

TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING AND *LOST* PATH TO SUCCESS

Daniella M. Sasaki

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<p>Tiivistelmä - Abstract</p> <p>This thesis analyses the transmedia storytelling strategy applied to promote the TV series <i>Lost</i>. As transmedia storytelling one may understand it as a story told throughout different media, with exclusive content pointing back to the main narrative, working as a potential new audience entry-point. "Which transmedia elements of the <i>Lost</i> formula could be transferable to other cases?" is the research question proposed and in order to answer it, all <i>Lost</i> transmedia events and other marketing elements are discussed and analysed. Alternate Reality Games (ARG) were the main part of this transmedia strategy, counting five in total. Added to ARG, there were mobisodes/websodes and a pseudo-documentary. Beside the transmedia, the following marketing elements are also analysed: a video game, a web game-style narrative, official podcasts, and DVDs/Blu-rays. Fandom is also discussed, as it is inevitable to talk about a TV show success without touching the subject. Transmedia elements are analysed based on the very transmedia storytelling concept, (a) the medium utilised; (b) strategy applied/objective(s); (c) how much it affected the viewer's knowledge compared to the main narrative; (d) where did the transmedia event lead the viewer; and finally, (e) if this transmedia event could actually work as an inviting entry-point to new audience. Based on the mentioned characteristics, it is possible to see that <i>Lost</i> transmedia elements were indeed successful and it could be applied, with appropriated changes, to other cases taking in consideration their particular features.</p>	
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<p>Tiivistelmä:</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus analysoi transmedia-tarinankerrontaa, jota on käytetty promotoimaan TV-sarjaa <i>Lost</i>. Transmedia-tarinankerronnan voi ymmärtää tarinana, joka kerrotaan yksinoikeudella eri medioiden välityksellä, tarkoituksena tavoitella lisää potentiaalisia yleisöjä. "Mitkä <i>Lost</i>in transmedia-elementit voisivat olla käyttökelpoisia myös muissa yhteyksissä?" on tutkimuskysymyksenä, ja jotta siihen voitaisiin vastata, kaikki <i>Lost</i>iin liittyvät transmedia-tapaukset ja muut markkinointiin liittyvät seikat ovat tarkastelun alla ja analysoitavana. Pääasiallisena strategiana on Alternate Reality Games (ARG), josta viisi esimerkkiä, ja lisäksi mobisodeja/webosodeja [mobisodes/webosodes], sekä pseudodokumentti. Transmedian lisäksi analysoidaan seuraavia markkinointielementtejä: videopeli, nettipelimäinen narratiivi, viralliset podcastit, ja DVDt/blu-rayt. Myös faniudesta keskustellaan, koska ilman tätä keskustelua olisi mahdotonta puhua TV-sarjan menestyksestä. Transmedia-elementtejä tarkastellaan transmedia-konseptin näkökulmasta: a) mediumin hyödyntäminen, b) strategia/päämäärät, c) kuinka paljon lisäsi katsojan tietämystä verrattuna päänarratiivin tarjoamaan tietoon, d) minne transmedia-tapaus johdatti katsojan, ja lopulta e) voisiko tämä transmedia-tapaus toimia johdattavana tekijänä uusille yleisöille. Perustuen näihin mainittuihin ominaisuuksiin, on mahdollista nähdä että <i>Lost</i>in transmedia-elementit olivat todellakin onnistuneita, ja voisivat olla hyödynnettävissä muissa yhteyksissä, asiaankuuluvien muutoksien ja huomioonottaen niiden ominaispiirteet.</p>	
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## 1. Introduction

When I watched *Lost* (Abrams et al., 2004) for the first time I could not imagine how hooked I would be from the first episode. And more, that I would be part of a worldwide legion of viewers that would follow the TV series throughout its six seasons trying to solve puzzles not entirely answered even with the show's end. At the same time, this particular show reminded me how different entertainment today seems slightly different than over a decade ago.

It was 1993 when *The X-Files* (Carter & Spotnitz, 1993) premiered on TV, and remained on television until 2002. I was only 13 years old when I began to watch it, soon it became the TV series of my life (so far). It was an intricate multilayered plot, dealing with conspiracy theories, aliens, paranormal events and other themes of the unknown. Later, two films were added to the narrative: *The X-Files* (1998) and *The X-Files: I Want to Believe* (2008), this last one released after the series end. Moreover, it is worth mentioning *The Lone Gunmen* (2001), which was a television series spin-off from *The X-Files*. The show soon became a cult series, generating significant amount of fan fiction production and conventions, with fans naming themselves as *X-Philes* (or simply *Philes*); whereas in Brazil, fans named themselves as eXcers. I would say that conventions are the idea of bringing that fictional story to our reality, something most fans would like to see.

Then, in 1999, when I went to the cinema with friends to watch *The Blair Witch Project* (Myrick & Sánchez, 1999) none of us could really say if it was a real documentary or a fictional movie. There were several different stories told by websites and magazines. I

have heard friends saying that the movie was terrifying, and others telling that it was not different from other films. The fact is *The Blair Witch Project* was a big hit at that moment and the comments generated through the internet made the audience more ‘curious’. At that time, we did not know in reality, but the entertainment industry was changing and it could have started started with this “small-budget independent film” called *The Blair Witch Project* (Jenkins, 2008, p.103). Analysing it today, it was an intelligent marketing strategy which has started one year before its release, when its website had already gathered fans who followed it periodically, especially with the discussion board added online by the producers. Although it was a fictional story, the site<sup>1</sup> led the people to believe that the disappearance of the ‘pseudo-documentary’ crew members, in the small city of Burkittsville, Maryland - USA, was apparently true (ibid., p.103-5). The website is still online to sell the movie DVD.

*Blair Witch* became known for bringing to the public dialogue the transmedia storytelling concept for the first time (Jenkins, 2008, p.103). In special, when it was able to merge a fictional story with our reality. However, I would argue that prior to *The Blair Witch Project*, *The X-Files* exceeded television frame and held some transmedia storytelling characteristics as well, such as the continuation of TV series on cinema screen, and a parallel spin-off series. I believe that in both cases, we can see how fantasy/fiction entertainment was somehow “evolving” to the format *Lost* was later presented, with an intricate marketing strategy called transmedia storytelling.

According to the media theorist Henry Jenkins, transmedia storytelling may be conceptualised as “stories that unfold across multiple media platforms, with each medium

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.blairwitch.com>



making distinctive contributions to our understanding of the world, a more integrated approach to franchise development than models based on urtexts and ancillary products.” (ibid., p.334)

The background set here is the postmodernism, which Dominic Strinati describes as “an attempt to understand a media-saturated society” (2008, p.206). Where the consumption is a matter of relevancy, “what we buy and what determines what we buy – is increasingly influenced by popular culture because popular culture increasingly determines consumption.” (ibid., p.206) Furthermore, transmedia storytelling has “strong economic motives behind” it, as Jenkins suggests (2008, p.106). “[...] There is a strong interest [from the entertainment industry] in integrating entertainment and marketing, to create emotional attachments and use them to make additional sales.” (ibid.)

It must be said that consumption has become something collective as well, which lead us to the collective intelligence concept, first coined by Pierre Lévy and used by Jenkins (2008, p.4) to explain that “No one knows everything, everyone knows something, all knowledge resides in humanity. There is no transcendent store of knowledge and knowledge is simply the sum of what we know.” (Lévy, 1999, p.13) Jenkins emphasises that knowledge could be “be seen as an alternative source of media power.” (Jenkins, 2008, p.4) Jenkins assumption could rely on the idea that Lévy’s collective intelligence “is a universally distributed intelligence that is enhanced, coordinated, and mobilized in real time.” (Lévy, 1999, p.16)

Furthermore, it must be mentioned that throughout the entire process, fandom is evidently active in order to make a franchise successful, therefore it cannot be entirely

ignored. The idea of emotional attachment raises questions on who are the industry dealing with, “merely” consumers or avid fans? Jenkins criticises those who are ignoring fandom, “None of these commentators on the new economy are using the terms ‘fan,’ ‘fandom,’ or ‘fan culture,’ yet their models rest on the same social behaviors and emotional commitments that fan scholars have been researching over the past several decades.” (2007, p.359) Jenkins critique on the lack of fandom concept use refers specially to more and more articles about “social media” and “web 2.0;” and their industry/consumers relationship consequences (ibid., p.357). In conclusion, the ideal consumer of today is a fan:

“[...] fandom represents the experimental prototype, the resting ground for the way media and culture industries are going to operate in the future. In the old days, the ideal consumer watched television, bought products, and didn’t talk back. Today, the ideal consumer talks up the program and spreads word about the brand. The old ideal might have been the couch potato; the new ideal is almost certainly a fan.” (ibid., p.361)

Entertainment products emotional attachment demonstrations seem to be more evident within social media applications, such as Facebook and Twitter. A content propagation is always just one click away. Aiming and reaching directly consumers/fans, TV series and movies have often a Facebook page, in order to keep their “followers” (using a Facebook term) updated and maintaining their interest. I cite here *The Avengers* film Facebook page<sup>2</sup>, which among posts are trailers, TV spots, actors videos, promotional

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.facebook.com/avengers](http://www.facebook.com/avengers)

photographs, media coverage and marketing spin-off products (videogame and action figure toys). The film itself is based on a Marvel Comics magazine, just like its “prequels” (and independent franchises): *Hulk* (2003), *The Incredible Hulk* (2008), *Iron Man* (2008), *Iron Man 2* (2010), *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011), and *Thor* (2011). *The Avengers* translates a common social media marketing strategy applied by several other films and TV series.

It is relevant to mention here that the focus of this thesis is on fantasy/sci-fi entertainment, as it seems more likely to have a transmedia strategy. Not to mention that this type of entertainment could be considered *cult*. It is clear that a larger audience means better ratings, on a cult show the audience, if formed only by cult fans, could have a limited possibility of audience success. Aiming for the broad “regular” public seems ideal for large broadcasters as ABC, NBC or CBS. Sharon Marie Ross, in her book *Beyond the Box* (2008), suggests that the internet spread “‘regular’/‘non-cult’ sites have proliferated to much the same degree as those for cult programs.” (2008, p.18) Continuing that “a largely, though not always consistently, symbiotic relationship has emerged between the industry-industry sites and the viewer-viewer sites that allows each ‘group’ to use the other for their own ends”, although the author emphasises that “the balance of power almost always residing in the hands of the industry.” (ibid., p.18) *Cult* will be further discussed in the following chapters.

However, transmedia it is not only about the already known franchising marketing products such as free *Star Wars* toy figures inside a cereal box or a *Lord of the Rings* poster. The idea of spreading some specific story throughout media goes further, producers/artists

have created entire fictional worlds, more than one could fully explore. This art of world-making (Jenkins, 2008, p.115-6) can be seen in the blockbuster franchise *The Matrix* (1999), divided into three films, animations, game, website, etc. The concept about to be discussed in this thesis, transmedia storytelling, does not work alone and may be applied with some other ideas, such as media convergence and art of world-making. All theories will be discussed and analysed in the second chapter.

### 1.1. Is there a formula to become a successful transmedia franchise?

With this master's thesis, I intend to comprehend mainly the Transmedia Storytelling (Jenkins, 2008, p.103) phenomenon, with the purpose to check the possibility of utilising such theory to other entertainment products as a marketing strategy to “become a successful transmedia franchise” (Jenkins, 2009). Although having a precise transmedia formula it would be simpler for the whole industry, I do not think it is possible to achieve that. What I will try to reach with this study is to find some main transmedia elements, based on an accredited narrative fiction TV successful example, which could help future releases of entertainment fantasy/fiction products.

The TV series *Lost* will be analysed as a successful example of the transmedia storytelling concept; and this thesis will try to answer the question ***Which transmedia elements of the Lost formula could be transferable to other cases?***

The series has been considered an audience success both on TV and online. The plot starts in 2004, when the Oceanic Air flight 815 had an accident during a travel from

Sydney, Australia, to Los Angeles, United States, with a mid-air break-up in several pieces and crashing down on some tropical island in the South Pacific, apparently deserted at first. There were survivors in different spots of the island. Not long after the accident they realise the island carried some mysteries, once a group of people had to face a polar bear and others witnessed a “monster” killing the wounded pilot. The unexplained facts kept happening: a French woman living in the island for almost two decades appeared, a 19<sup>th</sup> century sailing ship is found, as well as a hatch full of useful 1970s products and facilities, also the presence of “The Others”. The mysteries are everywhere in the plot and it seems to get more complicated progressively. If something is discovered, another mystery may appear.

Released in September 22, 2004, by ABC, the TV series *Lost* soon reached success, among public and critics, winning 2005 Emmy and 2006 Golden Globe at the category *Best Drama Series* (ABC, 2008). The ratings of its pilot episode broke records among the TV networks, more than 18 million viewers, “dominating its timeslot with the best young-adult rating for a drama premiere on any net (excluding spinoffs) in four years”, according to the *Variety* magazine website (Kissell, 2004). To prove its success, *Variety* says “*Lost*’ is still king of the fast-growing online video jungle”, accounting the official releases at the ABC website, with full free online episodes available for American viewers. According to Nielsen VideoCensus statistics, the show had, in March 2009, 35.8 million video streams for full episodes, clips and other short length content, by 1.4 million single viewers. Those numbers exclude uncountable torrent downloads all around the world, starting in matter of minutes after an episode first broadcast on TV ended.

## 1.2. Research Methodology

*Lost* has proven to be an interesting case of transmedia storytelling success, according to the audience statistics already presented in the previous topic. However, I believe it is not clear how the transmedia success was achieved. I explain here how I will be able to attain some conclusion considering the case in study. C. Rajendra Kumar says that “We all possess the vital instinct of inquisitiveness makes for, when the unknown confront us, we wonder and our inquisitiveness makes us probe and attain full and fuller understanding of the unknown.” (2008, p.1)

As a scientific research, this thesis requires a methodology, “Research is, thus and original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge making for its advancement. It is the pursuit of the truth with the help of study, observation, comparison and experiment.” (ibid., p.2) The author continues describing the relevant characteristics of a research, which can be applied to this thesis research: (a) “is a systematic in inquiry”; (b) “is an investigation into a subject or specific field of knowledge”; (c) “is undertaken to establish facts or principles”; and (d) “is an original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge making for its advancement.” (ibid.)

Mainly, the purpose of a scientific thesis is to answer one or more questions proposed by the author (ibid.). In this master’s thesis I intend to answer the inquiry stated before: *Which transmedia elements of the Lost formula could be transferable to other cases?*

This thesis will be an analytical research, which is explained by C. R. Kothari, in the book *Research methodology: an introduction* (2004), as a method in which “the researcher has to use facts or information already available, and analyze these to make a critical evaluation of the material.” (p.3) Also, it will be an applied, exploratory and conclusion-oriented research. Applied or action research objectives to “discover a solution for some pressing practical problem” (ibid.).

As exploratory type of research, one may understand it as “the development of hypotheses rather than testing” (ibid.). Furthermore, in a conclusion-oriented research, “a researcher is free to pick up a problem, redesign the enquiry as he proceeds and is prepared to conceptualize as he wishes.” (ibid.)

I will use mainly bibliographical and web content material to base the thesis theoretical structure. Henry Jenkins’ book *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (2008) sets the guidelines for transmedia storytelling and convergence culture concept, while I will use other authors to discuss and critique Jenkins’ ideas, such as Sharon Marie Ross’ *Beyond the Box: Television and the Internet* (2008); Marsha Kinder’s *Playing with Power in Movies, Television, and Video Games: from Muppet Babies to Teenage Mutant Turtles* (1991); and Jennifer Gillian’s *Television and New Media: Must-Click TV* (2011). Also, web content, such as newspapers and magazines articles, blogs and websites, especially ABC website, will be taken into consideration to assemble the descriptive part and the theoretical analysis.

Visual aid (DVDs and online videos) will be used in order to review certain *Lost* transmedia elements to be as accurate as possible. Even after the series end, it is possible to

play some online content material, which I will do. Also, to accurately report the play experience, I have acquired *Lost: Via Domus* video game for XBox 360 to better understand the player point of view. Each official transmedia item will be described and further critically analysed on chapter three, mainly based on the transmedia storytelling concept that will be further explained according to different authors. The latter is set to know which transmedia event was successful or not, therefore maybe ideal to apply in other entertainment cases.

### 1.3. Further chapters

On chapter 2, the discussion is on transmedia storytelling and other concepts, is the theoretical part of this thesis. Firstly, the transmedia storytelling concept will be regarded in depth. Secondly, how television has undergone some changes; thirdly, the cultural convergence, followed by participatory culture and Media Engagement. Fourthly, I discuss authorship, as a relevant topic about fans might becoming co-authors. Then the art of world-making will be discussed, followed by guerrilla marketing, viral videos and alternate reality game.

The third chapter is the core of this thesis, dedicated to explain and to analyse the transmedia elements implemented by *Lost*: five alternate reality games (ARGs), a series of mobisodes and a web pseudo-documentary divided in five parts. Before reaching the conclusion, I spend chapter 4 examining other forms of marketing utilised by *Lost*: a video



game, an official a UK web marketing piece, podcasts, and fandom blogs and websites. The conclusion of the research is on chapter 5, in which I finally discuss and analyse the results.

## 2. Discussing the Transmedia Storytelling and other concepts

This second chapter is dedicated to clarify some of the concepts to be used in this thesis. The main one is transmedia storytelling. In order to better understand the concept, one shall look back at Marsha Kinder's *Playing with power in movies, television, and video games: from Muppet Babies to Teenage Mutant Turtles* (1991). The author uses the term 'transmedia intertextuality' to explain the "intertextual relations across different narrative media" (p.2), in which the 'intertextuality' is employed according to media studies:

[...] intertextuality has come to mean that any individual text (whether an artwork like a movie or a novel, or a more commonplace text like a newspaper article, billboard, or casual verbal remark) is part of a larger cultural discourse and therefore must be read in relationship to other texts and their diverse textual strategies and ideological assumptions. (p.2)

In addition, I mention Mikko Lehtonen's ideas on intermediality, which is similar to Kinder's concept, "intermediality (intertextuality transgressing media boundaries)" (2001, p.71). Moreover, Lehtonen argue that in Modernity, as the age of reproduction, "is also an age of intensifying mediatization", therefore

"If mediatization signifies an increase in multimodality, this does lead to intermediality marking still stronger the formation of meanings in this multiply

multimodal cultural state. Hence, *all in all, the mediatization of culture signifies an increase in intermedial signification both in the production of cultural texts and in their reception.*” (Lehtonen, 2001, p.77; emphasis in original)

Kinder and Lehtonen seem to apply their concepts fairly similar to the idea of today’s transmedia storytelling. Kinder also combines transmedia intertextuality within a commercial supersystem, in order to describe the intentions of television companies to make children consume more (ibid., p.3). To achieve that level of consumption, a strategy which could be used is “through a dialogic system of intertextuality (involving language, play, and commercial exchange), which positions the child as an active consumer whose desires are directly addressed.” (ibid., p.23)

Back in 1991, Kinder could anticipate the transmedia storytelling reality of today through “a multimedia revolution that is already placing cinema, television, VCR’s, compact disc players, laser videodisc players, video games, computers, and telephones within a consolidated supersystem combining home entertainment, education, and business.” (p.4) Concluding that “In the case of the superentertainment system, transmedia intertextuality works to position consumers as powerful players while disavowing commercial manipulation.” (ibid., p.119-20)

Nicoletta Iacobacci (2008) explains, “A transmedia project develops storytelling across multiple forms of media in order to have different ‘entry points’ in the story; entry-points with a unique and independent lifespan but with a definite role in the big narrative

scheme.” In other words, there is a story being told and many ways to access it through different “entry-points”, which could be held in different media or not.

There is not a media type use restriction in transmedia storytelling, however it has been seemingly most employed the internet and its features. I believe the internet could be considered a medium, in a singular form, with different applications; or a media, in a plural form, as an amalgamation of several medium, such as videos on YouTube, blogs, games and websites. Transmedia concept would be broader if internet is to be considered a media itself, since transmedia online content is most of the time used, if not always. Online content is massively implemented in transmedia for being accessible instantaneously worldwide, plus user-generated content is also created and spread via web. In this thesis, I will consider internet as medium, which contains various applications/features.

*Lost* is the franchise case to be studied in this paper and an interesting example. Franchising meaning “The coordinated effort to brand and market fictional content within the context of media conglomeration.” (Jenkins, 2008, p.326) Furthermore, *Lost* was a TV series broadcasted by the American ABC, with an intricate plot proved to be even more complicated when clues from the puzzle spread over the internet, and in the real world, such as fictitious company websites, extra characters’ blogs and YouTube channels. The viewer had the option of following only the series on TV, ignoring any other unique content broadcasted by a different medium. At the same time someone who was not aware of the TV show could accidentally ‘see’/access some of these extra content leading to the main plot, the ‘big narrative scheme’.

The efficiency of each entry-point depends directly on the medium via which it is acting. Henry Jenkins explains that “In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best – so that a story might be introduced in a film, expanded through television, novels, and comics”, also “Different media attract different market niches.” (2008, p.98) A good example would be *The Terminator* (1984), a film which generated three sequels and a TV series. *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* was released in 1991, followed by *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines* in 2003. Before the fourth movie, some questions concerning John Connor’s mother needed to be answered, and the producers released the TV series *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* (2008). The following year was time for *Terminator Salvation*. The series is set in a period after the second film and tells part of the whole plot unknown by the audience, an exclusive content.

“Each franchise entry needs to be self-contained so you don’t need to have seen the film to enjoy the games, and vice-versa. Any given product is a point of entry into the franchise as a whole.” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 98) Another interesting case is the animation from Nickelodeon called *Avatar: The Last Airbender* (DiMartino & Konietzko, 2005), broadcasted from 2005 to 2008. It became video games and the characters were transformed in merchandising products, moreover a movie was released in 2010 directed by M. Night Shyamalan, *The Last Airbender* (Aversano, Marshall, Mercer, & Shyamalan, 2010), translating to a motion picture the first season of the animation. Also, graphic novels were released letting fans to know more about some characters not shown on TV or the movie (Sizemore, 2010).

However, one might ask the reason for the entry-point having an exclusive content being a relevant characteristic in transmedia storytelling. Jenkins says that repetition can make the audience lose interest, which would lead to a franchise fail. In order to avoid this consequence he explains the strategy to be adopted, “Offering new levels of insight and experience refreshes the franchise and sustains consumer loyalty.” (2008, p.98) Furthermore, the franchise usually tries to immerse the consumers in its world, such as a game play, according to Jenkins.

### 2.1. Television has changed

It is justifiable to mention that the main medium “used” by *Lost*, the television, has changed. The TV is no longer fixed in living rooms, and the audience does not need to be attached to a TV guide schedule anymore. Either because of digital receivers, such as TiVo, or simply because “‘Television’ is now portable and malleable, taken in on screens of all sizes, filed away on DVD box sets, and remixed on YouTube.”, as described on *Flow TV: Television in the Age of Media Convergence* (Kompare, 2011, p.97).

This medium concept “evolution” translates the period we live in, as it is further described in *Flow TV*:

‘Television’ exists as a massive mobilization of capital, culture, and technology; as illicit but eternally circulating BitTorrent files; and as countless discussion threads on LiveJournal fan communities. Thus, a “television moment” today is much more

likely to happen away from the set than it was in 1989, and much more likely to involve interactive networks of users, rather than isolated individuals generating their own resistant readings alone in their living rooms. (ibid.)

Sheila Murphy, on *How Television Invented New Media*, goes further than mere television changes, saying that computers, TV and film have fused due to “the industrial convergence of production and delivery methods and the narrative crossovers and linkages now commonly found between co-positioned media objects such as film franchises, television programs, or the adaptation of one medium's content into another format” (2011, Introduction, para. 7). Which reflects the cultural convergence defended by Henry Jenkins, that will be further discussed on item 2.1.

As direct consequence, Murphy cites “new forms”, exemplifying: ARGs, mobile episodes and applications, viral marketing strategies, blogs, Twitter-feeds, and fan-authored content. Furthermore, above all that, and agreeing with Kompare point of view, she defends that have been major alteration “in how, when, and where one accesses, uses, views, reads, plays, or hears media today”, as result of “digital technologies with multitasking capabilities [that] often allow for media consumption across a seemingly ever-increasing range of devices and in a variety of shifting locales.” (2011, Introduction, para. 8).

Jennifer Gillian cites the importance of *The Lost Experience* (ARG) international reception in the USA television paradigms alteration: “the shift in the place of importance of media savvy fans and of the international distribution platform, as those fans can be courted globally via fan- and producer-created websites.” (2011, p.170) It is evident that a

north-american TV series can be affected by foreign audience, “Viewers are often now responsible for or influenced by the increasingly global and paratextual circulation of the series”. (ibid.) Furthermore, *The Lost Experience* was planned to reach a global market, a global awareness. (ibid.)

When a TV show, such as *Lost*, is acquired to be telecasted in another country, the original broadcast channel is no longer related in most cases. (Gillian, 2011, p.171) In Brazil, AXN cable channel, open TV channel Globo, and online Terra TV acquired the rights of *Lost*. AXN would transmit each episode usually two weeks after ABC in the USA, due to subtitles need for the Brazilian audience. However, the series finale was transmitted only two days after the original broadcast. (“Final de ‘Lost’,” 2010) By contrast, the open channel Globo TV decided to air each entire season within usually one month in the beginning of the year, school summer vacation in Brazil, usually late night, as a substitute to a traditional talk show whose presenter was on vacation. This unusual strategy had been used before broadcasting the TV series *24*. Brazil’s case exemplifies an international distribution platform, detached from the original “brand” channel (Gillian, 2011, p.171). I would argue that the positive consequence is the identity creation of a television show regardless its channel, which is certainly attached for the American audience.

## 2.2. Cultural Convergence, Participatory Culture and Media Engagement

In a broader scenario, it seems that transmedia storytelling is a consequence of convergence undergoing today, as Henry Jenkins defends. Notwithstanding the notion of



intermediality and repurposing across media that have been used longer than transmedia. The word *convergence* itself means “technological, industrial, cultural, and social changes in the ways media circulates within our culture” (Jenkins, 2008, p.322), however there are ideas which refer “to a situation in which multiple media systems coexist and where media content flows fluidly across them.” (ibid.)

“By convergence, I mean the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behaviour of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want.” (2008, p.3) This also implies the consumers’ behaviour being encouraged to think by themselves, searching for new information and making “connections among dispersed media content.” (ibid.) If the same idea of convergence could have been applied before in another historical period, the impact would have not been the same, I believe convergence has been greatly influenced by digital media, which allowed access to audiences and places worldwide and at the same time, if needed. Jenkins’ convergence concept is clearly a type of progression in various fields: industry, technology, culture and social, as the author mentions.

Klaus Bruhn Jensen says that “Interactivity with media anticipates interactions between people. Communication is a particular constellation of interactivity and interaction.” (2010, p.51) This concept leads us to another important characteristic of the new entertainment scenario, the active audience, which does not accept all the content without questioning or trying to participate at certain extend. Jenkins calls this participatory culture, and it may be conceptualised as “culture in which fans and other consumers are

invited to actively participate in the creation and circulation of new content.” (ibid., p. 331)

Participatory culture is apparently similar to Marsha Kinder’s ideas on a dual form of spectatorship cultivated by television and games for children, which place young viewers “to combine passive and interactive modes of response as they identify with sliding signifiers that move fluidly across various forms of image productions and cultural boundaries, but without challenging the rigid gender differentiation on which patriarchal order is based.” (1991, p.3)

A variant of the same concept is used to describe audience participation on television content, named tele-participation, by Sharon Marie Ross, in her book *Beyond the Box* (2008, p.5-6). “Viewers are responding to various kinds of calls to tele-participation – invitations to interact with TV shows beyond the moment of viewing and ‘outside’ of the TV show itself.” (ibid., p.4). The author categorise the invitations, examining the importance of the internet here, in *overt*, when the TV show producers and writers clearly try to “activate viewer participation”, which is “easily discernible within the text of the series” (ibid., p.8); *organic*, when is not so obvious that the show/network is demanding the audience “to extend the text” (ibid.); and *obscured*, is the “messiest due to its complexity and ambiguity” meaning that “any invitation to participate resides primarily in the narrative structure and content of the show itself through a certain ‘messiness’ that demands viewer unravelling” (ibid., p.8-9), category to which *Lost* belongs according to Ross.

Among the categories, the obscured invitation is the one relevant to this research. Viewers seem to be seeking for “specific pleasures of ‘insider status’, puzzle-solving, and prediction and speculation.” (ibid., p.9) Also, the invitation has to be obscure so the

viewers, who do not want to follow the narrative out of the TV, do not become frustrated or cease to understand the show plot (ibid., p.177).

Ross continues with her thoughts, explaining how important the internet became for the industry to understand the audience, and change its strategy to attend it:

Tele-participation has become an increasingly crucial element in industrial strategies to capture the ever-splintering audience, as well as a crucial element in viewers' expectations for television. The Internet, meeting television *and* meeting the viewer, is an important part of this historical reconfiguration of television in its broadest sense. (ibid., p.18)

Henry Jenkins seems to have a similar perspective to Ross', however adding that "Even companies that adopt a collaboration logic have a lot to learn about creating and maintaining a meaningful and reciprocal relationship with their consumers." (2008, p.177) It seems that ABC could have achieved the next stage on its relationship with *Lost* fans, however, if that is the ideal industry-consumer relationship, it is difficult to say.

The viewer, actively participating and engaging on the called participatory culture, may be known as viewser (viewer/user), which I found the most appropriated term to be used in this thesis. The concept is cited extensively by Jennifer Gillian on *Television and New Media: Must-Click TV* (2011, p.2, 248) mentioning Dan Harries (ed.) on *The New Media Book* as her source (as cited in Harries, 2002). However, some sites as *WordSpy: The Word Lover's Guide to New Words* (McFedries, 2006) and *Double-Tongued Dictionary*

(Viewser, 2006) cite earlier source, Greg Roach, writing for New Scientist, *Into the vortex*, combining *viewer* and *computer user* (as cited in Roach, 1995).

### 2.3. Authorship

The participatory culture raises other discussions on the viewser/consumer subject. Firstly, the viewer could be in fact a fan as Henry Jenkins says, “Perhaps we are all fans or perhaps none of us is.” Especially when fandom could be on a verge of becoming mainstream, “As fandom becomes part of the normal way that the creative industries operates, then fandom may cease to function as meaningful category of cultural analysis. Maybe in this sense, fandom has *no* future.” (2007, p.364) I am not claiming here for fandom studies end, nor raising flags against it, but to use the *fan* concept broadly, involving in its concept the idea of viewser/consumer.

Secondly, is it possible to clearly define audience and author in media convergence events? Are fans also taking part on the storytelling authorship? To begin this particular discussion, Henry Jenkins considers relevant an authorship type which he says is happening in convergence culture: collaborative authorship. It refers “to situations in which the central author of franchise opens it to participation from other artist to shape it in ways consistent with its overall coherence but allowing new themes to emerge or new elements to be introduced.” (2008, p.321) In order to get to some objective, “these storytellers are developing a more collaborative model of authorship, co-creating content with artist with

different visions and experiences at a time when few artists are equally at home in all media.” (ibid., p.98)

However, Jenkins does not seem to put the audience in an author position when dealing with culture convergence environment. If fans are in fact the reason why a show is made, I believe they should have some voice on authoring, as they are actually engaging themselves and expecting something in return. Derek Kompare, on the other hand, analyses authorship in television as a closer relationship between “official authors”/producers and audience:

“[...] it functions both as a relationship between producer and user, and a proprietary discourse, with particular cultural, legal, and social attributes. ‘Television’ is not only what producers assemble, nor only the particular text on the screen, nor only what viewers make of it, but consists of all of this: all the institutions and practices that surround, produce, and contextualize those moments, i.e., *all that makes the very idea of ‘television’ meaningful.*” (Kompare, 2011, p.97)

Kompare analyses *Lost* official podcasts, which is presented by producers Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse and will be better explained in coming chapters, as he discusses its informal delivery and approach to fans: “the irreverent tone suggests that that [sic] ‘authorship’ is indeed a construction, a function of network publicity, and of their showrunner jobs.” (p.106) That said, the boundaries between author’s and audience’s roles are not clear anymore, which consequence is that fans might actually have some space in

the authorship of their favourite show, especially when their opinion are heard and taken into consideration by the authors. *Lost* podcasts offer a good example and will be better explained in chapter 3.

#### 2.4. The Art of World-Making

The *Matrix* trilogy (Silver, 1999 & 2003) is often used as an example of a breakthrough movie in many categories, and here I present it as film which introduced us to an entire new fictional world, the art of world-making. Jenkins says that “the world is bigger than the film, bigger even than the franchise” (2008, p.116), with uncountable possible characters, scenes and scenarios. In the case of *Matrix*'s plot, the world the characters used to know, quite similar to our reality off-screen, is unreal and manipulated by machines, once created by humans that took over control of the whole planet. The fake reality of the humans in the movie is a simulacrum of what Earth once was, meaning the world we live off-screen. However, people still exist because the machines depend on them, so they grow human beings, similar to crops, in order to continue living. Against all odds, in the reality of the movie, there is a remaining human city called Zion, where awaken people face the hard reality and fight the machines.

When a film creates an entire new world it offers the audience a chance to dive in a different reality, with almost endless new content. *Matrix* is not the only example of world-making, I could also cite franchises such as *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings*; and the TV series *Fringe*, *Heroes* and *Battlestar Galactica*. What they have in common is

belonging to the realm of sci-fi/fantasy and the aim to create alternative realities, a “process of design fictional universe that will sustain franchise development, one that is sufficiently detailed to enable many different stories to emerge but coherent enough so that each story feels like it fits with the others.” (Jenkins, 2008, p.335) Does it mean that this concept is restricted to science-fiction/fantasy genre? Apparently, yes, but I argue that the same idea could be applied, for example, to a drama based in historical facts franchise, such as *The Borgias* (2011), about Pope Alexander VI and classified as historical fiction.

How this world-making relates to transmedia storytelling? Jenkins answers it quite simply: “Transmedia storytelling is the art of world making.” (2008, p.21) The author continue his explanation “More and more, storytelling has become the art of world building, as artists create compelling environments that cannot be fully explored or exhausted within a single work or even a single medium.” (ibid., p.116) Using the world-making concept seems propitious to apply the transmedia storytelling idea, in order to create a variety of unique content across different media, even emphasising different characters to make the franchise even more interesting.

## 2.5. Guerrilla Marketing

The marketing applied to entertainment products today seems to rely greatly on guerrilla marketing, an idea of the 1980s, especially because of the dedication led by a time consuming process it takes. Jay Conrad Levinson explains that in order to achieve

“conventional goals, such as profits and joy”, one must utilise “unconventional methods, such as investing energy instead of money.” (n.d.)

Moreover, the author emphasises the equality idea, “Guerrilla marketing is needed because it gives small businesses a delightfully unfair advantage: certainty in an uncertain world, economy in a high-priced world, simplicity in a complicated world, marketing awareness in a clueless world.” (ibid., n.d.) Obviously, *Lost* is not a small business; however it seems to apply the cited strategy with dedication and making the viewers to dedicate themselves as well. Even though it might be simplistic to see *Lost* strategy as purely guerrilla marketing, I believe that was also the basis of a greater developed transmedia marketing applied by *Lost* producers. Fandom is not limited by guerrilla marketing as well, viewers’ engagement will be further discussed throughout the thesis.

### 2.5.1. Viral Marketing and Viral Videos

Viral marketing seems to be an evolution or, at least, in part of guerrilla marketing created in the 80s, but applied today. Theresa Howard says that “It’s a marketing strategy that involves creating an online message that’s novel or entertaining enough to prompt consumers to pass it on to others — spreading the message across the Web like a virus at no cost to the advertiser.” (2005) Howard continues explaining that viral components are more efficient and inexpensive than standard ads, even making the consumer to rely more on the information released. A viral marketing is an official strategy taken by the company which is releasing the product.



However, a viral video is not necessarily part of the viral marketing, it could be a user-made video that has gone viral or other videos not related to any commercial product, for example. Jean Burgess, in his article *'All Your Chocolate Rain Are Belong to Us?': Viral Video, YouTube and the Dynamics of Participatory Culture*, concludes that “the dynamics of viral video could be understood as involving the spread of replicable ideas (expressed in performances and practices), via the processes of vernacular creativity, among communities connected through social networks.” (2005, p.108) Which also explains the general idea that a “‘viral video’ is used to refer simply to those videos which are viewed by a large number of people, generally result of knowledge about the video being spread rapidly through the internet population via word-of-mouth’.” (ibid., p.101) Social media seems to be mandatory as means to spread and replicate a video that will eventually become viral.

Among the several examples, I can cite here the most viewed videos on Youtube of all time, in 2010. From the top 10 videos, only three are not music video clips, and can be considered fair examples of viral videos: *Charlie bit my finger* with 234,951,237 views; *Evolution of Dance* with 153,302,372 views; and *Hahaha - Small daring boy* with 139,726,890 views. (MacManus, 2010) However, only *Charlie bit my finger* is the only non-music video still among top 10 in 2012 (MacManus, 2012). On the other hand, none of the examples above is a marketing video, therefore I mention here campaigns from Burger

King such as *Whopper Freakout*<sup>3</sup> and *Whopper Virgins*<sup>4</sup>, also *Happy Birthday David*<sup>5</sup>, a video promoting *Prometheus* (2012), the *Alien* franchise prequel.

If there is a formula for an efficient viral video, Theresa Howard speculates in her article on USA Today that it could be the idea to “Create and execute an idea that’s intriguing enough to get consumers to interact.” (2005) At the same time, the opposite effect might happen just as easy as a viral event, “While the Web can be effective, it also can bite back. Consumers can spread gripes about a brand just as easily.” (ibid., 2005)

Jean Burgess analyses the phenomenon from a cultural participation perspective, claiming that “videos are not ‘messages’, and neither are they ‘products’ that are distributed via social networks. Rather, they are the mediating mechanisms via which cultural *practices* are originated, adopted and (sometimes) retained *within* social networks.” (2005, p.102) For example, when a *Lost* fan-created video is uploaded to the web and it eventually becomes viral, it clearly does not belong to the official narrative, nor is necessarily supported by *Lost* producers, therefore it is not part of a viral marketing, but it is a viral video.

### 2.5.2. Alternate Reality Game

The television series *Lost* has also brought a different form of interaction, the Alternate Reality Game (ARG), maybe not something to the common viewer or also known

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.bk.com/en/us/campaigns/whopper-freakout.html>

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.whoppervirgins.com/>

<sup>5</sup> See <http://youtu.be/4dSkf06yCvU>

as swimmer (who would not engage in playing an ARG, for example, a swimmer would just watch the show on TV) as Ross explains (2008, p.201), but at least to the active viewer willing to search for clues outside the box or diver (ibid.). “Typically ARGs are launched subtly with a few well-placed clues (or ‘rabbit holes’), leading players into a trail of websites, phone numbers, newspaper ads, and physical events that posit an alternate immersive reality with embedded mysteries and puzzles.” (Mittell, 2006)

Sharon Marie Ross gives a fictional example of a hidden treasure narrative to explain the ARG concept, “Players would hear about this treasure through an online ARG forum; they would then pursue the treasure by following a complex web of clues that would take them through ‘real yet fictional’ websites, magazine advertisements, online articles, etc. [...]” (2008, p.202)

Jennifer Gillian explains that a TV tie-in ARG focuses on the audience attention, being that the main commodity, therefore relying “on click-based consent by which viewers click on a sponsor’s site to find clues for the game. [...] It is a new media version of the television paradigm in which viewers exchange attention to advertising in return for entertainment content”. (2011, p.165) Probably because there is a content chase by the viewer, that TV tie-in marketing it is not immediately perceived as a marketing strategy. (ibid.)

The question that remains here is the reason behind such a intricate marketing strategy, beside the obvious audience hunt. Gillian presents an interesting answer:

By hosting opportunities for interaction and participation for a series' most dedicated viewers, networks and corporations that sponsor their content hope to benefit from the "gratitude effect" associated with prestige sponsorship models in which nothing is sold within the series, but the corporate brand is elevated in consumers' minds by the connection to (and the company's support of) their favorite TV programming. (ibid.)

Basically there are "vessels for passing along information" and "vessels for passing along promotion", according to Jennifer Gillian. The first "vessels" are the features of new media presented to tease the audience into television and online interaction. And the TV tie-in ARGs are the second "vessels" "in that each click to activate an MP3, a chatbot, or an instant messaging system is also a potential consumer touch point for the network and its advertisers." (ibid., p.166)

Although *Lost*'s ARG, called *The Lost Experience*, will be explained in more details on chapter four, I should say that *Lost* is not the strictest ARG example. "Producers could not make the game for traditional ARG players without alienating mainstream viewers; and producers could not make the game *necessary* to watching the show – they could only use it as a way to *enhance* enjoyment of the show." (Ross, 2008, p.202) The difference lies on the question if the situation presented belongs to a real or fictional world, and the game being released "in the midst of the enigma" bringing suspense to the narrative, explains Jason Mittell (2006). "In many ways, the narrative of *Lost* does the same thing [...] But 'Experience' begins with a storyworld already having been established on television, with

players bringing two seasons of expectation and theories into their interactions with the ARG.” (Mittell, 2006)

The Alternate Reality Game concept was only one of the marketing strategies applied by *Lost* producers, as further will be explained on chapter three, dedicated to analyse transmedia elements from the television series.

### 3. Lost and its Transmedia Events

*“One main point is that, yes, producers and network executives do hope you will follow the messiness of the narrative elsewhere, and that your voice will become apart of the narrative mix.” (Ross, 2008, p.177)*

*Lost* has been successful ever since it premiered in 2004, but why has the show reached such success? There are several characteristics gathered in this particular series to be analysed more carefully, which I speculate being source of its attainment. Firstly, there are narrative elements such as the multilayered plot, and the several main and support characters. Secondly, the production elements: producers, directors, cast, crew, scenarios. Thirdly, and the main point of this research, the transmedia elements: alternate reality games (ARGs), mobisodes/websodes, and a pseudo-documentary. The DVDs/Blu-rays also contributed to spread these transmedia elements to promote the series, allied with official podcasts, a video game and various merchandise goods and fandom activities. In this chapter I will describe and analyse *Lost* official transmedia events; and in the next chapter I will analyse other *Lost* appropriations, including merchandising, and also fandom.

In order to be able to use the transmedia resources, *Lost* is “in the right place and at the right time”, which means that through media history this type of elements would not be available or maybe the audience would not follow it as today. It is all about the right conditions. Sharon Marie Ross argues that with the internet nobody misses an episode anymore. In addition, *Lost* broadcaster ABC “became the first network to offer their hit

shows [*Lost* and *Desperate Housewives*] online from their home website – for free, with commercials.” (2008, p.178-9) Although ABC provides free episodes of its shows, only people within the USA are able to access that content. Still, one might be able to download via torrent several TV shows episodes as well, most of the time illegally, depending on the country’s laws.

James Poniewozik explains on his article for *Time Magazine*, *Why the Future of Television Is Lost*, how the show fits and succeeds in the new digital era of TV:

How did *Lost* escape the cult-show graveyard? Partly because it's just TV genius. But also because TV has changed--and because *Lost* changed TV. Many of the changes that threatened old-fashioned TV--the rise of the Internet, new technologies, a fragmented audience with new entertainment options--have made *Lost* successful. It won over Internet-centric viewers who are supposed to be bored with TV, and it benefited from technologies like iTunes, DVRs and DVDs that some were worried would be the end of TV. It took the attributes that would once have made it a cult failure--eccentricity and complexity--and used them to harness the power of obsessive, evangelical fans. (Poniewozik, 2006)

The new media development and its urge to multi-platform shows do not denote that every television production would achieve an online success. (Ross, 2008, p.177-9) Will a soap-opera, like *Days of Our Lives*, have an ARG one day? Probably not. Above all, the target audience matters. Ross’ survey showed that there are some interesting inherent

connection between sci-fi/fantasy fans and internet. Moreover, the author argues that “cult” shows such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *The X-Files* and *Lost* had their fan bases increasing with time. Although the first two examples are cast in some genre, science-fiction, fantasy and/or fantastic, somehow “*Lost* fandom is comparatively stigma-free. Something, seems to have shifted – in terms of ‘cult,’ in terms of the fantastic, and in terms of fandom.” (ibid., p. 181-2) For Sharon Ross, *Lost* has the characteristics of cult TV, being frequently associated with *Twin Peaks* and *The X-Files*. “*Lost* has also developed and maintained a more intricate an ever-changing multimedia presence, especially via Internet.” (ibid., p.199)

Transmedia storytelling has direct connection to the audience’s reaction towards the franchises. It needs the viewer to do more than just consume, it needs the viewer to also participate, engage him/herself in a quest for more information, to be a viewser. Henry Jenkins believes that “we should document the interaction that occur among media consumers, between media consumers and media texts, and between media consumers and media producers”, ever since “the current media environment makes visible the once invisible work of media spectatorship.” (Jenkins, 2006, p.135)

Named as “the new participatory culture” by Jenkins, its formation is based “at the intersection between three trends”: (a) “new tools and technologies enable consumers to achieve, annotate, appropriate, and recirculate media content”; (b) the promotion of “Do-It-Yourself (DIY) media production”; (c) “economic trends favoring the horizontally integrated media conglomerates encourage the flow of image, ideas, and narratives across multiple media channels and demand more active modes of spectatorship.” (ibid., p.135-6) Ross, on the other hand, calls the television participatory culture, tele-participation. I



interpret Jenkins' three trends as being possible to happen especially due to digital media, with viewers utilising internet (beside television) to watch TV shows, via torrent or streaming, for example. Also, internet allows the same viewers to interact with other viewers, reproduce and repurpose the show content publicly online.

Ivan D. Askwith's new engagement (towards media, content or advertising) concept is explained by a change on the viewer dedication, "an overall measure describing both the depth and the nature of an individual's specific investments in the object." However, the author emphasises how flexible the definition is, having different formats, serving for several desires and needs, which means "there is no simple formula or scale for conducting this measure, nor a single 'type' of engagement that describes the range of possible investments (financial, emotional, psychological, social, intellectual, etc) that a viewer can make in a media object." (2007, p.49)

Furthermore, Askwith states four viewer's behaviours, desires and attitudes towards the object in question: (1) "Consumption of object-related content and products"; (2) "Participation in object-related activities and interactions"; (3) "Identification with aspects of the object, both to self and others"; and (4) "Motivations (or desires) for each of the above." (ibid.)

I believe that making the viewer an active agent of 'change' upgraded his/her status from passive consumer to active consumer, however still a consumer. In a transmedia storytelling example there are more products to consume than in a product released with some non-transmedia marketing strategy. Furthermore, if the viewer decides to engage in a quest for more information through the transmedia elements, he will spend more time

‘consuming’ the products at certain extend. *Lost* is a good example of how much time fans have spent trying to solve its mysteries, following clues, creating websites and blogs, writing in forums, watching advertisements and consuming. This seems to be a new way to consume entertainment today.

Ross claims that the spectator’s encouragement to follow the narrative elsewhere must be obscured, especially not to leave outside the viewers who do not want to follow the clues left. Furthermore, “the enhancements offered must not make the experience of the original narrative incomprehensible or frustrating.” (2008, p.177) How to find the perfect balance to maintain fans and attract new audience can be complicated, however if a show achieve such purpose, it is most likely to be successful.

The question I proposed and that I will attempt to answer by the end of this thesis is *Which transmedia elements of the Lost formula could be transferable to other cases?*, and this is not a simple straight question to answer. In order to do that I believe one has to also understand if a particular transmedia strategy was efficient, and to achieve that, one should analyse if each transmedia event was successful. In this chapter I dedicate myself to describe and analyse the official transmedia events, especially to apprehend if each one of them was in fact successful or not.

Each medium has its own particularities, its own *language*, therefore the strategy applied should take in consideration all these details in order to achieve each medium success, reaching the right audience properly. Not only each medium has a different approach, but also each internet feature. A transmedia event launched on Facebook should

be different than an event made for YouTube, even though they might be interconnected and attract audience for one another, and certainly to the main narrative.

It is difficult to set parameters to analyse equally all transmedia events, however as subjective as the matter can be, some variables might be examined, such as audience numbers, if available. I believe a good option to study if a transmedia event was indeed successful is to analyse a few characteristics, based on the transmedia storytelling concept previously presented: (a) the medium utilised; (b) strategy applied/objective(s); (c) how much it affected the viewer's knowledge compared to the *big narrative scheme* (if affected just a *little*, it could be unsatisfactory, and if it is *too much*, it could dangerously affect the whole transmedia structure); (d) where did the transmedia event lead the viewer: directly to the main narrative or left traces to another transmedia event; and finally, (e) if this transmedia event could actually work as an inviting entry-point to new audience. Ideally, all characteristics should be examined, from (a) to (e), however it might not be entirely possible, hence I will analyse as many items as possible.

### 3.1. Alternate Reality Games (ARGs)

*"It is the latest well-funded entry in a young medium called "alternate-reality gaming"--an obsession-inspiring genre that blends real-life treasure hunting, interactive storytelling, video games and online community and may, incidentally, be one of the most powerful guerrilla marketing mechanisms ever invented." (Borland, February 2005)*

*Lost* ARGs were in fact a result of other TV shows successes and failures in previous years, especially *The X-Files* and *Alias*. From the first one, the producers understood they needed an end to the story, as an endless mystery would not sustain itself. From *Alias*, which inherit part of *The X-Files* fan base, there was an immersive experience which teased many viewers into participation. Later, part of production from *Alias* would work in *Lost*. (Gilliam, 2011, p.161-3) “*Lost* also has one of these ‘must click’ and share web experiences that encourages viewers to share the links as well as to keep clicking on hyperlinks to access a series of interrelated sites.” (ibid., p.163)

Furthermore, Gilliam discuss how *Lost* ARGs could have backfired, not satisfying the viewers as they expected, becoming more of a promotion than a game, a “massive multiplayer marketing” as Hollywood Reporter names it. (as cited in Gilliam, 2011, p.167) However, not every spectator wishes to play an ARG to know more about the series, there are those who desire nothing but to watch an episode. So, who would be in fact the target audience to ARGs? Gilliam could have the answer,

“[...] one way of keeping the cult fans happy is to utilize the web as a place in which to offer more depth to the mythology. At the same time message board commentary that urges producers to add more mythology to the on-air series can be misleading given that the comments come from dedicated viewers rather than the casual viewers who are needed to move a TV show from cult series to narrowcast-broadcast hit.” (ibid., p.162)

As Gillian mentioned, a show needs the two types of spectators, the casual viewers and the dedicated viewers. A televisual storytelling is not as demanding as an ARG, it only requires a viewer in a passive mode, meaning that viewer's interaction and engagement is draw to a minimal level. Meanwhile, an ARG would require an active engaged viewer, who is willing to participate, to search for clues online and offline, to interact with other viewers through social media, and to be part of a "massive multiplayer marketing". Most part of the interaction is usually via internet, as the most effective medium to reach a high number of viewers and to allow them to interact with each other and the game. In *Lost* case, even with time difference, fans from different countries were willing to engage themselves in playing.

It does bring to mind that an ARG promotes a fandom social life that, otherwise, could take more time to happen, or would never cross forums borders. Even though marketing campaigns should be planned according to an specific country, culture and people, *Lost* ARG would do the opposite, bringing completely different audiences together to a common goal. Does this mean it would massify its audience? Or would it select similar viewers in different audiences and bring them together using this marketing strategy? I would say it is more likely that the latter one is the key to the answer.

There were five alternate reality games while the TV series *Lost* was being broadcasted. The first one was *The Lost Experience*, between seasons 2 and 3, it lasted from May until October 2006. Its focus was the Hanso Foundation, allowing the audience to learn more about it. The second ARG was named *Find 815*, released on January 2008

(season 4), focusing on the Oceanic Airlines. The third game was *Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project*, from May until November 2008, at the season 4 to season 5 hiatus. The following ARG was *Lost University*, set between seasons 5 and 6, in 2009. Finally, also at the season 5 to season 6 hiatus, the last game was set *Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear*. The last two ARGs were released during a 2009 Comic-Con panel. (“Alternate reality game,” n.d.)

Each game took the player to intricate plots, just like the TV show. It is unlikely, and not justifiable, that I analyse here every single detail, as each ARG could be a theme for whole new thesis almost. I intend to summarise the main points each alternate reality game proposed.

### 3.1.1. The Lost Experience

“A combination of TV adverts, fake websites, call-centers, blogs, chocolate bars, video and flash mobs” that intends to allow the viewers “to follow the story of Rachel Blake, an ex-employee of the Hanso Foundation trying to uncover the truth behind the company’s sinister activities.” (“Alternate reality game,” n.d.)

In *The Lost Experience* advertising was playing a centre role, “which surprised people who seemed to forget for a moment that broadcast TV has always been structured around content offered in exchange for attention to advertising.” (Gillian, 2011, p.168) Viewers should then *pay* the price of playing the game by *facing* advertisements when taken to a website in game offered by a real company promoting its brand.

*The Lost Experience* (or TLE) was an elaborated game which was “co-developed by three TV companies: America's ABC, Australia's Channel Seven and the United Kingdom's Channel Four.” (“The Lost Experience,” n.d.) The United Kingdom Design Agency, Hi-ReS!, was responsible for the game websites, except for the sponsors sites. That same agency created the highly interactive website *Lost: The Untold*, which was an introduction to the series developed for the British Channel 4 (ibid.) *Lost: The Untold* will be better explained further in chapter four, as it was not part of any ARG, although it seemed to be on the edge of being a transmedia element.

TLE is part of the Hi-ReS! portfolio and a video explaining this ARG is available on its website archives section. This marketing campaign was created “Working closely with the writers behind *LOST*, the Lost Experience revealed the ‘back-story’ of the Hanso Foundation, the shadowy organisation behind the fictitious Dharma Initiative which sits at the heart of the TV series.” (ibid.)

This first *Lost* ARG was clearly well elaborated, being released in five phases. Hi-ReS! states that “In the UK alone over 30,000 unique users regularly interacted with the alternate reality game.” With peaks of over 50,000 people engaging on the game. (ibid.)

The Lost Experience began with ‘commercials’ inserted into the show. These led you to Web sites such as the Hanso Foundation. Astute Web users soon discovered hidden portions of the Web site, aided by clues found in other sites advertised on the show, inside commercial tie-ins for Sprite, Jeep, Monster.com and others. (Rose, n.d.)



Image 01: Hanso Foundation website. It no longer exists, however print screens are available online, such as this one. Retrieved from <http://img374.imageshack.us/img374/3924/oldhanso6mf.jpg>

The following description is based on the Hi-ReS! portfolio page and video. Phase 1, from May to June 2006, Rachel Blake hacks the Hanso Foundation website [thehansofoundation.org](http://thehansofoundation.org), see image 01, for six weeks, releasing important information about the founder and the executive board. Rachel Blake is a new character, introduced during this ARG. Phase 2, from June to July 2006, the Hanso Foundation shuts down its website after being hacked. Rachel, however, left a website address on its source code, [RachelBlake.com](http://RachelBlake.com), which led to her apparently innocent travel blog. Using a password, one



could find Rachel's hidden video journals of her Hanso Foundation investigations, see image 02.

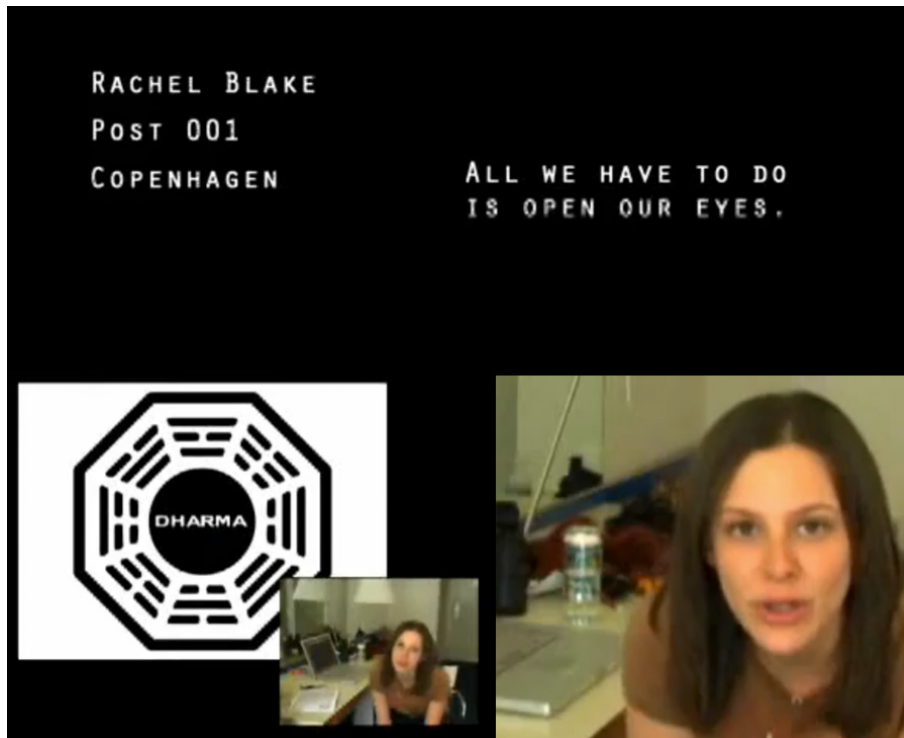


Image 02: Rachel Blake's first video scenes. Retrieved from [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_nMiMB2Gao](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_nMiMB2Gao)

Phase 3, from July to August 2006, Rachel spread a video in 60 fragments to be found online and offline worldwide, hieroglyphs were created for players to recognise them anywhere. With individual codes, the fragments could be all assembled on [hansoexposed.com](http://hansoexposed.com). "Channel 4 hid video fragments within E4 idents [sic] and hosted two 'flash mob' events in London and Manchester." ("The LOST Experience," n.d.)

Phase 4, from August to September 2006, 10,000 Apollo chocolate bars were produced only for this ARG. The fictional chocolate bar was seen on *Lost* first season, see image 03. The bars came with an URL printed on it, [whereisalvar.com](http://whereisalvar.com). At the website, people who acquired the chocolate were able to upload their photo with the chocolate. “A small number of chocolate bars contained a special code which, when entered onto the site, provided a clue to the final stage of the game.” (ibid.)



Image 03: Kate eats an Apollo chocolate bar in the Sawn Station/hatch, season 2, episode 2, *Adrift*. Retrieved from <http://comiporai.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/lost-apollo-bar.jpg>

Phase 5, the final phase, from September to October 2006, was an online radio broadcast by DJ Dan, who was following Rachel’s investigation. During the broadcast, Rachel Blake calls DJ Dan and says she has hidden a last video online. She “announced the final website leading to the ultimate secret of *The Lost Experience* – Rachel Blake was the daughter of Alvar Hanso, the founder of the Hanso Foundation.” (ibid.)

Today, all *The Lost Experience* websites are deactivated. However, I mention an interesting example, [hansocareers.com](http://hansocareers.com), which was officially part of the Hanso Foundation website and sponsored by [monster.com](http://monster.com), a job search website. Although it is deactivated, [hansocareers.com](http://hansocareers.com) loads a [Monster.com](http://Monster.com) page saying the the page searched is unavailable or does not exist anymore, offering links to several [Monster](http://Monster.com) sites worldwide.

*The Lost Experience* used digital web content blended with offline real world strategies, such as the Apollo chocolate bars sold. At this point, the viewser could have felt immersed in *Lost* somehow. I believe it worked as a teaser to keep viewers following the series on TV. Since it was placed between the second and third seasons, the show had already cultivated reasonable amount of fans following each series episode. Placing TLE before, between first and second season, could have made the viewers more confused with the intricate plot. At this point, after the second season, the producers had time to make the audience more comfortable with *Lost* narrative, comfortable enough to make the willing viewers to play an ARG.

By the end of TLE, viewers were directed towards the main narrative on TV, it did not leave any clue that a second ARG would happen. To learn that Rachel Blake was in fact Alvar Hanso's daughter did not affect greatly the main narrative, however, it led those viewers to re-think about the Hanso Foundation. The amount of information provided was balanced enough not to lose viewers, nor regular audience. The videos posted by Rachel Blake soon made to blogs, forums, social media and even the news, becoming viral, hence potentially attracting new audience (which is difficult to measure).

### 3.1.2. Find 815

This second alternate reality game was developed by ABC and an Australian company named Hoodlum, and it is part of the Hoodlum portfolio available on the website [hoodlum.com.au](http://hoodlum.com.au). The new character introduced here is Sam Thomas, who is an Oceanic Airlines IT technician and is searching for Sonya, his girlfriend. Sonya was a flight attendant in the same company and was working at the plane which crashed on the island. “Sam has been active in campaigning against the airline's decision to cancel searching for the flight, disgruntled that they wish to move on and resume business.” (“Alternate reality game,” n.d.) Oceanic Airlines was exposed through a video posted on [flyonceanicair.com](http://flyonceanicair.com) (ibid.).

DarkUFO, a fan website dedicated to *Lost* that will be described in chapter four, created a blog to discuss this particular ARG. Just like *The Lost Experience*, *Find 815* had some websites that the players could investigate, the main one was [find815.com](http://find815.com), where the user may still find a last blog entry by Sam Thomas, see image 04. This new *Lost* character also created an official *Find 815* group on Facebook, and had profiles on MySpace and Facebook. (DarkUFO, 2010)

The player follows Sam’s quest through videos, which are quite similar to *Lost* regular TV episodes including recaps, Sam’s video diaries, and websites. To follow Sam’s quest, the player should gather clues and solve them. Sam’s story was divided in five chapters, still available on YouTube, and I base my observations here on the videos reposted by the user Grisket (Grisket, 2008). On chapter 1, Sam appears on the TV news

talking about his girlfriend, protesting against the end of Oceanic 815 search. While he is at home, he receives an intriguing e-mail, with a hidden message: “Sunda Trench, Christiane I, Black Rock, Tell no one, and Grave consequences”. He tries to reply, just to bounce in error, the e-mail. He finds out that the e-mail belongs to Maxwell Group, which site was also created for this ARG, the-maxwell-group.com.

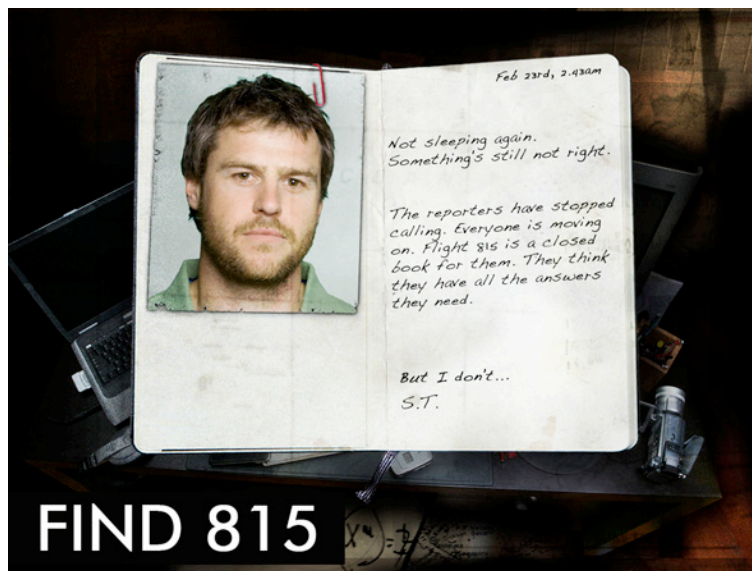


Image 04: Sam Thomas' last blog entry on find815.com. Retrieved from [http://](http://www.find815.com/)

[www.find815.com/](http://www.find815.com/)

On chapter 2, Sam searched, found and travelled to meet Christiane I, a boat in Jakarta, Indonesia, heading to Sunda Trench. Although, at first the captain does not allow him to join the crew, he eventually fixes some boat electronic equipment, proving how useful he could be and joins Christiane I. There are several game clues being dropped in the plot little by little, such as another mysterious e-mail Sam receives and Amelia Earhart old

news transmission. Also, Sam eventually realises that Black Rock was the 1881 missing ship that Christiane I crew is looking for.

Talbot is the responsible for the ship expedition, and Sam discovers he works for the Maxwell Group on chapter 3. Sam figures out the received e-mail as geographic coordinates. He also knows Talbot suspects of him being onboard, and Sam hears strange noises coming from the boat bridge.

On chapter 4, Sam uses the boat chart plotter to decipher the geographic coordinates, but Talbot finds Sam's notes and confronts him, who says the Maxwell Group sent him. Talbot smiles, warning Sam to stay away from those coordinates and that he will not find what he is looking for. He receives another e-mail encoded saying "Love you madly", something Sonya used to say to him.

The final chapter presents Sam convincing Christiane I captain, Ockham, to head the ship to his coordinates. Not long after doing it, Talbot finds out and start an argument with Sam. Just before the captain gets back to the old coordinates, the radar beeps and they say the Black Rock has been found. Sam convinces Ockham to let him navigate the ROV (remotely operated vehicle) on the next day, and instead of the Black Rock wreckage, he finds Oceanic 815 in the bottom of the ocean. On season 4, episode 2, Oceanic 815 plane wreckage are shown as found submerged in the ocean, linking *Find 815* ARG to the main *Lost* plot.

*Find 815* holds similarities to *The Lost Experience*, it also introduces us to new characters outside the island, the main character has also a blog, and videos are the main part of this ARG. It is clear that the use of videos tries to immerse the viewer using the

same visual experience as television does. The difference is the break of the fourth wall, the viewer is noticed and is urged to perform some interaction, unlike watching episodes on TV. *Find 815*, differently than TLE, looks like another episode of *Lost* with interaction, good video quality, while *Lost Experience* used mostly “homemade” videos. The second ARG was contained into digital boundaries, which could make the viewer feel more as a game player this time.

This ARG pushed the viewer towards the main narrative, not mentioning the previous game, nor giving hints of a future one. When Sam Thomas finds Oceanic flight 815 wreckage, it linked to an important piece of *Lost* puzzle, only to be revealed in the following season on TV. I believe this ARG was equally inviting to new audience as the previous one. Presenting a new character to both, loyal fans and new viewers, is an efficient method not to alienate the swimmer spectator and keeping the dedicated viewer.

### 3.1.3. Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project

The third *Lost* ARG, ABC also developed together with the Australian Hoodlum and a videoclip is available on its website as part of its portfolio. This game won the 2009 Primetime Creative Arts Emmy, on the category *Outstanding Creative Achievement in Interactive Media - Fiction*.

According to Lostpedia (“Alternate reality game,” n.d.), the focus was on the Dharma Initiative and intended to recruit candidates through the Octagon Global Recruiting (OGR). There was an OGR commercial aired during one of *Lost* episodes, *There’s No Place*

*Like Home, Part 3*. The main site was Dharmawantsyou.com (ibid.). The recruitment was “real” and took place at the Comic-Con in San Diego, California, July 24 to 27, bringing the ARG to our level of reality. (Gaulin, 2008)



Image 05: Dharma Initiative Recruitment Project ad. Retrieved from <http://www.hoodlum.com.au>

*The Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project (DIRP or The Project)* took place from May 29, 2008 until November 18, 2008. It started with an Octagon Global Recruiting TV advertisement aired during a season 4, episode 13, *There's no Place Like Home, Part 2*. There were some different Dharma advertisements, see image 05. Those interested in joining the Dharma Initiative should have applied online on DharmaWantsYou.com or at



Comic-Con 2008, where a real Dharma booth could be found. The participant would then take a test, be evaluated and receive a Volunteer Assessment Dossier, with his/her results and assigned post. Due to financial issues the Dharma Initiative was canceled, but a new website exclusive for the ARG participants was released, [Dharmaspecialaccess.com](http://Dharmaspecialaccess.com). The producers, Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse signed several e-mails sent to the participants, containing exclusive *Lost* features. (“Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project,” n.d.)

This ARG seemed to have merged fiction and reality, mixing fans of the real world and *Lost* world. Especially when the *Lost* fictional character, Hans Van Eeghen (“aka” Black Swan) talked live during the panel on behalf of the *Dharma Initiative Recruitment programme* to a great audience at the panel, see image 06 (Quixotic1018, 2008a). A video was also released during the *Lost* panel, when a participant, another *Lost* fictional character, called Dan Bronson secretly films inside the Comic-Con Dharma booth even if it was forbidden to do so. Dan runs to the microphone during the *Lost* panel and releases the video publicly, see image 06, before he was “caught” (Quixotic1018, 2008b). Later the producers revealed the objective of this particular ARG, “Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse stated in an interview with Lostpedia that the purpose of the game was to foreshadow the arrival of Sawyer's group in DHARMA times in Season 5.” (“Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project,” n.d.)

If the first ARG focused the Hanso Foundation and the second focused the Oceanic 815, the third one talked about the Dharma Initiative. It looks like *Lost* ARGs evolved from noticing the viewer, interacting with viewer to finally coming to the viewer’s level of

reality. Within *Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project* there was a progression: it started online to contact and call possible viewers; it then emerged in our reality claiming the fictional Dharma Initiative to be a real organisation; it interacted with viewers in the real world; then brought new characters once again saying they were real. Not only the fourth wall had been broken, but it was able to merge fiction and reality with real fans witnessing it. It had a theatre play feeling, added to a previous online participation call. The participation invitation was efficient because it attempted to direct fans to Comic-Con 2008, where is already a fandom meeting place, known for having panels of various series, films, comics and others, so actors, directors and producers would directly “talk” to fans.



Image 06: Comic-Con 2008. Hans Van Eeghen talks during *Lost* panel; Dharma Initiative booth; and Dan Bronson releases his video. Retrieved from <http://www.hoodlum.com.au>

This time the game did not seem as complicated as the previous two, however its complexity was not in the ARG plot, it was in the strategy applied. *Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project* was planned in a very efficient manner in order to immerse the viewers and everyone else at the *Lost* panel, attract potential new audience and reach real news world wide. As mentioned previously, the objective was to direct users to the main narrative, giving a hint of what the new season was about to show.

#### 3.1.4. Lost University

The main website for the *Lost University* (LU) is [lostuniversity.org](http://lostuniversity.org) in which the viewer can still find numerous information concerning the *Lost University*, another fake institution. Released during the San Diego Comic-Con 2009 (Day, 2009), between seasons 5 and 6, this particular transmedia ARG was different from the previous ones because it was made in another level of reality completely. For level of reality, I can explain as the viewer's awareness of the reality in this case, similar to the Dharma Initiative ARG, which merged reality and fiction. The *Lost University* combines the *Lost* world and the real world from an academic point of view. It is an attempt to convince the viewer that *Lost* mythology is real, therefore deserves to be studied. It offers courses as for example, *His 101: Ancient writing on the wall*, which seems to be treating the series mythology with certain contempt. In another example, the course description mentions a guest professor for *Lan 601: Exploring Spanish with Nestor Carbonell*, who is the actor that plays the character Richard Alpert.

Patrick Kevin Day, from the Los Angeles Times, described LU at the time of its release as “a multimedia experience that delves into the fields of study touched on in the show's five years.” And continues explaining how the site will work, “Real university professors will teach short video courses on a variety of ‘Lost’-related subjects -- and it's not exactly a light curriculum either, with philosophy, physics and hieroglyphics, among others.” (Day, 2009) This multimedia experience explained by Day clearly touches what I previously said about the different level of reality the producers intended here, our level of reality, specially with real professors lecturing online. However, the very exclusive lessons is only available for those who acquired the Blu-ray of Season 5:

The project was announced in July at the San Diego Comic-Con International with a website and course catalog. But the first semester of classes weren't set to begin until today -- timed to the release of ‘Lost's’ fifth season on Blu-ray. Though anyone can sign up online and participate in forums at [lostuniversity.org](http://lostuniversity.org), fans must have the show's Blu-ray discs to access the courses. (ibid.)

Hugh Hart presents in his article, *Lost Schools Fans With ‘Lost University’ Blu-ray Feature*, the Blu-ray set which comes with *Lost University* promotional material, see picture 07. Beside the real professors lectures, “The Lost University ‘courses’ include cast members offering jungle-survival tips (embedded right), including the revelation that ants taste like lemons, courtesy of actress Evangeline Lilly, who plays Kate.” (Hart, 2009)



Image 07: Blu-ray special box, *Lost* University. Retrieved from: <http://www.wired.com/underwire/2009/12/lost-university/>

The University site shows an ABC header, see image 08, clearly introducing to the user that it is part of *Lost* marketing campaign. One is able to find today a very convincing university website, with course catalog, forum, reading material, and a Tutoring Center with video sessions. After enrolling for the University, the user is able to find his own binder and a LUcard to print out. There is still today some exclusive content for those who freely subscribed for it. The LU logo has got a polar bear on it, which seems to be the mascot. The polar bear is an emblematic symbol in *Lost*, first appearing in the second part of the pilot

episode, and being mentioned several times during the series. Which shows how the *Lost University* was made for fans.

The video presented at the website home have a clear institutional focus, with a narrator and a “conservative” way of showing images. The images are not creatively edited, quite similar to old educational videos. Although, the viewer can find in the Tutoring Center four video sessions which review some *Lost* details, apparently in a lesson format, but not in a very conservative format, more as in *Lost* series style. The sessions have suggestive names: *Session 1: Dude, don't tell me what I can't say*; *Session 2: Things that go "tikka tikka tikka" in the jungle*; *Session 3: Hatches and patches*; and *Session 4: Zoology: Native (and not so native) island wildlife*. Session 5 is a cramming session with cards A to Z from different *Lost* characters, and elements, followed by a trivia in the bottom.

What this alternate reality game has in common with other transmedia elements is the idea of trying to make the user believe in it as a real institution. The first indication is its domain ‘.org’, explained by Domain.org how “.ORG domains are identical to other domains except that a .ORG domain typically implies the associated website is a non-profit organization, non-governmental agency (NGO), or a grass roots campaign focused on activism and/or education.” (“.ORG Domains - The Best Way to Represent Your Cause Online,” n.d.) The other indications are the layout and content presented on the website, discussed in previous paragraphs.

Jeff Jensen wrote an article at the time of the LU release, called *ABC launching a college devoted to 'Lost'? Sign us up!*, and gave some impressions of its purpose, “From the looks of it, ‘Lost University’ is several things at once: pure fun [...]; elaborate

promotion for the Season 5 DVD [...]", also speculating that it could possibly be "a nifty alternate reality game designed to keep *Lost* top-of-mind in the months leading up to its sixth and final season." (Jensen, 2009) Although it was first intended to promote the fifth season Blu-ray, today the user may find a video promoting *Lost University* apparently new master's programme, with a saying in the end promoting "The Complete Sixth and Final Season Blu-ray".



Image 08: Lost University website with ABC.com header. Retrieved from <http://www.lostuniversity.org/>

[www.lostuniversity.org/](http://www.lostuniversity.org/)

As mentioned previously, *Lost* ARG was clearly progressing from fiction to reality. Differently from the *Dharma Initiative* ARG, which elements from fiction emerged and interacted with the real world, the *Lost University* treats *Lost* fictional mythology as real. Although, most of the other show advertisements already led the consumer to buy some season DVD and/or Blu-ray, or even is a part of a DVD/Blu-ray extras, LU is not a simple ad, it clearly deals with real professors discussing *Lost* matters, bringing the fictional world closer or even merged to the real one.

The content studied at LU could refer to the island mythology from the main narrative, as a preparation for the series finale. The island had been a mystery since the show started, which offered a good focus for this ARG. However, if the strategy was to treat mythology as reality, it is not clear the reason for *Lost* actors and actresses appearing as themselves, instead of playing a role of their fictional counterparts. It could have been to incite curiosity and attract a new audience, nevertheless it did not involve the main narrative clearly, just references. The fake university website seemed to target young people, more likely students or prospective students, for the simple fact of its format and what it was depicting, a university. Using internet and DVD/Blu-ray as media, once again states the importance of internet use in ARGs. Moreover, the DVD/Blu-ray set was transformed in a transmedia cult fandom product, which means something fans usually like, exclusivity.

I find this ARG strategy quite peculiar and, at times, risky as it could not give back relevant content to fans as much as they could expect, such as the previous games. The strategy was definitely a step forward, creating once again a new ARG approach to keep the



viewers playing. Furthermore, it directed fans not only to the season finale, but also towards merchandise shopping, the DVD/Blu-ray set, with a more elaborated transmedia marketing.

### 3.1.5. Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear

If each ARG was progressing towards our level of reality, this last game seemed to be placed only in our reality. “Unlike the other official ARG's, this one breaks the fourth wall from its start, acknowledging the TV series, characters and Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse as the executive producers and writers.” (“Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear,” n.d.) However, as I previously said, I would argue that the fourth wall has been broken on the *Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project* ARG. After *Lost University* standing in between fiction/reality, this fifth game crossed the fiction/reality barrier, exiting fiction completely. Furthermore, Lindelof knows the audience demand, as he states:

We're trying to come up with innovative ways to make people not zip through the commercials. We're trying to break the fourth wall in some ways too and make *Lost* more than a show-an experience in many ways. That sort of thinking is in response to our fans who want to continue to interact with the show even when the show isn't on. We feel it's our duty as writers to continue to give them stuff like that.” (as cited in Hoey, 2006)

When the last ARG started, on the Comic-Con 2009 *Lost* panel, July 25, it was even difficult to recognise as a new game, as a supposed fan gives Damon and Carlton a painting, see image 09, claimed he made himself (Tysongivens, 2009). The fan was Paul Scheer, a real comedian and actor, who says he was promoting his art work on the website DamonCarltonAndAPolarBear.com. The website displayed 16 artwork frames related to the last season content. The website is still active and people are able to buy products, if not yet sold out, including some frames. (“Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear Art Samples,” n.d.)



Image 09: Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear painting. Retrieved from <http://images.wikia.com/lostpedia/images/f/f0/DamonCarltonPolarBearPainting.png>

In order to find and possibly buy the 16 different artworks, there were clues on the main website DamonCarltonAndAPolarBear.com leading the players to real locations

worldwide, where a new URL would be released. I write here dates of 2009, locations and web addresses to all artworks releases according to the blog *Lostargs.com*, and it is relevant to mention that the list shows different places all around the world (*ibid.*):

- Aug 16th - Bardot Club, Hollywood - [actuallyitsketchup.com](http://actuallyitsketchup.com)
- Aug 26th - Johnny Cupcakes, Boston - [thatandbasketweaving.com](http://thatandbasketweaving.com)
- Sep 1st - Attack of The Show - [Wewerecaughtinanet.com](http://Wewerecaughtinanet.com)
- Sep 8th - Crumbs Bake Shop, NY and LA -  
[ICANGETYOUPEANUTBUTTER.COM](http://ICANGETYOUPEANUTBUTTER.COM)
- Sep 14th - University of Arizona, Tuscon - [ithinkthatmanwasyou.com](http://ithinkthatmanwasyou.com)
- Sep 23rd - Syperpages.com center, Dallas - [HuckFinnWasTaken.com](http://HuckFinnWasTaken.com)
- Sep 30th - Rusty's Discount Pet Center, California -  
[Iamtryingtobuysomejerkeyandaslushy.com](http://Iamtryingtobuysomejerkeyandaslushy.com)
- Oct 6th - Parque Patricios, Buenos Aires - [runsaverytightoperation.com](http://runsaverytightoperation.com)
- Oct 15th - [polo67life.com](http://polo67life.com) - [youmightwanttoconsiderhikingboots.com](http://youmightwanttoconsiderhikingboots.com)
- Oct 23rd - Ron Herman Store, LA and Tokyo - [trustmejustleaveitbe.com](http://trustmejustleaveitbe.com)
- Oct 29th - Forbidden Planet, Glasgow - [itookacoupleofflyinglessons.com](http://itookacoupleofflyinglessons.com)
- Nov 6th - Super7 Store, San Francisco - [nooysterhere.com](http://nooysterhere.com)
- Nov 12th - Spin New York - [difyouburyit.com](http://difyouburyit.com)
- Nov 20th - Abe Lee Realty, Honolulu - [nosuchthingascurses.com](http://nosuchthingascurses.com)
- Nov 28th - 44th Ward Dinner Party, Chicago - [wellitsadelicioussandwich.com](http://wellitsadelicioussandwich.com)
- Dec 16th - Gallery 1988, LA - [nothingsforever.com](http://nothingsforever.com)

The final *Lost* alternate reality game acknowledged the existence of *Lost* creators, which is certainly a statement. I believe it was responsible for closing a circle: first a fictional world was introduced to viewers, some of these viewers became viewers, they observed and were observed, they were acknowledged by fiction, they interacted with each other, then fiction breaks the fourth wall, fiction comes to the viewers' reality, however, only to state that it was "just a fiction" nevertheless, acknowledging its creators.

*Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear* started differently, without the use of any medium, it was presented live at a Comic-Con. Ultimately, fans were immersed and could hardly make sense of it. Fans were directed from the official ARG website to real places in order to retrieve clues and keep playing the game. The fact that great part of this game actually played offline, off medium, makes it a breakthrough, an attempt to bring *Lost* fans from all over the world to interact and to play. Nevertheless, viewers once again needed to play together, as pursuing clues in Japan, Argentina and Scotland, which would have not been easy to do if played by a group of fans from only one country. It is significant to mention that producers not only acknowledged fans once again, but noticed worldwide fans. The marketing strategy here seemed to be more elaborated, nevertheless, the TV series attempted to go beyond the North American audience, which is remarkable.

Concerning the content, this ARG did not offer exclusive pieces from the main narrative, it focused on selling merchandise for fans. As it was released at the season 5 and 6 hiatus, together with *Lost University*, this ARG was allowed to focus more on fandom merchandising products. The strategy proposed could get attention from people in the real

world, which could make them new viewers, however the number of people reached would not be as great as if the campaign would go viral on the web, like the first ARG. For all these, I believe it was an interesting strategy to apply as *Lost* last alternate reality game, and I am convinced it was a just closure to the entire ARG process.

### 3.2. *Lost*: Missing Pieces (Mobisodes/Websodes)

The thirteen episodes were broadcasted from November 6, 2007, to February 4, 2008, according to Lostpedia. Each episode, with not more than three and half minutes, was first released on mobile phones from Verizon company, and repurposed on ABC.com six days later. In July 2008, the episodes were made worldwide available and once again repurposed on the fourth season DVDs and Blu-rays. These mobisodes/websodes content were part of the show storyline, “considered a canonical extension of the series.” (“*Lost*: Missing Pieces,” n.d.) *Lost: Missing Pieces* were mobisodes at first and then became websodes.

Oscar Dahl (2007) explains in his article *Lost: Mobisode 1, "The Watch"* that the mobisodes were a count down to the fourth season, completely original and produced by the “real *Lost* staff.” (Dahl, 2007) Jon Lachonis claims in his article *Lost Mobisodes Unraveled* that “The Mobisodes [...] have most fans kvetching about the irrelevancy and down right LOST-lessness of the tidbits that are meant to traverse gaps in the story.” (Lachonis, n.d.)

The audience learns more of some characters in each websode, also some details and different point of views of previous scenes, the ‘missing pieces’ literally. “So each Mobisode would have, in theory, given us a glimpse at the moments between major island events, along with a new fragment of the orientation film to put together.” (ibid.)



Image 10: *Lost: Missing Pieces* episodes, from left to right, top to bottom: websode entry scene; websode 1: *The Watch*; websode 2: *The Adventures of Hurley and Frogurt*; websode 3: *King Of The Castle*; websode 4: *The Deal*; websode 5: *Operation Sleeper*; websode 6: *Room 23*; websode 7: *Artz & Crafts*. Retrieved from <http://lostmobisodes.blogspot.com/>

*Lost: Missing Pieces* filled up some minor gaps in the story, and the mobisodes summary is on Appendix B for further consultation. These websodes are similar to DVD/Blu-ray extras that are usually promoted so fans have a reason to buy it. In terms of content, this particular transmedia item seems to have worked effectively, presenting short episodes that actually tells a great deal of information to viewers. The acknowledged information from each mobisode could give different perspectives on some characters, but would not actually make a great difference if the viewer did not know it. Differently from the ARGs, the websodes were always and only pointing to the main narrative. Although, I am not sure if this small teasers would have any effect on a potential new audience, as each video required main narrative previous knowledge.

Another crucial point is the mobisode length, which is appropriate for the mobile format, as it is difficult to watch videos on a small screen for a long period of time. Obviously, the main reason for the videos to be launched via mobile was to promote the Verizon brand; however, also releasing these little episodes online made possible for greater audience to view them. The fact that is not a game to be played, or require much effort, this particular type of transmedia event has major possibility to reach the greater audience, not only loyal fans.

Curiously, *Lost: Missing Pieces* was nominated in 2008 for the Emmy Award category of *Outstanding Special Class - Short-format Live-action Entertainment Programs*. (“Lost: Missing Pieces,” n.d.) The 2008 winner was *Battlestar Galactice - Razor Featurette #4*<sup>6</sup>, another TV fiction show. Even though is not really clear in the Primetime

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<sup>6</sup> See: <http://www.emmys.com/category/nomination-category/outstanding-special-class-short-format-live-action-entertainment-progra>

Emmys Rules and Procedures<sup>7</sup> the prerequisites to be nominated for that particular category, it is possible to notice that programmes nominated are usually digital features of TV shows, such as fictional characters' blogs and webpages, or exclusive videos, such as *Lost: Missing Pieces*. It seems the entertainment industry became aware and is supporting these digital format marketing products and transmedia events, especially TV fiction.

### 3.3. Mysteries of the Universe: The Dharma Initiative (web pseudo-documentary)

The pseudo-documentary *Mysteries of the Universe* was released in 2009 from July 23 until November 16, by ABC and *Lost* team to promote the final season. Just like the previous transmedia items, this one had a sponsor: Kia Motors, as seen on the advertisement published on Entertainment Weekly magazine (see image 11). ("Mysteries of the Universe," n.d.) It was released online on [abc.com/lostmysteries](http://abc.com/lostmysteries) and it target *Lost* loyal fans and great audience as well, as the ad was in a magazine specialised on entertainment. The documentary was divided in five parts, and it is not available on ABC website anymore, however it was replicated in many other sites. Also, it was repurposed on season 5 DVD and Blu-ray as an extra. It is clear that ABC seemed to be concerned on associating its brand with *Lost*, even though *Mysteries of the Universe* was promoting *Lost* and its final season, it was also promoting ABC.

It intended to explain The Dharma Initiative, as if it was a real secret organisation worldwide spread. Several elements connected to the Dharma at the outside world, it means outside the island, are shown and analysed in this documentary-style programme. The

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<sup>7</sup> See: <http://www.emmys.tv/awards/64th-primetime-emmy-awards>



viewer learns by watching what Howey Davenport (2009) explains in his article, published at TV Overmind website, as “Looking to be a clip from a program that originated in the 1960’s pieces of the great *Lost* puzzle.” Even though Davenport believes that it is a documentary, apparently made in the 1960’s, in order to give more hints to the viewers to solve the intricate show narrative, Lospedia states that “Mysteries of the Universe is purportedly a short-lived 1982 television series that aired on the ABC network.” (“Mysteries of the Universe,” n.d.) The elaborated introduction to the pseudo-documentary can be seen in image 12, and even the ABC logo was used in the introduction to make it more convincing.



Once thought to be *lost*... until now.

**KIA**  
KIA MOTORS  
PRESENTS

**MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE:  
THE DHARMA INITIATIVE**

A project discussed for years in and around conspiracy circles. Once thought to be *lost*, this explosive documentary project has never been seen before... until now.

Watch the first installment now!  
go to [abc.com/lostmysteries](http://abc.com/lostmysteries)

The five-part video series  
will screen as follows:

EPISODE 1	07.23.09
EPISODE 2	08.04.09
EPISODE 3	09.08.09
EPISODE 4	10.15.09
EPISODE 5	11.16.09

[abc.com](http://abc.com)

Image 11: *Mysteries of the Universe: The Dharma Initiative* advertisement. Retrieved from

<http://abc.go.com/media/email/primetime/lost/mysteries/index.html?v1>

The content of the documentary goes through a variety of The Dharma Initiative details. The main topics were the following: people missing after Dharma job interviews; a church in Los Angeles which receives great funds from Dharma; an unidentified behaviourist psychologist claiming Dharma uses the Ludovico's Technique for brainwash; and missing submarines that might have been bought by the organisation. In order to clarify the Ludovico's Technique, one must look into the movie *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), from where the term apparently became widespread when the main character, Alex, is forced into it. Anthony Burgess summarises as "behavioral modification through associative learning." (2010, p.28) Moreover, it uses "the principle of associative learning, whereby a person's behavior is modified through prolonged manipulations of her normal responses to select stimuli. In this day and age, Ludovico's Technique would be considered torture, or at least the unethical treatment of criminals." (ibid.)

The documentary also shows the connection among Alvar Hanso, Gerald DeGroot and Dharma. Moreover, I could mention some other topics such as: Tonga islands receiving, maybe by mistake, one ton of aerial Dharma food palette; Hanso to be the one who could have made a supply line with his knowledge and armada; DeGroot responsible for Dharma and its recruitment. The update, part 6, investigates a teacher called Olivia, who reappeared, but do not explain in detail why she disappeared; the symbol used by the Dharm's Initiative might be based on the ancient *bagua*; there is also an speculation that Dharma might have been taken over by another organisation, citing Eloise Hawking as the new church general manager. Moreover, the *Mysteries of the Universe* production/producers receive threatening calls when attempting to investigate the Dharma Initiative

further. Above all things, the documentary tries to warn the viewer and recommends people to be vigilant and aware of The Dharma Initiative.



Image 12: *Mysteries of the Universe: The Dharma Initiative* introduction scenes.

Retrieved from <http://abc.go.com/shows/lost/lost-mysteries/ThemeGallery/276307?playlistId=225479&clipId=VD5534078>

*Mysteries of the Universe* attempted to direct people to the series final season, and it works efficiently as a transmedia strategy as it provides an exclusive content to fans which also answers some of the main narrative questions. However, the answers provided could lead to

more questions and it did not affect greatly a fan's overall knowledge. This could be an interesting entry-point to new audience, as it is a fake ABC documentary from 1982, getting attention for those unaware of its authenticity. With a real sponsor, Kia Motors, logo on the advertisement, it was even more difficult for non-viewers to understand it was not a real documentary. What has become clear though, is that it was a programme associated with *Lost* and ABC.

#### 4. Pure marketing or part of the grand *Lost* Transmedia Storytelling

In this chapter I will discuss, which I considered, important marketing pieces, even though they were not part of *Lost* transmedia storytelling. Also, I analyse how fandom was an important matter for the show, together with some fan's productions examples. From a greater perspective, *Lost* marketing strategy also applied these *non-transmedia* marketing pieces, which does not mean they were less creative than transmedia pieces analysed in chapter 3.

##### 4.1. *Lost: Via Domus* (game)

The first marketing piece is the video game that was meant to be part of *Lost* transmedia marketing strategy, but it was left outside it in the last minute. Dave Rudden explains in his article *A way home -- re-examining Lost: Via Domus after the series finale* that at first the game was planned to be part of the narrative, but when it was about to be released "the producers changed gears and clarified that it would be considered 'not in canon,' explaining 'it's unfair for the audience to go to ancillary sources in order to really understand the show.'" (Rudden, 2010)

Ubisoft and ABC launched on February 2008 ("*Lost: Via Domus*," n.d.) based on *Lost* for PC, XBox 360 (see image 14), and Playstation 3. The name of the game is in Latin, and it means 'the way home', which refers to the plot and objective of *Lost: Via Domus*.



Image 13: Xbox 360 *Lost: Via Domus* game cover. Retrieved from: <http://>

[2.bp.blogspot.com/\\_-mAA13RfqZM/S\\_KuL0GS9xI/AAAAAAAAAbc/yyqd2DicX3o/s1600/LOST+VIA+DOMUS+.jpg](http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_-mAA13RfqZM/S_KuL0GS9xI/AAAAAAAAAbc/yyqd2DicX3o/s1600/LOST+VIA+DOMUS+.jpg)

The player is a man who wakes up on the site of the Oceanic flight 815 accident. He does not have any memory. The game official website explains the plot: “Now you must fight for your survival by exploring the island, uncovering its dark secrets, and piecing together the fragments of your own furtive past. If you’re lucky you may just find a way home...” (“The Game,” n.d.)

The game is played in first person, as seen on image 15, and the main character is a photojournalist called Elliott Maslow, but he is not a character from the TV show. (“Characters,” n.d.) He is as new as some characters introduced in some of the Alternate Reality Games, such as Oceanic Airlines IT technician Sam Thomas, from *Find 815*; and

Hanso Foundation ex-employee Rachel Blake, from *The Lost Experience*. During the game some other new characters appear, just like some others already known from the TV series.

Even though the game was not related directly to the main plot, Dave Rudden tries to compare both ends, of the Game and of the TV series. The comparison includes presumably hints to Desmond's abilities and Jack's last moments. However the author concludes that "Unfortunately, just like in the finale, we never quite learned what those rules were, but looking at them in the scheme of the entire series, their significance looms larger than ever before." (Rudden, 2010)

This video game could have certainly be a useful and effective piece on the transmedia strategy, as *X-Men: The Official Game*, released between the X-Men second and third movies, which was a clear transmedia piece. To offer the chance to experience the island and its mysteries would be very difficult otherwise. But I do agree with producers about demanding a great deal of engagement from viewers, it could have backfired and draw fans out of the series. To play an entire video game can be challenging and arduous, especially to those not familiarised with this medium. Nevertheless, playing an ARG might be easier and request less dedication than a video game, which rewards normally only appears by the end of it.

As a game based on the series, it works for those gamers or curious people among fans, with interesting features and the first person experience provided. I have played this video game to understand if it could effectively transmit the feeling of the series. Even though the graphics are not as perfect as some other animated films or video games, the



whole *Lost* atmosphere can be felt at times, with tension, problems to solve and characters to talk. I believe *Via Domus* works well, but not great, if analysed as a video game solely.



Image 14: *Lost: Via Domus* screenshot. Retrieved from: <http://media.ubi.com/us/games/>

lost/Screenshot\_01\_large.jpg



#### 4.2. *Lost*: The Untold

This particular “programme” was created by Hi-ReS! Design Agency to promote and introduce *Lost* in Great Britain, as it was hosted by Channel 4 website. It was considered by fans as “dubbed ‘deuteroconan’”, meaning “officially created to be part of the *Lost* mythos but ultimately rejected.” (“*Lost*: The Untold,” n.d.). Moreover it was nominated for the 2005 British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) for the New Media Developer category (“Craft Nominations 2005,” n.d.). Although the original site is no longer available on Channel 4 website, it is on Hi-ReS! page (“*Lost* Untold,” n.d.). Lostpedia summarises *Lost: the Untold* idea, citing Hi-ReS! book *Amantes sunt Amentes*:

Our first collaboration with Channel 4 was for the UK launch of ABC's hit series *LOST*. As we didn't want to give away the plot, we created a 6-week long episodic online narrative which aimed to explore the elements that you don't see on the island: the characters' dreams and their unconscious and the reality they left behind. Channel 4 supported the site with a dedicated phonenumber you could call to retrieve weekly clues and passwords for the site and even got their news team to produce a fake news report for us. (as cited in “*Lost*: The Untold,” n.d.)

It did not belong to any alternate reality game, however the user should play to go through the content. To open a safe, for example, the user has 15 seconds to choose the right combination, see image 16. The content is only revealed in pieces, through various

confusing images, clips and sounds. It can also be rather surreal, uncomfortable and shuddery, see image 16, provoking frights from time to time. Being a game-style navigation, it teases the user to reach the end.

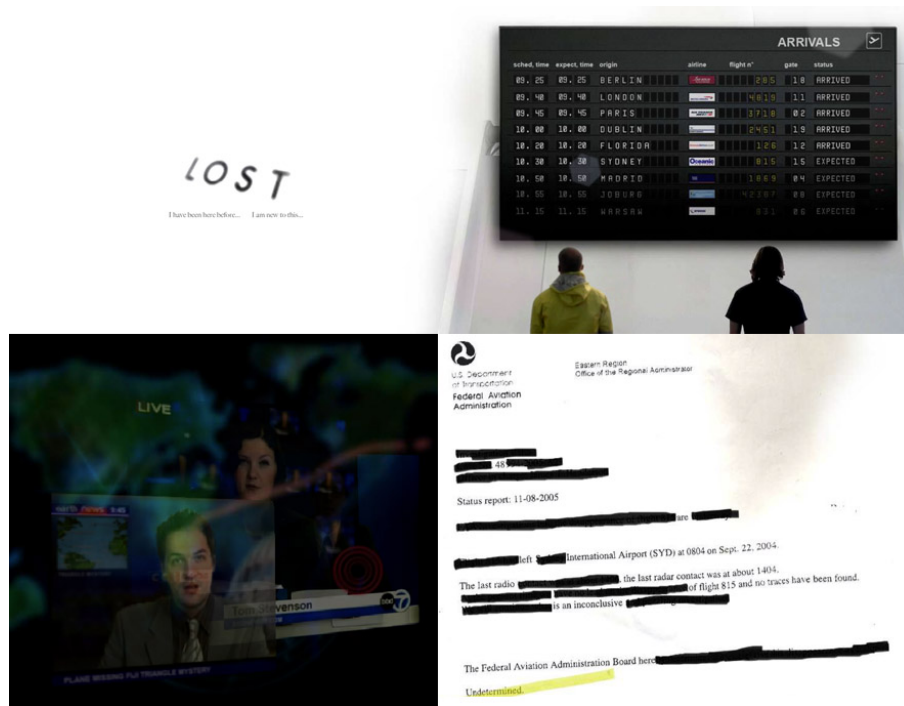


Image 15: Screenshots from *Lost: the Untold*, “I am new to this...” path. Retrieved from

<http://archive.hi-res.net/lostuntold/main.html>

I will briefly describe *Lost: the Untold* linear horizontal Flash navigation. The first screen is white and offers two paths: “I have been here before...” and “I am new to this...”. When the user is “new to this”, it is taken to an airport arrival panel showing several expected flights arrivals, including Oceanic 815, see image 15. Clicking on it, a video mixed with animations shows the plane accident, followed by news reportages about the flight disappearance. Then, there is a US Department of Transportation - Federal Aviation Administration investigation report on Oceanic 815 being gradually marked in black,

leaving the message “48 are left here” in the end, with a *Lost* promotional photo of the Survivors. Finally, the user can submit his/her name and e-mail on an incident report to receive more information about the related incident.

“I have been here before...” takes the user to the flight passengers manifest on a beach, with sand and waves sound in the background. There are certain names highlighted: Austin Kate (apparently misspelled on purpose, it should be Austen), Jarrah Sayid, Littleton Clare, Locke John, Pace Charlie, and Shephard Jack. The screen follows the mouse as it moves. When a name on the manifest is chosen, the screen moves to another sand area with the character’s personal belongings, plus two stones, one black and one white, see image 16. Similar to stones that Jacob and Man in Black used to play a board game with (see appendix A for more information about these characters). Each stone takes the user to a different part of the character’s life, and I believe the black one might lead to a more obscure past of the character.

The narrative is highly interactive, to go through it one needs to really explore the navigation, find hidden links on the screen, search for clues, answer questions, choose right combinations and passwords, and is even possible to light candles *in memoriam*. Interesting examples are the access to Locke’s work computer, and Charlie’s band, Drive Shaft, blog.

What is interesting is the fact that *Lost: The Untold* was created specific to the UK Channel 4 audience, which is very specific target audience. As discussed previously, when a series broadcast rights are sold to other countries the original broadcast channel is dissociated from it, in this case the American ABC. It seems that Channel 4 was attempting to create an association with *Lost*, promoting it. The medium chosen was the web, which

could reach more potential viewers, and made possible a game-like experience. But overall, its proposal was to know some main characters better, in a very unusual, artistic, surreal format. It was certainly attempting to attract more viewers as well as maintaining the interest of loyal fans.

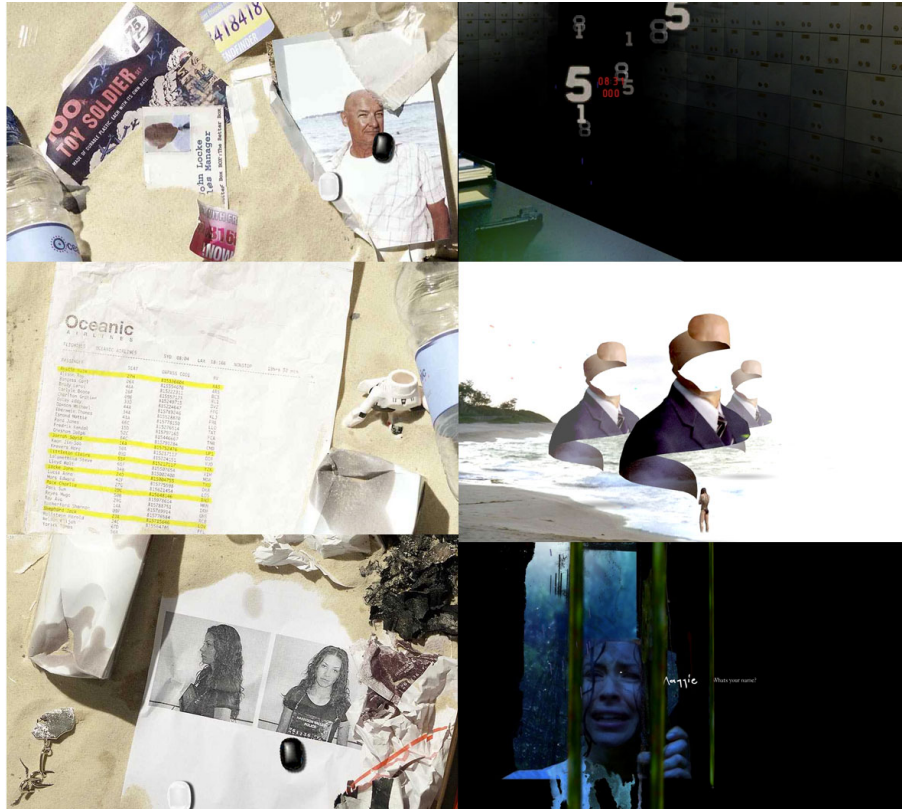


Image 16: Screenshots from *Lost: the Untold*, “I have been here before...” path. Retrieved

from <http://archive.hi-res.net/lostuntold/main.html>

### 4.3. Official Podcasts

I believe it is relevant to define the word *podcast*, before I begin the discussion on *Lost* official podcasts. The Apple iTunes website has a quite clear definition of it, “A

podcast is an episodic program delivered via the Internet using an XML protocol called RSS. Podcast episodes can be audio files, video files, documents, or any combination of the three.” In order to podcast a programme, one should post “the episodes and the XML document to a Web server.” (iTunes, n.d.) The user may subscribe for a podcast of his choice, using a software such as iTunes. *Lost* producers made the official podcasts available on iTunes and ABC.com. (Suenaga, 2007)

The inclusion of a various type of media makes the podcasts very appealing to the entertainment industry, it “can be used to offer many different kinds of programs. Any television or radio program can of course be transmitted as a podcast, as can any lecture, performance, or other recorded event.” (iTunes, n.d.) In *Lost* particular case, “The podcast ostensibly functions as an outlet for further fan engagement with the notoriously attention-demanding ABC drama, and is explicitly connected to the “official” message board also hosted at the ABC site.” (Kompare, 2011, p.103)

The official *Lost* podcast started on 2005, November 8th, with producers Carlton Cuse and Damon Lindelof discussing the first season, and interviews with Josh Holloway, who played Sawyer, and Daniel Dae Kim, Jin. (Suenaga, 2007) The podcasts were presented by Kris White, and included Lindelof and Cuse appearances, discussing episodes and answering fans’ questions. Moreover there were actors and actresses from the series talking in the podcasts. (“Official Lost Podcast transcript/November 08, 2005,” n.d.)

The informal podcast tone has a purpose according to Derek Kompare, in Flow TV, “a choice made not only to facilitate production but also to strategically enhance producer–fan engagement, conveying that ‘Carlton and Damon,’ as people, are not unlike listening

fans.” The producers also “aim to reassure fans that they are ‘one of them,’ in sensibility if not in kind.” (2011, p.104) A good example of taking fans opinion into consideration (which could be argued as audience co-authorship) was two characters’ fate, Niki and Paulo, who were suddenly introduced at the second season end, “Cuse and Lindelof acknowledged in a podcast that they realized the fans didn’t like the characters, and killed them off” (ibid.)

These podcasts also were always presented in a way that “continually point back to the ‘official’ text of the series, leaving further explorations and insights, such as might be found on external fan sites, outside its boundaries.” (ibid., p.106) Kompare claims that these “official” podcasts worked as some sort of “cult television authorship”, reinforcing Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse’s position as authors, “At the same time, the irreverent tone suggests that that ‘authorship’ is indeed a construction, a function of network publicity, and of their showrunner jobs.” (ibid.)

The official podcasts period was from season 2 until season 6, with a total of 101 transmissions, between November 08, 2005 and May 20, 2010. Podcasts were not only audio, there were some examples in video. Also, there were podcasts from specific places, such as the Comic-Con on August 02, 2007, and the Paley Festival on March 05, 2010. (“Official Lost Podcast transcript/November 08,” 2005, n.d.) Lostpedia makes available a list of all podcasts episodes transcriptions and most of the multimedia podcast files on its website, under de topic *Official Lost Podcast*.

Although these are not transmedia events, they certainly contributed to keep the audience focused on *Lost*. As Kompare states, “the podcasts challenge fans and producers

alike to ‘keep up’ as they’re ‘making it up’.” (2011, p.111) Furthermore, these go beyond “practices of contemporary television production”, acting more as “practices of promotion and publicity”. (ibid.)

Podcasts, although not part of transmedia strategy, were a very effective channel of communication between creators and fans. Even if it was not an equal communication between parts, however more of a creators’ presentation and promotion of themselves as *Lost* official spokespeople. It could have been used as a fandom interpretation control method (or simply, damage control), subtly guiding audience, especially when some unwanted fandom action took place, for example.

#### 4.4. DVDs and *Lost* Merchandise

Other *Lost* merchandise products were also made available for consumers. Officially, ABC has got an online store presenting all the products at [abctvstore.cafepress.com/Lost](http://abctvstore.cafepress.com/Lost). Among the goods, there are T-shirts, DVDs, Blu-rays, CDs, books, mugs, bags, aprons, McFarlane Toys action figures, stationary, calendars, posters, buttons, magnets, and many others. One of the store sections is a fan-designed gear, with products customised by fans, showing 4,905 items.

The DVDs, and by consequence also the Blu-rays, have differentiated importance among the merchandise, once they offer, not only the full episodes of each season, but also the extras. For extra content, I refer to the bonus features which mixes different levels of reality, as the first season DVD brings audition tapes of the main actors (*Lost: The*

Complete First Season (DVD), n.d.), and the fourth season brings *Lost: Missing Pieces* (“*Lost: The Complete Fourth Season (DVD)*,” n.d.), the previously discussed 13 mobisodes/websodes released specially on Verizon mobile phones and then on ABC website. (“*Lost: Missing Pieces*,” n.d.).

It means that DVDs/Blu-rays also played an important role in the transmedia storytelling, carrying repurposed transmedia elements that might be introduced for the first time to some viewers. This strategy of repurposing elements from one medium to another seems to work well in a cross-platform distribution strategy such as *Lost*. Especially to those who do not follow the white rabbit elsewhere, throughout other media, focusing only on the TV. With the series end, a special DVD /Blu-ray box with all six seasons started to be sold, see image 17, offering the consumer some exclusive goods, as the game board played by Jacob and the Man in Black.

Even though the show has reached its end, it did not mean all mysteries were solved, nor all questions were answered, at least not on television:

After six seasons of watching and re-watching episodes of "Lost," not to mention spending infinite hours online poring through messageboard theories, blog analyses and Lostpedia entries, fans of ABC's notoriously brain-addling drama definitely wanted answers from the show's sixth and last season. But when the much-hyped series finale aired in May [2010], some felt that -- as emotionally moving as those parting moments with protagonist Jack Shephard may have been -- not enough answers were given. (Chaney, 2010)





Image 17: *Lost: The Complete Collection DVD* “contains all 6 seasons, a full disk of unseen footage, a collectible ankh, a replica of the island, and a copy of the Senet game board used by young Jacob and MIB.” Retrieved from <http://abctvstore.cafepress.com/Lost>.

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Fans could have felt frustrated with end of the series not being a definite closure, not answering all questions, and asking many more. How would this affect a series after its end? It could affect merchandising products sales, for example, but not much more than that. Interestingly, Jen Chaney expose an strategy applied that could apparently remediate fans’ frustration issue, in her Washington Post article, *With 'Lost' DVDs, some answers finally found*. The author shows how the sixth season DVDs and Blu-ray extra content could play an important role to help wrapping up the whole series: “Here’s the good news,

though: both releases actually do deliver some answers, as well as -- in keeping with 'Lost' DVD tradition -- some of the more detailed, entertaining extras available on any TV collection." (Chaney, 2010)

The supposed further answers seem an attempt to ease the fans' "needs". Although this thesis does not intend to raise a discussion on the answers given or not given by the end of the show, it is interesting to point out how *Lost* producers apparently answer the fans using the DVD/Blu-ray extra content. Which seems to be a transmedia storytelling continuation, with exclusive content even after the TV show ended. I refer here to an epilogue, released on the Sixth Season DVD/Blu-ray and the Complete Collection set, called *The New Man in Charge*. The epilogue is divided in three parts, showing what happened after Jack's death and with Hurley as protector of the island. ("The New Man in Charge," n.d.) This after series epilogue still did not answer the remaining mysteries, but it gave fans a bit more of the series.

*The New Man in Charge* certainly had transmedia characteristics, such as the content exclusivity and another medium utilised as vehicle. However, it was released after the series was finished. It is unlikely to function as an entry-point for new audience, especially if it was released only as DVD/Blu-ray bonus feature, even if it leaked to the web afterwards. I believe to be treated as a special feature makes justice to what it is, an epilogue to please the fans and sell more DVDs/Blu-rays.

#### 4.5. Fans' Websites and Blogs

*Most people are fans of something. If not, they are bound to know someone who is.*

*(Gray, Sandvoss & Harrington, 2007, p.1)*

*The laconic answer to these questions is that fandom matters because it matters to those who are fans. (Answer to the chapter title Introduction: Why Study Fans? - Gray, Sandvoss & Harrington, 2007, p.1)*

This thesis objective was not to study fandom, nor to analyse *Lost* from a fandom perspective, however, as a popular show, one must give attention to the subject. *Lost* and fandom seems inseparable, and one would not survive without the other, but not vice-versa. As not any entertainment show would survive without audience. Furthermore, I have used many fandom material to develop this thesis, which certainly made this research richer.

According John Gray, Cornel Sandvoss and C. Lee Harrington, on *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World* introductory chapter, *Introduction: Why Study Fans?*, they explain that the fan studies are on its third wave and have become more empirical rather than being mainly conceptual (2007, p.7). The first two waves of researchers “had focused on particular audience groups, such as fan communities and subcultures, and the interaction between the members of such groups, either as interpretive community and support networks, or in terms of cultural hierarchization and discrimination through distinction.” (ibid.)

The fan studies have changed its focus, but also the way fans were perceived has changed. “Rather than ridiculed, fan audiences are now wooed and championed by cultural industries, at least as long as their activities do not divert from principles of capitalist exchange and recognize industries’ legal ownership of the object of fandom.” (ibid., p.4)

Another change that directly affected fans’ activities, beside the internet itself, was the variety of technological gadgets releases “increasing entrenchment of fan consumption in the structure of our everyday life.” (ibid., p.8) As gadgets it is a reference to “Blackberries, iPods, PSPs, laptops, PDAs, and cell phones all bring fan objects out with their users to the subway, the street, and even the classroom.” (ibid.)

Fandom is marked by high consumption and the use of technology, and Sharon Marie Ross explains another topic related to that, the cult TV fandom tele-participation based on characteristics scholars usually agree,

[...] many describe a form of tele-participation that necessarily includes a show that ‘prompts’ (somehow) a need for viewers to ponder the world of their program in all its complexity. This ‘pondering’ might take any number of forms: creating a fanzine, joining a club, contributing to fan-based encyclopedias, writing slash fiction ... but whatever the form of tele-participation might be, a general scholarly consensus has emerged that cult TV is uniquely poised to prompt such activities and that true cult TV demands this tele-participation. (Ross, 2008, p.12)

It could be questioned here if *Lost* is part of cult TV or not, and Ross raises questions pertinent to that discussion, “How have more recent TV shows perhaps borrowed from the strategies of cult television and its fandom to create more mainstream programming that *does* attract ‘just regular viewers’?” (ibid., p.13) Although it is not clear if Ross considers *Lost* cult TV or not, it seems clear that *Lost* used some cult TV techniques, and its public was not only cult TV audience, but also regular viewers. By cult TV techniques, I refer to Ross’ saying that “cult programs tend to share specific narrative traits [...] and that those traits are conducive to tele-participation” (ibid.). Moreover, Ross also emphasise the importance cult TV gives to fandom.

Considering Ross’ ideas on cult TV, fandom and tele-participation, they seem to be the basis for transmedia storytelling, with cult fans already dealing with tele-participation. It gets clearer when the author says “Internet activity related to television, activities and textual strategies that used to be primarily the domain of cult TV and its fans are increasingly a part of TV making and viewing more generally” (ibid., p.14) As seen on chapter three, all transmedia elements relied on internet to reach the great audience and inviting it to interact and sometimes to play. Also highlighting Ross’ suggestion that the industry aims for the great audience in the end:

If the primary consistent factor across varying understandings of ‘cult’ is tele-participation in the service of exploring all aspects of a show’s fictional world, then it becomes important to examine how networks are building environments to

support this - but aiming for a larger audience than most cult shows garner. (ibid., p. 214)

The material produced by these fans is called fan culture by Henry Jenkins, “Culture that is produced by fans and other amateurs for circulation through an underground economy and that draws much of its content from the commercial culture.” (2008, p.325) Jenkins states “the media industry and its consumers alike now operates as if we were moving towards a more participatory culture, but they have not yet agreed upon the terms of our participation.” (ibid., p.177) I believe it is true that “we are moving towards a more participatory culture”, *Lost* transmedia in general terms demonstrates this affirmation, especially with alternate reality games. Although interaction is not a rule, it is a tendency to invite the great audience to become viewers who would engage in pursuit for more knowledge. In addition I agree that we do not know yet “the terms of our participation”, nevertheless everything could potentially require our participation, not only fiction TV, but also movies, random products marketing campaigns, news channels, among many others. However, it does not mean that the viewer should or will become a viewer.

Focusing on *Lost* fandom, there are many examples worldwide and in different languages, including websites, blogs, encyclopaedia, forums, podcasts and books. But, I do not think is possible to precisely cite all variety of *Lost* fandom elements. Tim Surette, a fan himself, writing for TV.com classifies *Lost* fans in five humorous categories: (1) *The Super Hardcore*, those almost obsessed fans, “They've completed all the *Lost* ARG Web games, paused the action and taken detailed notes every time Daniel Faraday opens his notebook,

and would follow Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse off a cliff”; (2) *The Skaters, Jaters, etc.*, fans who are more interested in the characters’ romance than the main plot; (3) *The Catching-Up-on-DVD Set*, those who became fans after the show started and “spent many weekends on the couch in a disgusting heap catching up via *Lost* marathons on DVD”; (4) *The Angry Lost Fans*, “Highly devoted through Season 1, still fans during Season 2, and near-absentees during Season 3, these picky people have had it up to HERE! with *Lost*.”; and finally (5) *The Eternally Confused and Faithful*, “These are fans who simply take the show for what it is: quality television entertainment. No conspiracy theories, no real annoying habits, just fans of good moving pictures. Come to think of it, they're pretty boring.” (Surette, 2010)

I have chosen some fandom production examples to cite here, starting with Lostpedia - [lostpedia.wikia.com](http://lostpedia.wikia.com). This wiki encyclopaedia is pointed to by many fan websites, forums and blogs as the most complete source on *Lost*. It gathers 7,272 articles and more than 23,000 images as I access it today, however the number might change soon being a wiki product. Lostpedia has a twitter account, with more than 20 thousand followers. It also possesses a blog and a forum. Because it is a collective encyclopaedia wiki, it has a page asking for collaboration to finish articles related to *Lost*. One may find information in, I dare say, almost everything related to the TV show. The navigation is rather simple with the possibility of search by words or going through the few menu items: characters, episodes, features, and community. Interestingly, there is an article about Lostpedia on Wikipedia.

The next example is the DarkUFO blog, one of the most accessed *Lost* blog, according to Lostpedia (DarkUFO, n.d.), and showing 206,000 results when searched on

Google, “darkufo lost”. It is mainly a blog, but is also on Facebook, MySpace and Twitter. Lostpedia reveals DarkUFO as Andy Page, a professional English poker player (ibid.). However, the blog is famous because it has leaked real spoilers of the third season finale, which caused great impact on *Lost* production, making them go to “radio silence” mode after what occurred (ibid.). This episode shows how much power a fan could have these days.

The American MTV released a clip called *A Look Back At The 'Lost' Series One Year Later*, asking some of *Lost* loyal fans about the series end. Some of the famous online fans were there and is worth mentioning as examples of recognised fan celebrities: Jo Garfein from Get Lost With JOpinionated; Erika Olson from LongLiveLocke.com; and Anil Kapur from The ODI Lost Podcast (“A Look Back At The 'Lost' Series One Year Later,” n.d.). It shows that somehow the industry is listening to fans, even after the end of a show.

There are some other interesting elements that are relevant to cite, although is not fan made it was officially produced by ABC feeding the fandom even more. Moreover, I analyse them here because I could not affirm if the following were simply marketing, only special products dedicated to fans, or both. On the fifth season, the producers released the comedic *Lost Untangled*, episodes recaps made with *Lost* official action figures and also a Pierre Chang puppet (“Lost Untangled,” n.d.). *Lost Slapdown* was released on season 6 and showed the producers Carlton Cuse and Damon Lindelof answering questions made by different people about *Lost*, including the comedian Paul Scheer, *Lost* actors Michael Emerson and Nestor Carbonell, Texas Rangers baseball pitcher C. J. Wilson, and some



Muppets characters (“Lost Slapdown,” n.d.). Simultaneously, there was the *Ask Lost* release, which was seven clips of *Lost* actors and one actress answering fans’ questions, still available on ABC.com (“Ask Lost,” n.d.). Finally, I could mention *Lost: the Official magazine*, clearly a merchandise good, but directed to *Lost* fans. There were 31 issues between October 2005 and August 2010, filled with promotional photographs, interviews, fan questions, theories, etc. “All issues have been released with two editions - a normal newsstand cover and a special "collectors edition" variant cover.” (“Lost: The Official Magazine,” n.d.)

## 5. Conclusion

Before the television series *Lost* ended in 2010, I had a guess that the show would end when the fictional world met the real one, where we live in. Although the TV series did not finish that way, the last alternate reality game did. *Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear* did more than just break the fourth wall, it merged the show with our reality and acknowledged the producers Carlton Cuse and Damon Lindelof as the responsible for the series. The show was always swinging like a pendulum between worlds: wild island and civilisation, past and present, life and death, and so were the ARGs, *Lost* world and our world, fiction and reality. In the end, the series was confronted with death, while the ARG confronted our world.

“Indeed, the appeal of playing the games--and of writing them, their authors say--is that the lines between what's real and what's part of the game quickly become blurred. It can be an extraordinarily paranoia-inducing experience.” (Borland, February 2005) If an alternate reality game has the purpose of combine fiction and reality, *Lost* ARGs evolved successfully from an online meeting with the audience to a real face to face encounter with its public.

Of course, a transmedia storytelling is not purely made of alternate reality games, although I believe it could have been possible. In *Lost* case, the ARG strategy seemed to be a very efficient tool to keep the fans interested in the show, and eventually attract some new audience. Not only transmedia elements were the entry-points to *Lost*, as seen on chapter 4, there were other significant marketing pieces that possibly brought new audience to the

show: video game, official podcasts, DVDs/Blu-rays, web campaigns, *Lost: the Official magazine*, and fandom production (blogs, websites, forums, etc). Any of these could have worked as an entry-point to the main narrative.

A discussion over the target audience that a show like *Lost* would attract could be placed here. As I previously cited Sharon Marie Ross, on chapter 2, about swimmers and divers, *Lost* had both type of viewers. Swimmers just watched the show, and divers played its ARGs. As divers I have often referred as viewers during this thesis. Ross explains that, not only ABC, but also CBS and NBC are developing “strategies for capturing the ways in which cult fans ‘act’ (i.e., buy) without alienating ‘regular viewers.’ The results have yielded ‘mainstream cult’ programs” (Ross, 2008, p.214). Cult TV and fandom embed deep characteristics on Ross’ tele-participation idea, relating TV and internet usage.

The problematic question proposed by this thesis, *Which transmedia elements of the Lost formula could be transferable to other cases?*, has been gradually answered. Based on a few characteristics, I analysed each transmedia storytelling event in order to comprehend how effective it was, which would affect the analysis on how successful was the entire transmedia strategy, consequently reaching some conclusion on the thesis question. The items analysed were (a) the medium utilised; (b) strategy applied/objective(s); (c) how much it affected the viewer’s knowledge compared to the *big narrative scheme*; (d) where did the transmedia event led the viewer; and finally, (e) if this transmedia event could actually work as an inviting entry-point to new audience.

Alternate Reality Games played an important role in *Lost* and in its transmedia strategy, even popularising the term and the series at certain extend, especially when it

reached the news, blogs, forums, etc. There are several sites dedicated to the subject, including a special online section on the Guardian newspaper website with news only about ARG and other about the TV show. *Lost* ARGs seemed to be successful in overall terms as analysed on chapter 3, they were the most important piece of the transmedia strategy applied. Using a variety of media, but mostly web based, each game could deliver pieces of the main narrative interesting enough for divers to pursuit, but not in a great amount of information which could have, but it did not, alienate swimmers. Also, each one of them could potentially serve as an entry-point to the main narrative, as it worked as a teaser. The exception was the last alternate reality game, *Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear*, which was mainly set in our reality level, pointing to *Lost* art merchandising.

It is significant to say that each ARG was different from one another, which seems that they have been created to achieve different layers of communication and media. Starting from *The Lost Experience*, where viewers could interact with each other to solve puzzles, however mainly on the web. A new character was introduced, Rachel Blake, and the audience was somehow acknowledged, as Rachel published her videos requesting aid, therefore there was not a real interaction viewer-game. Asking for help was an approach strategy to reach divers and start the transmedia path. *Find 815* also is based on a new character, Sam Thomas, who also communicate with viewers by video diaries and his blog. What differs this ARG from the previous one was the video quality, more likely the show on TV, whereas *The Lost Experience* seemed like a series of amateur videos, which worked as a sign of authenticity.

*The Dharma Initiative Recruiting Project* takes divers to a different level, actually to our level of reality, when a real Dharma stand is presented at a Comic-Con. Many fans could experiment in reality a piece of the narrative, participating on the recruiting project. Once again the layer of reality has changed and new characters were introduced live on a *Lost* panel. If this third ARG was the break of the fourth wall, acknowledging the spectators and getting of the television screen to interact with them, the fourth alternate reality game shifted the level of reality and medium another time. *Lost University* is presented as a real educational institution offering courses on *Lost* mythology. Not only the reality was shifted, but blended fiction and reality. The university was fictional, but the courses and the teachers were in fact real; and *Lost* actors and actresses did not play their characters. *Lost University* ARG was leaving behind fiction. When the final game was shown, I believe the circle was closed, because *Damon, Carlton and a Polar Bear* was introduced during a Comic-con panel, live and among fans, there was not a medium to first reach the fans. At the same time it has closed the circled as it has acknowledged *Lost* authors. It is quite subjective, but the creation looked back to its creators, which was a statement, creature realising its masters and its own state as in a fiction realm, and doing that in our reality. The ARGs by themselves told a full story, with their own characters, with start, middle and end; undoubtedly the main part of the transmedia storytelling strategy.

The second transmedia element I presented was *Lost: Missing Pieces*, a series of mobisodes, firstly made specially for Verizon mobile phone, but later released officially online, becoming a websode. These particular *Missing Pieces* episodes seemed to me more like those DVD bonus features deleted scenes. At the same time, each scene presented was

able to answer a little question or to connect some dots. Even though it might have answered some *Lost* matters, it also raised new possible questions, such as the ARGs. Utilising a mobile as a mean can backfire as well, however, as part of marketing for a specific sponsor company, results for the transmedia strategy could have matter less compared to ARGs. Later, the mobisodes were repurposed as websodes, which then reached more audience. In fact, as they did not require to play, it could have potentially reach more spectators than the ARGs. *Lost* was treated as a TV series, and level of reality was not questioned.

*Mysteries of the Universe: The Dharma Initiative* was the third transmedia storytelling element elected to be in this thesis. This web pseudo-documentary was dedicated to investigate the Dharma Initiative, as it was introduced in the series surrounded by mysteries. It was definitely another missing piece from the bigger *Lost* puzzle, answering and asking several questions. I believe, the format was the highlight of this particular element, because it was a realistic 1980s ABC documentary-style. The aesthetics of the programme fit the purpose of it, to make viewers immerse in that world, a very good attempt to make viewers believe it was a real documentary, characteristic similar to the ARGs. Also, ABC seemed to be the brand in promotion in this case.

There were also two marketing elements I judge as being on the edge of the transmedia storytelling concept, as they did not introduce any new piece of information to the puzzle, however, how they were constructed, their format, were really impressive. Firstly, the video game *Lost: Via Domus*, which had its plot changed so it would not be in “canon” to complicate the main plot understanding even more (Rudden, 2010). The first

person narrative game transports the player to *Lost* island to interact with known and new characters, a feature well appreciated on a transmedia storytelling, I would say. Moreover this type of video game using first person would be very effective to immerse the player in the narrative. I felt the immersion playing *Lost: Via Domus*, especially when I could decide what to do and where to go, or simply explore *Lost* scenario.

Secondly, there was a Hi-ReS!/Channel 4 release, *Lost: the Untold*, which possessed appealing characteristics to be a good example of a transmedia component. However, the lack of new information that could help solve *Lost* puzzle sent this online game to another direction. Once again, the format was a real asset, combining problem solving and clue gather, this point-and-click highly interactive narrative takes the user to a surreal obscure world, full of multimedia collages and some disturbing sights and sounds. The overall objective was to introduce the series and the characters, in order to attract UK spectators to watch *Lost* on Channel 4. Moreover, the BAFTA nomination is a positive point, as a recognition of this multimedia proposal.

There were also marketing elements, which features did not reflect transmedia. I have presented the official podcasts, as a strategy to keep fans interested. I speculate here if those podcasts could also aim for swimmers fans, not being strictly targeting divers. After all, podcasts are similar to a radio or a television broadcast, it does not require any further knowledge or makes one hunting for clues to solve riddles.

Another marketing strategy elements presented were the merchandise sales, including fan-made goods and DVDs/Blu-rays. Although the DVDs/Blu-rays frequently

carried repurposed transmedia components, such as *Lost: Mysteries of the Universe* on season 5.

After analysing each element, I could conclude that *Lost* transmedia storytelling strategy was successful due to a various characteristics held throughout the entire series lifespan. The transmedia events were not working alone, there were always other type of marketing elements happening at the same time and even before, such as a very informational website, advertisements, TV spots and teasers, official *Lost* magazine, actors and actresses giving interviews to promote the series, *Lost* panels on Comic-cons to reach the fans directly, official podcasts, DVDs/Blu-rays and video game. Furthermore, fandom made a difference, with websites, blogs, forums, fan-made videos and podcasts, and social media in general. Fans can “make or break” a show, and *Lost* fans certainly helped promoting the show even more, attracting more audience beside staying loyal. Also, *Lost* was promoted worldwide by broadcast companies that bought the rights to re-transmit it in other countries. Local promotions were added to ABC marketing and transmedia strategy. Those were the main reasons for *Lost* to become a success and also a transmedia storytelling strategy success.

I do not envision having a perfect transmedia plan here, there are transmedia agencies specialised in it. Nor a final word on transmedia storytelling. There are not clear rules, as each case is different. However, the purpose of the thesis was to answer the question *Which transmedia elements of the Lost formula could be transferable to other cases?*, and I feel obliged to at least suggest some points I consider significant, but not fixed, to be analysed in each possible transmedia case before using similar *Lost* transmedia



elements: (a) budget availability for a possible transmedia storytelling project; (b) the main medium already utilised by the case; (c) target audience; (d) which other media could fit best the particular target audience; (e) does the plot permits new additional content not causing frustration on the viewer?; (f) consider the use of spontaneous media marketing, such as news reportages; (g) always take in consideration the opinion of the audience. There are many other points that could have been cited here, but I believe those were the main ones which can make a difference when planning a transmedia strategy.

The budget is the main item, as based on it an entire production is planned. Hardly works the opposite way, unless is a project which the sponsor has interests to make it no matter the cost. To have an idea of how much will be spent in promotion clarifies the limits. The second item is the medium used as vehicle by the case, which is the start point to plan the transmedia strategy. *Lost* was a TV show, and it used television greatly to promote it, even advertising fictitious companies for transmedia events. It is effortless for the audience to remain on the same medium, instead of attempting a medium change for marketing promotion from the beginning.

Analysing the target audience is fundamental to plan how to approach the spectator. There are several important characteristics to consider here, such as: age; gender; local, nationwide, or worldwide; swimmers and/or divers; just to mention a few. The more the target audience is restricted, the more likely to have an efficient strategy. Based on the audience, certain media could be selected for a more competent approach, and would allow us to know how open is the audience to possible new additional content to be presented in transmedia elements. Spontaneous marketing, when positive, is priceless. Even negative

news can sometimes attract audience. To catch the news companies attention could work as a shortcut to gather a greater audience and reach success. Finally, the audience should be heard as often as possible. The spectator/consumer is the key and the objective of all marketing campaign, transmedia or not. To know what pleases him/her can differentiate a successful case from a foiled one. Also, fandom can be utilised to a project advantage, especially when fans create products and spread popularity.

In *Lost* case, the plot was intricate enough to open a wide range of playing possibilities. Multilayered fiction narratives, as *Lost*, seem to be easier to apply such strategy, on account of having a larger plot to work with. However, I am not saying that linear single-layered drama stories cannot use transmedia options, but it has to be carefully studied to see which elements and how they could be applied. Every *Lost* transmedia component presented here could be adapted according to different case needs.

Each medium has its own language, I have said before, so it should be mindfully considered and the approach should be different to each medium to use its qualities to the strategy advantage. Internet is the affordable and primary choice, in my opinion. It was *Lost* choice, after TV, and mostly utilised for promotion. Internet provides almost limitless possibilities and gather a good range of features, such as video, radio, forum, text, game, podcast, social media, among others. The instantaneity is a great asset, although it could work against a project as well. Television is a medium with appeal to the great audience, therefore should be thoroughly planned before utilised. For instance, depending on the target audience a certain day and time could fit better to promote a product, which also includes the choice of channels, as much as cable or open TV. Radio is also an affordable

medium, as it requires less to produce an audio marketing piece. Radio and TV can be associated with internet or compete with it. Podcast is a similar product to radio, although usually not broadcasted lively.

*Lost* has used mobile to promote mobisodes, but mobile has more possibilities than mobisodes. A smartphone allied with internet may access more videos, podcasts, exclusive applications, for example. Among the media utilised by *Lost*, those I believe need more budget are DVD/Blu-ray and video game. In both cases, they are self-contained media that compete with torrents download. To sell DVD/Blu-ray and video game require a great amount of budget, planning and commitment. Obviously, utilising each medium I cited here depends on each case.

For example, for smaller audiences, I would suggest a webgame, instead of the elaborated *Lost: Via Domus*; it could be exclusive websodes, instead of mobisodes of a particular mobile company; and I think *Lost: the Untold* is a very good piece of transmedia that could serve as an effective model for narrative exploration. There are adjusts to each case that can and should be done, as mentioned in the case above.

I believe *Lost* is a exemplary guide that could be the basis of future transmedia storytelling cases, however it does not mean one should copy the formula word by word, pixel by pixel. That is not a fixed successful transmedia formula, nor will be. Each case is a different case. *Lost* is just a reference.

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## APPENDIX A

## The Narrative

The TV show *Lost* has already been introduced in this thesis, however I believe a detailed summary of the series is needed in order to better understand the plot and its transmedia events. The summary will be divided into seasons, with a total of six. The description is based on the TV series and mainly on the recapitulations (or recaps), released in the beginning of each season to summarise the previous one, with the reference episode number 00. Not only those episodes seemed to serve as a recapitulation for each season, not letting the audience to lose track of the complicated narrative; but also seemed to be an effective way to attract new audience into the story. There were also summary episodes in the middle of the seasons as the plot became more and more complicated, but those will not be used here. A summary for each episode can be found at ABC *Lost* official website.

There are many characters in the plot, therefore I introduce the main ones now and the actors playing them. I will add the rest as the summary follows. Main characters, I judged important, are those who could actually survive the series until the last season, with regular appearances and consistent story background, being part of the main story/plot. Sayid Jarrah (played by Naveen Andrews), Jack Shephard (Matthew Fox), Hugo "Hurley" Reyes (Jorge Garcia), James "Sawyer" Ford (Josh Holloway), Kate Austen (Evangeline Lilly), Sun-Hwa Kwon (Yunjin Kim), John Locke (Terry O'Quinn), Jin-Soo Kwon (Daniel Dae Kim), and Claire Littleton (Emilie de Ravin).

## Season 1

Jack opens his eyes and realises he is lying in the jungle. In September 22nd 2004, 48 passengers survived a plane accident. It was the Oceanic Air flight 815, flying from Sydney, Australia, to Los Angeles, USA. In principle, the passengers apparently do not know each other. The *Destination Lost* (season 2, episode 00) narrator introduces some characters, “a doctor, a con artist, a soldier, a lottery winner, an addicted, and a prisoner.” In order, narrator means Jack, Sawyer, Sayid, Hurley, Charlie and Kate, therefore one might interpret those as the main characters. They start to know each other and wait for rescue, noticing some strange events on the island. The mysteries are many: polar bears in the jungle; a distress radio signal in a loop for 16 years; Jack seeing his dead father walking; Locke walking after the crash, even if he used to be a paraplegic; a smoke monster; etc.

The characters are known by the spectator bit by bit through flashbacks, knowing their lives and their travel purposes. They learn that they are not alone on the island, first Danielle Rousseau appears, and then The Others. Jack becomes the Survivors’ leader and comes up with a motto that will remain until the series end, plus it became the title of the second season finale: *Live together, die alone*.

The Survivors build a raft and set sail with Sawyer (a con man), Michael, Walt (these two, father and son) and Jin (a Korean man who is married to Sun, who is also on the island) in search for help, but encounter The Others and Walt is kidnapped, while Sawyer is shot and the raft is exploded. Meanwhile Jack, Locke, Hurley and Kate explode a hatch found in the jungle with dynamite found in an old ship. Characters dead: Boone.



## Season 2

In *Lost: A Tale of Survival* (Season 3, episode 00), Benjamin Linus (leader of The Others) is the narrator of this recap. In this second season an important character is introduced, Desmond, who was sailing the world when his boat crashed on the island and he was rescued by Kelvin, who wears a Dharma Initiative employee suit. They live in the hatch and needs to enter a number sequence into a computer every 108 minutes to save the world. Kelvin teaches Desmond everything, planning on leaving the island with Desmond's boat. Desmond discovers Kelvin's plan and accidentally kills him outside the hatch. When Desmond returns, more than 108 minutes have passed and there is a system failure until he enters the code again. He finds himself alone in the hatch pressing buttons until the Survivors open it using dynamite. Before Desmond runaways from the hatch, Jack and Locke get to know some of the Dharma Initiative projects, replacing Desmond to keep pushing buttons.

Not only people from the plane front section have survived, as shown in the first season, but also 23 passengers from the tail section, on the other side of the island. New characters are introduced, however they face The Others from the beginning, being kidnapped and forced to fight against them. When Jin, Sawyer and Michael appears on the other side of the island, the tail section group decides to join the front section group walking their way there. A love triangle starts with Jack, Sawyer and Kate.

The Survivors start to take shifts to enter the computer code in the hatch, but one day, during Michael's shift, a computer chat starts leading him to think his son, Walt, is talking to him. He decides to go after Walt, just to end up kidnapped by The Others. The Survivors, following Michael, meets The Others face to face and a forced territory delimitation truce is set. Benjamin Linus, disguised as Henry Gale, gets caught by Rousseau and handed to The Survivors, who soon realise Ben is lying. Locke is convinced by Ben that the station does not have a real purpose. By accident, Locke finds a hidden map on a wall with more Dharma stations like the hatch, which is actually called The Swan station.

Meanwhile, Michael is threatened by The Others to set Ben free from the Survivors' camp and bring Jack, Kate, Hurley and Sawyer, or he will never see his son again. Michael follows the plan, sets Ben free and convinces the four Survivors on the list to help him rescue Walt. They get caught by The Others, who release Hurley and give Michael and Walt a little boat to sail away from the island. In the hatch, Locke convinces Desmond, who has returned, to stop pushing the buttons, so he does it only to find out he was wrong. Desmond turns the fail safe key and blows up the hatch. Characters dead: Kelvin, Shannon, Ana Lucia, and Libby.

### Season 3

The summary episode is *Lost: Past, Present and Future*, season 4, episode 00. In this season the characters are still being detailed to the audience in flashbacks. It is shown

how Jack and Locke are different, almost opposite to each other. Jack is the skeptical spinal surgeon, a “man of science” as the narrator says, and Locke is a believer in the island, a “man of faith” as he describes himself. But the Survivors were not the only group of people brought to the island, many others have “visited” the island, including the Dharma Initiative. This organisation was the responsible for building all the laboratories facilities to do research on the island itself. Benjamin Linus was brought to the island with his father when he was a child, but when he grew older he decided to join The Others killing all Dharma Initiative, becoming their new leader.

The Others have been living on the island for a long time, its leader, Ben, claimed he was protecting the island when the Oceanic 815 crashed. Ben made Michael turn in his friends because he had a spinal tumour, so he could blackmail Jack, imprisoning Kate and Sawyer, to make the doctor perform the surgery. Jack makes a deal with Ben to leave the island after the surgery is done. A new main character is introduced, Juliet, a fertility specialist, who has been brought to the island to find out why all the pregnant women on the island was dying. However, she did not find a reason and Ben does not allow her to go back home until she finds an answer. Jack and Juliet only wanted to leave the island, an objective that brings the two of them closer to each other. When Jack and Juliet are about to leave the island using the submarine, Locke explodes it. They have to return to the Survivors camp, together with Kate who tried to rescue Jack but failed. Juliet is now part of the Survivors group.

Locke stays with The Others, showing more connection between him and the island than anyone else. So Benjamin is started to be questioned as the best option for being a

leader. Locke has to go through a test, imposed by Ben, to kill his father, who has deceived him to get a kidney and being responsible for Locke's paraplegia. He cannot kill his father, however. Locke discovers his father was the con man responsible for Sawyer's parents death, therefore Locke leaves Sawyer to kill him instead. Ben Linus takes Locke to check if he is really special by being capable to see Jacob in a cabin. Locke actually hears Jacob asking for help, and Linus shoots Locke because he is a real threat for his leadership position among The Others.

When Desmond turned the fail safe key a major catastrophe was prevented by releasing a magnetic pressure, which made the island visible to the outside world for a brief moment. With the accident, Desmond starts to have glimpses of the future seeing Charlie's death no matter how much he tries to save him. Later, a helicopter pilot named Naomi is found after an accident in the jungle, she says that works for Penny, Desmond's love, and is looking for Desmond. She claims to be part of a freighter rescue team, also she is carrying a satellite phone, which can be used to communicate with the freighter. However, the Looking Glass aquatic station is blocking all communications signal from the island. Charlie volunteers himself to go there and turn off the distress signal, knowing previously that Desmond had another vision of him dying down there.

The Survivors decide to fight The Others when they try to get pregnant women from their camp, a tip given by Juliet. Sun, who got pregnant on the island. is a target and may also die if she does not leave the island to have her child. The Survivors actually kill some enemies and Benjamin is caught while asking them not to call the freighter. Meanwhile,

Charlie switches off the Looking Glass station, and before he drowns he finds out the freighter is not Penny's.

The season finale shows Jack finally making the call, although Locke says he is not supposed to. The final scene is Jack's flashforward from a future the audience cannot fully understand, is Jack and Kate talking near an airport, outside the island.

#### Season 4

Season 5, episode 00 is called *Lost: Destiny Calls*. This episode includes comments from the producers, Carlton Cuse and Damon Lindelof, who describe and analyse some main characters and their past. Also, the Dharma Initiative is analysed and the audience learns more about this utopian society, which conducts several experiments, and also discovers the island indigenous people, The Others (or The Hostiles). Benjamin Linus' mother died giving birth to him, so his father joins the Dharma and moves to the island. After Ben kills all Dharma members, he becomes The Hostiles'/Others' leader and see the Survivors' plane accident as a threat to his power, especially Locke. Ben tries to kill Locke, shooting him, but he survives.

In this season there are various flashforward events, presenting to the public scenes of some of the Survivors outside the island. Meanwhile, the freighter Kahana, contacted in the previous season, sends a research team to the island and new characters are introduced: the physicist Daniel Faraday, the cultural anthropologist Charlotte Lewis and Miles Straume, a psychic. The Survivors are split into two groups, one led by Jack, who believes

they can be rescued by the freighter; and one led by Locke, who always thought the freighter would be a dangerous threat.

Together with the researchers from the freighter, mercenaries also land on the island. Their main mission is to catch Ben, even if they kill everyone else. Ben's adoptive daughter, Alex, whose real mother was Danielle Rousseau, is also killed by the mercenaries. The Kahana was sent by Charles Widmore, Penny's father, the same Penny that is Desmond's love. Ben claims Widmore set up a conspiracy showing the world the Oceanic 815 plane was found in the bottom of the ocean; at the same time Widmore accuses Benjamin of doing that. The audience does not know who is actually telling the truth.

Getting to know more of the characters' past, the audience learn that Claire and Jack are siblings, both sharing the same father. Under strange circumstances Claire vanishes leaving her son, Aaron, behind. There are uncountable connections among the Survivors and many other side characters which are only known little by little.

After 180 days on the island six survivors, the Oceanic 6, finally leave it by helicopter, however the island disappears in front of their eyes, Ben moves the island in space and time as a last resource not to be found by outsiders. Also the freighter explodes with Michael, who came back with Kahana, and Jin in it. So the Survivors do not know what has happened to their friends left behind. And the people on the island only see a black smoke in the sea, thinking everyone was killed on the freighter. Jack, Kate, Sun, Sayid, Hurley and Aaron (Claire's son) together with Lapidus and Desmond finally leave the island. Their chopper crashes in the ocean, but their inflatable boat is found by,

nonetheless, Penny. Jack, who had agreed with Locke to lie about the island, convinces the rest of his friends to do the same, saying they were the only real survivors from the accident.

All Oceanic Six get back to their lives, but they all wonder if they were supposed to leave the island or not. Ben was thrown out of the island when he moved it, waking up in the Tunisian desert, 10 months in the future. He convinces Sayid, after having his wife killed, to become a hitman and revenge his wife, however maybe Benjamin is just manipulating Sayid. Kate raises Aaron as her son, gets engaged with Jack, but breaks up with him later. Jack learns Claire is his half-sister, starts to drink, finds out that Locke died and goes to see his body, that is when he meets Ben at the funeral parlour. Ben states that everyone who left the island should return to it.

### Season 5

This summary episode is named *Lost: Final Chapter*, season 6, episode 00, and prepares the audience for the series final season. The people left behind on the island start to flash through time, as they find out later that, when Ben turned the wheel to move the island, it “dislaunched” them from time. The Oceanic Survivors and the freighter research team start to travel through time, therefore, learning the island history. However, this time traveling has side effects and kills Charlotte.

The same wheel should be turned again to stop the time travel, so Locke does it, being thrown in the Tunisian desert, just like Ben was. The flashes stop, but those left in the

island found themselves in 1974, joining the Dharma Initiative in order to survive and wait for their friends to return.

Locke, back to the civilisation, is helped by Widmore, getting to know he jumped in the future three years. He then starts to try to reunite the Oceanic Six to go back to the island. He believes he failed his mission, when Ben appears saying he will help him. Ben envisions a chance to return to the island and kill Locke, making it look like a suicide. Jack meets Ben at the Locke's funeral parlour, who convinces him they all need to go back. In order to do so, they meet Eloise Hawking, who used to be The Others' leader, just like Widmore, who was overtaken by Ben. Daniel Farady is son of Eloise and Widmore.

By coincidence or not, all Oceanic Six plus Ben and John Locke's body are in the same flight to Guam, predicted by Eloise to be the means to get to the island again. Even Lapidus is piloting the plane. They all have different purposes to return to the island. Observing that Sun has left her little daughter behind and Kate has left Aaron with his real grandmother, Claire's mother. When the plane forces land on the island, Lapidus, Ben and Sun see themselves in 2007; but Jack, Hurley, Kate and Sayid land in 1977. Those in the past joined the Dharma Initiative but Sayid, who is missing.

In the present, Locke reappears alive, but with a slightly different behaviour, without the usual fear and doubts, this is the new Locke. He wants Richard Alpert to take him to Jacob. Richard has always been a devoted servant to the island and does not seem to age, as he is seen in different dates. Jacob was only known by name until now. The audience learns he has met many Oceanic Survivors in the past outside the island, touching them, which means they were not there by mere coincidence. Moreover, Locke wants Ben



to kill Jacob. Although, there were some Jacob's followers in the plane, which crashed in 2007, none of them could avoid Jacob being killed by Ben.

Back in 1977, Daniel Faraday develops a theory to change the future, using a Hydrogen bomb to destroy the massive energy the Dharma eventually will find out, which lead them to construct the hatch, already destroyed in the future. Because Desmond fails to push a button in the future, the Oceanic 815 crashes, and according to Faraday's theory, this could be avoided preventing the hatch/Swan Station to be built. Faraday is killed by The Others trying to find where the Hydrogen bomb is. Jack then convinces them to take him to the bomb location.

Meanwhile, Sayid was found in the jungle and taken as a supposed Hostile by Dharma members. Jack puts Faraday's plan into action, but Sayid is shot by the Dharma when they are leaving the camp. Jack drops the bomb in the hatch excavation site, but nothing happens. The drill perforating the ground hits the predicted massive energy down there and starts to attract all metal around it. Juliet is trapped in chains and fell down the pit. Surviving the fall, she decides to tap the A-bomb with a rock, so it really explodes.

### Season 6

*Lost: The Final Journey* was a special programme presented before the series finale, which was two hours and thirty minutes long. This special summarised the whole series, intercalating the show scenes with the producers', actors' and actresses' comments.

The final season starts with two parallel stories, (A) still on the island, and (B) as if the Oceanic 815 aircraft had safely landed in Los Angeles. There are some minor differences in characters' behaviours and stories at the narrative (B), also called flash sideways. Curiously, the island in the flash sideways is in the bottom of the ocean. Jack has a teenage son; Sawyer is a policeman and his partner is Miles; Kate is an arrested fugitive claiming innocence; Hurley is a lucky lottery winner; Sun and Jin are not married, but they are secret lovers; Claire is pregnant and does not know if she is going to give away her baby; Sayid's love, Nadia, is now married to his brother; and Locke is engaged to his girlfriend and is still on a wheelchair. Even though they are not on the island, their stories start to cross each other.

Kate meets Claire and helps her in the hospital. Locke used to work for Hurley, who soon arranges him a job as teacher in a school where he meets Benjamin Linus. Sun's father discover her secret affair and hire men to take care of Jin, however Sun gets shot and goes to the same hospital as some other characters. Later, Sawyer and Miles arrest Kate and Sayid.

Still in the plane, Jack saves Charlie's life when he chokes with a bag of heroin that is when he has a déjà vu of Claire, his love on the island, who he does not know in the flashsideways. Desmond works for Charles Widmore and needs to get Charlie's band to play with Widmore's son, Daniel. Charlie causes a car accident to make Desmond see what he saw when he almost died. Desmond suddenly "remembers" his other life on the island and with Penny. He then decides to show other Oceanic 815 passengers their déjà vu as well, to "awake" them

On the island, the bomb did not work, they are still there, however they jumped into the future, to the island present time. Juliet is dead and Sawyer blames Jack for her death. The island mythology is explored, bringing again new characters and explaining some others. Richard Alpert came from the Canary Islands, around 1860, sold as a slave after accidentally killing a doctor to get medicine to his dying wife. Richard was supposed to go to America, but the ship he is in crashes on the island. He is saved by the Man in Black, who plans to use Alpert to kill Jacob, however it does not work. Richard becomes Jacob's advisor in exchange for an eternal life.

Jacob and the Man in Black (MIB) were brothers raised on the island by a woman, who was the island protector. When adults, the Man in Black keeps trying to find a way out of the island, and Jacob is chosen to be the new protector of the island. Felt deceived by his mother, MIB kills her, which leads Jacob in anger to throw his brother in the mysterious cave in the heart of the island. A smoke monster emerges almost immediately. That is how the threatening smoke monster was born. The audience learns that he can only assume the shape of dead people, such as Jack's father and Locke, and his previous self. The Man in Black is still trying to leave the island, but there are certain rules that do not allow him to do so, and Jacob has been preventing him to leave as well. Jacob claims to be avoiding the evil to spread the world. MIB cannot kill his brother himself, that is why he convinces Ben to do so.

When Jacob met some of the Survivors in the past and touched them, they became protected and also candidates to be the new island protector. In order to leave the island, the Man in Black needs to also kill all Jacob's candidates: Jack, Hurley, Sawyer, Kwon (Jin

and/or Sun). Kate, when became Aaron's mother, is excluded of being a candidate. The Man in Black tries to deceive the candidates to get them killed. He then recruits Sayid and Claire, and try to kill Desmond. He finally gets the candidates and Sayid in the submarine with a bomb. Sawyer pull some wires and the bomb timer accelerates, Sayid decides to sacrifice himself and run with the bomb. After the explosion, Sun is trapped and the submarine is flooding with water. Jin stays with Sun and they inevitably drown together. Jack saves Sawyer and drag him to the sea shore, where he meets Kate and Hurley.

In the flash sideways, Desmond is willing to "awake" all Oceanic 815 Survivors. Hurley remembers everything after kissing Libby, for example. Desmond runs over Locke and gets arrested to meet Kate and Sayid in jail. Hurley is working with Desmond now to catalyse more awakenings. Ben also has his awakening after Demond punches him. In this story, Ben helps Alex to get a scholarship and meets her mother, Danielle Rousseau.

Back to the island, Kate, Hurley, Jack and Sawyer meet Jacob, even if he is already dead, and Jack volunteers himself to be the new protector of the island. Locke plans to use the aircraft, which Lapidus was piloting to Guam, to escape the island. Desmond seems to be the key to destroy the island as the new Locke/Man in Black/smoke monster believes. Ben kills Widmore and seems to be working with the Man in Black now.

Widmore tells MIB, before Ben kills him, that Demond is Jacob's fail safe, so the Man in Black uses him to go down the mystery cave and uncap a pool of water. The island starts to destroy itself and the new Locke thinks he is going to win, however Jack realises the Man in Black is now human and can be killed. They fight, Jack is fatally wounded, but even though kills the Man in Black. Back to the cave, Jack asks Hurley to be the new

protector of the island, then descend to undo what Desmond has done and help him to get out of the cave. Jack is left behind in the cave.

In the flash sideways, the audience understands that all Survivors are there because they died. The island was real and everything that happened was real. Jack is reunited with the Oceanic 815 friends, not meaning they all died at the same time, but that some died before Jack and some long after him. A timeless conception of after death meeting. They are all reunited to remember and let go, to move on with their “lives”. At this point the audience sees the main characters all brought together in a church, even those who died in the first season.

Back to the island, everything is back to normal. Jack reappears in the river, walks to the bamboo field, lies down and Vincent, Walt’s dog, shows up lying beside him. This scene is almost the same as the first scene of Jack on the island, when he wakes up after the Oceanic 815 accident, except that is played backwards. The series closure scene is Jack shutting his eyes after seeing the plane with his friends leaving the island.

## Appendix B

## Lost: Missing Pieces (Mobisodes/Websodes) - Episode Guide

Mobisode 1, *The Watch*, is a deep emotional conversation between Jack and his father, Christian, on the day of Jack's wedding. Christian gives Jack a watch given to him by his father. Mobisode 2, *The Adventures of Hurley and Frogurt*, is a conversation between Hurley and Neil about Libby, with whom Hurley is going to have a first date. Neil, called Frogurt by Hurley, tells Hurley that if he does not do anything about Libby, it will be his turn to try. The third episode is *King of the Castle*, it shows Ben and Jack playing chess after Ben's spinal surgery. Ben teases Jack to stay on the island, although confirming he intends to honour their agreement and let Jack leave the island in the submarine. The conversation seems to predict several future events, Jack makes fun of a possible sub sinking, and Ben says Jack might regret and want to return to the island in the future, if he leaves.

*The Deal*, is the fourth mobisode, presents a meeting between Michael and Juliet, when Michael is captured by The Others. It is another honest conversation, in which Juliet says Ben will fulfil his promise and release him and Walt, if Michael keeps his part of the deal. Also, Juliet tells him that she also made a deal with Ben in order to save her sister's life. Mobisode 5, *Operation: Sleeper*, is a conversation between Juliet and Jack in the middle of the night, when she confesses that is still working for Ben while in the

Survivors' camp. This happens right after Locke blows up the submarine. However, she is talking to Jack because she is not going to work for Ben anymore.

The sixth episode is called *Room 23*, Juliet is in some facility and the alarm is on. Ben arrives and ask her what is happening. Apparently, Walt is causing all the mess, including some birds killing, and nobody wants to go to his room anymore. *Artz & Crafts* is the seventh websode, and as the title denounces is about Dr. Arzt, a side character on the show, who is a high school science teacher. He comes to Jin, Sun, Hurley and Michael at the beach asking them if they are going to move to the caves, as Jack defends. He doubts Jack is the best person to make those type of decisions, as he saw Jack running after his dead father in the jungle. Suddenly, a loud monster noise is heard and Dr. Arzt changes his mind and decides to move to the caves with everyone else.

Websode 8, *Buried Secrets*, is about Sun and Michael. Sun is trying to bury her California drivers license when Michael comes looking for Vincent, Walt's dog. She confesses that she was going to leave Jin and move to America, but changed her mind at the airport. Michael comforts her and they almost kiss, but the dog appears. Episode 9 is *Tropical Depression*, with Michael and Dr. Arzt talking and the teacher saying he lied about his weather knowledge. Here, Dr. Arzt shares his story of why he was in Sydney going to Los Angeles, he met a woman online and went there to meet her. When things went wrong, he decided to book an early flight, Oceanic flight 815.

*Jack, Meet Ethan. Ethan? Jack* is the mobisode 10, when Ethan comes to Jack's tent with a suitcase full of medicine he claims that he has found in the jungle. Ethan is part of *The Others*, but at this point nobody knows that. Ethan points out that Claire will deliver on

the island and Jack must be prepared. When Jack says Ethan could be his assistant, an awkward moment of silence happens. Before he leaves, Ethan says his wife and baby died in childbirth. In the eleventh episode, *Jin has a Temper Tantrum on the Golf Course*, Jin loses to Michael playing golf and gets very angry with it. He starts to yell in Korean all his life frustrations and how much he is alone. Michael and Hurley do not understand Jin's reactions and just keep watching the scene.



Image 18: *Lost: Missing Pieces* episodes, from left to right, top to bottom: webside 8: *Buried Secrets*; webside 9: *Tropical Depression*; webside 10: *Jack, Meet Ethan. Ethan? Jack*; webside 11: *Jin Has A Temper Tantrum On The Golf Course*; webside 12: *The Envelope*; webside 13: *So It Begins*. Retrieved from <http://lostmobisodes.blogspot.com/>



*The Envelope*, mobisode 12, shows Juliet burning her hand trying to get a hot burned muffin tray out of the oven. Amelia shows up at her house and ask if Juliet is crying because of Ben, but Juliet denies it, although admitting things are awkward between them. She says they might be in trouble and asks Amelia to tell no one what she is about to show her. When Juliet gets the envelope, the doorbell rings. The last mobisode, number 13, *So It Begins*, brings Vincent, Walt's dog, moments after Oceanic 815 accident. Vincent is in the jungle when Christian, most likely the Man in Black, calls and ask the dog to find his son, Jack, and to wake him up, because he has work to do. Jack opens his eyes in the bamboo field and Vincent runs over him.