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## Multiplayer games in online ads

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## **Multiplayer games in online ads**

### ABSTRACT

This disclosure describes online advertisements that include embedded multiplayer games. The techniques enable users to form teams that work towards a common goal in the embedded game. Multiplayer gamified ads, as described herein, can result in deeper user engagement by making advertisements fun and rewarding.

### KEYWORDS

- Gamified ads
- Games in ads
- Multi-ad games
- Persistent score
- Multiplayer game
- Embedded game
- Online advertising

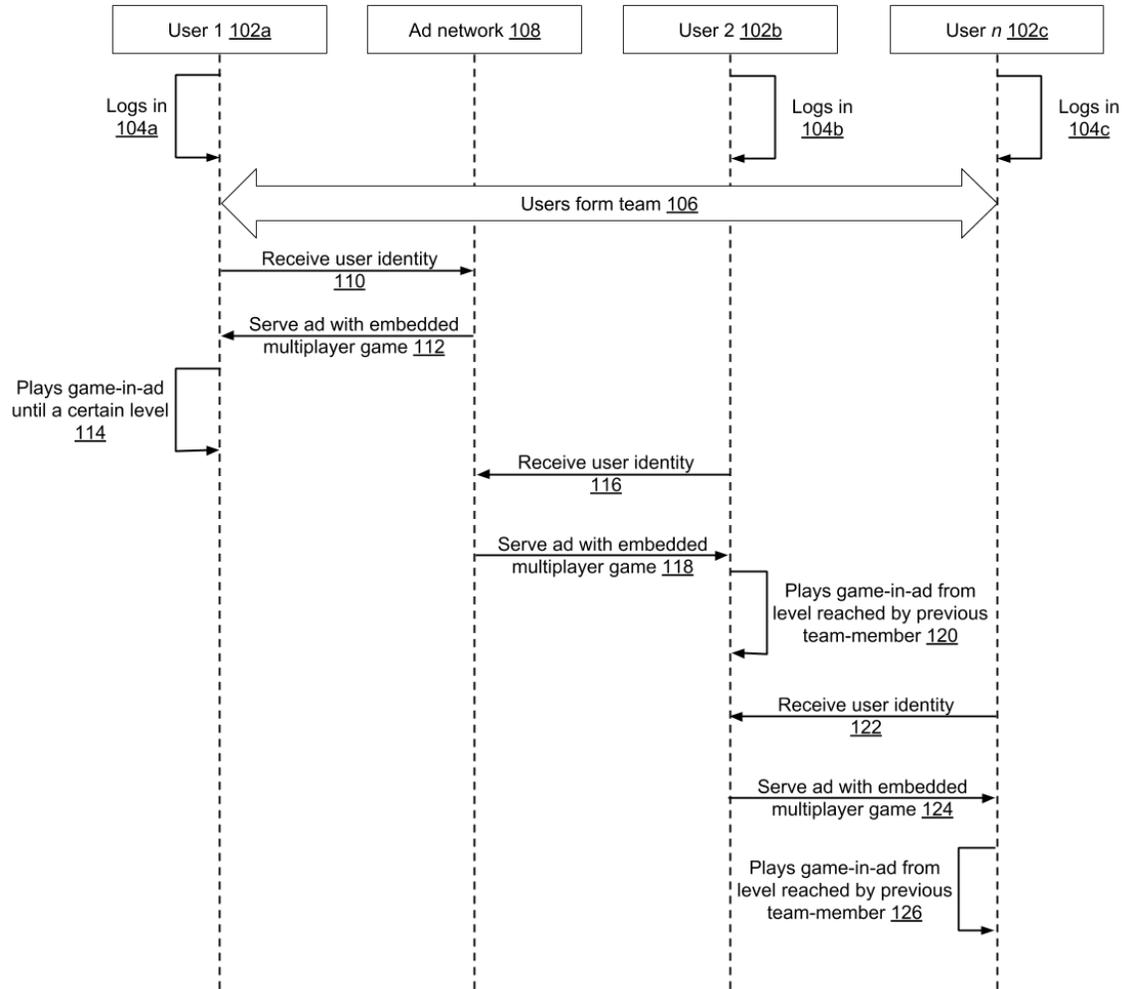
### BACKGROUND

Users are frequently bored by online ads and tend to tune them out. Advertisers benefit from ads that are fun, rewarding, and encourage user engagement with their brands. Developers and publishers also prefer interesting ads, since such ads can sustain user interest in their pages or other content. Ad networks that serve ads benefit when users are signed in, since it enables serving relevant ads to the users.

## DESCRIPTION

This disclosure describes online advertisements that include embedded multiplayer games. The techniques enable users to form teams that work towards a common goal in the embedded game. Per the techniques, an advertiser creates a game within an ad and a team-member user has the opportunity to contribute to the group goal. Some examples of goals include:

- A team is challenged to solve a complex puzzle; each ad impression offers a chance to solve one piece of the puzzle.
- A team is challenged to decipher a passage; each ad impression offers a chance to solve one piece of the passage.
- A team is challenged to shoot down a target by sending enough arrows to hit the target. A team-member user can shoot arrows while in the ad.
- A team is challenged to find an object hidden in an area; each ad impression offers a chance to look for a hidden object.
- A team is challenged to move the heads of their avatars together to a beat in a certain way.
- A team is challenged to get the characters of a game to dance together in a certain way.



**Fig. 1: Multiplayer game in an ad**

Fig. 1 illustrates multiplayer games in ads, per techniques of this disclosure. Users 1 through  $n$  (e.g., users 102a-c) log in to their respective clients (104a-c) and form a team (106). In this context, a client can be a device (e.g., a smartphone, a laptop, a personal computer, a tablet, etc.); an app (e.g., a mapping application, a messaging application, etc.); a platform (e.g., operating system); etc. Formation of the team can be assisted by an advertising network (108). Alternatively, if the users are on a common social network platform, then the social network can facilitate the formation of their team.

With user permission, the ad network receives the identity of a first user (110), and serves to the first user an ad with an embedded multiplayer game (112). The user plays the game in the ad, reaching a certain level (114), measured in terms of, e.g., scores, levels, experience points, character attributes, other gains, etc.

With user permission, the ad network receives the identity of a second user (116), and serves to the second user the ad with embedded multiplayer game (118). The user plays the game in the ad, e.g., starting from the level reached by the previous team member (120).

In a similar manner, the ad network receives with user permission, the identity of the  $n$  users of the team (122) and serves to each the ad with embedded multiplayer game (124). Each user plays the game in the ad starting from the level reached by the previous team member (126). The current status of the game is displayed in the ad, e.g., by visually displaying the portion of game task that is done, by displaying a fraction (“200/1,000 complete”), etc.

The ad may offer team or individual awards. For example, the ad may indicate that “there’s a group award when the puzzle is solved.” Alternatively, the ad may indicate “one member of your group will win \$20 when the group wins.” The award payout can be facilitated through online payment mechanisms. Alternatively, the award can be a non-transferrable digital good. The award can be sent through email. If the award is sent by email, the user may be requested to log in to establish their credentials. The email may also include a follow-up advertisement from the sponsor that is giving away the award. The ad can be served as an interstitial ad. It can also be an html ad that the user can interact with.

In this manner, multiplayer gamified ads, described herein, can result in deeper user engagement by making ads fun and rewarding. Advertisers benefit by having a more engaged audience. Ad networks benefit when more users log in, as more relevant ads can be served.

Further to the descriptions above, a user may be provided with controls allowing the user to make an election as to both if and when systems, programs or features described herein may enable collection of user information (e.g., information about a user's social network, social actions or activities, profession, a user's preferences, or a user's current location), and if the user is sent content or communications from a server. In addition, certain data may be treated in one or more ways before it is stored or used, so that personally identifiable information is removed. For example, a user's identity may be treated so that no personally identifiable information can be determined for the user, or a user's geographic location may be generalized where location information is obtained (such as to a city, ZIP code, or state level), so that a particular location of a user cannot be determined. Thus, the user may have control over what information is collected about the user, how that information is used, and what information is provided to the user.

## CONCLUSION

This disclosure describes online advertisements that include embedded multiplayer games embedded. The techniques enable users to form teams that work towards a common goal in the embedded game. Multiplayer gamified ads, as described herein, can result in deeper user engagement by making advertisements fun and rewarding.