



MARKET NUT
crackin' marketing

STEAM PAGE GUIDE



The indie dev's Steam page checklist

What's actually losing you wishlists — and **how to fix it.**



BEGINNER FRIENDLY • 15 MINUTE READ • PDF GUIDE

CONTENTS

PAGE 1 THE HONEST TRUTH FIRST

SECTION 1 CAPSULE ART

SECTION 2 SHORT DESCRIPTION

SECTION 3 TRAILER

SECTION 4 SCREENSHOTS

SECTION 5 TAGS

SECTION 6 ABOVE THE FOLD

SECTION 7 TIMING & STRATEGY

SECTION 8 YOUR CHECKLIST

SECTION 9 THE PART NOBODY WANTS TO HEAR





THE HONEST TRUTH FIRST

YOUR STEAM PAGE IS DOING THE SELLING WHILE YOU SLEEP

Most indie devs spend weeks on their trailer, months building the game, then write their Steam page in an evening. You can feel it when you land on those pages.



Vague adjectives

Words that say nothing



Backstory nobody asked for

Players don't care about your lore dump



Walls of Text

Big blocks of text kill conversation

The Steam page is where warm leads either convert or bounce — and most of the time, they bounce before they even reach your description.



Your Steam page is your pitch.

Not your Twitter. Not your Discord. Not your beautifully animated trailer on YouTube. The store page is where the decision gets made.



WHY THIS MATTERS THE NUMBERS



Wishlist to sales

27%

Research puts the median first-month sales conversion at around 27% of launch wishlists. Every wishlist counts.



Capsule click rate

< 2%

Most indie games have a click-through rate below 2%. A stronger capsule can change that number significantly.



Decision speed

0.5s

You have roughly 0.5 seconds on a capsule image. Players decide whether to click before they've even read a word.



Language gap

70%+

Most devs only publish in English. The majority of Steam users browse in other languages — that's a huge missed audience.



SECTION 1

CAPSULE ART

YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION AT EVERY SIZE

Your capsule appears everywhere on Steam — search results, discovery queues, recommendation carousels, friends' activity feeds. If it doesn't communicate your game's genre and tone at a glance, people scroll past before they've even read your title.



You want to make your Steam page look like your type of game so that at an instant somebody shopping goes, 'Ah, it's that type of game — I'm gonna buy it.'

— **Chris Zukowski, [HowToMarketAGame.com](https://www.howtomarketagame.com)**
(Steam marketing expert, cited by Unity)



Why it matters

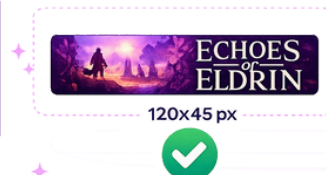
- Seen everywhere on Steam
- 0.5 seconds to grab attention
- Drives clicks and wishlists
- Directly impacts sales



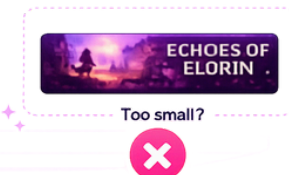
Design for the smallest size first

Your logo must be readable at 120x45 pixels. If it's not, zoom out on your screen and look at your capsule as a thumbnail. If you can't read the title, neither can a player scrolling through search results.

120x45 px



Too small?



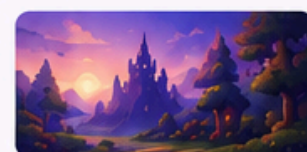
Use minimal text — ideally 0 to 3 words

The top-performing indie capsule images use almost no text. Let the art communicate the genre and mood. A dark atmospheric image says "horror." Soft pastels say "cosy." Let it do the work.



No review scores or award badges on capsule art

Since September 2022, Valve enforces strict rules here. Breaking them makes your game ineligible for featuring in official Steam sales and events — visibility you cannot buy back.



Capsule art is the one area where most marketing experts — including Chris Zukowski — say spending money on a professional artist is worth it. It is the single highest-leverage asset on your page.



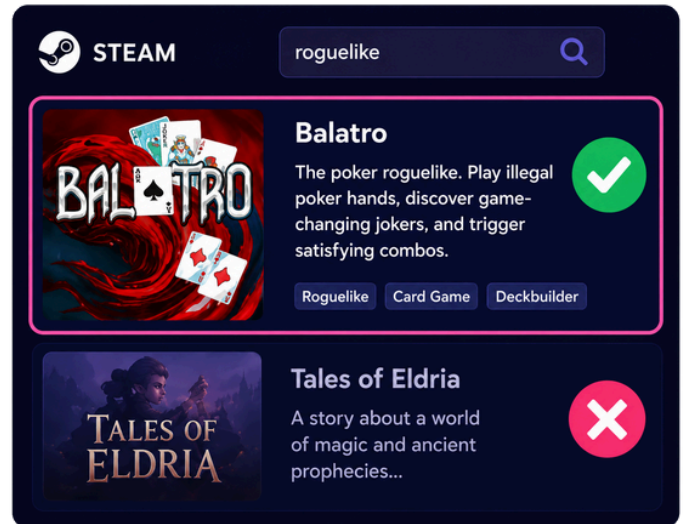


SECTION 2

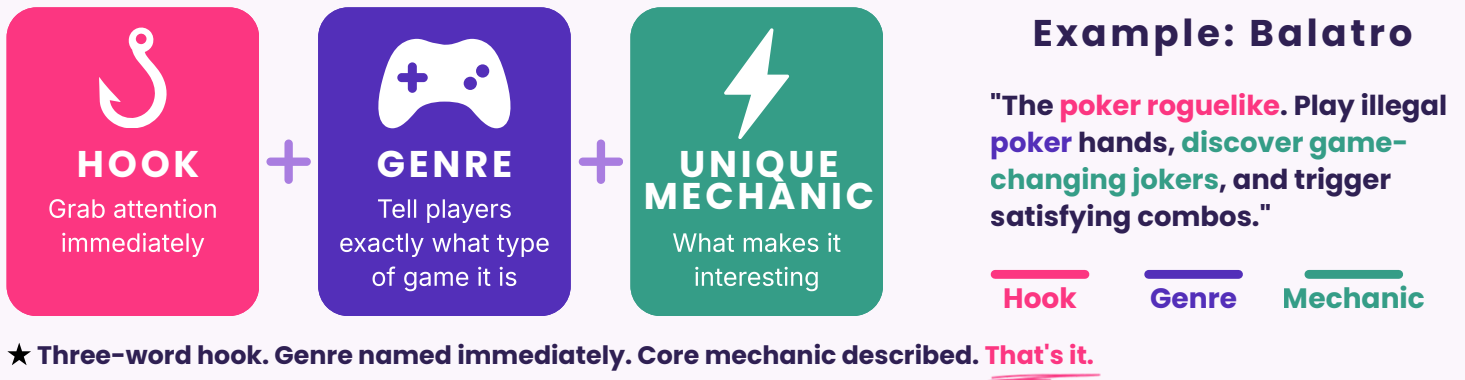
SHORT DESCRIPTION

YOU HAVE ABOUT 300
CHARACTERS — MAKE
THEM COUNT

The short description shows up in Steam search results, on tag and category pages, and anywhere your game appears in a condensed list format. Most devs either leave it vague or write it like a story synopsis. Neither converts.



THE FORMULA THAT WORKS



1 name your genre in the first 10 words

Players scan for keywords. Lead with what you do, not what the world is.

ROGUELIKE ✓
DECKBUILDER ✓
CITY BUILDER ✓

A mysterious journey through an ancient land... ✗

2 Write for the player, not about your game

You are a knight who must defeat the ancient dragon and save the realm. ✓

A story about a knight who must defeat the ancient dragon and save the realm. ✗

3 Treat it as a living document

Developers who iterate on their copy based on conversion data see steady improvement over time. Don't set it and forget it.

WHAT TOP DEVS DO DIFFERENTLY



Clear genre



Fast Hook



Unique mechanic



Short sentences

✗ COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID



Lore dumping



Vague wording



Long paragraphs



No genre mention

TRY THIS TEMPLATE

[GENRE] + [WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT] + [WHAT THE PLAYER DOES]

Example:

A co-op survival horror. Scavenge abandoned stations, manage oxygen, and escape before the darkness finds you.





SECTION 3

TRAILER

THE THING PEOPLE WATCH INSTEAD OF READING

Most players will watch your trailer instead of reading your description. If your trailer opens on a logo, a title card, or a mood reel, you've already lost them. They want to see the game.



1



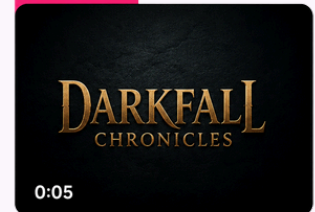
Show gameplay within the first 5 seconds

This is not optional. Players are deciding whether to wishlist or bounce in the opening seconds. Lead with the most exciting, representative moment your game has.

DO THIS:



NOT THIS:



2



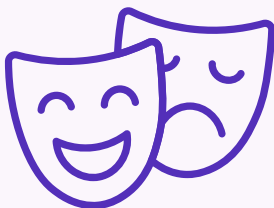
60-90
SECONDS

Keep it tight — 60 to 90 seconds is ideal

A trailer is not a documentary. Show the core loop, show a few exciting moments, show enough to make someone want more. Then stop.



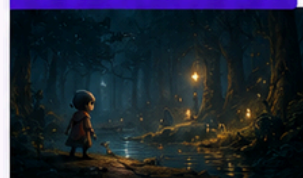
3



Make it feel like the game

If your game is atmospheric and slow-paced, a rapid-cut hype trailer will confuse people. Tone match. The right players should watch it and immediately feel like this is for them.

TONE MATCH = RIGHT AUDIENCE



✓ Atmospheric game = Atmospheric trailer

TONE MISMATCH = WRONG MESSAGE



✗ Confusing tone = wrong audience

QUICK RECAP



Show gameplay within 5 seconds



Keep it tight (60-90 secs)



Show the core loop and exciting moments



Make it feel like the game





SECTION 4

SCREENSHOTS

SHOW THE GAME — NOT THE BRANDING

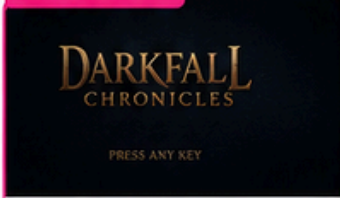
Screenshots are not a design opportunity. Valve is explicit: they must show actual gameplay. No concept art, no pre-rendered stills, no marketing copy.



✗ COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Here's what gets devs caught out:

TITLE SCREEN



✗ Doesn't show gameplay

CONCEPT ART



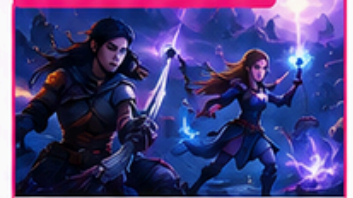
✗ Not representative of gameplay

AWARD BADGES



✗ Adds no gameplay information

CAPSULE ART REPEATED



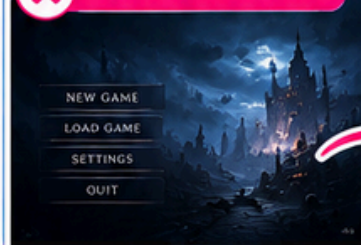
✗ Players have already seen this

SCREENSHOT #1 MATTERS THE MOST

LEAD WITH YOUR BEST GAMEPLAY MOMENT

By the time someone reaches your screenshot gallery, they've seen your capsule multiple times. Show them something new. Lead with your most exciting, representative gameplay moment.

✗ WEAK FIRST SCREENSHOT



Main menu tells players nothing new.

✓ STRONG FIRST SCREENSHOT



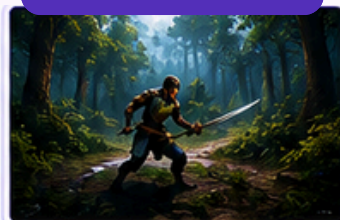
Show exciting, representative gameplay right away.

GIFS ARE YOUR SECRET WEAPON

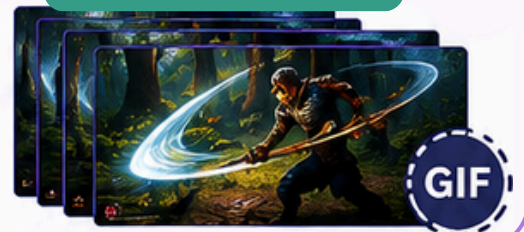
USE GIFS IN YOUR DESCRIPTION

Movement explains mechanics faster than screenshots ever can.

STATIC SCREENSHOT

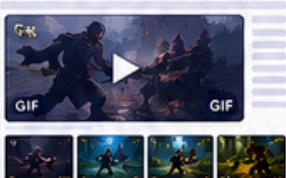


GIFS (SHOWS MOVEMENT)

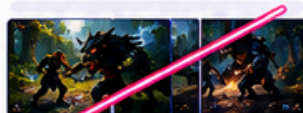


WHERE GIFS SHOULD GO

✓ **USE GIFS HERE**
Long Description Section



✗ **NOT HERE**
Screenshot Gallery



Keep screenshots for gameplay shots. Use GIFs to demonstrate mechanics.

If the screenshot doesn't teach the player something new, replace it.





SECTION 5

TAGS

TAGS ARE HOW STEAM'S ALGORITHM FINDS YOUR PLAYERS

Tags are not just labels — they determine where Steam places your game in its algorithm. Most indie devs use tags too broadly and miss the players who would actually love their game.



❌ GENERIC TAGS = ALGORITHM NOISE

ACTION

ADVENTURE

INDIE

RPG

2D

Too broad. Competes with thousands of games, making it harder for the right players to find you

✅ SPECIFIC TAGS = TARGETED DISCOVERY

PRECISION PLATFORMER

PIXEL ART

2D PLATFORMER

TIME ATTACK

FAST-PACED

MINIMALIST

RETRO

Specific. Relevant. Less competitive. More visibility for your ideal players.

20
SLOTS

USE ALL 20 TAG SLOTS.

Every slot is an opportunity to be discovered.

Precision Platformer

2D Platformer

Fast-Paced

Time Attack

Pixel Art

Retro

Minimalist

Controller

Singleplayer

Short

Difficult

+ More

1 PRIORITISE YOUR TOP 5 TAGS

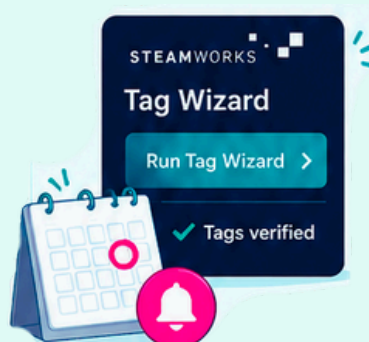
Steam weights these most heavily. Make sure they are the most accurate description of your game's genre and subgenre.

EXAMPLE TOP 5

- 1 Precision Platformer
- 2 2D Platformer
- 3 Fast-Paced
- 4 Pixel Art
- 5 Difficult

2 CHECK THEM REGULARLY

Players can add their own tags, and they're not always correct. Set a monthly reminder to run the Tag Wizard in Steamworks and verify your tags are accurate.



3 LOOK AT WHAT SIMILAR GAMES USE

The top 10 games in your genre are a masterclass in which tags get results. Cross-reference and refine.

TOP 10 GAMES IN YOUR GENRE

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- ...
- 10

COMMON HIGH-PERFORMING TAGS

- Precision Platformer
- 2D Platformer
- Fast-Paced
- Time Attack
- Pixel Art
- ...



SECTION 6

ABOVE THE FOLD

THE FIRST SCREEN IS YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

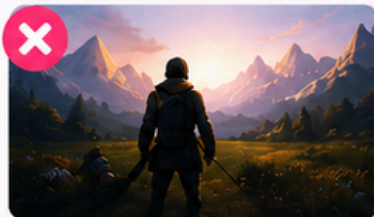
Everything a player sees before they scroll — the header capsule, trailer, screenshots, short description — needs to advance the pitch. Not repeat it.

If someone has seen your capsule three times and then your "About this game" section opens with that same capsule art again, you've wasted the most valuable real estate on the page.

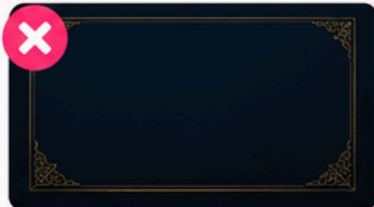


DON'T DO THIS

Repeats the pitch. Wastes prime space. Tells players nothing new.



Repeated capsule art.



Blank decorative banners.



Giant "WISHLIST NOW" graphics.

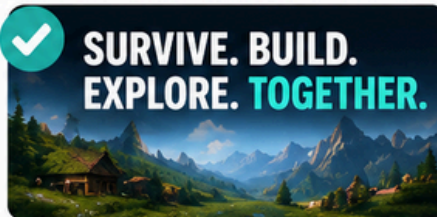
Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Pellentesque eu neque euismod, lacinia sapien non, posuere sem. Curabitur consequat, risus a cursus fringilla, nisl mi convallis sem, in porta nisl massa at dolor. Donec euismod, nisl eget consectetur interdum.

Walls of text with no clear purpose.

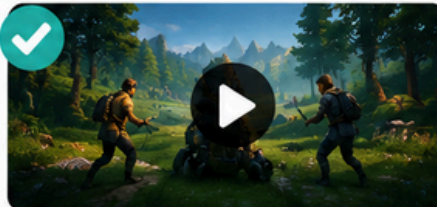


DO THIS INSTEAD

Advances the pitch. Shows the game. Earns the wishlist.



A punchy opening line that sells the fantasy.



Fresh gameplay footage in your trailer.



Feature sections with clear headers.



GIFs that show your mechanics in action.



If your content is compelling, people will wishlist. Use that space to earn it.

—Indie Game Joe

Steam Store Page Optimization guide





SECTION 7

TIMING & STRATEGY

LAUNCH YOUR PAGE EARLY — THEN KEEP BUILDING



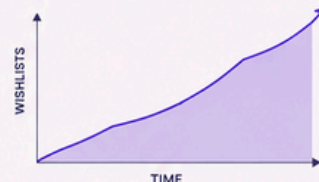
1

LAUNCH YOUR PAGE 6 TO 12 MONTHS BEFORE RELEASE



Games like *Dome Keeper* launched their page roughly 9 months before release, gathering tens of thousands of wishlists before they entered their demo into Steam Next Fest. The page doesn't need to be perfect — it needs to be live.

EARLY PAGE =



More time
= more
wishlists.
Start early.
Grow steady.
Win at launch.

2

7,000 WISHLISTS IS THE NUMBER TO AIM FOR BEFORE LAUNCH



Industry experts widely cite 7,000 wishlists as the threshold for appearing in Steam's Popular Upcoming tab, which then triggers the algorithm to market your game for you. Below that, you're largely invisible.

POPULAR UPCOMING

Game	Wishlists
Thornwick	7,642 wishlists
Dungeon Realms	9,215 wishlists
Robot Kingdom	11,308 wishlists
Echoes of Light	8,341 wishlists

See more

★ Hit 7,000+ wishlists to get on this page. This is where visibility takes off.

3

TRANSLATE YOUR PAGE — EVEN IF THE GAME IS ENGLISH ONLY



The majority of Steam users browse in a language other than English. A translated page gets your game in front of thousands of shoppers who would otherwise never see it. Steam adds an automatic in-game language warning, so players still know what to expect.

Languages:	Interface	Full Audio	Subtitles
English	✓	✓	✓
French	✓	✓	✓
German	✓	✓	✓
Simplified Chinese	✓	✓	✓
Japanese	✓	✓	✓
Portuguese - Brazil	✓	✓	✓

i IN-GAME LANGUAGE NOT SUPPORTED

This game is not available in your preferred language. Please review the supported languages before purchasing.

4

DON'T PANIC ABOUT WISHLIST DELETES



Expect 10–12% of your wishlists to be deleted, especially during big Steam sales when players prune their lists. This is normal. Everyone has them.

WISHLIST DELETES ARE NORMAL

10-12%

Average wishlist deletes over time



Focus on the trend, not the daily dips. Build consistently and the numbers will follow.

THE TAKEAWAY

Launch early. Aim high. Translate everything. Stay consistent. Time is your biggest advantage



LAUNCH EARLY



AIM FOR 7,000+



TRANSLATE
YOUR PAGE



STAY
CONSISTENT



SECTION 8

YOUR CHECKLIST

- TICK OFF **AS YOU GO**

Use this to audit your page. Every item left unchecked is a potential wishlist you're leaving on the table.

1

CAPSULE ART READS CLEARLY AT THUMBNAIL SIZE

test it at 120×45px

☐

2

CAPSULE HAS NO REVIEW SCORES, AWARD BADGES, OR MARKETING TEXT ON IT

☐

3

CAPSULE COMMUNICATES GENRE AND TONE WITHIN 0.5 SECONDS

☐

4

TRAILER SHOWS GAMEPLAY WITHIN THE FIRST 5 SECONDS

no logo or title card openers

☐

5

SHORT DESCRIPTION NAMES THE GENRE IN THE FIRST 10 WORDS

and follows hook + genre + mechanic format

☐

6

SHORT DESCRIPTION IS WRITTEN FOR THE PLAYER, NOT ABOUT THE GAME'S BACKSTORY

☐

7

SCREENSHOTS SHOW ACTUAL GAMEPLAY

no concept art, title screens, or pre-rendered stills

☐

8

FIRST SCREENSHOT LEADS WITH THE MOST EXCITING GAMEPLAY MOMENT

☐

9

LONG DESCRIPTION OPENS WITH SOMETHING NEW

not a repeat of the capsule art

☐

10

GIFS ARE USED IN THE LONG DESCRIPTION TO SHOW GAMEPLAY MOVEMENT AND MECHANICS

☐

11

ALL 20 TAG SLOTS ARE FILLED WITH SPECIFIC, ACCURATE SUBGENRE TAGS

☐

12

TOP 5 TAGS ACCURATELY REFLECT YOUR CORE GENRE

and match what similar successful games use

☐

13

PAGE IS LIVE AT LEAST 6 MONTHS BEFORE PLANNED RELEASE TO ALLOW WISHLIST ACCUMULATION

☐

14

PAGE HAS BEEN TRANSLATED

into at least the top languages for your genre's audience

☐

REMEMBER

Your steam page is your 24/7 salesperson. Make it as clear, compelling, and trustworthy as possible - then give it time to work.



DONE & DONE?

Great! Keep monitoring, iterating, and improving based on data. Optimisation never really ends.



SECTION 9

THE PART NOBODY WANTS TO HEAR

A CHECKLIST WON'T WRITE YOUR PAGE FOR YOU

Use this to audit your page. Every item left unchecked is a potential wishlist you're leaving on the table.



KNOWING WHAT MAKES A GOOD STEAM PAGE AND ACTUALLY WRITING ONE ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.

The short description alone - 300 characters - is something developers rewrite dozens of times and still aren't sure about.



THE LONG DESCRIPTION NEEDS TO SELL WITHOUT SOUNDING/FEELING SALESY.

Inform without overwhelming, and keep players reading to the end.



AND ONCE IT'S LIVE, IT NEEDS TO BE TREATED AS A LIVING DOCUMENT:

Tested, iterated on, updated based on what the steamworks data is telling you.



MOST DEVS DONT HAVE THE TIME OR THE MARKETING BACKGROUND TO DO THAT WELL -

And that's not a criticism, it's just honest.



THE GAMES THAT GET IT RIGHT USUALLY HAVE SOMEONE WHOSE ACTUAL JOB IS MAKING WORDS CONVERT.

The copy on your steam page is doing the selling while you're busy building the game. It deserves that level of attention.

THAT'S A WRAP!

🎉 Thanks for reading

I hope this guide helped you feel a little more confident about marketing your game.

Building a game is hard enough without having to become a full-time marketer too. Whether you're working on your first prototype or preparing for launch, remember that marketing isn't about shouting louder—it's about helping the right people discover what you've built.



Book a free consultation →



Explore more Resources



NEED A HAND?

If you'd like support with your game's marketing, I'm always happy to chat.



www.marketnut.co.uk



info@marketnut.co.uk



[company/marketnut](https://www.linkedin.com/company/marketnut)



[etsy.com/uk/shop/MarketNut](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/MarketNut)



WHAT I CAN HELP WITH



Launch Strategy



Community Building



Social Media Marketing



Wishlist Growth



Steam Page Optimisation



Analytics & Growth



Influencer Outreach

ONE LAST THING...

The best time to start marketing your game was yesterday.

The second-best time is today.

Good luck with your project — and if you ever need a marketing sidekick, you know where to find me 💖



MARKET NUT
crackin' marketing