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Discourse Analysis of a Video Game Press Release

In “OVERWATCH™ READY FOR ACTION SPRING 2016†—PRE-PURCHASE NOW FOR CONSOLE AND PC” from November 2015, a well-established videogame company known as Blizzard Entertainment reveals new information about its latest game, *Overwatch*. Blizzard’s goal in this press release is to inform both potential customers and press sources about their latest game and its developments. Though the document has no specific author, it has been written for one of the most successful videogame companies in the world that spends hundreds of millions of dollars on advertising and understands how to convince readers to purchase their products.

Throughout the document, it is evident that the style and language is geared toward exciting its audience rather than objectively informing. The very first sentence sets the tone of the entire release, stating, “The world needs heroes... and *Overwatch*™ is recruiting starting today!”^{1(par. 1)}. The use of ellipses and exclamation points is typical of advertisements and not of informative research papers. Although this style is not used professionally, it induces a level of suspense and excitement that gets consumers and subscribers interested in what follows. The release also describes the game with words that excite the reader. For example, the document is full of buzzwords and phrases like “unique arsenal of weapons,” “iconic,” and “critical.” It even proceeds to describe *Overwatch* as a game in which, “the action is intense, with a focus on immediacy and fun”^{1(par. 2)}. As such, the release is targeted toward an audience that enjoys fast-

paced action and entertainment. It is clear that the goal of using such language is to create excitement in readers that inevitably translates to sales for Blizzard Entertainment.

Though the language can excite readers, there is little value for Blizzard Entertainment in this excitement unless the readers can actually purchase the content being advertised. For this reason, the formatting and content of the article is carefully designed to have readers pre-purchase the game. The press release does not have any images to attract attention, but there are several hyperlinks placed throughout the article. These hyperlinks lead either directly to the page where customers can pre-purchase the game, or to the game's home page, which contains several large images and links to the pre-ordering page. Regardless of where the reader's focus is while reading, there is quick and easy access to purchasing the game. Making it very easy for the reader to convert to sales is clearly an important thing to consider for a press release. If the exciting language wasn't enough for readers, Blizzard Entertainment has even offered a special in-game vanity item for those who order the game early, providing even more reason for readers to make an impulsive purchase. It's important to note that the mention of this special vanity item, along with a link to the pre-purchase page, is provided at the start of the release. This way, readers know exactly where to go if they find themselves interested in purchasing the product at any point while reading.

Language not complex until legal parts

Visual- easy to read

Reference

1. OVERWATCH™ READY FOR ACTION SPRING 2016†—PRE-PURCHASE NOW FOR CONSOLE AND PC [Internet]. Blizzard Entertainment; [2015 Nov 6, cited 2016 Jan 19].

Available from: <http://blizzard.gamespress.com/>