Scaling indie games at speed: Hasbro’s studio model for board games

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Coming from a family that loves board games, Patrick O’Rourke (Director Product Management, Hasbro Games) would say play is in his DNA. “I lead our publishing portfolio of new high-growth gaming brands. It’s a cross-functional role, and I get to be part of building something from the brief to a real product that people play. I’ve always loved to share my love of games with friends, so this role feels like it was made for me.”

Today, the Hasbro Games is creating games through a studio model, and the core focus remains reaching more players where they are.

Scaling Stories Through Partnerships

One way the Games team gets games to market is through partnerships—a surefire way to amplify the voices and creative ideas of independent game designers: “There are so many talented game designers and indie publishers out there. We can help them scale with tools and resources they wouldn’t otherwise have access to.”

The team builds new kinds of stories every time they work with independent designers. Each idea gains additional perspective as the team puts brainpower behind it. Says Patrick, “Players are not just consuming a story—they’re creating one every time they play. By working with a diverse group of partners, we unlock different genres, voices, and formats.”

The Games team recently worked with award-winning game designer, Elizabeth Hargrave, to bring her new game, “Sanibel,” to shelves. Bringing a new story to life is one of the best parts of working with designers.

The collaborative spirit of the team attracts partners to Hasbro in the first place. “We show up with energy, we move fast, and we’re not afraid to try something different if it makes the game better. That mindset is what partners respond to.”

Adult Party Games with Purpose

Hasbro is aging up its brands to reach more players than ever before. Embracing one of the fastest growing parts of the space, the Games team has transitioned to offering adult party games, publishing titles like Truth or Drink by Cut Games, Priorities by Clarendon Games, and SERVD by SERVD Cards.

Through this dynamic partnership model, Hasbro combines its industry expertise and resources with the innovative spirit and agility of independent creators. Partnerships with companies like Cut Games, Clarendon Games, and SERVD Games can give Hasbro's internal Games team the opportunity to test, learn, and move into new categories where we haven't played before.

For Patrick, creating games for an adult audience isn't just about strategy, it's a way for more people to build community around games: "Adult party games give us a way to show up during real, meaningful moments in people's lives. When they're looking to connect, laugh, and make memories, games can be the bridge. They create friendships and sometimes even rekindle relationships. That kind of impact is powerful and inspiring to the entire team."

Moving to Market at the Speed of Play

As for the next chapter for games? Patrick already sees it taking shape.

"I'm excited by the new wave of games that bring innovative mechanics and design style, but stay smart and minimal in their components," he says. "That kind of elegance is hard to pull off, and I think it's going to drive a lot of what's next."

Behind the scenes, Hasbro's ability to move faster than ever is proving to be one of its greatest strengths. From concept to shelf, Hasbro's Games team has been working together like a well-oiled machine.

"In the past year, we've broken records for speed to market," Patrick says. "That only works when every part of the team is locked in. It's a clear signal of what's possible when the whole system is working the way it should."