Thinking “Out-of-the-Box” with Board Games
Emily Rickel, William Shelstad, Matthew Pierce, Philip Young, Barbara S. Chaparro

What is OOBE?
One method that explores the initial impressions made during a user’s first interaction with a product has been termed the “out-of-box experience”, or OOBE (Gilbert, Sangwan, & Ian, 2005).

The OOBE technique typically measures first impressions of the following processes:

- Packaging Investigation: Sensory cues like the look and feel of a product’s packaging and components can set user expectations.
- Unboxing: Opening a package, seeing what is first available, viewing how the contents are arranged, and removing contents.
- Setup/Configuration: Gathering materials needed for using the product, assembling the product, and reviewing help documentation.
- Initial Use: Interacting with the product’s features and capabilities, ability to access all of the product’s available functions.

Importance of OOBE
- Fewer product returns and calls to customer helplines, increase in positive interactions with product.
- 871% growth rate of YouTube’s unboxing genre since 2010.
- Product usage & brand loyalty.
- Increased sales and popularity.
- Users are less sensitive to prices & competitive products.

Method

| Participants | 4 males, 2 females; Ages: 19 – 22
| 3 casual, 3 experienced players |

3. Typically, this board game involves players managing trees and competing for sunlight to grow and compete for resources. The game is not only visually appealing but also provides an engaging experience that involves strategic decision-making and resource management.

Measure

| Net Promoter Score (NPS) | Confidence |
| Points of Delight | Difficulty |
| Points of Frustration | Adjectives (MPRC) |

Materials

- Published by Blue Orange Games, Photosynthesis is a strategy board game that allows 2-4 players to play as different species of trees that plant seeds and grow trees to compete for the sun’s energy.

Procedure

The above measures were taken during the following stages:

- Unboxing
- Setup
- Initial Play
- Disassembly

OOBE Stage

- Unboxing
- Setup
- Initial Play
- Disassembly

Results

- Difficulty Ratings of Casual and Experienced Players
- Confidence Ratings of Casual and Experienced Players

- The OOBE technique can be used with board games to explore a game’s quality, clarity of rules and instructions, perceived complexity, ease of use, and overall impressions.
- Experienced board game players find unboxing and playing games for the first time easier than casual players.
- Casual players are less confident in their ability to grasp the mechanics of a new game during initial play.

Conclusions

- The OOBE technique can be used with board games to explore a game’s quality, clarity of rules and instructions, perceived complexity, ease of use, and overall impressions.
- Experienced board game players find unboxing and playing games for the first time easier than casual players.
- Casual players are less confident in their ability to grasp the mechanics of a new game during initial play.

References

- HMD versus PDA: A comparative study of the user outbox experience.
- An Experiential Comparative Tool for Board Games.