

D20Studios

## Cross platform magic



### D20Studios

Romeoville, Illinois  
[www.d20studios.com](http://www.d20studios.com)

### Results

- Realized more than 10,000 downloads of mobile versions across iOS and Android™ platforms within three months of launch
- Enjoyed 30-fold increase in downloads within one day of Apple iTunes App Store launch
- Achieved industry recognition and awards
- Developed and delivered game using only existing knowledge of Adobe Flash® technology and Adobe Creative Suite®
- Easily tested and optimized for all screen sizes and specifications
- Digital game generated so much interest that it will also be sold as a board game

Independent developer uses Adobe® gaming technologies to deliver exhilarating multiplayer experience for web, mobile, and board games

Nostalgia runs deep in the world of online games, for a time when players crafted characters, rolled dice, picked cards, and moved tokens along a board. D20Studios understands this paradigm well, as is evident in its initial offering, *Hero Mages*, a socially driven multiplayer, multi-environment game that uses robust Adobe gaming technologies to deliver classically styled, virtual experiences to today's mobile and desktop screens.

*Hero Mages* is the achievement of Ross Przybylski, an independent developer whose day job is building eLearning content. As a longtime fan of board games, Przybylski yearned to create a digital game that had all the classical elements of the tabletop games he used to play for hours with friends. He envisioned a digital game that would provide bursts of highly compelling, visually engaging experiences geared for today's multitasking gamer, seeking the widest possible audience on the web as well as across all mobile devices.

What started as a hobby is now D20Studios, Przybylski's company. *Hero Mages*, the firm's flagship product, is a free online game where players command a band of mighty heroes fighting to determine the fate of Papillion, as a mysterious prophecy strikes fear into the hearts of others. Virtually equipped with traditional board game elements—a set of dice and a hand of cards that represent magical spells—players must leverage skill, luck, and social politics to emerge victorious as the hero of magic in this exciting battle of turn-based strategy that can be played from any Adobe Flash enabled web browser and across mobile platforms.

D20Studios turned to Adobe gaming technologies to create online and offline, multiplayer, and single-player browser-based versions of *Hero Mages*. Adobe AIR was used to bring the game from the web to mobile for its flexibility to port to any mobile environment while delivering a consistent, compelling experience.



### Challenge

- Integrate classic aspects of board, role-playing, and collectible card games into one highly engaging digital experience in multiplayer, multiplatform environment
- Port web browser version of game across mobile platforms, without needing to learn new programming languages
- Monetize content by offering game options through app stores

### Solution

- Deploy Adobe gaming technologies to develop, test, and optimize game design across multiple platforms
- Harness the power of Adobe Flash Professional to deliver visually engaging, high-performance, multiplayer strategy games
- Encapsulate the look and feel of classic games into a compelling online experience using Adobe Creative Suite® software

### Systems at a glance

Adobe Gaming Technologies used include:

- Adobe Flash Professional
- Adobe AIR
- Adobe Flash Player

Adobe Creative Suite Master Collection. Components used include:

- Adobe Photoshop®
- Adobe Illustrator®
- Adobe Dreamweaver®

### From vision to worldwide recognition

Przybylski turned to Adobe Flash Professional to create online and offline, multiplayer and single-player browser-based versions of *Hero Mages*, where players take turns commanding a fantasy battlefield. "I had some programming experience, but had never attempted anything as complex as creating a game engine for use in a multiplayer environment or on mobile platforms," he says. "It was all new to me. Adobe Flash technologies enabled me to make my dream become reality and create a revenue stream at the same time."

Przybylski ported the web version of *Hero Mages* across tablet and mobile platforms, including iOS, Android, and Barnes & Noble NOOK®. "I am a huge fan of Adobe Flash Professional because it serves as an ActionScript® code development tool as well as a highly visual development environment," says Przybylski.

Przybylski selected Adobe AIR® to bring his Flash game from the web to mobile for its flexibility to port to any mobile environment while delivering a reliable, consistent, equally compelling experience everywhere.

"Adobe Flash technologies give developers the power to rapidly create prototypes, import artwork, and build characters in timelines," says Przybylski. With Adobe Flash Professional, he could edit within existing project timelines, having code at his fingertips to test and tweak the layout.

The ease of prototyping and iterating helped Przybylski organize and build components for *Hero Mages* by creating miniature runtime components using the Adobe Flash IDE. As he inserted and tweaked icons and artwork within the user interface, miniature components adapted to the changes in layout, scaling perfectly to accommodate the physical dimensions and pixel density required for phones and tablets.

Adobe gaming technologies also eliminated the need for Przybylski to learn new programming languages to bring the game from the web environment to iOS and Android. "I had already written the game once, and did not want to write it again. Adobe Flash technologies integrate the artist and the developer in me, while other toolsets are less intuitive and keep both sides separate. I like being able to exercise my brain on both fronts."

Przybylski knows that games improve with as much user feedback as possible and so relies on the D20Studios website to connect with *Hero Mages*' nearly 10,000 registered users. To optimize his online presence, he used Adobe Dreamweaver software for web templates and in-depth searching capabilities, noting that Dreamweaver was extremely useful in finding variables across multiple files that helped keep the underlying code clean and concise. Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator software enabled Przybylski to make *Hero Mages* visually stunning, filled with detailed and engaging illustrations and images—while working in a smoothly integrated Adobe environment.

*"I am a huge fan of Adobe Flash Professional because it serves as an ActionScript code development tool as well as a highly visual development environment."*

Ross Przybylski  
Founder, D20Studios

### Breaking ground online and off

When *Hero Mages* launched in the Apple iTunes App Store, download numbers exploded. Apple soon designated *Hero Mages* as "New and Noteworthy" in its App Store. Three months after launch, more than 10,000 players downloaded *Hero Mages* on a variety of mobile devices. The game is available through Apple iTunes, Google Play, the Amazon Appstore, and Barnes and Noble (for use on NOOK).

As *Hero Mages* is a community-based game, Przybylski relies on social media to promote it. He uses Facebook and Twitter to generate interest and respond to queries, and participates actively in game forums. On the first day *Hero Mages* launched on iPad, the response was overwhelming, and people were very excited to learn that just one person is behind the game, not a corporate game publisher.

The industry is equally enthusiastic about a game built entirely with Adobe Flash technologies that can run on any screen, large and small. A community of independent game developers and players called indiePub awarded *Hero Mages* as a finalist for "Best Mobile Game" in its 2012 Independent Propeller Awards, along with citations for Best Game Design and Technical Excellence in 2010.

*Hero Mages* is now being transformed from a virtual offering into a physical board game by Game Salute, a major tabletop game publisher that has recently welcomed D20Studios to its family of designer studios. "I believe this is the first Adobe Flash game to become an actual board game," says Przybylski.

Przybylski also reports that users are clamoring for an asynchronous multiplayer version of *Hero Mages*, which will be the next big update to the game. He intends to add in-app purchases to mobile versions for additional playable characters and single-player adventure options. Also in the works are blueprints for adding new characters, offering more single-player adventure options, and allowing friends to participate in exciting group interplay—all based on Adobe gaming technologies.

For more information  
[www.adobe.com/go/gaming](http://www.adobe.com/go/gaming)



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