

# ASSASSIN'S CREED SHADOWS



## SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

BY AFFAN ANITYA

# ASSASSIN'S CREED SHADOWS

**Assassin's Creed Shadows** is the latest installment in Ubisoft's long-running action-adventure series, set in feudal Japan. Players explore a vast open world through the dual perspectives of Naoe, a shinobi assassin, and Yasuke, a powerful samurai. The game emphasizes stealth, dynamic combat, and expansive world-building, blending historical fiction with cinematic storytelling.

## PROJECT GOALS:

To see and analyze customer's sentiment of this game.  
To find the truth despite the recent drama following the release of this game.

# DATA COLLECTION USING STEAM API

- I used the Steam API to collect user reviews for Assassin's Creed Shadows.
- Data was collected in March-April 2025, shortly after the game's announcement and trailer release.
- Review texts were then processed and analyzed using BERT-based sentiment classification.
- Tools used: Python, Pandas, Requests, Matplotlib, Seaborn, and WordCloud.

# WHY STEAM?

- Steam is one of the most trusted gaming platforms, offering open, verified reviews from actual players.
- Chosen over platforms like YouTube to ensure feedback reflects genuine, first-hand gameplay experiences.
- The purpose of this analysis is not to criticize, but to objectively assess how the game was received by players.

# STEAM API ISSUE

## **Pagination Trap:**

Steam API pagination is prone to errors—after a certain point, it begins returning the same batch of reviews, creating a loop trap.

## **Rate Limits:**

Frequent requests may result in silent throttling, which doesn't block the request but returns incomplete or outdated data.

## **Limited Metadata:**

The API offers only basic review fields, restricting insights into user profiles, hardware specs, or platform context.

## **Inconsistent Responses:**

Occasionally, review ordering shifts between calls, making it hard to deduplicate or guarantee completeness.

# STEAM API SOLUTION

- Added loop detection logic by monitoring repeating review IDs.
- Introduced delays and checkpoints to reduce API overload.
- Logged responses to identify unexpected behavior patterns.

# COLUMN OF THE DATA

From the Steam API, obtained:  
9172 rows of data

Review_id	Unique identifier for the review
Review_text	Full text of the review
Votes_up	Number of helpful/upvotes received
Votes_funny	Number of "funny" votes
Comment_count	Number of comments on the review
Author_steamid	Unique ID of the review author
Author_playtime_forever	Total playtime of the author (in minutes)
Author_playtim_last_2weeks	Playtime in the last 2 weeks
Language	Language of the review
Timestamp_created	When the review was posted
Timestamp_updated	Last time the review was edited
Review_score	Binary: recommended or not recommended
Written_durin_early_access	Was it written during early access?

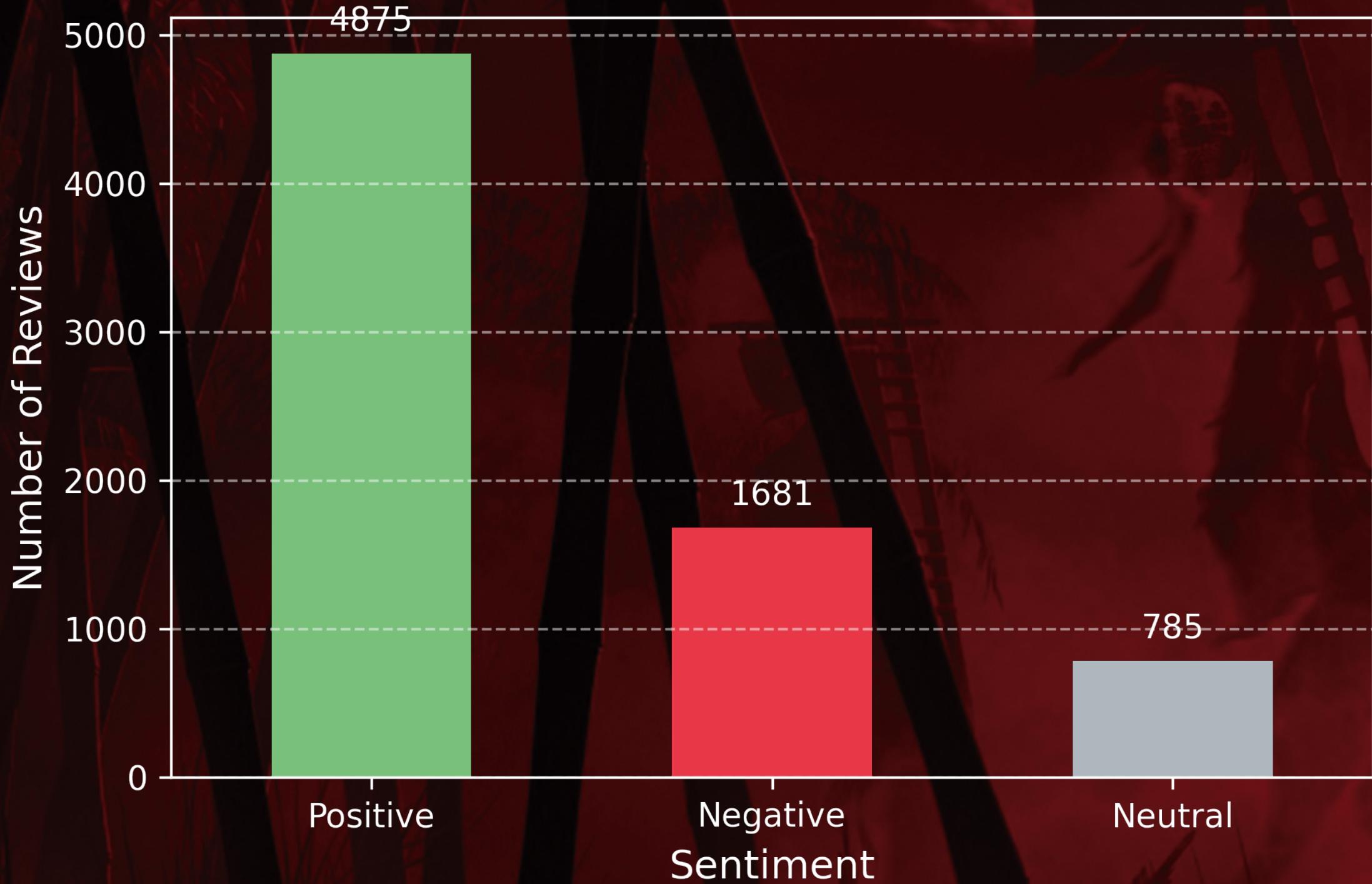
# SENTIMENT LABELING BERT

BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) is a powerful language model developed by Google. It understands context in both directions (left and right), allowing it to grasp the true meaning of words in a sentence.

## WHAT IT DOES IN THIS PROJECT:

- Automatically analyzes review text.
- Classifies each review as Positive, Negative, or Neutral.
- Helps uncover player sentiment at scale without manual labeling.
- We got a new column named bert\_sentiment to analyze it further

# DATA DISTRIBUTION



- Positive reviews dominate, making up the majority of responses.
- Negative reviews are present in notable volume, indicating a vocal segment of dissatisfied players.
- Neutral reviews are the fewest, suggesting that most players formed a strong opinion—either positive or negative.

This pattern implies that the game evokes strong reactions, with satisfaction outweighing criticism but not silencing it.

# WORDCLOUD: POSITIVE



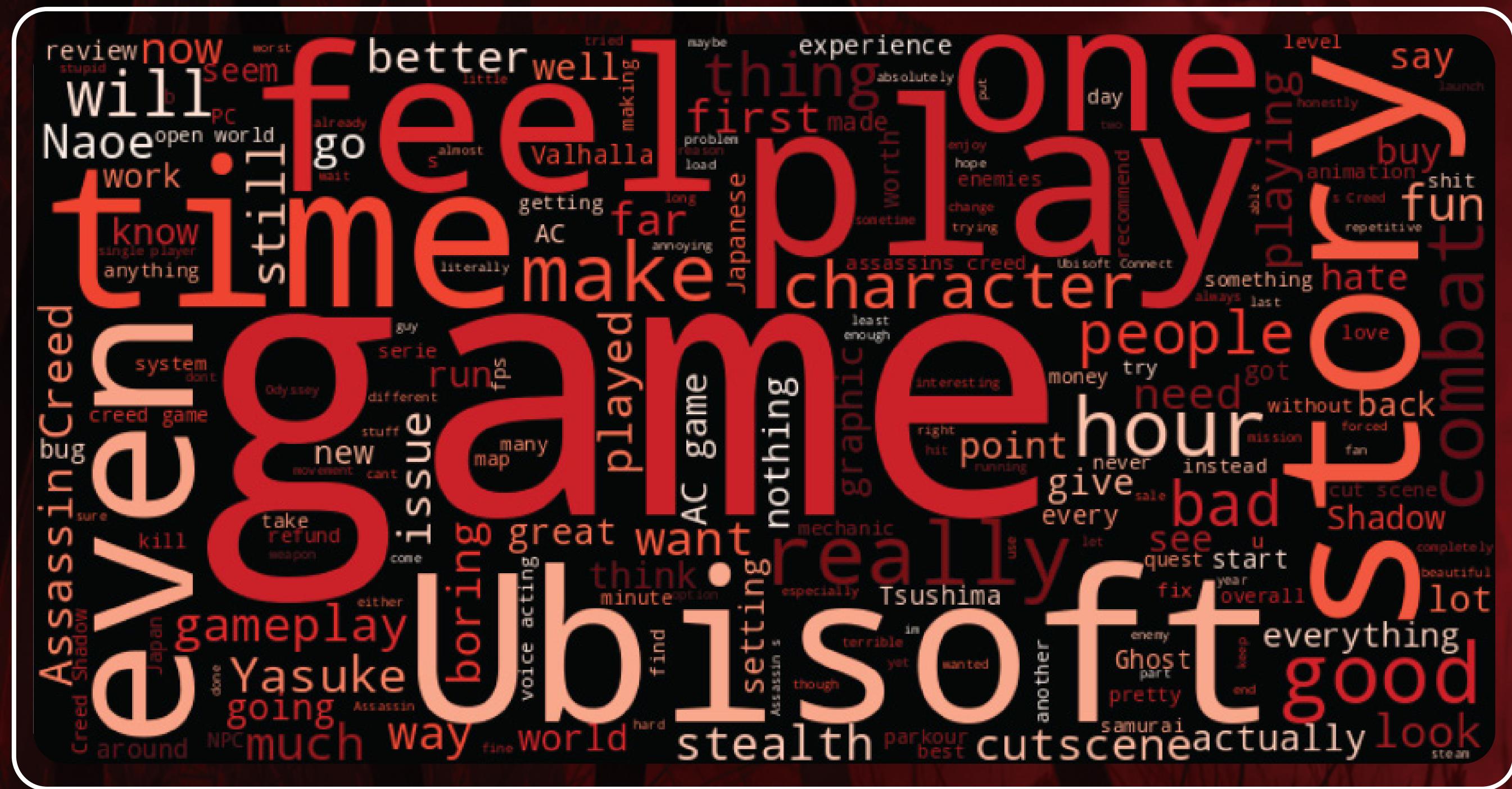
# WORDCLOUD: POSITIVE KEY INSIGHT

Gameplay Elements	stealth, combat, smooth parkour, open world, ninja, samurai
Narrative	story, character, immersive setting, engaging experience
Visual & Performance	beautiful, graphic, animation, performance, visually impressive
Comparison	Valhalla, Origins, Odyssey, Ghost of Tsushima
Emotion	fun, good, amazing, awesome, enjoy, love, great
Player Endorsement	recommend, perfect, best, enjoyed, worth
Character Mentions	Yasuke, Naoe

# WORDCLOUD: POSITIVE SUMMARY

- Strong praise for stealth, combat, parkour, and open-world design reflects high gameplay satisfaction.
- Players highlight the story and character depth as immersive and engaging.
- The game is noted as visually impressive, with mentions of graphics, animation, and performance.
- Comparisons to Valhalla, Origins, Odyssey, and Ghost of Tsushima suggest high expectations—often met.
- Words like “fun,” “awesome,” “love,” and “recommend” signal strong emotional engagement and endorsement.
- Yasuke and Naoe stand out as memorable leads, though the supporting cast receives less attention.

# WORDCLOUD: NEGATIVE



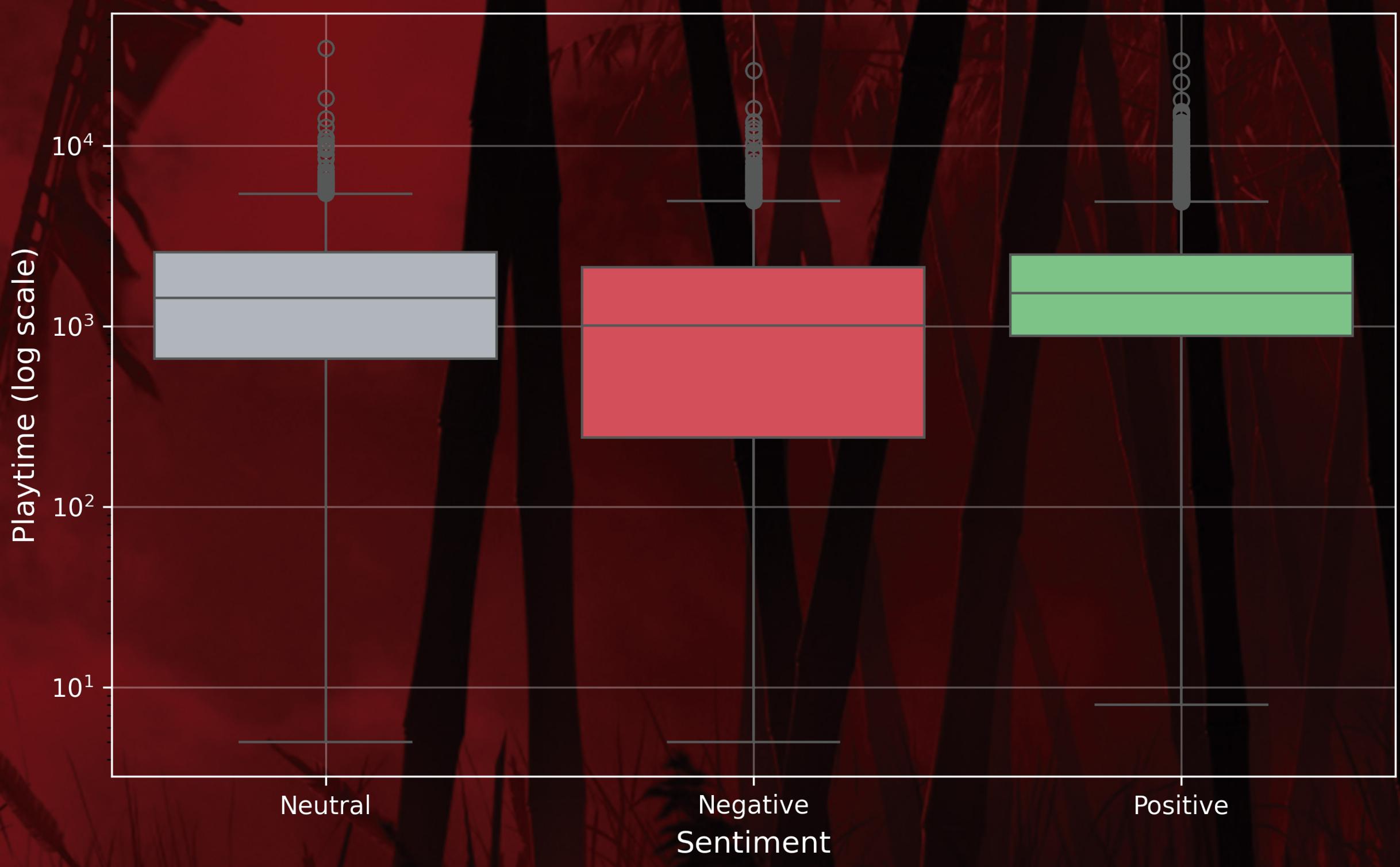
# WORDCLOUD: NEGATIVE KEY INSIGHT

Gameplay Elements	gameplay, combat, stealth, run, mechanic
Narrative	story, character, cutscene, Yasuke, Naoe
Technical Issue	Ubisoft, issue, bug, fps, system, refund
Emotion & Sentiment	bad, annoying, boring, even, really, want, make
Comparison	Valhalla, Ghost, Odyssey
Player Demands	make, fix, want, refund
Visual Feedbacks	graphic, look, animation, setting

# WORDCLOUD: NEGATIVE SUMMARY

- Frequent criticism of gameplay elements like combat, stealth, and mechanics indicates dissatisfaction with the game's core systems.
- Mentions of story, characters, and cutscenes suggest that narrative elements may lack depth or emotional engagement.
- Technical issues—bugs, low FPS, and performance problems—are often blamed on Ubisoft, reflecting frustration with execution and support.
- Emotionally loaded words such as “bad,” “boring,” “annoying,” and “issue” point to a widespread sense of disappointment.
- Comparisons to titles like Valhalla, Odyssey, and Ghost of Tsushima imply that many players feel this game fails to meet franchise standards.
- Repeated demands for fixes, refunds, and improvements signal high player expectations and a desire for accountability.
- While Yasuke and Naoe are mentioned, their impact appears divisive, with overall character reception more critical than positive.

# PLAY TIME COMPARISON

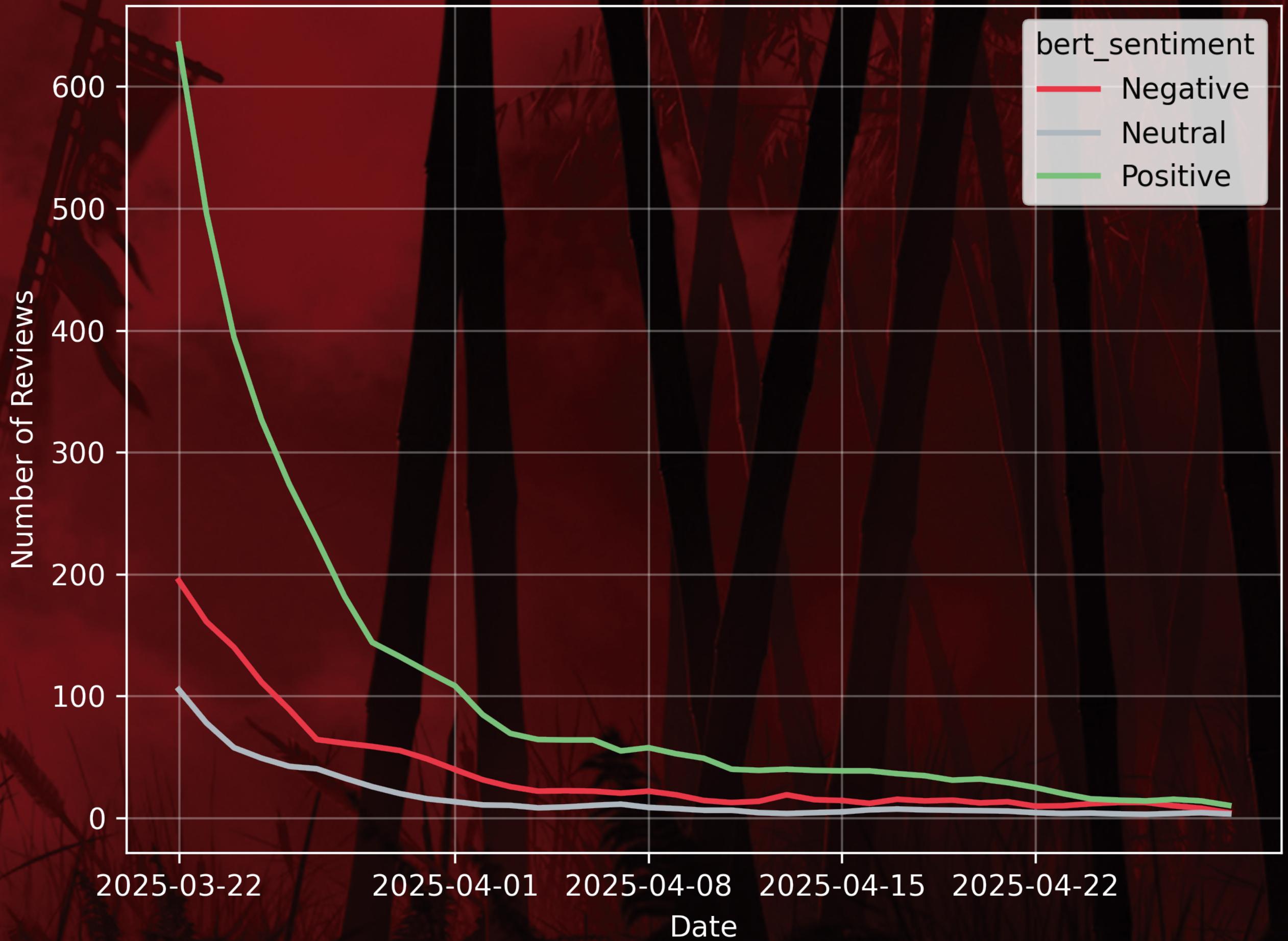


# PLAY TIME COMPARISON SUMMARY

- Negative reviews often come from players with substantial playtime — sometimes even more than those who left positive feedback. This suggests criticism comes from experienced players, not just casual users.
- Positive reviews show a similarly high median playtime, reinforcing that satisfaction often follows extended engagement.
- Neutral reviews span a wide range but tend to be shorter in playtime, possibly indicating less investment or uncertainty about the game.

Both praise and criticism are primarily driven by players with significant time in the game, making their feedback especially meaningful for developers.

# REVIEW TREND



# REVIEW TREND SUMMARY

- Positive reviews peaked at launch (~March 22), likely driven by marketing hype and visual appeal.
- A sharp post-launch drop suggests that early excitement was short-lived, possibly due to gameplay or narrative issues.
- Negative sentiment persisted longer, indicating continued player frustration beyond the initial release period.
- Frustrations likely stem from bugs, performance issues, or lack of mechanical depth discovered after extended play.
- Total review volume declined after 2 weeks, signaling limited replayability and low long-term engagement.

# CONCLUSION

The analysis of 9,000+ Steam reviews reveals a complex reception of Assassin's Creed Shadows, shaped by both initial excitement and emerging disappointment over time.

- **Sentiment distribution** shows a majority of reviews (over 60%) were positive, but nearly 20% were negative — highlighting a significant segment of dissatisfied players despite overall favorable reception.
- **WordCloud insights** reinforce this divide: positive feedback focuses on core strengths like stealth, combat, parkour, and visuals, while negative reviews emphasize technical flaws, unengaging mechanics, and unmet expectations around narrative and polish.
- **Playtime patterns** indicate that both praise and criticism come from experienced players — those who spent a substantial amount of time in-game. This suggests that the feedback is not superficial, but deeply informed by hands-on engagement.
- **Review trends over time** highlight a sharp peak in positive sentiment at launch, followed by a steady decline and lingering negative reviews. This points to strong hype at release but inadequate long-term retention or satisfaction.

# SUGGESTION

## Refine Core Gameplay Systems

Combat and stealth remain central to the franchise's identity, but feedback suggests they must evolve. Future titles should focus on:

- More responsive and fluid combat
- Expanded stealth tools and AI behaviors
- Better balance between freedom and challenge

## Deepen Narrative and Character Arcs

While leads like Yasuke and Naoe leave an impression, many players desire richer emotional engagement and supporting characters with meaningful depth. Consider:

- Branching character interactions
- Stronger emotional stakes
- Stories that reflect local cultures and consequences

# SUGGESTION

## Prioritize Technical Polish at Launch

Repeated concerns about bugs, FPS drops, and system instability show players value performance as much as visuals. To protect long-term perception:

- Optimize early builds more aggressively
- Communicate transparently about known issues and patches

## Build for Long-Term Engagement

Trends show interest drops within weeks post-launch. Retention could be improved through:

- Compelling side content and world-building
- More reactive worlds that change over time

# SUGGESTION

## **Rebuild Trust by Listening to the Community**

Many of the most detailed reviews—positive and negative—come from high-playtime users who deeply care about the franchise. These players are:

- Franchise veterans with clear expectations
- Highly engaged voices in the public discourse
- A reflection of the community's long-term loyalty
- Future titles should embrace this feedback loop early.
- Listening to long-time fans isn't just good analytics—it's how the franchise earns trust again.

# THANK YOU

As a long-time Assassin's Creed fan — from Altair to Naoe and Yasuke — this project comes not from criticism, but care.

It's the fans who made this franchise legendary.  
Who celebrated its stories, defended its vision, and grew its legacy.

But today, I find myself playing only a fraction of what's offered.  
Not because it's bad — but because it no longer feels built for me.

I hope this analysis reminds us — and maybe even the developers —  
that when you truly listen to your community,  
you don't just preserve a franchise.

You **honor its legacy**.