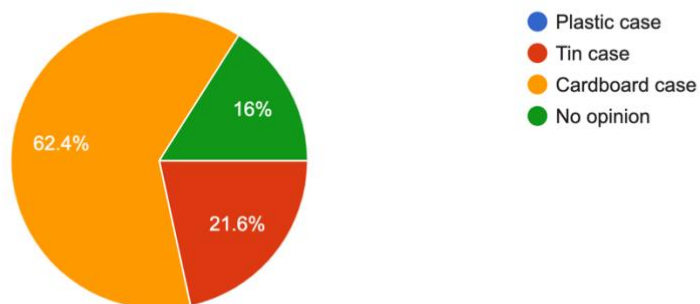
Are the rules easy to understand

125 responses

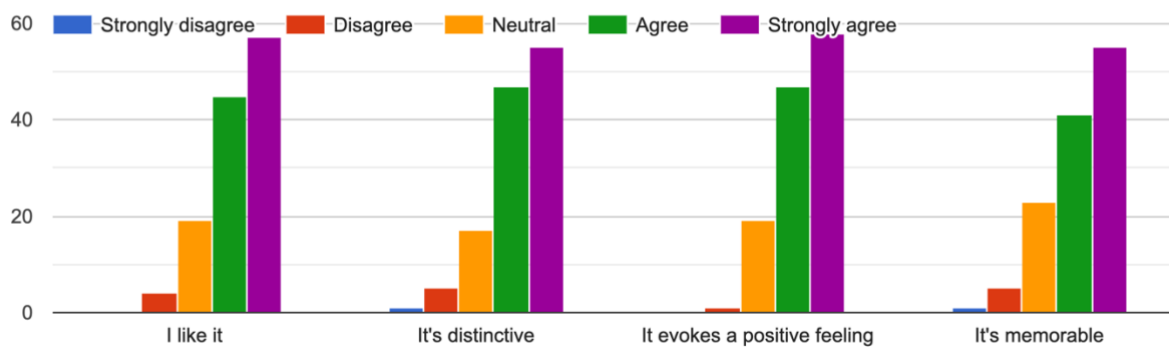


Which packaging would you prefer for a card game?

125 responses

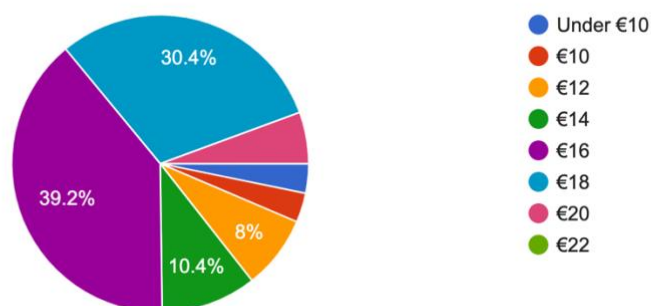


What do you think of Form Up's packaging



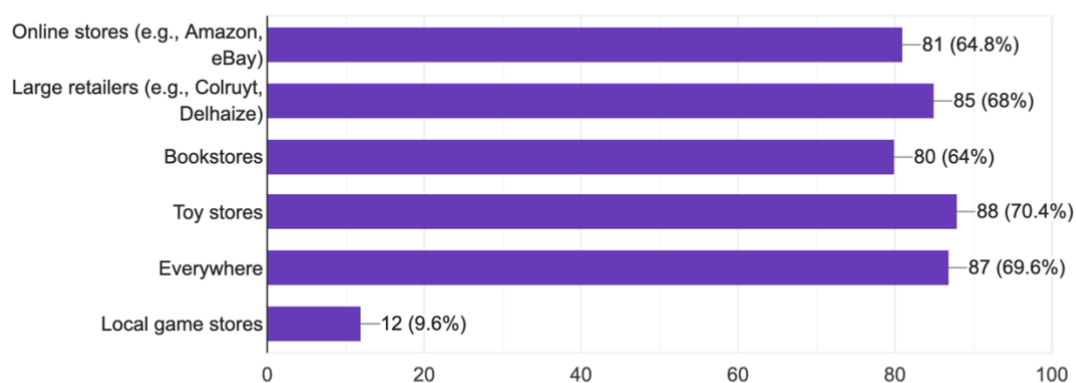
How much would you be willing to pay for Form Up?

125 responses

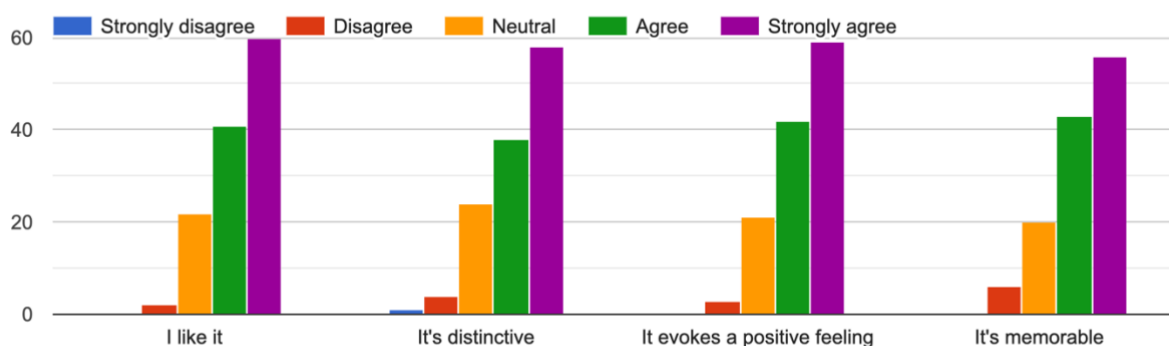


Where would you prefer to buy Form Up?

125 responses

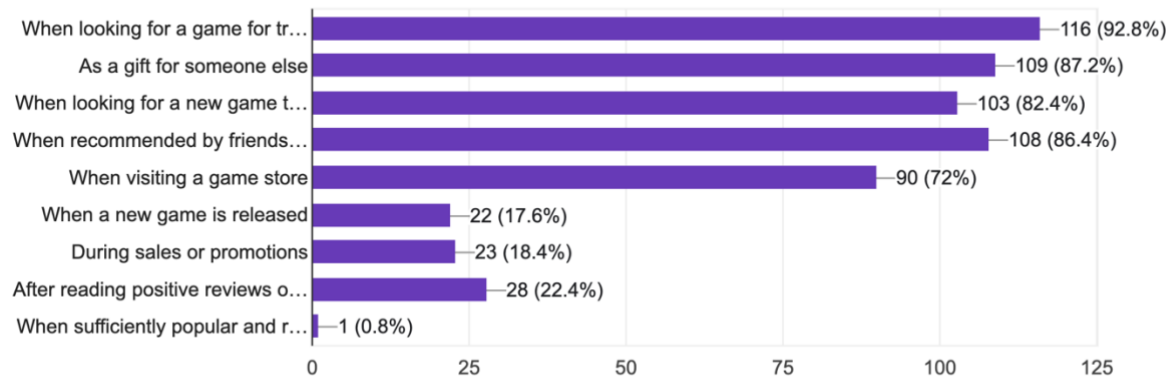


What is your opinion of the card game's brand name and moto: Form Up - Stay in Shape ?



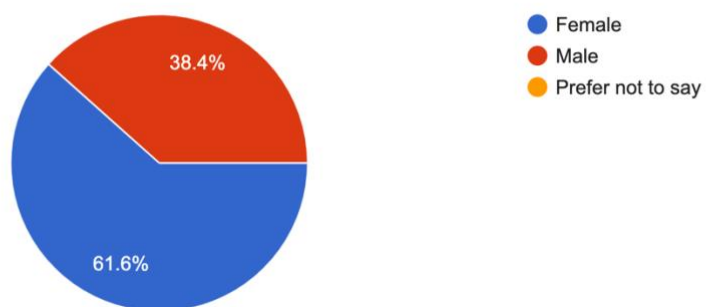
When do you buy a card game ?

125 responses



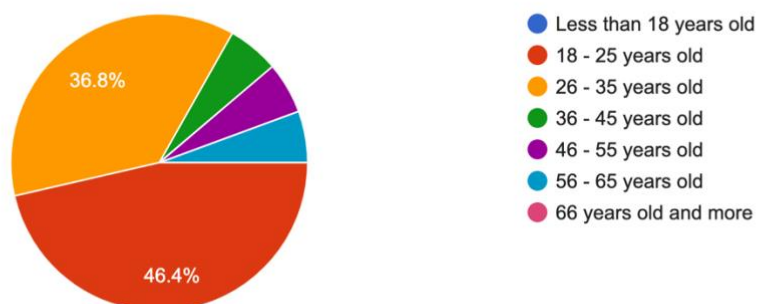
Gender

125 responses



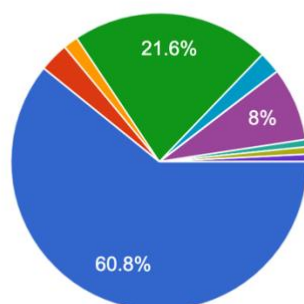
What is your age?

125 responses



Where do you live?

125 responses

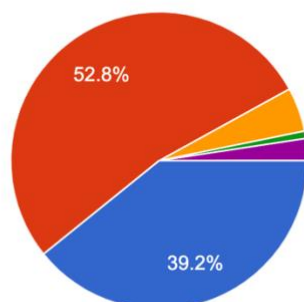


● Brussels
● Antwerp
● East Flanders
● Flemish Brabant
● Limburg
● West Flanders
● Hainaut
● Liège

▲ 1/2 ▼

You are a

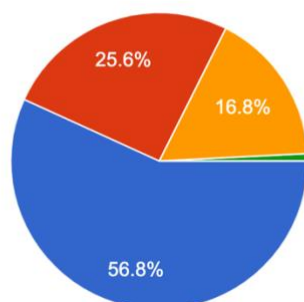
125 responses



● Student
● Employee
● Employer/Entrepreneur
● Unemployed
● Retired

Status

125 responses



● Single
● Couple living together
● With children
● Couple not living together yet

YEAR 2026	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec
Total #card games sold via website	284	284	284	284	310	310	310	310	310	310	362	362
Total #card games sold via distributor	568	568	568	568	620	620	620	620	620	620	724	724
Total #card games sold to retailers	284	284	284	284	310	310	310	310	310	310	362	362
Total #card games sold to toy stores and bookshops	284	284	284	284	310	310	310	310	310	310	362	362
#Card games sold in total	852	852	852	852	930	930	930	930	930	930	1086	1086
#Card games sold via website	3720											
#Card games sold via distributor	7440											
#Card games sold in total	11160											

YEAR 2027	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec
Total #card games sold via website	294	294	294	294	320	320	320	320	320	320	374	374
Total #card games sold via distributor	587	587	587	587	640	640	640	640	640	640	748	748
Total #card games sold to retailers	294	294	294	294	320	320	320	320	320	320	374	374
Total #card games sold to toy stores and bookshops	294	294	294	294	320	320	320	320	320	320	374	374
#Card games sold in total	881	881	881	881	960	960	960	960	960	960	1122	1122
#Card games sold via website	3844											
#Card games sold via distributor	7684											
#Card games sold in total	11528											

YEAR 2028	jan	feb	mar	apr	may	jun	jul	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec
Total #card games sold via website	304	304	304	304	331	331	331	331	331	331	387	387
Total #card games sold via distributor	608	608	608	608	662	662	662	662	662	662	774	774
Total #card games sold to retailers	304	304	304	304	331	331	331	331	331	331	387	387
Total #card games sold to toy stores and bookshops	304	304	304	304	331	331	331	331	331	331	387	387
#Card games sold in total	912	912	912	912	993	993	993	993	993	993	1161	1161
#Card games sold via website	3976											
#Card games sold via distributor	7952											
#Card games sold in total	11928											

12.8 Appendix 8: Evolution of variable costs per year

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028	2026	2027	2028
Production	1,00 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €
Production	1,00 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €	0,75 €
Offline sales	- €	- €	- €	- €	2,70 €	2,70 €	2,70 €
Distributor	- €	- €	- €	- €	2,70 €	2,70 €	2,70 €
Online sales	3,36 €	3,36 €	3,36 €	3,36 €	- €	- €	- €
Envelope	0,50 €	0,50 €	0,50 €	0,50 €	- €	- €	- €
Stamp	2,86 €	2,86 €	2,86 €	2,86 €	- €	- €	- €
Total	4,36 €	4,11 €	4,11 €	4,11 €	3,45 €	3,45 €	3,45 €

12.9 Appendix 9: Evolution of fixed costs per year

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Legal fees	1 223,26 €	- €	- €	- €	- €
SRL fees	1 073,26 €	- €	- €	- €	- €

Trademark registration fees	150,00 €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Tangible fixed assets	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €
Divers	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €
Operating expenses	2 547,33 €	7 398,00 €	66 437,97 €	71 484,49 €	72 754,18 €
Travel expenses	513,33 €	1 540,00 €	1 540,00 €	1 540,00 €	1 540,00 €
Insurance	- €	950,00 €	950,00 €	950,00 €	950,00 €
Accounting fee	1 500,00 €	3 000,00 €	3 000,00 €	3 000,00 €	3 000,00 €
Salaries	- €	- €	56 916,00 €	56 916,00 €	56 916,00 €
Marketing expenses	- €	1 000,00 €	3 123,97 €	8 170,49 €	8 440,18 €
Website	34,00 €	408,00 €	408,00 €	408,00 €	408,00 €
Other operating expenses	500,00 €	500,00 €	500,00 €	500,00 €	500,00 €
Total	4 770,59 €	8 398,00 €	67 437,97 €	72 484,49 €	72 754,36 €

12.10 Appendix 10: Evolution of cost price per unit

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028
Variable cost per unit via website	4,36 €	4,11 €	4,11 €	4,11 €
Variable cost per unit via distributor	- €	3,45 €	3,45 €	3,45 €
Fixed cost per unit	2,33 €	6,04 €	6,29 €	6,10 €
Total cost per unit via website	6,69 €	10,15 €	10,40 €	10,21 €
Total cost per unit via distributor	- €	9,4 €	9,74 €	9,55 €

12.11 Appendix 11: Competition-based pricing

Direct Competitors	UNO	Jungle Speed	Dobble	Exploding Kittens	Average Price
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Average price with VAT	14,00 €	20,00 €	16,00 €	20,00 €	17,50 €
Average price without VAT	11,57 €	16,53 €	13,22 €	16,53 €	14,46 €
Average price B2B	8,57 €	12,24 €	9,79 €	12,24 €	10,71 €

12.12 Appendix 12: Overview of cost-based pricing, competition-based pricing and value-based pricing

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028
Pricing	1 deck of cards - Online sales			
Cost-based	6,69 €	10,15 €	10,40 €	10,21 €
Competitor-based	14,46 €	14,46 €	14,46 €	14,46 €
Value-based	13,22 €	13,22 €	13,22 €	13,22 €
Pricing	1 deck of cards - Offline sales			
Cost-based	- €	9,49 €	9,74 €	9,55 €
Competitor-based	- €	10,71 €	10,71 €	10,71 €
Value-based	- €	9,79 €	9,79 €	9,79 €

12.13 Appendix 13: Form Up's B2B selling price

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028
Sold via website (without VAT)	12,40 €	12,40 €	12,40 €	12,40 €
Sold via distributor (without VAT)	-	9,49 €	9,49 €	9,49 €

12.14 Appendix 14: Form Up's revenue evolution

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028
# Sold via website	3600	3720	3844	3976

# Sold via distributor	0	7440	7684	7952
Price via website	12,40 €	12,40 €	12,40 €	12,40 €
Price via distributor	- €	9,49 €	9,49 €	9,49 €
Total Revenue	44 628,10 €	116 721,30 €	120 574,05 €	124 753,74 €

12.15 Appendix 15: Form Up's Profit evolution

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Total revenue	- €	44 628,10 €	116 721,30 €	120 574,05 €	124 753,74 €
Total cost	4 770,59 €	24 094,00 €	108 395,17 €	114 793,13 €	116 529,94 €
Total profit before tax	(4 770,59) €	20 534,10 €	8 326,14 €	5 780,92 €	8 223,79 €
Corporate tax	- €	5 133,52 €	2 081,53 €	1 445,23 €	2 055,95 €
Total profit after tax	(4 770,59) €	15 400,57 €	6 244,60 €	4 335,69 €	6 167,84 €

12.16 Appendix 16: Form Up's income statement forecast

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Turnover	- €	44 628,10 €	116 721,30 €	120 574,05 €	124 753,74 €
Cost of goods sold	- €	15 696,00 €	40 957,20 €	42 308,64 €	43 775,76 €
Gross profit	- €	28 932,10 €	75 764,10 €	78 265,41 €	80 977,98 €
Other operating income	- €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Payroll expenses	- €	- €	56 916,00 €	56 916,00 €	56 916,00 €
SG&A	2 697,33 €	7 398,00 €	9 521,97 €	14 568,49 €	14 838,18 €
EBITDA	(2 697,33) €	21 534,10 €	9 326,14 €	6 780,92 €	9 223,79 €
Depr & amo	547,99 €	881,32 €	1 214,65 €	1 214,65 €	1 214,65 €
Income before tax	(3 245,32) €	20 652,78 €	8 111,48 €	5 566,27 €	8 009,14 €

Taxes	- €	5 163,20 €	2 027,87 €	1 3ç1,57 €	2 002,29 €
Net income	(3 245,32) €	15 489,59 €	6 083,61 €	4 174,70 €	6 006,86 €

12.17 Appendix 17: Form Up's balance sheet forecast

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Fixed assets	1 525,28 €	1 643,96 €	1 429,31 €	1 214,66 €	1 000,00 €
Net Intangible assets	858,61 €	643,96 €	429,30 €	214,65 €	- €
Net Tangible assets	666,67 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €	1 000,00 €
Current assets	1 229,41 €	16 600,31 €	22 898,58 €	26 287,93 €	30 509,44 €
Inventories	- €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Accounts receivables	- €	- €	5 803,20 €	5 993,52 €	6 202,56 €
Cash	1 229,41 €	16 600,31 €	17 095,38 €	20 294,41 €	24 306,88 €
Total assets	2 754,69 €	18 244,27 €	24 327,88 €	27 502,59 €	31 509,44 €

Permanent capital	2 754,69 €	18 244,27 €	24 327,88 €	27 502,59 €	31 509,44 €
Capital	6 000,00 €	6 000,00 €	6 000,00 €	6 000,00 €	6 000,00 €
Accumulated retained earnings	(3 245,32) €	12 244,27 €	18 327,88 €	21 502,59 €	25 509,44 €
Debt	- €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Long term debt	- €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Shot term debt	- €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Total liabilities	2 754,69 €	18 244,27 €	24 327,88 €	27 502,59 €	31 509,44 €

12.18 Appendix 18: Form Up's cash flow statement forecast

Year	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
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Net income	(3 245,32) €	15 489,59 €	6 083,61 €	4 174,70 €	6 006,86 €
Depreciation and ammortization	547,99 €	881,32 €	1 214,65 €	1 214,65 €	1 214,65 €
Working capital			(5 803,20) €	(190,32) €	(209,04) €
Operating Cash Flow	(2 697,33) €	16 370,90 €	1 495,06 €	5 199,03 €	7 012,47 €
Tangible fixed assets	(1000) €	(1000) €	(1000) €	(1000) €	(1000) €
Intangible fixed assets	(1073,26) €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Investment Cash Flow	(2073,26) €	(1000) €	(1000) €	(1000) €	(1000) €
Shareholder	6000 €	- €	- €	- €	- €
Dividends	- €	- €	- €	(1000) €	(2000) €
Financing Cash Flow	6000 €	0 €	0 €	(1000) €	(2000) €
Total Cash Flow	1 229,41 €	15 370,90 €	495,06 €	3 199,03 €	4 012,47 €

12.19 Appendix 19: Interview with Stijn Vankerckhoven

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Je hebt een eindwerk te maken en daar ga je een spel maken, neem ik aan. Of een businessplan bouwen rond het ontwerpen en maken van een spel.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, inderdaad. Dus dat is voor mijn thesis. Dus een vriend van mij had enkele jaar geleden een spel ontwerpt. En dus nu ga ik een businessplan maken.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Jazeker. Maar dus, het is een kaartspel, een idee van een kaartspel, dat heb je al?

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, ja. Dus ik heb eigenlijk, want hij heeft het dus meerdere jaren geleden ook geprint. Dus ik heb het hier ergens. Sekundje. Hier. Dus we hebben één, échantillon. Dus het spel zelf is een beetje een mix tussen het spel Uno en Jungle Speed. Ja. Dus ja, het is een beetje een mix van die twee spellen, maar ook twee varianten eigenlijk, in één spel.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

En het is al getest in spelsituaties? Het is dus volledig met panels?

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, met vrienden en familie, maar nooit echt met een bredere markt.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Nee, dat is denk ik hetgeen waar je altijd moet mee beginnen, is om het spelconcept heel goed te testen. En nog eens te testen en nog eens te testen en alle feedback te verwerken in een volgende versie. En uiteindelijk kom je toch tot een bepaald punt waar je zo goed als geen opmerkingen meer krijgt. En als je kan vaststellen, denk ik, dat wanneer je het spel kan uitleggen in een paar minuten, en aan de gang kunt gaan met het spel, en je ziet dat iedereen zich amuseert, dan heb je volgens mij een goed spel in handen. En hoe dat nu eruitziet, hoe dat dan verpakt wordt en dergelijke, zijn dingen die je kunt fine-tunen naar verloop van tijd. Maar het idee hebben is al een hele belangrijke. En dan denk ik ook, het bouwen van een businessplan rond is een heel, heel... Ja, het is een gegeven dat je toch een beetje professioneel moet aanpakken.

[Delphine Mertens]

Inderdaad, inderdaad. Ja, dat is dus ook mijn thesis. De businessplan voor dit spel.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ja. Nee, wat ik aan denk bijvoorbeeld, is heel wat Kickstarter-initiatieven deze dagen. Mensen komen daar met een idee. Ze maken reeds een verpakkingsvoorstelling. Ze gaan al de nodige fabrikanten contacteren voor een prijs, want ze moeten toch ook ergens een richtprijs hebben. Hoeveel willen we gaan ophalen met onze crowdfunding? Maar dat is het dan. En zij vergeten al hetgene wat daar rondkomt. Hoe ga ik dat in de markt zetten? Hoe ga ik dat markten zelf? De logistiek die erachter zit. Want ze krijgen dan een bepaalde som funding. Ze gaan die spenderen aan een productie. En plots staat die palet met al die spellen

voor hun deur en ze weten zelfs nog niet waar ze die gaan opslaan. Alles moet als een puzzel in elkaar passen. Dat is een beetje... Ik geef soms een paar workshops hierover waar veel mensen zeggen, ik heb de nieuwe Uno.

Ja, is goed. Fantastisch. En hoe ga je dat in de markt zetten?

Welke partners ga je aantrekken? Dat is natuurlijk een belangrijke. Of ga je dat rechtstreeks doen, of doe je dat zelf? Dat zijn allemaal dingen die je voorhand moet afwegen om dan in een plan te gieten.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, en dat is natuurlijk ook waarom ik deze interview wil hebben. Om informatie te hebben over de industrie zelf. En over Cartamundi ook. Want het is ook wel een grote speler in de industrie.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Wij zijn eigenlijk in 1798 zijn wij begonnen... Nee, 89. Zijn wij begonnen met het maken van speelkaarten. Niet onder de naam Cartamundi, hoor. Dat was toen de firma Brepols. Brepols is nu nog altijd 50% eigenaar van Cartamundi. Dat is de familie De Somer. En de andere 50% is in handen van de familie Cartier de Marchienne. Die eigenlijk de drijvende kracht zijn achter de groep Etex. Ook achter Sibelco, bijvoorbeeld. Maar in de entiteit Cartamundi zijn zij vertegenwoordigd via de firma Brepols. Brepols is bekend van agendas, van hoogwaardige publicaties van boeken. De familie De Zomer is dan weer gelinkt met de firma Van Genechten Biernans. En zij drukken hoofdzakelijk kartonnen verpakkingen. Bijvoorbeeld, om een voorbeeldje te geven. De verpakkingen of de Happy Meal-boxen voor McDonald's. Dat wordt grotendeels bij hen gedrukt. Maar bijvoorbeeld evenzeer de luxe verpakkingen van een champagne. Zoals, noem maar een heel bekend merk. Zij zitten ertussen. Dus hoogwaardig afgewerkte drukwerken. Die hebben in 1970 beslist om samen te gaan.

De opkomende concurrentie uit het Verre Oosten. En uit India destijds waren eigenlijk de drijfveer. En men heeft gezegd, in plaats van elkaar te bekampen. Want ze zitten allemaal in Turnhout. Op een gegeven moment in de geschiedenis waren er elf verschillende kaartenmakers in Turnhout. En in 1970 nog drie die overschoten. En die hebben gezegd, laten we dat dan in één firma bundelen. Met een neutrale naam. Een Latijnse naam. Carta Mundi. Eigenlijk die ook onze visie en ons doen weergeeft. Excellentie in het maken van kaarten. Het carta-gedeelte. Maar Mundi laten we ook proberen om de wereld te veroveren met een bedrijf. Het eerste, daar kan ik u verzekeren, daar zijn we goed in. En het tweede, daar zijn we toch al voor 75% in geslaagd.

We hebben nu momenteel veertien vestigingen wereldwijd waar we produceren. Drie in de Verenigde Staten. Eentje in Mexico. Eén in Brazilië. We hebben een organisatie in Japan. In India. En dan denk ik nog een vier of vijftal in Europa. En dat is dan Polen, Duitsland, België natuurlijk. Spanje. Ja, dat is het.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, het is wel overal een beetje een voet in de wereld.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ja. En de manier waarop we eigenlijk kunnen groeien zijn... Want we zijn oorspronkelijk in de markt gekomen. Cartamundi had een beetje de promotionele markt in handen. Dus alles wat reclamekaart is, dat was in het begin echt wel 75-80% van onze omzet. Nu, dat is tijdens de jaren ook wel een beetje afgezwakt.

En in 1985, denk ik, is er een zekere heer Mertens bij ons begonnen. En die heeft ook die spellenindustrie beginnen te bewerken. En dat was een succes vanaf dag één eigenlijk. En toen zijn spelers zoals Mattel, met Uno. Toen was het nog niet Mattel, maar nog een andere speler waarvan ze het dan hebben overgekocht. Hasbro, noem maar op. De grote speelgoedfabrikanten zijn toen eigenlijk bij ons beginnen bestellen. Zoals bijvoorbeeld zijn wij de kaartjes voor Monopoly beginnen drukken voor hen. Ze hadden destijds een fabriek in Ierland en wij leverden de kaartjes dan.

En zo ging er geen enkele beurs voorbij of geen enkele meeting voorbij, want er kwamen nieuwe orders binnen en die groeiden. Het voordeel was denk ik ook dat wij in die markt een enorm netwerk hadden en we hebben ook bepaalde partners aan elkaar voorgesteld. Dus de ene ging dan het spel licencieren van de andere en ging in zijn markt dat dan weer commercialiseren.

En zo is eigenlijk de bal aan het rollen gegaan. En we hebben een versnelling gekregen in heel die ontwikkeling. In 1993 kregen we de vraag...

Was het 1993? Nu moet ik even nadenken. Nee, 1995, excuseer.

Hebben wij de vraag gekregen van drie jonge mannen uit Seattle. Zij hadden een bedrijfje opgericht, dat heette Wizards of the Coast. En zij hadden een verzamelkaart, de spel Magic the Gathering, dat ze wilden gaan produceren. En ze vroegen zich af, kunnen jullie dat op speelkaarten karton? En kunnen jullie daar ook een bepaalde mix in maken, zodanig dat bepaalde kaarten zeldzaam zijn en andere veel meer voorkomen? Dus de common-uncommon, rare cards, zoals zij dat kende van de sportkaartencultuur, die toch bestaat in Amerika, bijvoorbeeld, waar kaartenverzamelingen van generatie op generatie worden doorgegeven.

En we moesten ook ronde hoeken aan het spel kunnen maken, omdat er veelvuldig mee gespeeld werd. Dus ronde hoeken. Vermijd een beetje dat die hoeken beschadigd geraken. En wij moesten op alle vragen ja antwoorden. Voor ons was dat eigenlijk geen aparte vraag. Voor hen was het een groot vraagstuk, voor ons was het een hele simpele oplossing gebleken.

En dan zijn wij voor hen beginnen produceren. En de eerste opdracht, voor 100.000 pakjes boosterpacks van kaarten, die hebben ze dan betaald met de creditkaart van een van hun vaders. En ik denk een paar maanden later, zij hebben dat dan op een grote beurs in de US voorgesteld, en waren wij al bezig de tweede ronde te produceren. En dat is zodanig gegroeid dat in 1999 hebben zij hun bedrijf kunnen verkopen aan

Hasbro voor 500 miljoen dollar. En sindsdien is dat blijven gaan, blijven gaan, blijven gaan. En is ook het verzamelkaartengegeven een onderdeel van de speelgoedmarkt geworden.

Dus wat we nu zien in de markt van kaarten is, want je vroeg naar best practices, zijn bijvoorbeeld kinderkaarten. Daar zie je natuurlijk, je hebt de titel zelf al vernoemd, Uno is een enorm succes. Blijft ook, iedereen kent het, iedereen speelt het. Als je op vakantie gaat, je zit op het strand te spelen naast het zwembad, je zit in het vliegtuigje, je komt altijd Uno tegen. En ik let daar natuurlijk speciaal op.

Maar ook bijvoorbeeld onze gewone kwartet spellen, die enorm meegaan. Jeux de famille, in allerlei vormen, je kan het niet ook noemen, maar de technische kwartetten in Duitsland bijvoorbeeld, is voor ons echt een basis. Elk jaar komt dat terug en dat wordt overal verkocht.

En het zijn eigenlijk qua prijs heel interessante spelletjes. Daar moet men niet te lang over nadenken. Het is puur impulse-driven purchasing. En de mensen denken daar niet bij na. De kindjes zagen een keer in de speelgoedwinkel. Oké, neem dit maar mee, dat kost niks. En is daarmee weg.

Maar wij zien ook tegenwoordig heel veel naast die verzamelkaarten, de kaarten voor kinderspelletjes, zien wij ook heel veel trivia-spellen komen. Trivial Pursuit heeft daar wel een beetje de aanzet gegeven, maar je ziet er nu enorm veel komen. Party Games is ook iets wat meer en meer opkomt. Ik denk aan Cards Against Humanity bijvoorbeeld. Dat is een heel goed voorbeeld. Met heel wat titels die toch gelijkaardige dingen doen in Frankrijk bijvoorbeeld.

Frankrijk is wel, moet ik zeggen, van Europa de spellenmarkt nummer 1 geworden. Gevolgd door Duitsland en de UK. Vroeger was het UK en Duitsland vooral. Maar Frankrijk heeft de leidersplaats echt overgenomen. Heel veel creativiteit in die markt. Ongelooflijk mooi om af te zien.

Maar naast de partyspellen heb je ook nog andere trends die meer en meer interessant worden. Ook voor ons, om die doelgroepen aan te spreken. Dat zijn bijvoorbeeld educatieve spellen. Spellen die gebruikt worden door professionals, zoals bijvoorbeeld logopedisten, om kinderen te leren makkelijker te praten. Om hen te helpen in de ontwikkeling. Maar ook bijvoorbeeld spellen die gebruikt worden om te leren optellen, aftrekken en vermenigvuldigen. Heel, heel simpel. Maar dat wordt dan ook meer en meer in de scholen gebruikt. Soms ook om degenen die wat sneller zijn bezig te houden, terwijl de anderen hun taak nog aan het afwerken zijn.

Er zijn verschillende insteken. Je ziet heel veel initiatieven in dat gegeven. En een markt die recent heel groot geworden is, en vooral corona heeft dat gedreven, is de adult entertainment markt. Dus online verkoop van toch wel seksgeoriënteerde spellen. Die heel discreet verzonden worden. Maar daar gaat een hoop geld om. En dat is een nieuwe doelgroep van ons, die met cashbetalingen geen probleem hebben. Het is voor ons zakelijk gezien een heel interessante doelgroep. Het enige is, in de productie moeten we soms vrijwilligers vragen, omwille van het expliciete karakter. Maar die vinden we dan wel. En de mensen staan er ook helemaal anders tegenover. Dat is zeker en vast een heel belangrijk gegeven. En wat we ook zien, is kaartspellen of kaarten die gebruikt worden voor promotionele doeleinden.

Dat blijft gaan. Maar dat is niet meer de bakker om de hoek die nog eens 500 kaartspellen met gepersonaliseerde rugzijden bestelt. Maar we zien heel veel kaartspelletjes die in loyaltycampagnes van

grote supermarkten terugkomen. Zo hebben wij er eens eentje gedaan in Duitsland, bij de supermarktgroep Rewe, voor een kerstactie. En daar kon men kiezen uit zes verschillende spelletjes. Men kon die verzamelen. Je moest, ik dacht, voor 30 of 35 euro aankopen. En dan kreeg je er een gratis spelletje bij. Het waren er twaalf verschillende. Het waren er zes van Mattel-titels en zes Hasbro-titels. En die periode natuurlijk was ook iedereen geneigd om daar terug te gaan shoppen, want dat was een mooi, ofwel een cadeautje, ofwel een zultoudertje voor de kinderen. Dus in dat opzicht is dat ook wel iets dat nu meer en meer begint terug te komen.

En waar Cartamundi ook op had ingezet in die grote campagnes, dat is een digitaal aspect van zo'n campagne, waar je bepaalde kaarten kon inscannen, en dan kreeg je een effect op de tablet of op je telefoon met augmented reality. Zulke dingen.

Dat is ook wel interessant. Het is enorm om te zien wat je met kaarten kan doen. Want ik denk bijvoorbeeld nu ook aan receptkaarten. Dat zijn voor ons ook kaarten die we produceren. Voor een grote formaat kaart, een recept, die je kan op een staander zetten in de keuken terwijl je aan het kokkerellen gaat.

Je hebt heel veel verschillende formaten, je hebt enorm veel verschillende doelgroepen. Het is een heel boeiende industrie met heel veel variatie. Ja.

En wat ook een nieuwe trend is, is bijvoorbeeld het wellnessgebeuren. En onder wellness ga ik vrij breed hoor. Bepaalde mensen die hun vlucht zoeken, bijvoorbeeld in tarotkaarten. Die hun toekomst willen voorspeld zien. Of toch een houvast willen voor een bepaald... Ik weet niet welke reden.

Maar ook wellnesskaarten, dus die gaan uitleggen wat gezonde woeding is, gezonde recepten, smoothies. Welke kruiden je het beste kan gebruiken voor welke doeleinden. Daar hebben wij ook een heel gamma kaarten. Dat is ook weer iets dat meer en meer toegang krijgt in de markt. Dus je ziet, het gaat enorm breed.

Nu moet je daar een keuze in maken als je een kaartspel wil gaan lanceren. En ik zie dan het spel van de vriend van u. Dat is dus een amusementspel.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, een amusementspel, inderdaad.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Wat ik zou doen als leek in de markt, bijvoorbeeld, die nog geen stappen heeft gezet in die markt en ik wil een nieuw spel gaan uitbrengen, dat is in eerste instantie het spel testen.

Dat heb ik zo net gezegd. Want op het moment dat je dat hebt gedaan, moet je ook al beginnen denken tegelijkertijd aan het design ervan. Ik weet niet of je al eens een fles wijn gekocht hebt, juist omwille van het feit dat dat etiket er zo leuk uitzag. Drie vierde van mijn aankopen zijn zo. Dus je kan dat in de

supermarkt niet proeven. Maar oh, dat ziet er mooi uit. Dat is tof. En dan neem je dat mee. Dus in het marktsegment, als ik het kaartspel zie, dan is dat wel een hele interessante. Dus de eyecatcher is heel belangrijk.

Een heel goed design. Als je het design maakt, zou ik ook meteen in mijn achterhoofd houden wil ik dit spel lokaal uitbrengen? Of wil ik dit internationaal uitbrengen?

[Delphine Mertens]

Voor nu is het meer echt lokaal. En ook dan lokale productie. Ja, echt meer lokaal. Meer Belgisch, eigenlijk.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Maar in België, een goed voorbeeld, zijn we drietalig.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, er is ook een drietalig... Achter is er een drietalig...

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Voilà, spelregel.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, spelregel, inderdaad.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Maar de kaarten bevatten die tekst?

[Delphine Mertens]

Nee, enkel cijfers en vormen en figuren. Dus geen tekst, nee.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Het is heel eenvoudig gehouden. Er is over nagedacht, dat zie ik. Maar in veel gevallen is dat niet.

En dan moet men die kaarten gaan vertalen. Dan moet men verschillende versies gaan drukken. En dan moet men wel rekening houden met hoe de opmaak van een kaart is, bijvoorbeeld. Dan zou je zeggen, doe alle teksten in het zwart. Dan hoeft je maar één drukplaat te verliezen. Je bespaart kosten.

Nu, dat is één aspect. Je hebt het kaartformaat. Dat is een tweede aspect. Wij werken met bepaalde standaardformaten van drukvellen. Dus je wil eigenlijk een kaartformaat kiezen, waarmee je optimale bedekkingen, zoveel mogelijk kaarten kan drukken in één run. En meestal het kaartformaat dat ik nu herken in het spel dat je me toonde, is het bridgeformaat.

Het normale standaard kaartenformaat. En als je dat doet, dan kan je tot 132 kaarten op één drukvel drukken. In één run. Dat kunnen ook twee spellen zijn van bijvoorbeeld 66 kaarten.

Een ander standaard is 110. Waarom 110? Wel, een normaal kaartspel bestaat of heeft 55 kaarten. 13 x 4 plus de joker en nog de bridgekaart die erbij zit. Dus in dat opzicht is een dek, zoals je daar juist toonde, van 55 kaarten, neem ik aan, dat het ongeveer zal zijn. Is perfect. Het is eigenlijk heel optimaal om te drukken. Logistiek zit je daar, qua drukprocedé, op een hele mooie standaard te werken.

Dan zou het design van de kaarten, wanneer je echt het onderste uit de kan halen en de beste prijs proberen te bereiken, dan zou je alle kaarten een witte of een gelijkaardige boord moeten geven. Zodanig dat die kaarten vlak naast elkaar op dat drukveld kunnen staan en wij gewoon moeten snijden. Want is dat nu een rode kaart en een groene kaart, en je zet die tegen elkaar en je moet daar juist gaan snijden, Dan heb je het risico, en een machine en papier hebben bepaalde toleranties, die je toch niet kan vermijden, dan kan het zijn dat die rode een streepje op die groene kaart zet. Dus om dat te vermijden moeten we die een beetje uit elkaar gaan zetten en dan moet je een ander snijprocedé volgen. Maar het kost meer geld, want je krijgt ook minder kaarten op hetzelfde drukveld.

[Delphine Mertens]

Maar de achtergrond is wit voor alle kaarten.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Perfect, er is echt goed over nagedacht. Ronde hoeken, praktisch. En dan kan je naar de verpakking gaan kijken.

En dan moet je je budget ergens gaan bepalen door eens te kijken in de markt zelf hoeveel is de retailprijs van een dergelijk spel in de supermarkt of in de spellenwinkels en zo verder. Ik denk dat je dit zou kunnen verkopen aan ongeveer een 13-14 euro retail, BTW inbegrepen.

Als je de BTW eruit haalt, en dan ga ik ervan uit dat je ook misschien niet meteen, maar op langere termijn ook met een groothandel en een kleinhandel gaat moeten werken, dan moet je om tot je ideale productieprijs te komen, en dat is een beetje de gouden regel, delen door 12.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ah, waarom?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Je hebt de marges van de retailer zelf, de grootste marge, van de eindverkoper, van de groothandel, als je die ertussen hebt zitten, en dan heb je natuurlijk je eigen marge die je ook, want je moet zelf ook kunnen lenen. Neem nu dat je de BTW eruittrekt, je komt op 12 euro. Om nu praktisch te rekenen. Als je deelt dat door 12, dan moet je eigenlijk je spel kunnen produceren voor 1 euro.

Daar neem je zelf misschien maal 2,5. Als je 1,5 euro per spel wint, dan ga je maal 2 doen naar de groot handel, gaat zijn prijs, maal 2 of maal 3 doen naar de eind, en die gaat het dan nog eens tot op 13-14 euro brengen. Dus daar moet je rekening mee houden.

Maar in het begin, als ik het zou doen, ik zou in het begin mijn eigen webshop starten.

Ik zou de marketing doen op de socials. En vooral Instagram, Facebook, misschien minder dan dat, dat hangt een beetje van de doelgroep af.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, de doelgroep is meer millennials, dus Facebook is toch nog wel...

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Is nog goed, ja. En ik zou dat beginnen echt promoten in die zin, en je webshop gaan promoten. Hier en daar is een SEO-specialist onder de arm nemen, om te zeggen, zit dat allemaal goed in elkaar, hoe kan ik dat optimaliseren, enzovoort. Maar dat hoeft ik jullie niet uit te leggen. Jullie generatie is daar veel beter en sneller dan ik.

Ik heb er thuis eentje zitten, maar al goed, want anders was ik niet zo mee. Maar dan ga je je eigen webshop beginnen, en hoeft je die tussenstappen niet te nemen.

Dus je gaat meteen dat spel dat je voor 1 euro aankoopt, dan ga je 13 euro of 11 euro winst opmaken in het begin.

Dan moet je wel in je achterhoofd nemen, dat je ook de fulfillment moet gaan doen. Dus je moet voorzien zijn op het versturen van die spellen.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, transport en alles.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Begeleidend schrijven, noem maar op, verpakking, post met de post of niet met de post, je moet dat allemaal in je businessplan verwerken. Dat zou voor mij pijler 1 zijn. Directe verkoop via eigen webshop.

Als je dat al hebt, en je begint dan te praten met een eventuele distributeur, dan kan je zeggen van, jij kan en mag voor mij de distributie doen, maar ik hou wel mijn eigen webshop. Ja. Als dat niet is, dan durft hij wel eens zeggen van, kijk, we doen het via onze eigen webshop.

En dan heb je een belangrijke verkoopspijler eigenlijk al aan hem cadeau gedaan, waar je daar zelf veel meer kan uithalen in het begin, zonder extra kosten te moeten maken.

[Delphine Mertens]

En is Cartamundi een distributeur of niet? Of enkel een manufacturer?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Wij zijn vooral manufacturer, en wat wij wel hebben, is een eigen verkoopsnet, waar wij onze eigen titels verkopen.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ah ja, dus bijvoorbeeld als ik bij u kom om mijn spel te printen, kunnen jullie het niet verkopen voor mij?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Nee, dat gaan we niet doen. En waarom niet? Omdat 70% van onze omzet wereldwijd zijn eigenlijk productie inkomsten voor derde partijen zoals jij, zoals Mattel, zoals Uno. En we willen die niet tegen het hoofd stoten, we willen die niet gaan beconcurreren. Want als die morgen een beetje op hun teen getrapt zijn en die bollen het af, ja dan zit je daar.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, dan hebben jullie geen inkomsten meer.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Dus je moet een keuze maken. Maar de gewone speelkaarten die we al sinds mensenheugenis maken, de merken die we uitgebouwd hebben, die houden we. En ook heel belangrijk daar is voor ons de casinowereld. Dat pokercircuit. Daar zijn de meeste mensen waarvoor wij produceren niet actief. Dus dat is een mooi evenwicht dat we hebben ingebouwd gedurende de jaren en we willen die niet verstoren. Dus we gaan dat niet doen.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, dat zeker.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

We hebben ook wel eens kaartspelletjes op de markt gebracht, bijvoorbeeld onder de licentie van Disney. Maar dat was al een beetje wandelen op een slappe koord. Daar hebben toch al mensen gezegd van hé, je komt wel heel dicht in onze buurt. Dus we hebben dat eigenlijk terug afgebouwd, hebben ze het nu met onze eigen brands en dat is het.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, en dus voor mij dan zal ik bij Cartamundi komen om meer de manufacturing zelf. En dan zal ik zelf dan bijvoorbeeld bij Colruyt of Carrefour of zo of bij winkels die meer spellen verkopen zelf moeten gaan om ze daar te verkopen.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Of we kunnen u, en dat is iets wat we wel vaak doen, is bepaalde contacten in contact brengen met het netwerk dat we hebben. En dan gaat de deur al half open. Als je echt op een deur moet gaan kloppen, bijvoorbeeld, ik zeg nu maar bij 999 Games, een hele bekende distributeur is, of bij Asmodee, dan gaan die mensen zeggen van ja, dat is een van de velen, maar als Cartamundi, zijn goede leverancier, toch bij hen aan de deur klopt en zegt we hebben echt wel een tof idee gevonden in de markt, je moet het eens bekijken, dan staat die deur al echt open.

En dan kan je beginnen te negociëren met een distributeur. En dat kan op verschillende manieren. Distribueren van kaarten is een business, een hele belangrijke business natuurlijk, om je spel in de markt te steken. Maar die distributeurs gaan soms zeggen van wij willen je idee afkopen. Ja, dan kan je honderdduizend euro verdienen misschien, maar dan heb je niks meer in handen.

Dat is één ding. Tweede zaak zou kunnen zijn dat je zegt van ja goed, jij mag het verkopen, jij mag mijn distributie doen, en je doet dat bijvoorbeeld op basis van een licentie overeenkomst.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, of royalties.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Of royalties, inderdaad. En dan heb je dat wel in handen en kan je ook zeggen van kijk, het design en dergelijke mag je niet veranderen tenzij ik mijn akkoord geef. Want ze willen meestal. De Fransen zullen het willen verfransen. De Britten zullen zeggen ja, maar dat werkt niet voor ons. En de Duitsers die zeggen van dit is niet ons design. Sorry, wij willen daar een Duits tintje aan geven. Ja, dan moet je soms toegeven, maar je kan wel onder controle houden. Dus dat is wel altijd een heel belangrijk gegeven.

Dus je werkt ofwel op een percentage, of je werkt op een bepaald vast bedrag per spel verkocht. Spel bijvoorbeeld. Dat zijn mogelijkheden.

Maar als je het zelf gaat doen, moet je wel rekening houden met. In de retail zelf, als je het via distributors doet, dan moet je wel een verpakking hebben die een beetje in het kader speelt van die, ik zou zeggen, spellenshop. Die heeft natuurlijk een beperkt ruimte, een beperkt shelf space. Dus je moet al zien dat jouw verpakking niet te volumineus is.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, maar een spelkaart neemt toch niet zoveel plaats? Het is niet een grote bordspel.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Nee, maar soms... Moment, ik kom direct weer in beeld.

Kijk, dit is nu... Nu ga ik nog even uit het spel verdwijnen, maar ik kom direct terug.

Dit is een kaartspel. Het is nu een speelkaart van Kuifje. En dit is ook een kaartspel. En sommigen kiezen ervoor om dit dek in dat doosje te verpakken. Waarom? Er is iets meer volume, het is een gangbaar formaat in de retail, heel herkenbaar. En het staat je toe om in plaats van die 12 of 13 euro naar 15, 16 euro te gaan. Waar dat de productiekost misschien maar 20 cent verschilt. Dus je gaat mogelijkheden kunnen inbouwen om toch een iets hoger prijssegment te gaan bewerken. Met hetzelfde spel, gewoon om de verpakking een beetje aan te passen.

[Delphine Mertens]

En wat is de productie kost bij Cartamundi?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Dat hangt er allemaal van af, wat wil je erin, hoeveel wordt het bedrukt en wat zijn de aantallen. Dus wij beginnen in principe pas vanaf duizend stuks te produceren. Duizend stuks voor nu dit bodem deksel doosje bijvoorbeeld. Dan moet je toch rekening houden met één dekker in en een spelregeltje voor duizend stuks een 5-6 euro.

[Delphine Mertens]

5-6 euro voor de duizend?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Per stuk. Dus dan wordt het per duizend maar 5-6 duizend euro. Dit, daar mag je rekenen aan rond de euro. Dat is een heel ander gegeven.

[Delphine Mertens]

En dat is ongeveer hetzelfde als deze?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Dit is nu een pokerformaat, dat is 63mm x 88mm. Een bridgeformaat is 56mm x 87mm.

[Delphine Mertens]

En is er een verschil in prijs dan?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Dat zal niet heel veel uit elkaar liggen. Het is ongeveer hetzelfde. Maar van het moment dat je naar vijfduizend stuks gaat, dan spreken we hier over het bodem deksel doosje.

Het grotere doosje. Vijfduizend stuks, anderhalf euro. En in de bridge format, 75 cent.

Als die aantallen omhoog gaan, dan kom je meteen aan een veel voordeligere prijs. En dan hangt het er een beetje vanaf. In het begin een heel moeilijk evenwicht. Ga ik voor die duizend, of ga ik voor die twee of drie duizend? Met het risico dat ik er misschien duizend op mijn zolder heb steken, totdat ik het nog eens ooit opkom.

Of ben ik zo overtuigd van mijn zaak, dat ik denk van die drie duizend, die krijg ik sowieso weg. Want soms, ik heb beide gevallen gezien. Mensen die zeggen ik bestel er drie duizend, en die nu nog met spel thuis zitten. En mensen die er duizend bestellen, maar die na een maand of twee bij ons terug op de deur kloppen en zeggen ik heb er weer nodig.

[Delphine Mertens]

En wat is de ingrediënten die doen dat de tweede meer kan verkopen dan de eerste? Is het meer de spel of de marketing?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Heel veel. Eén, wat ik zo net zei, het aantrekkelijk karakter van de verpakking. Ten tweede, het spelconcept. En ik denk voor vijftig procent het « markten van ». Ik heb ooit een klant gehad, en die man was een hele gladder verkoper. En die riep op een gegeven moment de pers bij elkaar. Een hele grote

persconferentie, alle grote media waren daar. Ik zat achterin de zaal, ik was ook uitgenodigd als producent. En hij verklaarde daar, van mijn spel heb ik er nu ondertussen al zestigduizend geproduceerd.

En na de persconferentie heeft hij me op de rug getikt en gezegd, zeg moet ik die andere vijftigduizend dan nog factureren? Want daar heb ik geen weet van. Dus hij was werkelijk de boel aan het opladen. Het was niet de waarheid wat hij vertelde, maar daar is nooit niemand niet achter gekomen. Ik voelde me ook niet geroepen om het te gaan zeggen. Maar dan zijn daar wel bepaalde spelers opgesprongen.

En uiteindelijk heeft hij heel zijn spelconcept kunnen verkopen, licentiëren aan Hasbro. En die hebben daar een spel van gemaakt, een heel succesvol spel. Die heeft dan ook een deal gesloten met Electronic Arts voor een digitale spel gebaseerd op zijn spelletje. Die zit nu thuis en die zal tien jaar aan het stuk zijn computer aan het open doen om te zien hoeveel royalties er gestort zijn.

Maar om maar te zeggen, als je het kan verkopen, verbloemen soms een beetje, dan is dat ook een heel belangrijk onderdeel. En het voordeel dat hij had, hij had het artwork laten maken door een opkomend kunstenaar met een hele specifieke stijl. En dat sprak meteen aan. En daar zijn ze nooit vanaf gestapt van die stijl. Dus dat is behouden gebleven. Dat was een onderdeel van die licentie overeenkomst.

En ondertussen ligt dat wereldwijd overal te pronken naar spellen en dat wordt verkocht. Dus dat is mooi. Maar dat zijn succesverhalen. Zo ken ik er een tiental. Maar zo heb je er geen honderden.

Natuurlijk Cards Against Humanity. Een ander goed voorbeeld is Exploding Kittens. Dat zijn echte succesverhalen. Dat zijn zaken. Maar Exploding Kittens, waarom zo succesvol? Het was een nooit gezien iets. Het was totaal nieuw idee. Het concept, de artwork, heel mooi. En ook het prijsniveau. Want je kon het kopen destijds tegen 15 euro. Je kreeg een spel met twee decks in een wooden dekseldoosje. Mooi hè?

En dan beginnen de expansies. Dan gaat men nieuwe versies in de markt brengen met een andere insteek. Dat is ook altijd heel mooi om in je achterhoofd te houden. Zodat je een stapje verder kan ontwikkelen naar een volgende versie van een bepaalde titel. Maar dat is al één ding. Dan moet je natuurlijk ook zien dat je financieel een buffer bouwt. Want in allereerste instantie ga je die 1000 of 2000 decks nooit krijgen met dezelfde betalingsvoorwaarden dan een klant die al jaren bij ons klant is.

[Delphine Mertens]

Dat is zeker. Met de tijd zullen de kosten ook wat minder zijn. En ook wel economisch op scale. Als ik daarna 10.000 wil gaan printen, zal het natuurlijk wat minder zijn dan 1000 of 5000.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Voilà. En je gaat dat moeten eerst voorfinancieren. En daar zien we heel veel mensen op spaak lopen. Die hun spaarcenten erin steken en uiteindelijk toch een spul in de markt zetten. Dat niet aanslaat voor een of andere reden. En die zitten met een kater. We hebben ooit één dame gehad. En die heeft uiteindelijk na

vele jaren, want we hebben ze in heel lang krediet gegeven, tot er bij ons een nieuwe baas kwam die zei dat het niet langer kon. En ze heeft haar huis verkocht. Toch wel. Dat was niet de meest aangename meeting die ik ooit gehad heb. Maar het moest. En zij heeft dat gedaan. En ik had de indruk dat ze dat niet zo heel hard vanaf zag. Maar langs de andere kant dacht ik dan toch van, toch een zware dobber.

Maar ik denk nu nog aan bepaalde dingen die ik denk, daar moet je zeker rekening mee houden. Ergens probeer je vernieuwend te zijn. Een niche te vinden in de markt die je dan kan uitbreiden. Ofwel ga je mainframe naar het grote publiek. En dan moet je wel met een heel origineel link komen. Design is heel belangrijk. Neem desnoods een professionele design eronder de arm die je echt heel mooi kan maken. Dan begin eerst met directe verkoop online. Schakel daarna, want je gaat dat niet kunnen blijven houden als het een succes is.

Nee. Dan schakel je een distributeur in. Je moet rekening houden met een verpakking die goed aanslaat. En dan ook, denk ik, geregeld, en dat mag dezelfde titel zijn, maar met een nieuwe verpakking komen. Bijvoorbeeld een kersteditie met een fraaie verpakking die iets meer luxueus oogt. Dat zijn zo van die insteken waarmee je toch weer eens uit je comfortzone treedt misschien. Maar waarmee je de markt eens terug aanpakt en de interesse vernieuwt.

[Delphine Mertens]

En is het dan meer interessant om altijd een nieuw spel te maken of een nieuwe editie? Of is het toch wel meer interessant om door Mattel of Hasbro te worden verkocht?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Het is, denk ik, een combinatie van beide. Wil je het echt doen groeien, dan is een distributeur, dat heb je nodig. Je kan dat niet allemaal alleen doen. En je hebt ook plaatselijke contacten nodig. Er zijn maar weinig distributeurs die bijvoorbeeld heel Europa bestrijken. En dat zijn dan zulke grote, de Mattels, de Hasbro's, de Asmodees, die gaan je heel weinig persoonlijke vrijheid geven. Dan moet je al heel sterk in je schoenen staan om tegen hen te gaan argumenteren. Je kan beter, denk ik, in het begin werken met kleinere distributeurs. Die ook minder titels in het portfolio hebben. En daarmee ook heel goed gaan kunnen focussen op jouw spel. En die dat mee gaan nemen naar beurzen. Waar ze het gaan demoën. Waar je het kan publiek bereiken en zeggen van zo speel je het, doe het eens. En dat verkoopt. Gewoon in een rek zetten, dat helpt niet. Je moet het kunnen. De spellenshow in Duitsland in begin oktober is die dit jaar. Die heet Spielen, dat is in Essen, dat is niet zo heel ver van bij ons.

Op vier dagen heeft men daar 240.000 bezoekers, consumenten. En die komen daar spellen spelen, testen, kopen. Daar worden elk jaar ongeveer 1000 tot 1200 nieuwe spellen voorgesteld. Dat is enorm. Dat bewijst ook dat het een booming markt is. Ik ben zelf verantwoordelijk voor Scandinavië. En de Deense markt bijvoorbeeld nu is enorm aan het ontwikkelen. Zweden volgt. Waarom ook daar weer een succes? Zij hebben hele lange winteravonden. De standard of living is vrij hoog. Zij kunnen een spel tegen een

bepaalde prijs aankopen, geen enkel probleem. In het zuiden van Europa is het tegenovergesteld. Daar zijn de winters nog heel lekker om buiten te flaneren. Dus men gaat minder in huis, thuis spelen. Op straat speelt men niet meteen spelletjes of niet zo veel. Dat is een hele andere mentaliteit. Ook qua betalingen bijvoorbeeld. In Spanje 120 dagen is niet wettelijk in Europa. Maar je gaat je geld nooit voor 120 dagen krijgen. Daar wil je niet beginnen. Je gaat ergens naartoe waar je binnen 15 of 30 dagen je geld op de rekening hebt. Dat is ook heel belangrijk om te zien. Het zijn allemaal van die kleine facetten die het succes maken uiteindelijk. En vermijden van een grote stok aan te leggen. Dat is in het begin een hele moeilijke. Omdat je niet weet hoe het spel gaat aanslaan in de markt.

[Delphine Mertens]

En voor u, wat is in average hoeveel je zou kunnen verkopen voor een nieuw spel zoals deze? Want ik moet mijn forecast nu doen voor hoeveel ik zou kunnen verkopen. Maar ik heb geen idee hoe ik daaraan kan beginnen.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ik zou met een eerste run beginnen van ongeveer 1500 stuks. Die ga je volgens mij, als het een goed spel is, een half jaar minstens. Of maximaal, zo moet ik het zeggen, maximaal kwijt zijn.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, in zes maanden.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Natuurlijk, met de nodige ondersteuning en bekendmaking.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, natuurlijk, met de marketing erachter.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ja, en je bezoekt wat kleine events, seminars, beurzen waar je dat spel kan demonstreren. En dan werkt dat. Nu, ik zeg dat nu, maar ik weet niet of je het spelletje maximaal kent.

[Delphine Mertens]

Nee, dat ken ik niet.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Het heeft de pers gehaald, het gaat over optellen en aftrekken. Het is eigenlijk een ventje van negen jaar oud, die zijn oefeningen die hij van de leraar kreeg, beu was. Hij zei, ik kan dat nu echt niet plezanter gemaakt worden. En die heeft op een avond, die is beginnen tekeninkjes maken, schetsjes. En die heeft gezegd, hier pa, kijk eens, ik wil eigenlijk een kaartspel maken. En met dat kaartspel kan ik samen met mijn vriendjes heel makkelijk de tafels en dergelijke inoefenen. Maar dat maken we tenminste nog wel om. Wel, ondertussen hebben we daar 60.000 voor geproduceerd. En dat is nu drie jaar geleden.

Ja, in het Frans en in het Nederlands.

Die vader is erop gesprongen, die heeft zich daarin vastgebeten. Want die zoon is al lang niet meer geïnteresseerd in dat spel. Die is eruit gegroeid. Maar nu gaat men ook optellen en aftrekken, komt er nu bij. Delen en vermenigvuldigen had men al. En men gaat weer, zie je, een vernieuwing brengen in de markt. Dat kan men dan ook als een bundel weer gaan aanbieden. En zij werken op die scholen. En daar heb je het voordeel, die leraars die dat spel zien. Die zeggen, maar dat is tof. Dan kunnen we de kinderen al spelenderwijze iets aanleren. Dat blijft hangen. Beter dan wanneer we het op die saaie manier doen. Fantastische vondst. En in die scholen, daar gaat ook weer de mond-tot-mond reclame van klas tot klas. Van school naar school. En daar verkopen zij nu direct heel veel spellen aan.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, want ik denk dat voor mij, voor mijn spel, zal mijn main selling point, zal meer retailers, zoals Colruyt en Carrefour en al zijn. En ook meer, ik denk, online. Dus bijvoorbeeld Amazon of bol.com.

Ook mijn eigen website, zoals je zei. En dan, ja, spelwinkels enzovoorts..

Ik dacht er ook aan, want er is ook meer en meer in Brussel, cafés waar je cardgames kan doen of bordspelletjes. En dan een gratis spel geven, om de mensen die ook meer geïnteresseerd zijn in deze hobby's, ermee kan spelen. En dan later het gaan kopen in een winkel of bij Carrefour of zoiets.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Wil ik maar één opmerking? Het is een fantastisch plan. Maar ik wil maar één opmerking maken. De Amazons en de bol.com's, daar steek je enorm veel energie in. Die reglementering is enorm ingewikkeld.

En zij hebben helemaal geen businessethiek. Dus wij hebben ooit een spel verdeeld, mag ik niet zeggen. Maar wij hebben de coördinatie gedaan tussen verschillende distributeurs in Europa voor een Amerikaanse uitgever. En plots duikt er op Amazon een naammaak op. En wij hebben toen, of zij hebben toen Amazon aangesproken en gezegd van we willen dat je dat uit de handel haalt. En die hebben daar eigenlijk zelfs nog niet op geantwoord. Die trekken zich daar helemaal niets van aan. En dat is niet aangenaam.

[Delphine Mertens]

En ook daarvoor is er dan ook « patents »?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Oh, heel moeilijk. Je kan je design laten registreren in een imagebank. Dat is misschien wel iets wat ik zou doen. En een logo op van het bedrijf dat zou ik ook doen. Dat kost geld. Dat is ook weer een investering. Doe ik dat Europa-wijd? Doe ik dat wereldwijd? Dat is ook weer een keuze die je maakt. Europa-wijd sowieso beginnen. De markt is zodanig klein geworden, online verkoopt, dat het het een van het ander gaat. Dus je zou Europa als je eerste spelregio moeten gaan aanschouwen, denk ik. De Amerikanen komen niet makkelijk hier kopen. En wij zullen niet snel in Amerika kopen omwille van de taxen en dergelijke die erop komen. BTW's, dat is allemaal heel raar. Het zit er raar in elkaar.

Maar wat zeker en vast interessant is, is natuurlijk de omzet of de volumes die je met die bol's en met Amazon draait. Wil je dat zelf doen? Dat is een andere vraag. Je hebt natuurlijk distributeurs die echt wel gespecialiseerd zijn daarin. Die zich daarin vastgebeten hebben en die zeggen wij zijn echt een Amazon-shop. Dat maakt het voor u als opstartend bedrijf makkelijk. Want dan zeg je oké, dan doe jij dit voor mij, voor Amazon. En dan hoeft je van heel die reglementering eigenlijk weinig of niks aan te trekken. Dat is een hele belangrijke. Doe je het zelf, dan ga je er heel veel energie in steken. En zij gaan ook de prijs drukken. Dus zij weten wel waar ze over spreken. En het negociëren met die mensen is een richtingsverkeer.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Nu dacht ik juist aan iets. Dat is nog een ander puntje waar je zeker ook rekening moet mee houden. De doelgroep, als die onder 14 jaar valt, dan heb je sowieso een CE-logo nodig. Dan moet jouw spel voldoen aan de Toy Safety. En dan moet je bepaalde opmerkingen en bepaalde vermeldingen op de verpakking doen en dergelijke zaken. Dus dat mag je niet vergeten.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, en ik dacht ook aan de FSC-label voor gerecycleerd papier en karton. Doet Cartamundi dan de label?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ja. Ik ga u vandaag misschien niet, want ik heb hierna nog een meeting. Maar ik ga u de loop van de week zeker die reglementering eventjes doorsturen. Of reglementering in grote lijnen hoor. Maar ook voor de legal aspect, zodat je dat allemaal een beetje kan nalezen. Dan ben je volledig gedocumenteerd. Maar het is zo, wij werken meestal op een 70% FSC-mix voor een totale product. En dan kan je dat logo gebruiken, dat is zeker ook een verkoopsargument. Ook als het CE-logo erop staat, is het ook een verkoopsargument. Maar daar moet je voldoen aan bepaalde reglementeringen. Dat kan je niet zomaar opzetten. Wat ook heel belangrijk is, het teken van recycleerbaarheid.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ah ja. Maar als het teken van FSC-label erop staat, is dat dan ook niet voor de recycleerbaarheid?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Niet. Enkel voor de onderdelen die in karton en papier zijn.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, maar voor mij zal alles in karton zijn.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Maar het zou kunnen dat jouw dek, zoals het kuifjesdek dat ik je toonde, geseild is met een cellofaan. En dat kan een composteerbaar cellofaan zijn. En dan zet je die recycle-logo er wel op. Dan zijn alle materialen recyclerbaar.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, want ik denk ook dat de sustainability ook wel heel belangrijk is.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ja, en daar zou ik eigenlijk, en dan ga ik nog eventjes een voorbeeldje zoeken, Een cellofaan, waar normaal de kaarten in verpakt zijn, die wordt meer en meer vervangen door een glassinepapier. Dat is evenzeer verwerkbaar op onze lijnen, maar is papier dat recycleerbaar is. Dat is geen plastic meer. Dat is een tendens in de markt. Men wil echt weg van alles wat plastic is. Vandaar dat ook heel veel van deze spellendoosjes met een papieren sticker. En die vrij stevig geseild wordt. Dus aan daar waar eigenlijk de sluiting is, gaat men een papieren sticker aanbrengen. Die is heel stevig, maar niet zo stevig dat die ook als je die weghaalt, dat die de verpakking gaat beschadigen. Ah ja, oké, dat is wel interessant. Dat is een tussenoplossing.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, dus die is ook wel echt in de kaartindustrie een trend in de sustainability.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Bijvoorbeeld grote bordspellen, die vroeger zo'n plastic tray hadden, waar alle stukjes mooi in pasten. Daar gaat men volledig van weg. Dat wordt ofwel een kartonnen oplossing, ofwel gaat men tegenwoordig ook kijken naar het vacuum trekken van zulke trays, zoals men vroeger met plastic deed. Gaat men dat doen met bijvoorbeeld hout- of coconutpulp. Dus natuurlijke materialen die recycleerbaar zijn. Dat is echt een tendens die we in Europa ongelooflijk hard zien gaan. In Amerika trekt men daar nog geen bal van aan. Dat is typisch, denk ik, voor die markt. Maar in Duitsland, Scandinavië, verkoop je bijna geen spellen meer waar nog plastic components in zitten. Bijvoorbeeld gewoon de pionnetjes, daar moet de hout in zijn. Plastic pionnetjes, dat zien we echt met de maand minder en minder. Dobbelstenen ook in hout, dat is echt een nieuwe tendens.

Waar moeten we nog mee rekening houden? Logistiek. Ja, zoveel verpakkingen moeten natuurlijk allemaal een beetje handelbaar zijn. Gewichten moeten nagekeken worden, maar daar begeleiden wij ook onze klanten in. Wij gaan hen ook zeggen van kijk, misschien moet je dat zo doen, moet je dit zo doen. Dat is onze job.

Om te gaan zeggen van ja, dat kaartformaat krijg je maar 50 van op een vel, maar een pakje van 68 van op een vel krijgen. Zulke dingen, dat is een beetje het consult aspect van onze opdracht. En aan het produceren zelf doen we natuurlijk.

De certificaten worden nu verzorgd na productie. Zodat je die ook weer kan gaan publiceren online, zodat mensen terugvinden van ah, dat voldoet aan die en die eisen. Want de consument is heel mondig geworden en informeert zich echt.

[Delphine Mertens]

Dat is zeker, zeker. Zeker de doorgroep dat ik heb is meer millennials. Waar ze ook echt veel meer informatie gaan zoeken over de productie en al.

En dus de, zoals je zei, de generale supplychain voor zo'n kaartspel, is echt u, Cartamundi gaat dan produceren. En dan zal ik bijvoorbeeld alle kaartspellen komen halen. Ze ergens stockeren. En dan ze naar, ofwel door mijn website verkopen. Ja. Of naar winkels en retailers. En dan gaan transporteren en zij gaan ze dan verkopen.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Of je doet dat via een distributeur die al dat uit jouw handen neemt. Ja, inderdaad. En dan ben je eigenlijk degene die het spel bedenkt. Die het ontwerpt. Die het laat produceren. En die het dan levert of laat leveren door ons bij een partner. En die factureert. Want daar komt het dan uiteindelijk op weg.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, natuurlijk.

En dan gaat die distributeur het stockeren en dan transporteren.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

En dan doet die al de rest van het werk. Die gaat dat ondersteunen op de beurzen waar hij naartoe gaat. Dat kunnen kleine beurzen, grote beurzen zijn. Die gaan sowieso naar die grote beurzen gaan. Dat doet iedereen wel een beetje. Maar die gaan ook bijvoorbeeld hier en daar bepaalde kleine organisaties van spellenclubs die mensen aantrekken, gaan zij ook demos geven. Ze hebben daar ook hun mensen voor. Maar zij weten heel goed dat die demos geven, dat doet verkopen.

Dat is een heel belangrijk factor.

[Delphine Mertens]

En weet u hoeveel een distributeur dan zou kosten?

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Wel, die gaat werken op zijn margins. Dus die gaat een prijs afdingen. En dan moet je zien van ja, oké goed, ik heb die productie zoveel verkocht. Ik wil daar minstens zoveel zelf aan verdienen. En als hij dan

zegt, of dat wordt voor u bijvoorbeeld vier euro. En hij zegt ja, maar ik kan er maar vijf geven. En distributeur B die zegt van oké, ik koop dat ding voor zeven en een half. Dan moet je gaan afwegen. Eén, waarom is die bereid meer te betalen? Wat zijn de kosten van de andere? Wat gaat hij erachter steken van marketing efforts en dergelijke zaken? Dat is een kwestie van negociëren en prijzenafspraken maken.

Maar ik zou dan eerder een beetje zelf een beetje minder marginen nemen. En op het volume rekenen. Degene die er meer voorachter steekt. Dat die dat voor mij zou doen. Maar dan moet je echt gaan met bepaalde margins afspreken. Ik ga u een rekenmodelletje doorsturen ook. Dat je ziet hoe ik mijn prijs zou opbouwen of afbouwen. Ja, inderdaad. Het is wel mooi om je thesis mee te nemen.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja, inderdaad. Ik heb al een marketingplan en zo gedaan. En nu zit echt meer de supply chain en een financial plan. Dus daar heb ik natuurlijk wat minder informatie over. Want het is toch wel iets heel precies. Zeker voor een financial plan. Want ik moet dan ook weten. Oké, in een jaar, twee jaar, drie jaar. Hoeveel zal ik verkopen? Dan kan je ook... Het is moeilijk om het zo goed te weten eigenlijk.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Maar het kan snel gaan. Maar momenteel is het een markt die successen in de hand werkt. Omwille van het succes, van het gegeven. Heel veel mensen willen offscreen een avond in de week. Minstens zich gaan vermaken. Ze doen dat in een club. Ze doen dat onder vrienden. Ze doen dat in een gamecafé. In Kopenhagen ben ik onlangs in een gamecafé geweest. Dus dat is boomvol. Hoeveel mensen dat daar zaten te spelen. Die hebben daar een archief. Je kan een spel uitlenen. En het tweede grote belangrijke aspect in het hele gamecafé was het café gebeuren natuurlijk ook. Ik heb nog nooit zoveel Belgische bieren bij elkaar gezien dan daar. En iedereen zat daar lekker. Ze serveerden ook kleine snackjes. Ja, dat was het. Dat was daar gewoon een gezellige boel. En iedereen zat spelletjes te spelen. En een pintje te drinken. Wie doet dat niet graag?

En allemaal jonge mensen. Dat was opvallend, vond ik persoonlijk. En het was een beetje ingericht zoals een huiskamer. Het was echt mooi gedaan. En men had overal ook bordjes hangen van steek je je gsm weg.

[Delphine Mertens]

Om echt de elektronische detox doen.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Inderdaad. Een andere trend die we ook zien is dat heel veel mensen van mijn leeftijd die kleinkinderen hebben, die ook opgegroeid zijn met spellen. Want mijn ouders kenden dat eigenlijk niet. Dus nu zie je ook dat die grootouders veel meer geneigd zijn om spelletjes die zij leuk vinden of vonden te gaan spelen met hun kleinkinderen. Dus er komt een versnelling in de interesse naar spellen. Van kleins af aan.

En dat was bij ons vroeger begon dat ja... Ik weet mijn eerste Scrabble en Monopoly. En toen was ik eigenlijk einde basisschool. Dus dan ging je wel maar stilletjes aan naar de humaniora. Toch een verschil. Nu beginnen ze eigenlijk heel vroeg te spelen.

Ook omwille van het feit dat veel leerkrachten spelletjes gebruiken. Dus dat zit erin. Het gaat niet meer uit ons DNA gaan denk ik.

[Delphine Mertens]

Ja. Ja, zeker.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Dus voilà. Ja, verpakkingen. Er zijn allerhande soorten verpakkingen. Als je daar nog informatie zou willen. Maar het gaat nu over dit specifieke spel. Dan kan ik je daar ook nog verder helpen. Maar dat is nu niet zo relevant denk ik. Maar als er nog vragen zijn. Ja, dan laat je het maar weten. Om zo snel mogelijk nog in te spelen.

[Delphine Mertens]

Super. Dankjewel. Dat was wel heel fijn.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ik stuur je die informatie die ik beloofd heb. En ik ga je ook dan de opname ook nog voorstellen.

[Delphine Mertens]

En kunt u ook kort uw eigen background uitleggen? Want ik moet ook daar... Allee, uitleggen.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Ik heb verschillende kanaaltjes doorzwommen. Vooraleer ik bij Cartamundi aankwam. En ik ben daar begonnen als key account manager voor Wizards of the Coast. Dus volledig focussen op één klant. Dat waren wel verschillende departementen. Maar één klant voor die verzamelkaartenspellen. En dan ben ik stilletjes ook de gewone bordspellen en kaartspellen ingerold. Omdat er een collega op pensioen ging. En vandaar heb ik ook nog lang de combinatie van de twee gedaan.

En dan plots ben ik kunnen overschakelen. Moeten overschakelen. Door een zwangerschapsverlof van een collega. Die in die loyalty campagne met verzamelkaarten zat. We deden toen juist een verzamelkaartprogramma met... Een programma bij Carrefour in Frankrijk. Op basis van de Rolling Stones. Allemaal weetjes, ditjes. Dat was wel plezant natuurlijk. Dan ben ik er zo ingerold. Dat heb ik vier jaar en een half gedaan. Heb ik nog een verpakkingsproject gedaan. Of onderzocht een businessplan erin moeten maken. Gaan we dit doen? Al dan niet. We hebben dat niet gedaan. Dan terug in de games gekomen. Terug van departement veranderd.

En in corona ben ik dan drie jaar actief geweest in het opzetten van... En het terug ten slapen brengen van firma Medimundi. Wij hebben FFP2-maskers gemaakt tijdens die periode. En dan ben ik nu terug in de spellenmarkt gekomen. Ik ben nu verantwoordelijk voor de verkoop in Benelux en in Noordwijk. En ik werk nog twaalf maanden. En dan ga ik op pensioen.

Dat is een beetje mijn CV zou ik zeggen.

[Delphine Mertens]

Super, dank U! Dat is heel interessant, ook een mooi parcours.

[Stijn Vankerckhoven]

Graag gedaan. Ik stuur je nog alles op. Als er nog iets is geef je maar een seintje.