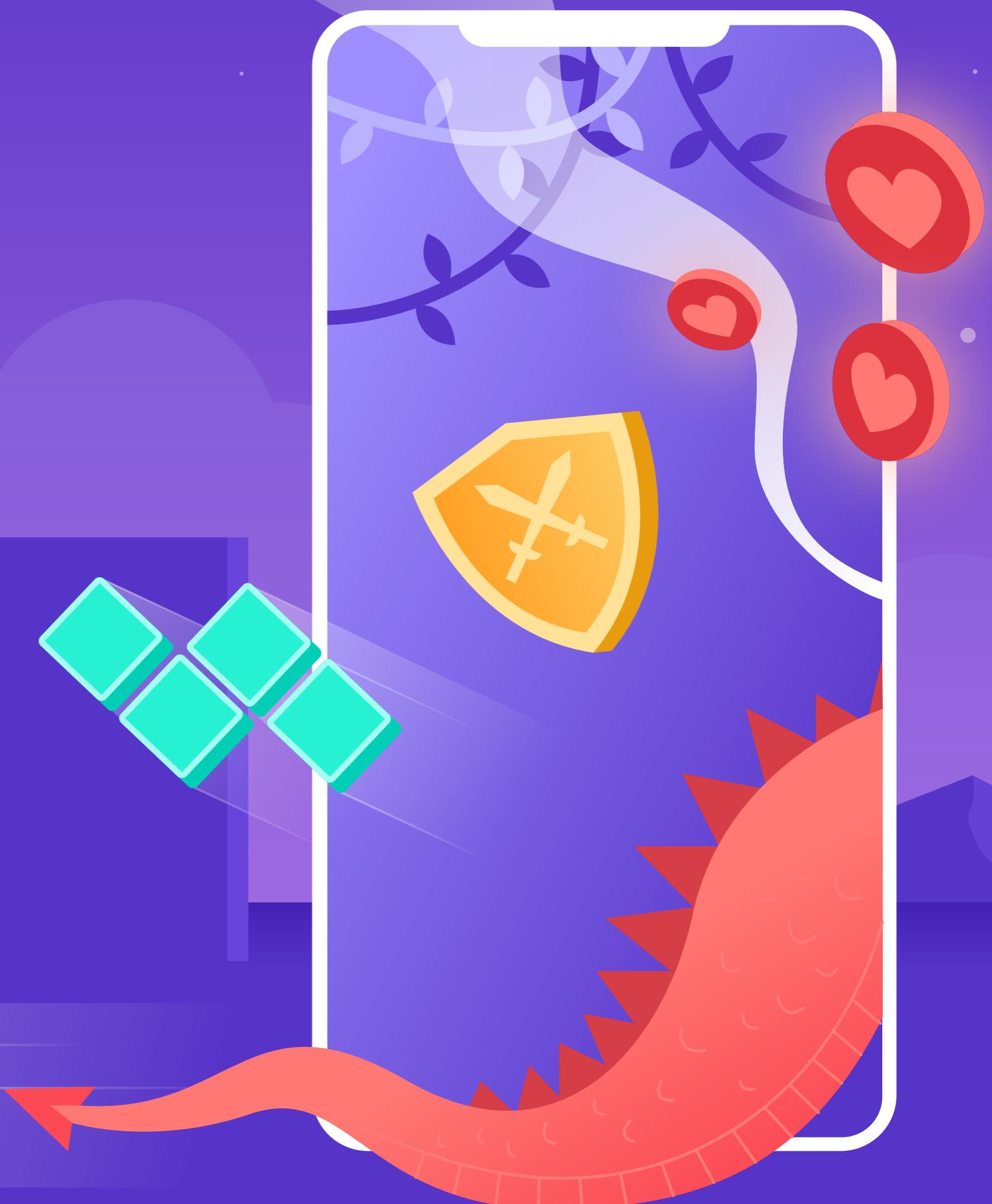
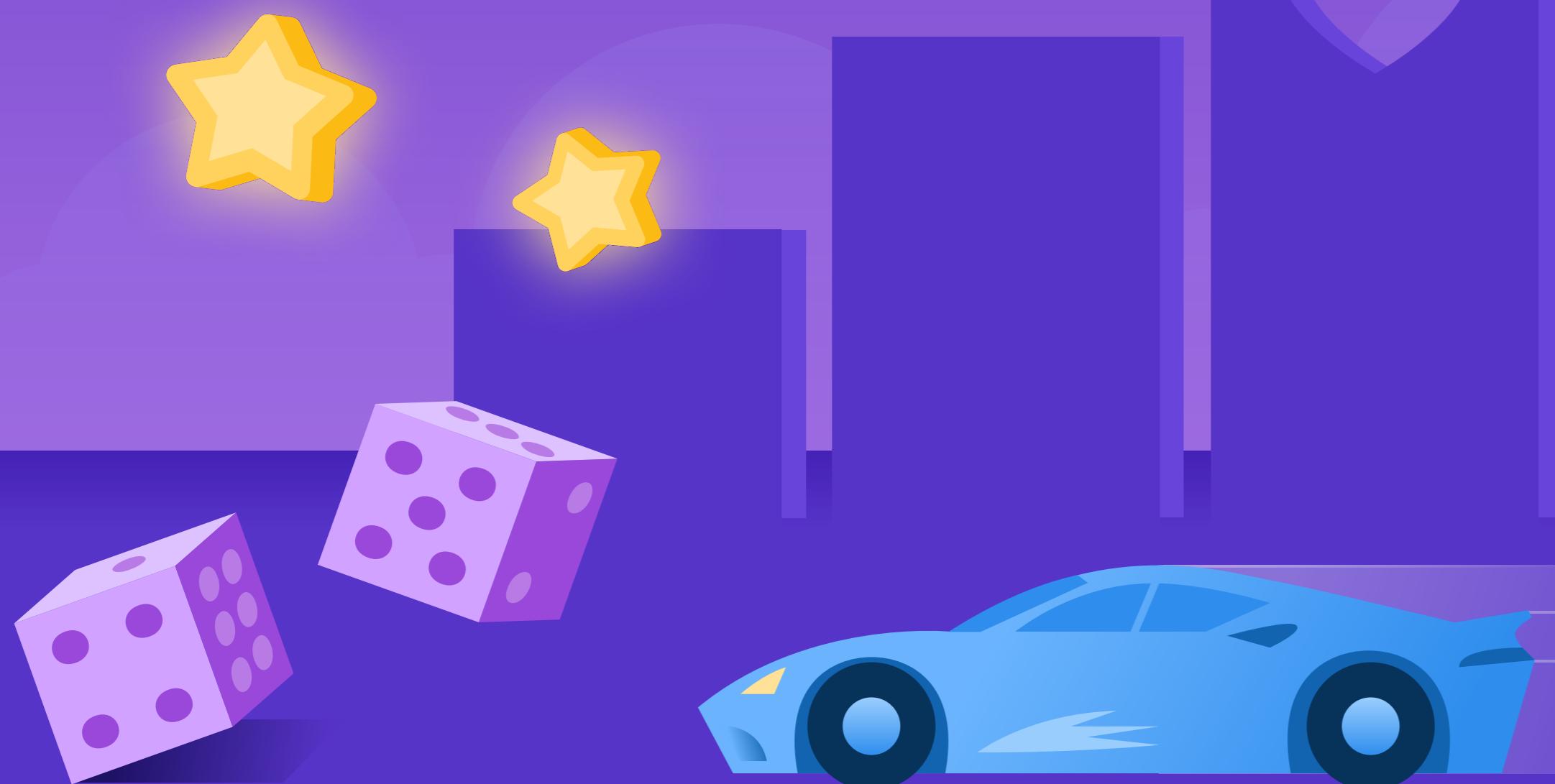


2023



Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report

Discover what drives engagement and fosters strong loyalty among today's mobile gamers



Foreword

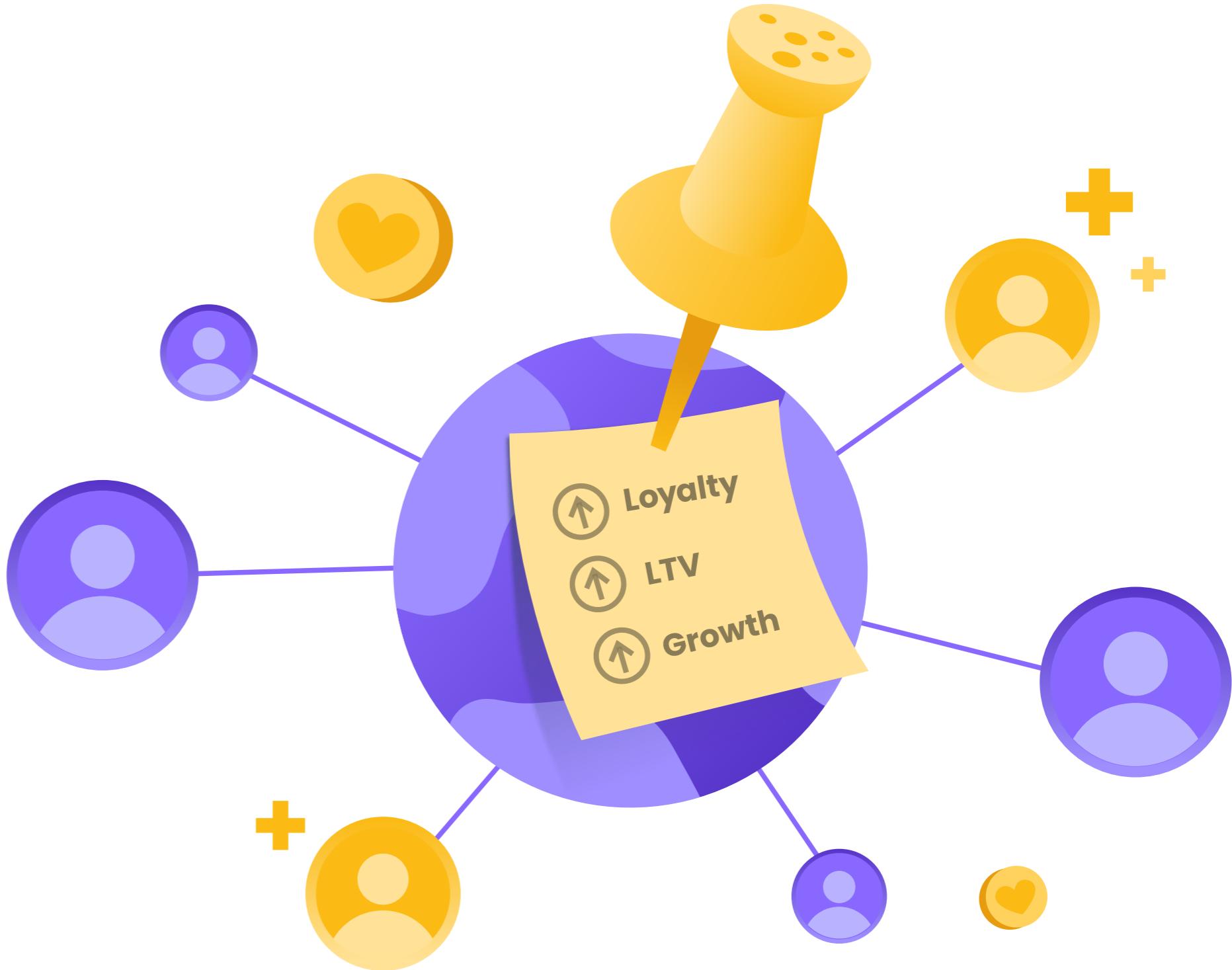
It's no secret that acquiring users has become more difficult and expensive year over year, and maximizing retention and lifetime value (LTV) of existing users has become even more essential to drive growth of every mobile game. At Mistplay, we're mobile marketers and app developers too, and are firm believers that loyalty is mission-critical to sustainable and profitable growth.

We operate a community of millions of monthly gamers on a global scale and are fortunate to be able to aggregate and synthesize this rich set of data to help publishers better understand the state of gamer loyalty in today's mobile gaming environment. Our inaugural **Loyalty Index** is a longitudinal benchmark that systematically measures loyalty across mobile gaming genres while highlighting how leading genres achieve success across six key metrics. Additionally, by tapping into our community of engaged gamers, our **Loyalty Survey** explores what drives player motivation, spending habits, and retention.

Our goal in surfacing these insights is to support the ecosystem of game publishers and developers – specifically the marketing, monetization, and product teams – to help guide strategic thinking and decisions that can enhance game performance. By providing insights into loyalty across different genres and consumer behaviors, we hope that this report will become another tool in your toolbox to assess player engagement, monetization, and overall game success.

We hope you find the report and key insights on mobile gamer loyalty valuable. We'd love to hear from you so please connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) or reach out to us to share feedback on how we can make future releases of this report more valuable – and stay tuned for more insights from Mistplay that you won't find anywhere else.

– Jason Heller, CEO



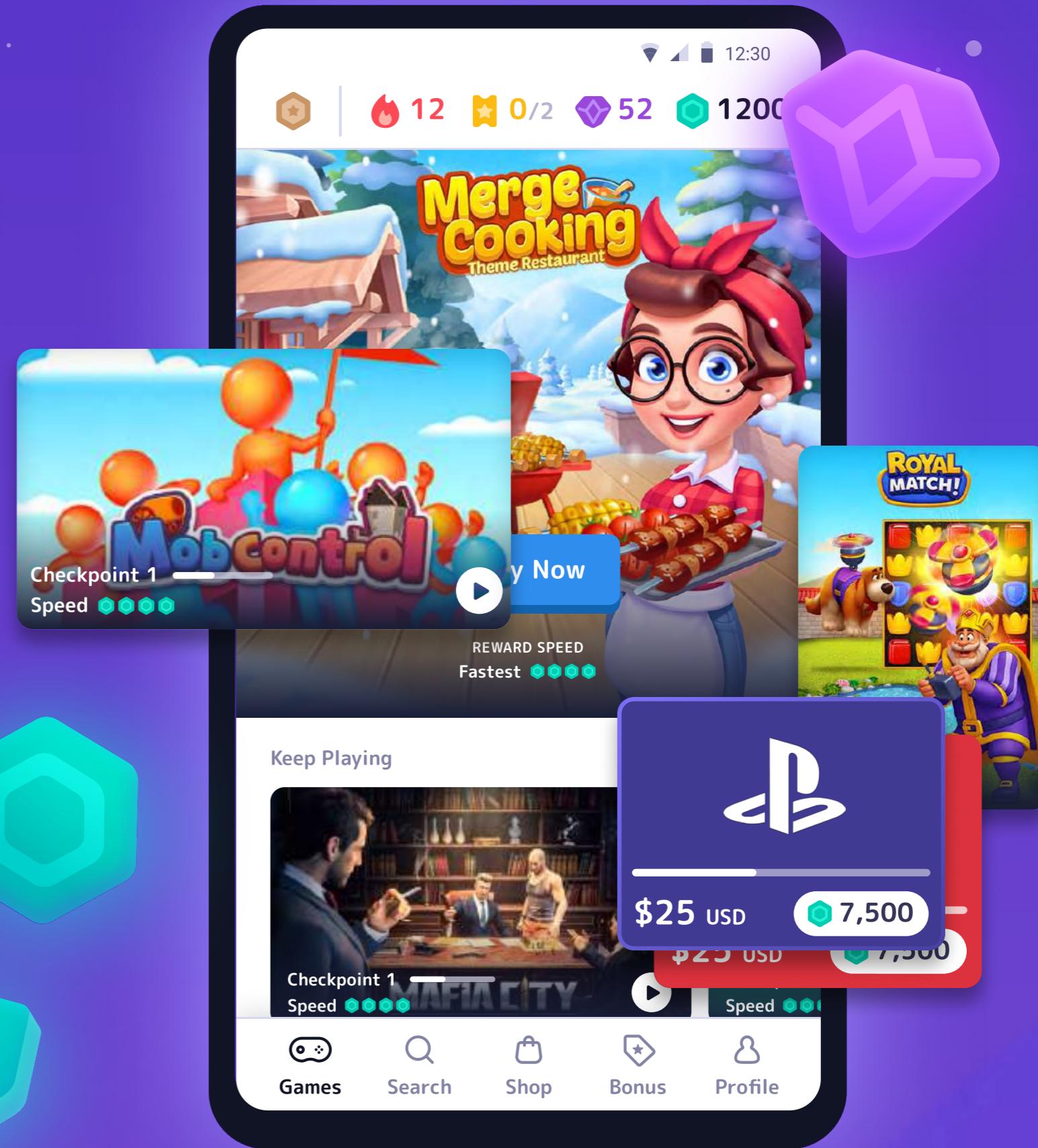
About Mistplay

Mistplay is the #1 loyalty app for mobile gamers.*

Our community of millions of engaged mobile gamers use Mistplay to discover new games to play and earn rewards. Headquartered in Montreal and launched in 2016, Mistplay has climbed the ranks as a media source for game publishers, most recently ranking Top 5 Best media sources for Global ROI and Retention in the 2023 Singular ROI Index.

- **A growing community** of over 2 million monthly gamers means developers can reach a large audience of engaged players looking for their next favorite game.
- **Our AI-driven recommendation engine** suggests games to players based on their play and spend habits, ensuring Mistplayers discover games they're most likely to enjoy.
- **Play-and-earn** fosters increased user retention and LTV as users redeem loyalty points for tangible rewards like gift cards from top brands.

Visit www.mistplay.com to learn more.

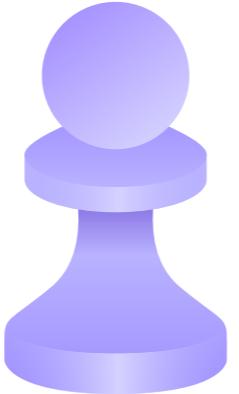


Key index insights



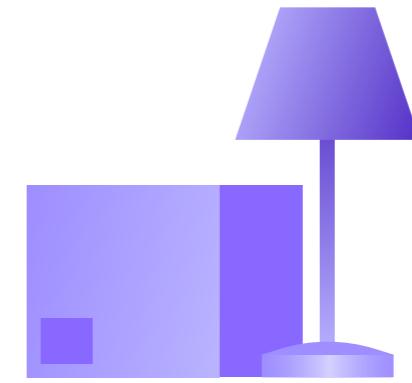
RPG games garner the most loyalty.

RPGs rank the highest on the Loyalty Index with a loyalty rating of 75 out of 100. Deep gameplay experiences and compounding monetization systems drive players to spend more money in a single transaction, spend more often, and play more often than nearly any other genre.



Strategy games drive repeat purchases.

The genre also ranks second out of 13 for both average sessions per user and average playtime. Strong spending mechanics intertwined with socialization and customization gameplay features fuel user progress and competitiveness.



Lifestyle games see the highest average sessions per user.

These games also drive strong monetization by ranking first for share of spenders by D30 and third for repeat purchases. With bite-sized and compellingly-repeatable gameplay tasks, these games are designed to bring players in multiple times throughout the day and spend incrementally to achieve their aspirations.

Key survey insights

Players enjoy multiple games at once but only spend money on a few.

77.3% of spenders rotate between two to seven games at any given time throughout the week, but 53% only spend money on a single game.



Players crave gameplay-based ads.

71.7% of all respondents state it's important to see actual gameplay footage in ads when deciding to install a game or not.



More than a third of players ignore mobile ads.

36.7% of respondents said they actively ignore in-game ads, while 25.7% actively pay attention no matter what type of game is advertised.



Word of mouth is a top-3 acquisition source.

While ads and app stores reign supreme, 35% of respondents say that they discover new mobile games to play through recommendations from friends and family.



Negatively-received updates can impact player retention.

39% of respondents say they will quit playing a mobile game if the publisher releases a poorly received update that isn't fixed within a week.



App store ratings and reviews are crucial deciding factors for game installs.

Over 60% of respondents believe that star ratings and written reviews are important when considering downloading a new title from the Google Play Store – with over 30% rating them as **very important**.



Players are motivated by play-and-earn.

84% of players would be interested to start playing a game where they can play and earn tangible rewards, and one in four players said they would even *leave* their current favorite game and fully switch over.



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The Mistplay Loyalty Index



The Mistplay Loyalty Index



In today's mobile gaming market, player loyalty is the key to growth and maximizing lifetime value. While LTV often varies per game genre, several high-level KPIs can impact LTV on a fundamental level by affecting player loyalty. Not only are retention and spender conversion crucial metrics to understand the breadth of loyalty, but the quality of user spending and engagement play an important role in understanding the depth.

Looking at these metrics individually can help mobile game publishers pinpoint where you can tweak or optimize specific features. However, looking at these metrics in the aggregate, as a benchmark, will allow your teams to compare their efforts against averages across genres and glean insights into how leading genres optimize gameplay loops, monetization, and LiveOps to fuel user engagement and spending.

The **Mistplay Loyalty Index** is a longitudinal benchmark that systematically measures loyalty across mobile gaming genres. To generate this index, we analyzed 500 mobile games and millions of players across the Mistplay platform, looking at six key KPIs from data sets covering the first half of 2023.

Monetization



Share of spenders (D30)

Share of players who made at least one IAP within 30 days of installation



Average repeat purchase rate

Players who make more than one IAP / total spenders



Average purchase value

Total revenue / total transactions



Retention (D30)

Share of players who played the game 30 days since installation



Average sessions per user

Total sessions / total users



Average playtime per session per user

Total duration of all sessions / total sessions

Engagement

Loyalty ratings

The Mistplay loyalty rating is a holistic score which encompasses each game's rating across six key metrics – three monetization-based KPIs and three engagement-based KPIs.

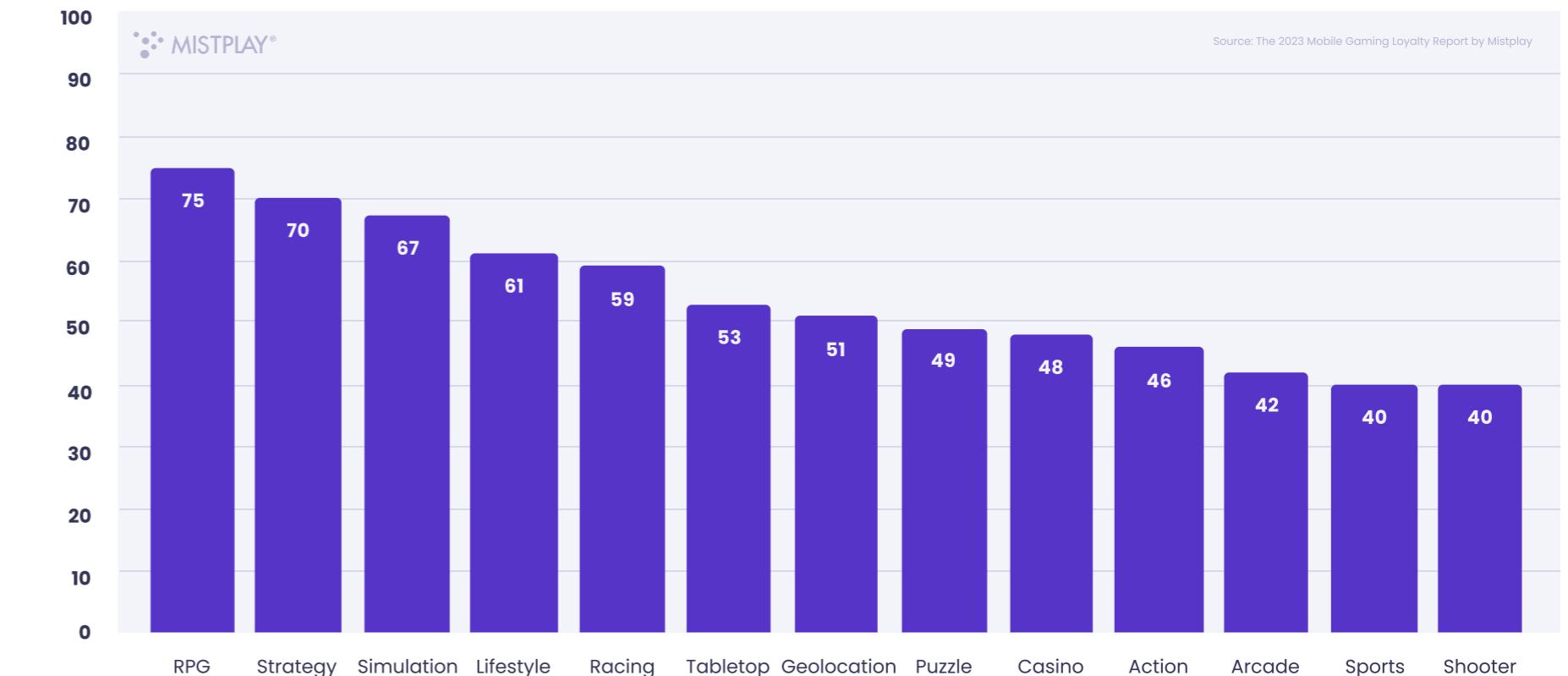
RPG (75), Strategy (70), and Simulation games (67) garner the most loyalty across all mobile game genres, successfully keeping players coming back to play and spend in titles across the genres.

RPGs come out as the top genre for overall loyalty with a rating of 75. It is also one of the most consistently loyal genres, ranking within the top three across four of the monetization and engagement metrics. Insights from [data.ai¹](#) show that RPGs lead in mobile game consumer spend, totalling \$25.5B and accounting for 31% of IAP spend worldwide in 2022. With deep gameplay experiences to navigate and progress through, RPG players spend more, spend more often, and play more frequently with longer sessions than nearly all genres.

Strategy games are not far behind as the second highest loyalty genre with a rating of 70 and also come in second-place in consumer spend at \$12.1B according to data.ai (15% worldwide). Repeat purchases and strong overall engagement flourish in this genre as robust upgrade systems often require time commitment or spend as players seek to continuously progress and dominate.

Simulation takes third in overall loyalty with a rating of 67, ranking in the top five across five of the metrics – including third for retention and second for share of spenders while commanding 10% of worldwide mobile gaming consumer spend (\$8.1B). The genre often provides a unique avenue of creativity and engagement with virtual worlds to build and socialize in, driving continued play time and spend to maximize players' experience within their digital playgrounds.

Loyalty rating by genre



Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by Mistplay

Category rankings by genre (1 - 13)

Genre	Share of spenders (D30)	Average purchase value	Average repeat purchase rate	Retention (D30)	Average sessions per user	Average playtime per session per user
Action	7th	7th	5th	7th	13th	5th
Arcade	11th	9th	7th	8th	12th	11th
Casino	3rd	10th	10th	2nd	6th	12th
Geolocation	9th	2nd	13th	5th	4th	10th
Lifestyle	1st	11th	3rd	11th	1st	7th
Puzzle	4th	13th	8th	1st	9th	8th
Racing	8th	3rd	6th	6th	8th	3rd
RPG	6th	1st	2nd	9th	3rd	1st
Shooter	10th	12th	12th	13th	11th	9th
Simulation	2nd	8th	4th	3rd	5th	4th
Sports	13th	5th	11th	12th	10th	13th
Strategy	5th	6th	1st	10th	2nd	2nd
Tabletop	12th	4th	9th	4th	7th	6th

Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by Mistplay

Monetization metrics

In-app purchases compete with players' other discretionary spending for share of wallet, with the most compelling games coming out as a top choice with the most perceived value. Implementation of strong monetization systems in your games can drive share of spenders and quality of user spending, leading to increased revenue per user and long-term loyalty.

Lifestyle games are a champion in mobile game monetization, coming in first for share of spenders by D30 and third for repeat purchase rate. Alongside bite-sized, fun, and compellingly-repeatable gameplay tasks, the genre excels at monetizing on emotion. Many Lifestyle games create strong emotional connections early by linking compelling storytelling or the prospect of in-game stardom with [a taste of premium gameplay experience²](#) before scarcity and challenge sets in. Monetization is carefully balanced to promote spending as a worthy convenience for players to achieve their aspirations while also ensuring other players can still progress toward satisfaction, even at a slower rate.

While **RPGs** don't hold a top rank in share of spenders, players that do spend make the most high-value purchases and tend to spend more frequently. RPGs often feature long-term objectives and quest progression that require either hours of time or currency spent to make meaningful progress, which presents a powerful opportunity to drive higher value purchases. Top RPGs aim to [diversify their monetization models³](#) and continuously introduce value-driven content through updates, limited-time events, and gachas, which compound on top of retention-based monetization systems like battle passes. These options, varying in price, allow players to evaluate the cost-to-value ratio and help ensure they feel like they're getting their money's worth.

Strategy games excel in repeat purchases in particular, with many titles being [purpose-built⁴](#) to encourage repeat purchases through socialization and customization. For example, alongside countless upgrade systems, players of 4X strategy games and other sub-genres are often encouraged to regularly spend money on "guild gifts" (bundles of items and perks that benefit an entire guild) and VIP shops with limited-time deals featuring new characters, experience cards, and more.

Monetization by genre (indexed)



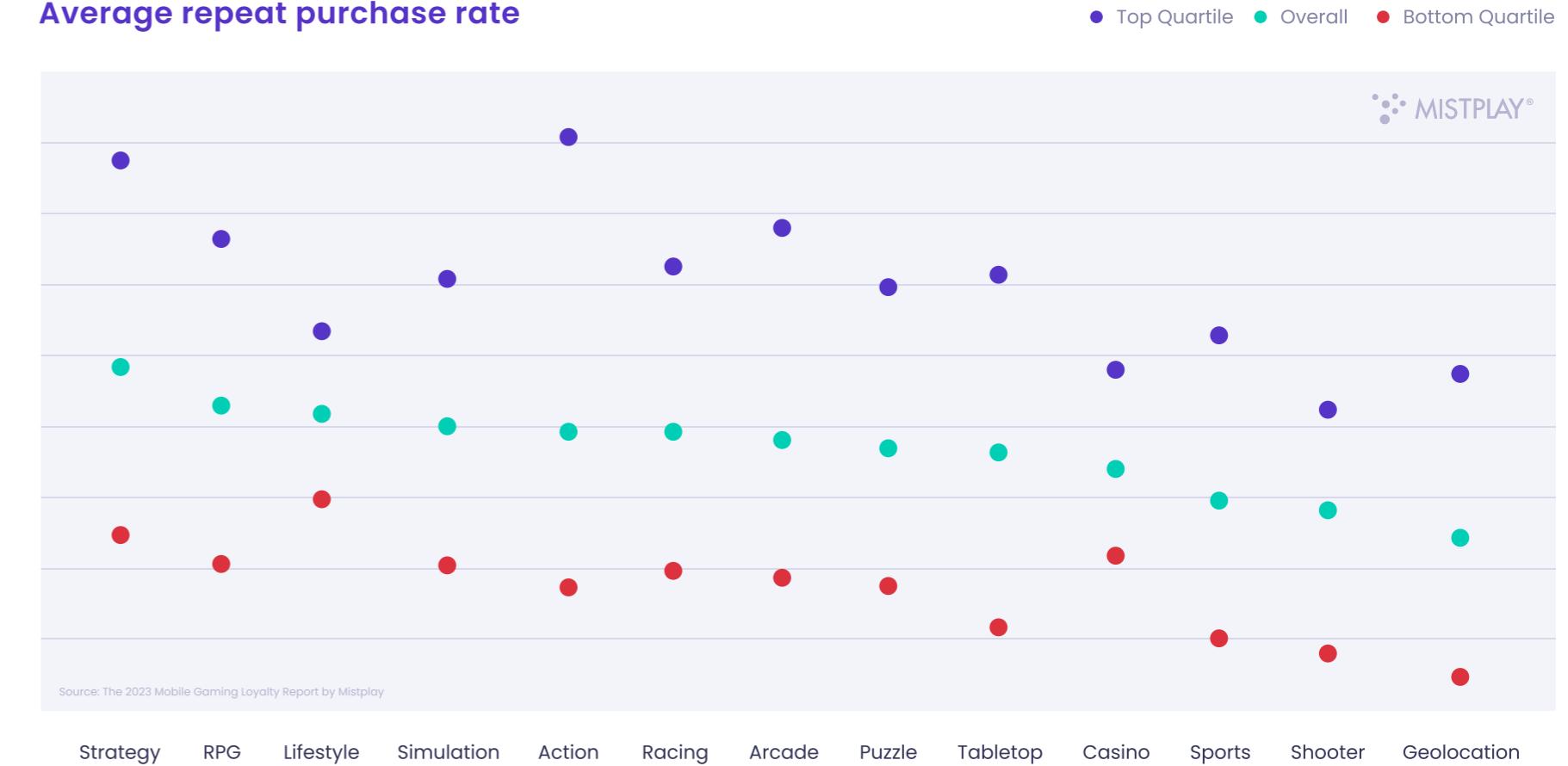
Monetization by quartile

The top quartiles for **RPG** and **Tabletop** games offer giant leaps in average purchase value over the mean. Successful titles in these genres have the opportunity to make significant revenue – RPG games especially, when combined with their high-ranked average repeat purchase rate.

Notably, while **Casino** ranks lower for purchase value and frequency, the genre exhibits one of the largest gaps between the top and bottom quartiles for share of spenders, indicating that games in this category have plenty of room to grow and succeed in converting spenders throughout the game's lifecycle.

*Quartiles help illustrate the spread of performance between games within a genre.
Wider variance among the top and bottom 25% can signal opportunities for growth.

Average repeat purchase rate



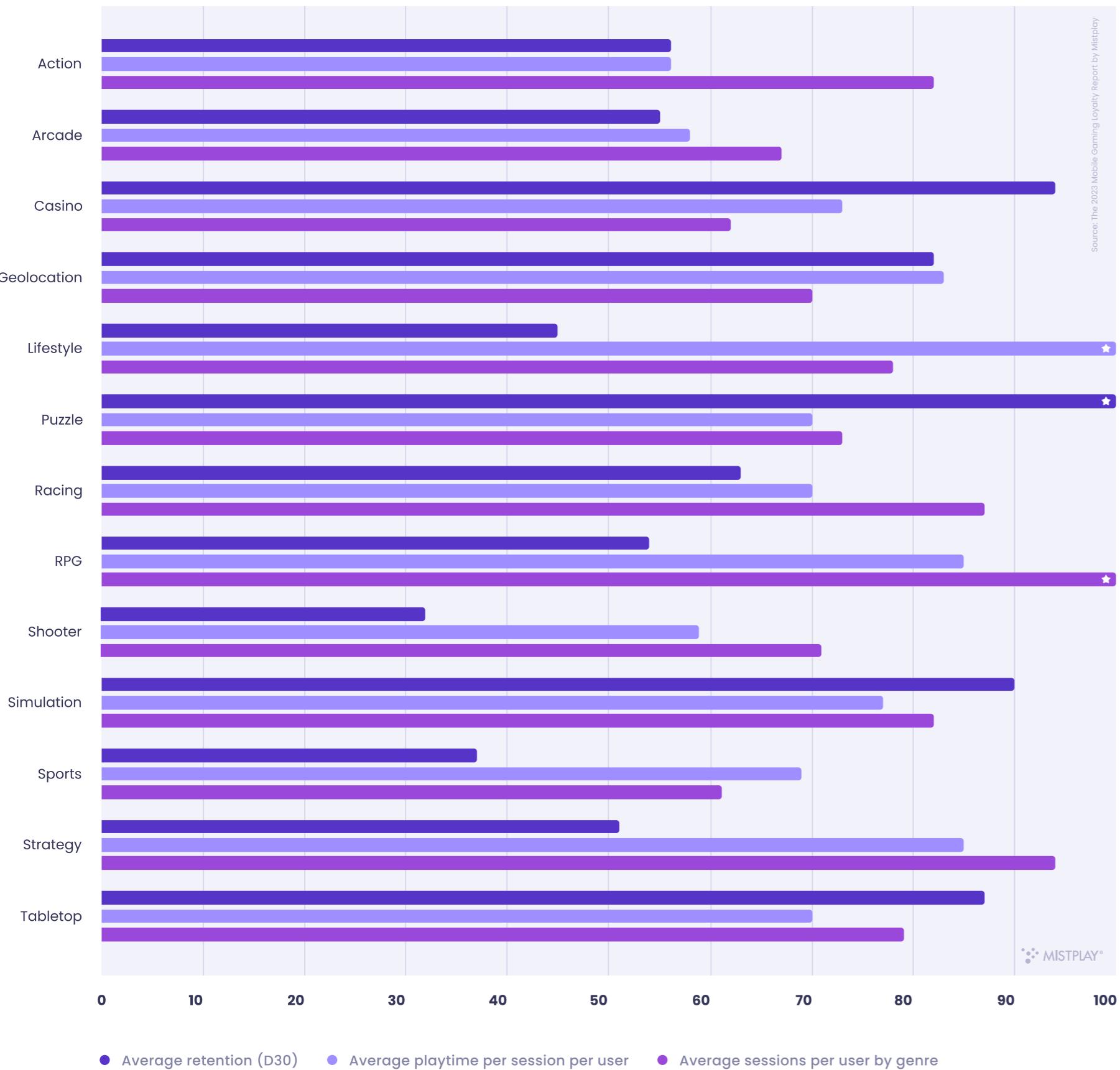
Average share of spenders (D30)



Average purchase value



Engagement by genre (indexed)



Engagement metrics

Your players have busy lives, and your game competes for their attention alongside every other installed app and the daily tasks they have in life. Success means implementing effective engagement strategies to increase user retention and foster loyalty as players play more often and for longer on your titles.

Puzzle games are king for D30 retention. The genre successfully [caters to a large casual audience with intuitive gameplay features](#),⁵ which remains true as sub-genres emerge and evolve while iterating on winning formulas. Pick-up and play mechanics coupled with automated tutorials drive a smooth first-time user experience. Simple yet enticing gameplay then fuels the pursuit to beat “countless” levels with progressively unlocked content providing gradual challenge and continuous short bursts of entertainment on the go.

RPGs don’t just dominate in monetization but also stand out as a powerhouse for playtime KPIs, with the highest average playtime overall. These games feature deep experiences where [there’s always something to do](#)⁶ – from exploration to

multiplayer gameplay and well-balanced meta-games providing rotational content, new challenges, and energy refills strategically timed to elicit a feeling of endless content per session.

Strategy games rank highly for engagement with staples like base building and resource management enticing players to return frequently for long, focused play sessions to upgrade, strategize, and battle. But the two playtime metrics aren’t necessarily correlated – **Lifestyle** in particular has the highest average sessions per user but ranks seventh for session duration. From decoration and design to interactive stories, these games often have tons of recurring activities that only take a moment to engage with. Straightforward game loops fueled by always-on [LiveOps events linked to social mechanics](#)⁷ have served as a successful foundation for years and often encourage users to check in to see what’s new whenever they can fit it into their schedule.

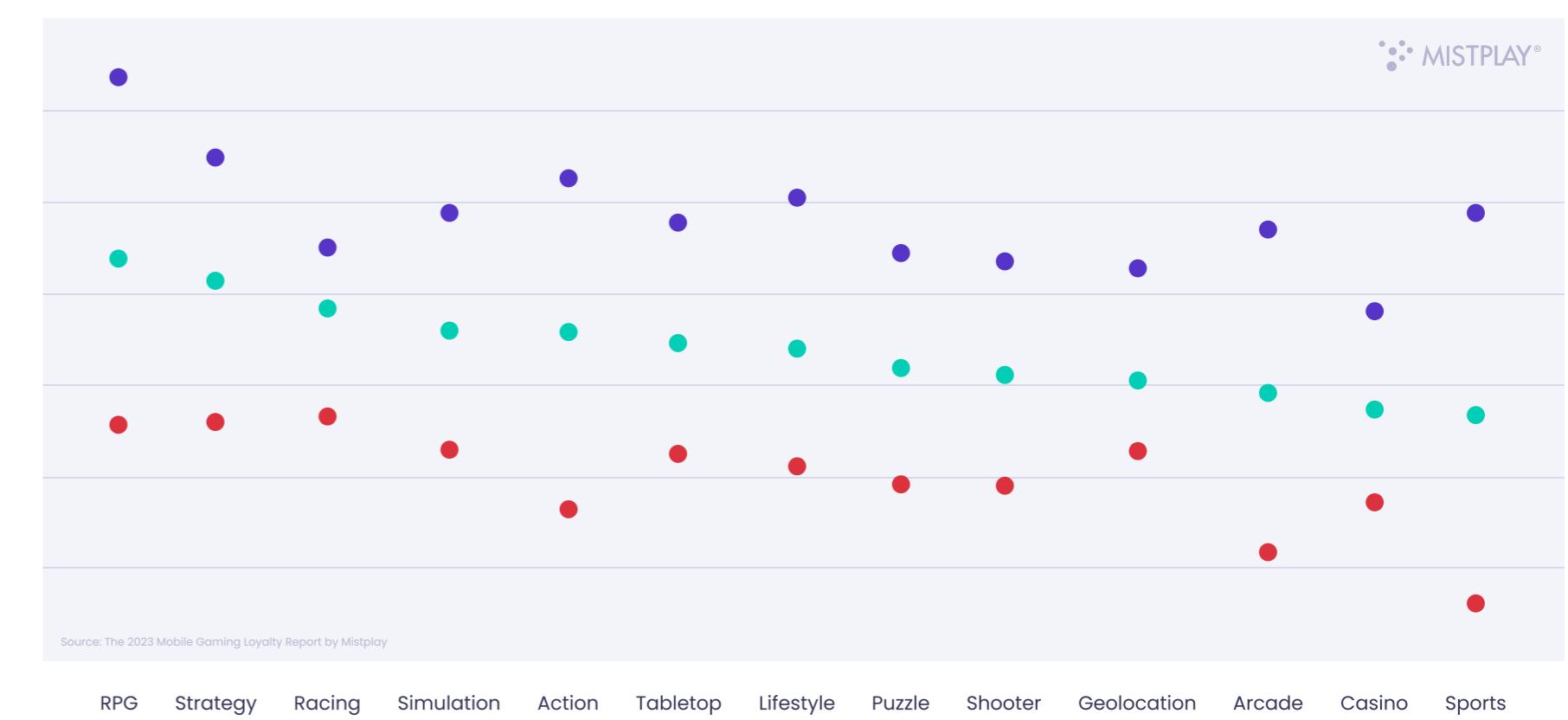
Engagement by quartile

While **Sports** games rank near the bottom for average playtime per session, they have the second-highest average sessions per user score for the genre's top quartile behind **Lifestyle**. Players may actively engage with the most popular Sports games on the market, but engagement is a challenge for many in the genre.

Similarly to monetization, **Casino**'s top quartile stands out against many other genres for D30 retention, coming only in second behind **Puzzle** both overall and for the top-performing quartile. With a large delta between the overall and top quartile, there's plenty of room for growth in this category.

*Quartiles help illustrate the spread of performance between games within a genre.
Wider variance among the top and bottom 25% can signal opportunities for growth.

Average playtime per session per user



Average retention (D30)



Average sessions per user by genre



The Mistplay Loyalty Survey



The Mistplay Loyalty Survey

Developing player loyalty requires examining and optimizing all steps of the user journey. From the first ad impression to long-term engagement strategies – these elements affect how much time players play your game, how much they spend, and their overall lifetime value. When studies show that [as little as 2%⁸](#) of a mobile game's player base can generate up to 95% of its IAP revenue, ensuring that you're developing player habits and fostering loyalty is crucial to maximizing sustainable long-term success.

To aid product, monetization, and marketing teams in improving player loyalty, we surveyed 3,000 mobile gamers on their discovery, play, and spend habits inside and outside of the Mistplay platform. We crafted 20 questions themed around player loyalty, running through the entire spectrum of the player experience – from discovery and advertising to long-term engagement and spending behavior.

We received responses from a variety of players – from players who spend \$100+ in games (“high-value spenders”) to players who have never spent money in mobile games – to provide you with a breakdown of overall play and spend habits as well as key insights on high-value spenders in particular.



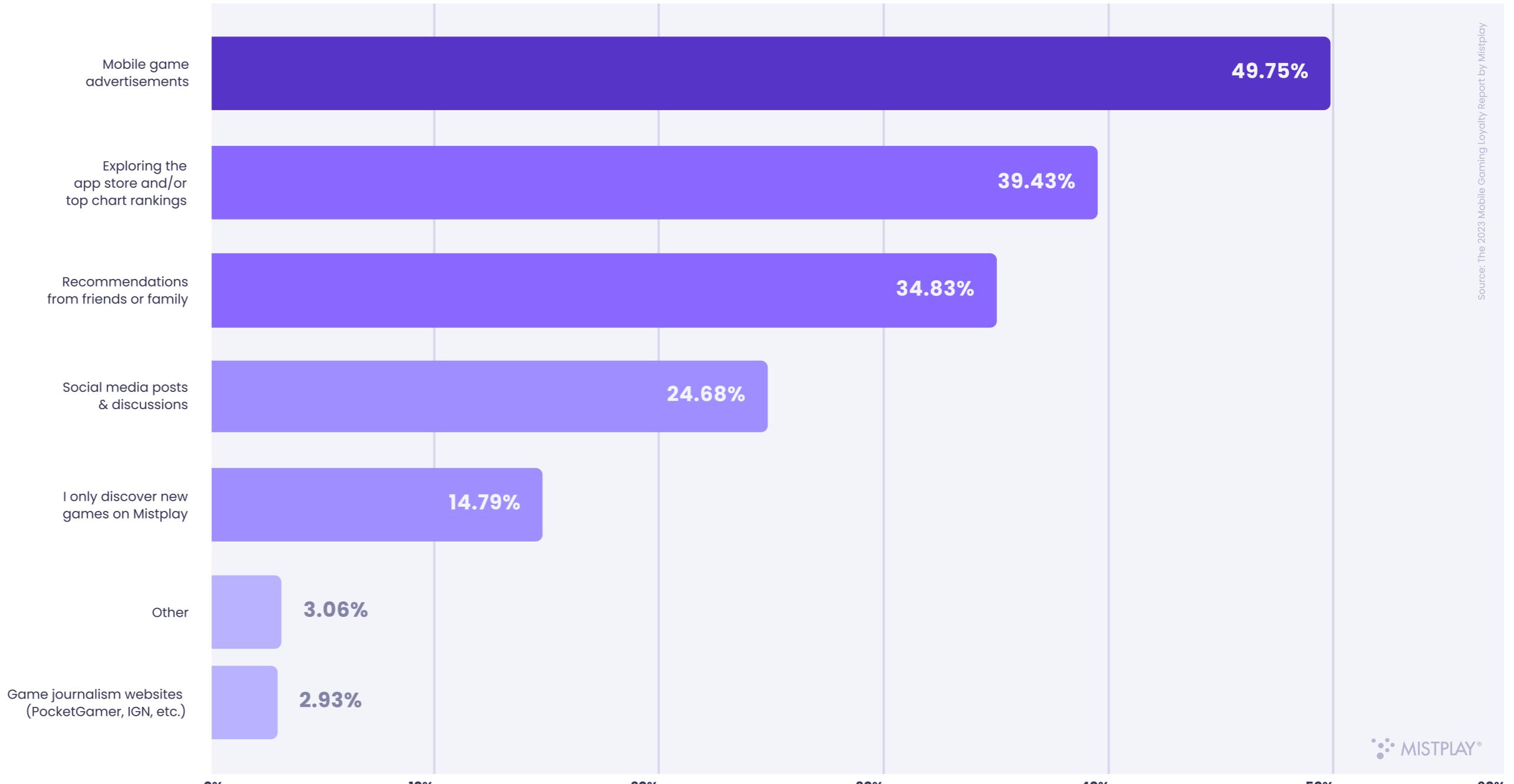
Acquisition

Game discovery

Mobile game advertising remains the most successful discovery method for most players, with nearly half relying on ads as a primary method for learning about new games. Don't discount the personal touch of friends and other players, though, as app store exploration (39.4%) and direct recommendations (34.8%) aren't far behind.

Less than **1%** of high-value spenders get recommendations from game journalism websites, compared to 3% of other players. 

How players discover new mobile games



Question: Besides Mistplay, what's the main way you discover new mobile games to play? (Select all that apply)

Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by Mistplay

Social media channels

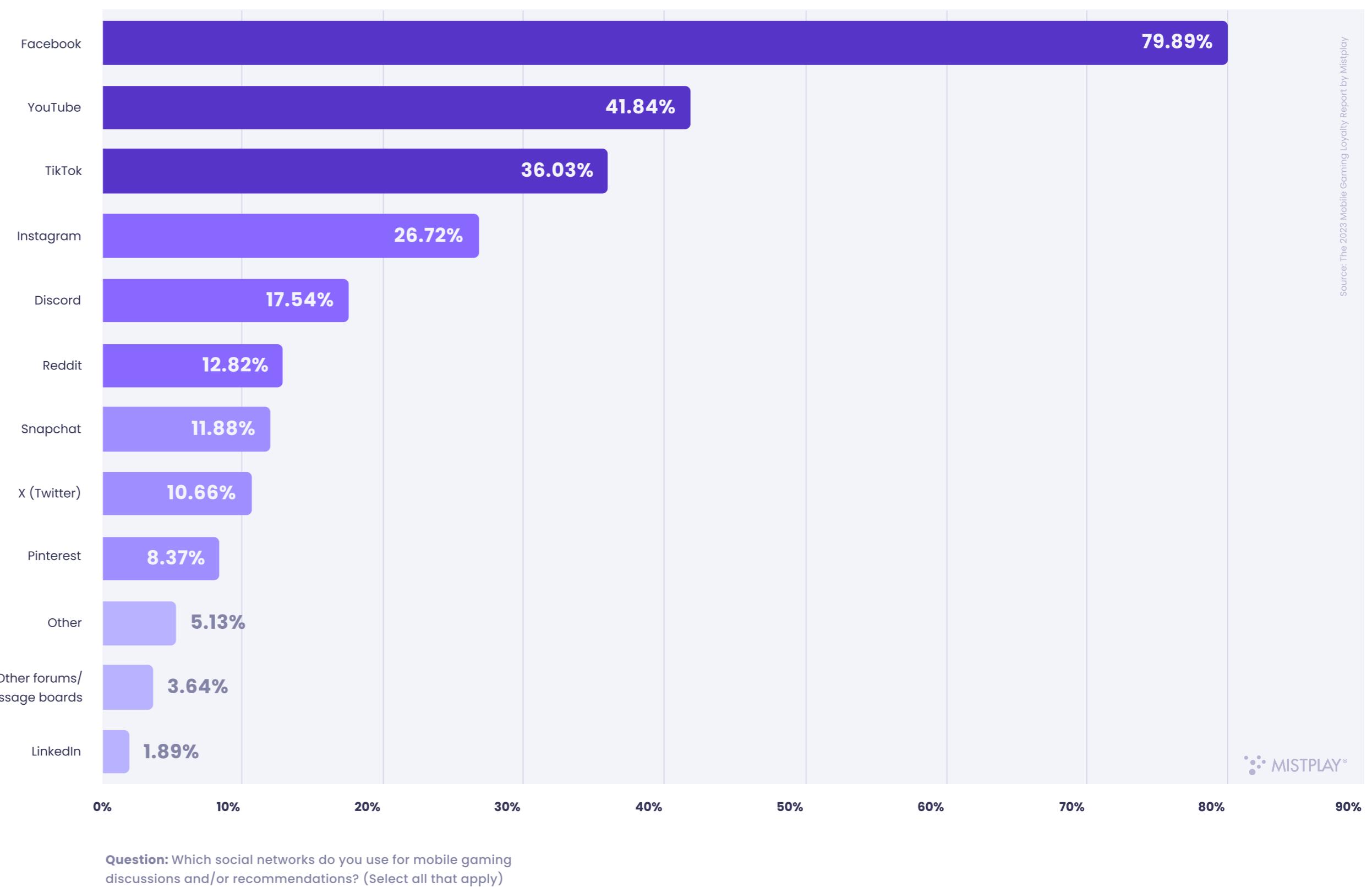
For users who discover new games through social media, **Facebook is the most popular channel, with 80% of respondents saying it is their primary social platform for discussing mobile games and seeking recommendations.**

Facebook's role as the largest social network for creating posts and community groups and sharing links with friends and family makes it a crucial avenue for word-of-mouth advertising and can be strategically leveraged by mobile marketers.

YouTube and TikTok aren't far behind, and their video-centric platforms (long-form in the case of YouTube and short-form for TikTok) make them a perfect venue for gaming content that fuels engagement and new game discovery.

Other platforms that aren't as popular but would still benefit from omnichannel marketing and community engagement include Instagram (photo sharing), Discord (live chat-based discussions with centralized communities), and Reddit (community-based message boards). These channels require their own approaches and strategies to maximize effectiveness, so ensure you research whether entering these spaces will provide a return on your investment dependent on the game genre and the player base.

Social networks players use to discuss mobile games



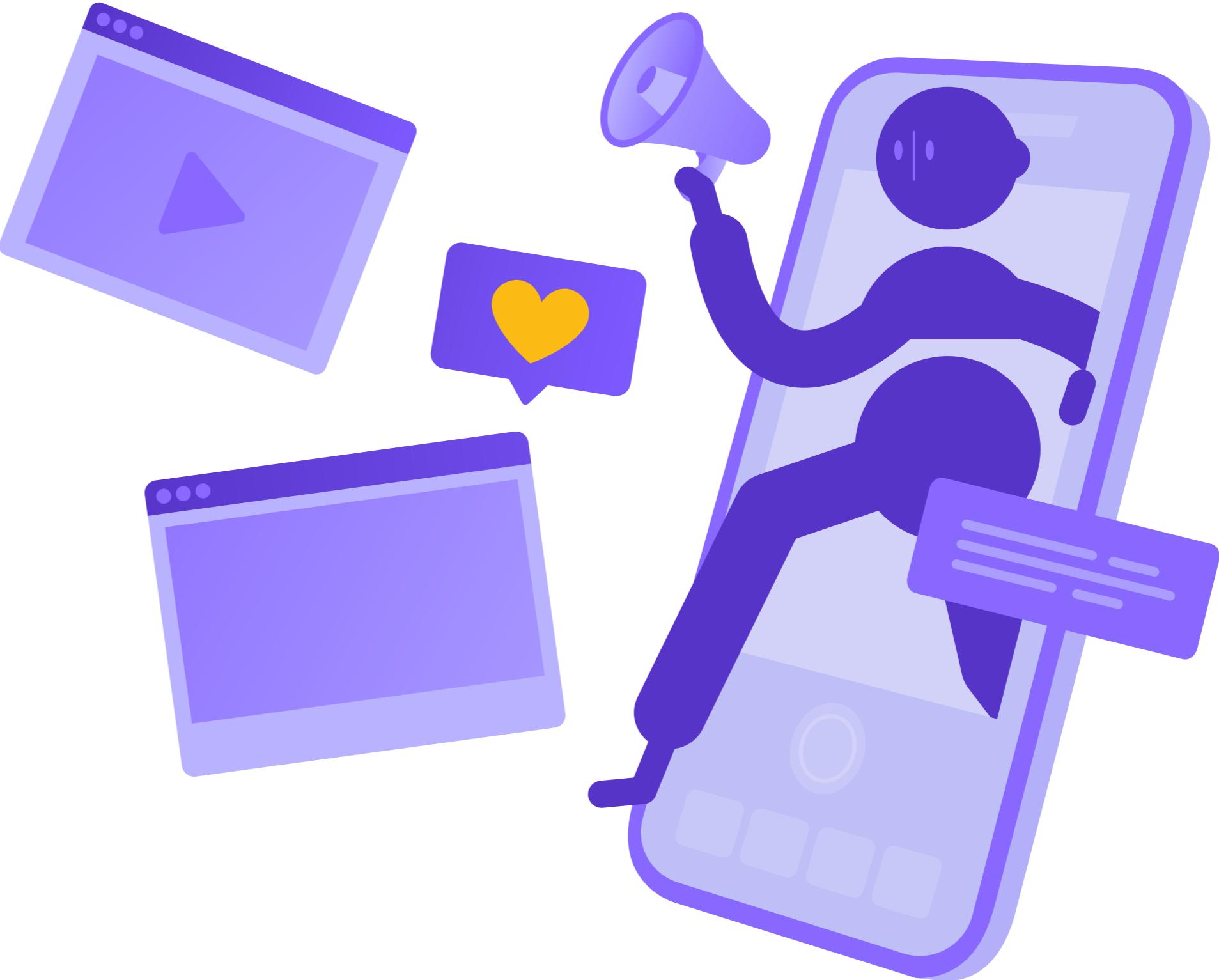
Advertising

In-game ads

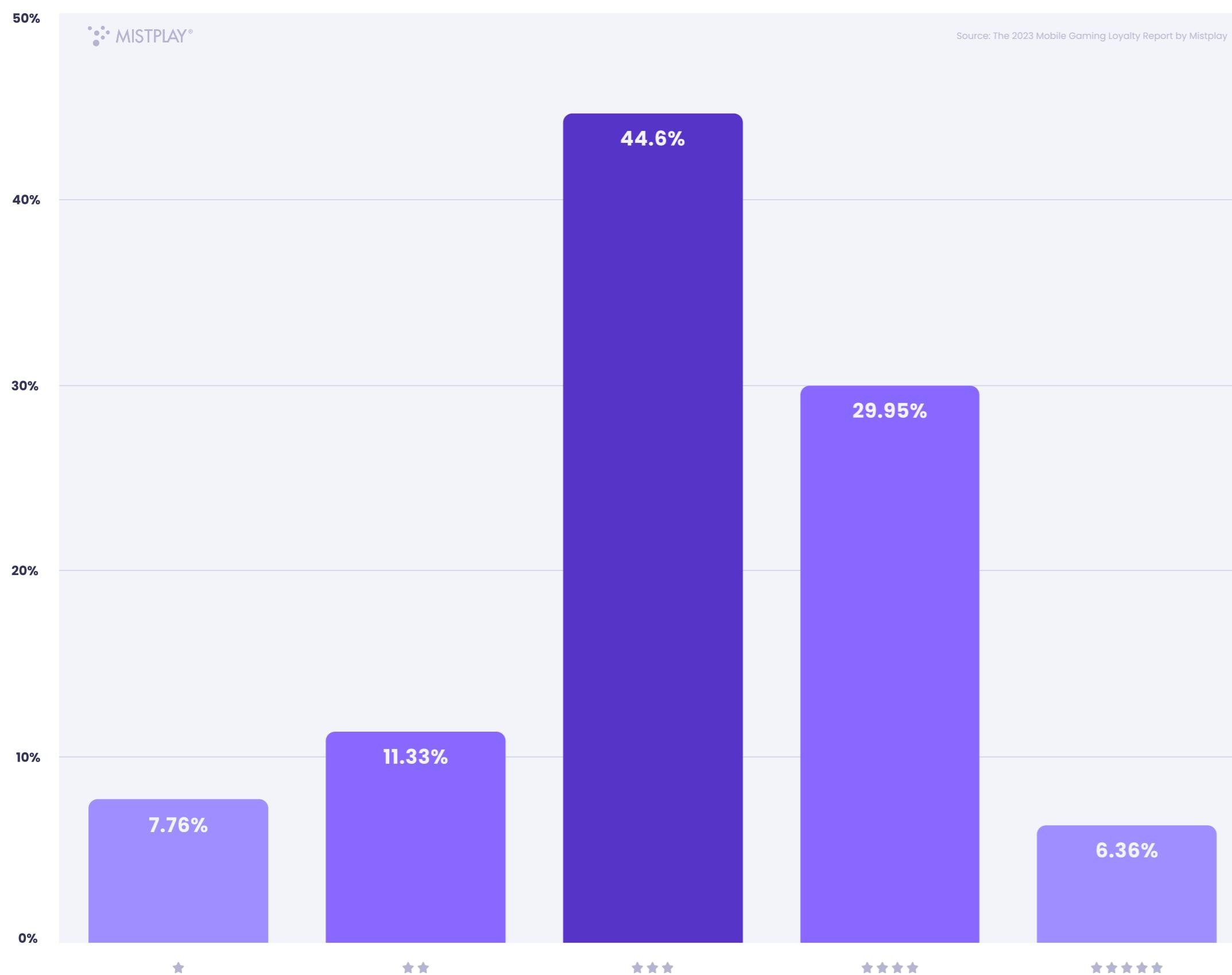
Maximizing the impact of your advertising means understanding how to command attention – especially when **36.7% of players typically ignore and disengage with all advertising while they play**. Conversely, 25.7% of players will actively watch advertisements if they find them appealing, even if they're not looking for a new game.

Ad timing and repetition are also crucial. **Over half of mobile gamers will download a new game within a few days of ad exposure**, and 68.3% within the first few weeks, while 10% need to see ads for a month or more before downloading. However, at the end of the day, 21.7% still won't download a new game no matter how many times they've been exposed to an ad.

Of course, design and content also significantly impact whether ads are effective, and using real game footage in ads is essential for many players. **71.7% of players say it's important to see actual gameplay** before deciding to download a new game, with 55.1% saying real gameplay footage is *very* important. Marketers should cautiously approach using fake gameplay in their user acquisition strategy, but there's no denying that it can have a [massive impact⁹](#) when done right.



Lowest-acceptable star rating to install a new mobile game



App store listings

Keeping your app store listing in top shape is also essential. Roughly **60% of players believe that star ratings (59.6%) and written reviews (61.9%) are important** when considering downloading a new title from the Google Play Store – with over 30% of players saying they're **very important**.

Marketers should take advantage of their ability to interact with and moderate reviews on their respective platforms. For example, the Google Play Store enables mobile game marketers to moderate and reply to reviews roughly 24 hours before each posted review goes live on the game's app store listing.

The star rating a game receives is also an essential factor for determining user acquisition. In fact, the average acceptable star rating for most players is surprisingly a 3 – anything lower than that, and the chances of players downloading your game diminish significantly. Some players are even pickier, with more than one in three requiring 4 stars or above.

High-value spenders have more exacting standards:



87.6% of players who spend \$100+ won't download anything rated less than three stars – 16.6% higher than all other players. Further, 42% of high-value spenders won't download anything less than four stars – nearly 30% higher than the average player.

Engagement ★

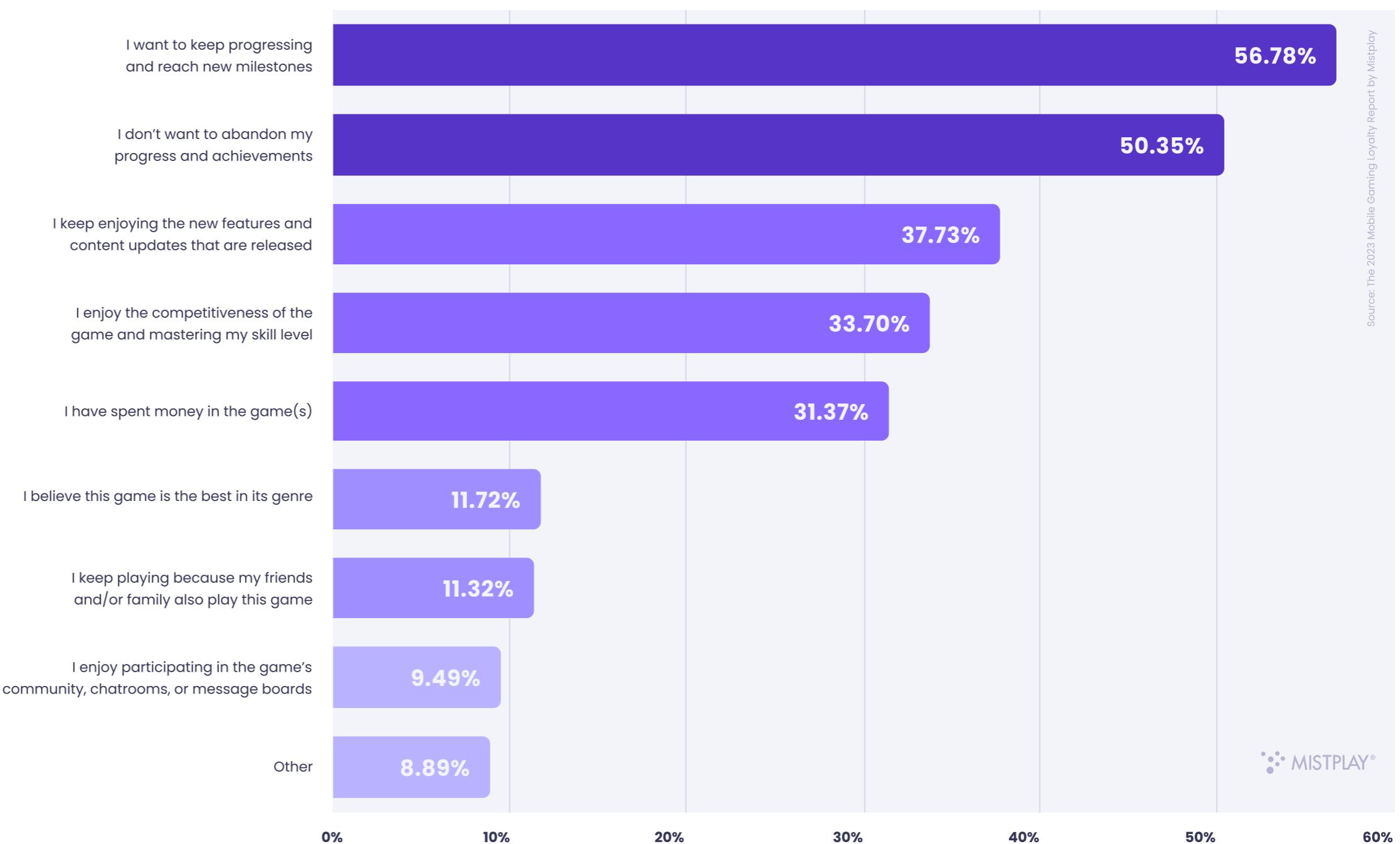
Player motivations

Progression is a significant factor in keeping players engaged and retaining them long-term. In fact, the top two reasons why players are motivated to continue playing a game are the desire to continue progressing (56.8%) and to avoid abandoning their progress (50.3%). As players progress, they also enjoy seeing the newest features and updates added to the game, with 37.7% of players citing it as a reason for returning. Building core gameplay loops that provide meaningful and visible progression – completing levels, unlocking new zones, or upgrading their characters – while leveraging the novelty of new content ensures players are motivated to return to your game for fresh experiences.

The more players spend, the more motivated they are to keep playing because of that investment. ★

52.4% of players who spend over \$100 on mobile games cite their spent money as a motivating factor, 67% higher than the average.

Player motivations for continued gameplay



Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by Mistplay

Motivations to churn

Much like how progression is a driving factor in getting players to return, a lack of progression can drive players away.

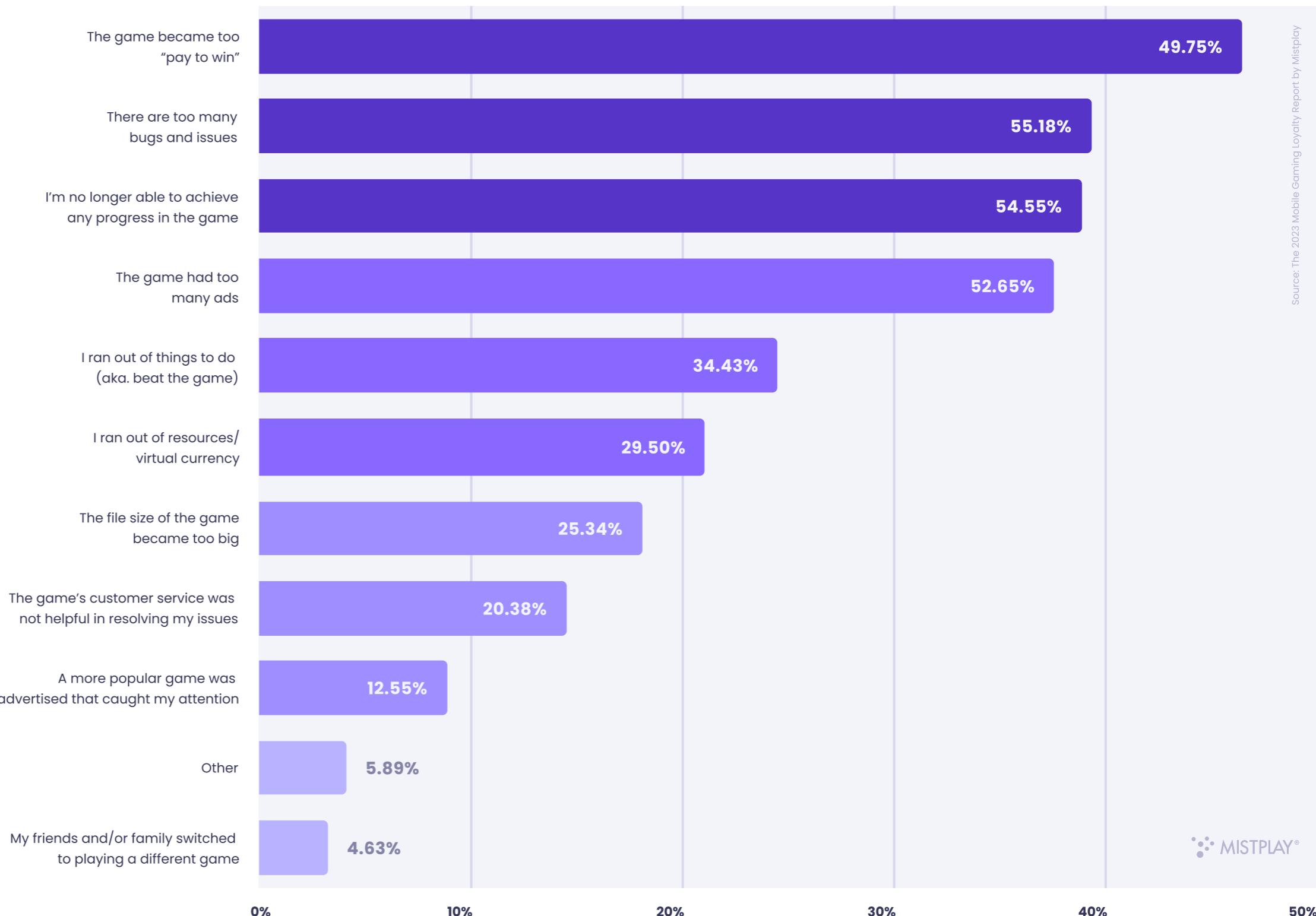
This lack of progression can manifest in several ways, whether it's through a feeling that a game has become "pay to win," players have to put up with too many game-halting bugs, they've hit a wall in their ability to progress, ads are too intrusive to play, or even simply running out of content to play.

Reducing the amount of player friction while optimizing ad and IAP revenue is a delicate balancing act – getting it right will ensure players stick around. [Difficulty is especially tricky to get right¹⁰](#); it helps to reward players early and often so they understand the feeling of victory. Then, construct an on-ramp to more difficult challenges while also providing compelling progression layers that entice players to push through to the...

Even high-value players will get burnt out if they feel like their progress is too dependent on being able to spend money. ★

77.2% of players who spend over \$100 cite it as the reason they'll stop playing – 12% higher than the average player.

Player motivations to stop playing and switch games



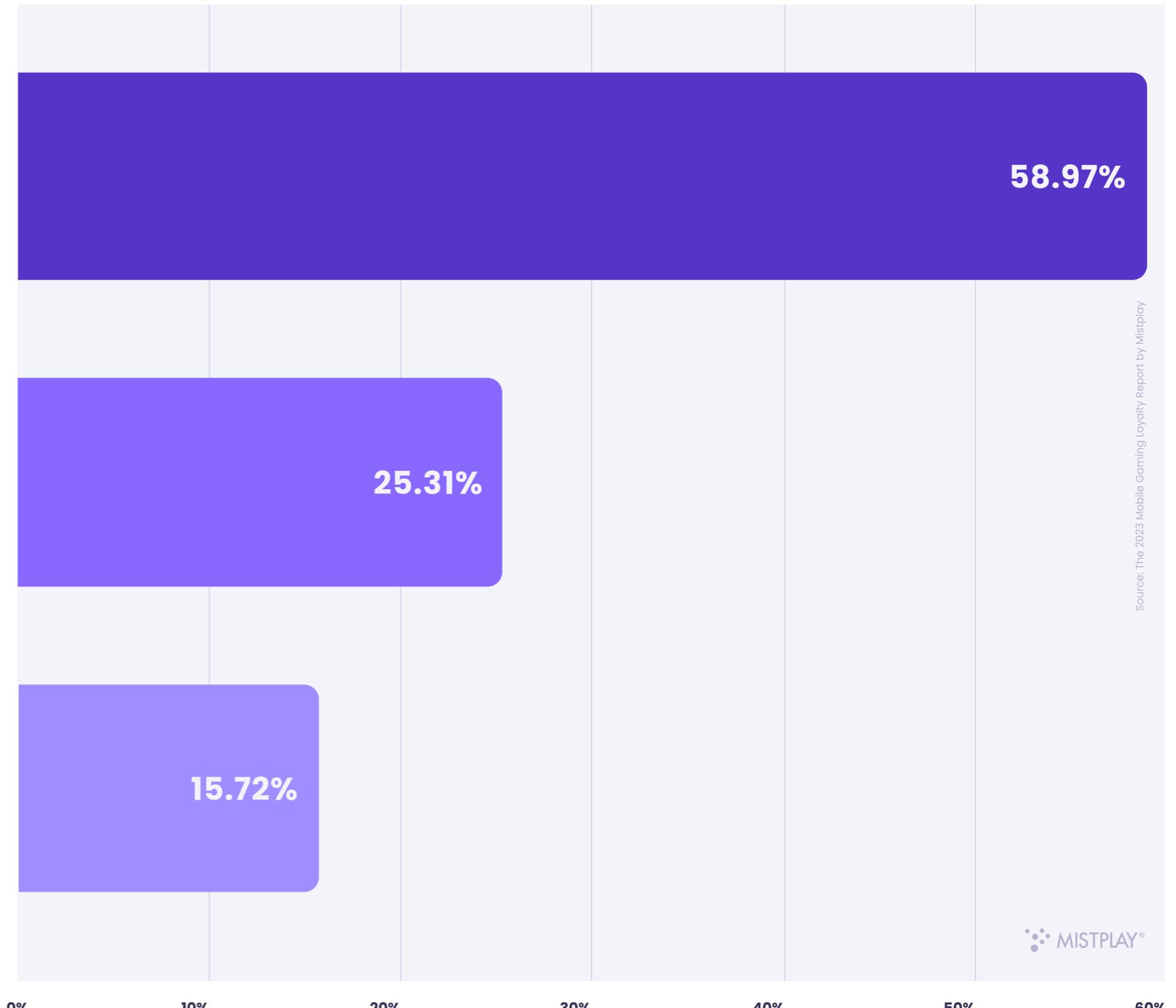
Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by Mistplay

Appeal of play & earn gaming

A majority of mobile gamers, 84%, will add games that offer tangible rewards to their mobile game rotation – or switch to those games entirely. In fact, one in four players surveyed would **stop** playing a previous favorite if their new game leveraged play-and-earn mechanics and offered tangible rewards, like gift cards.



Efficacy of tangible rewards



Question: Would you continue to play your favorite game if earning a tangible reward by playing was not available, but other similar games offered this benefit instead?

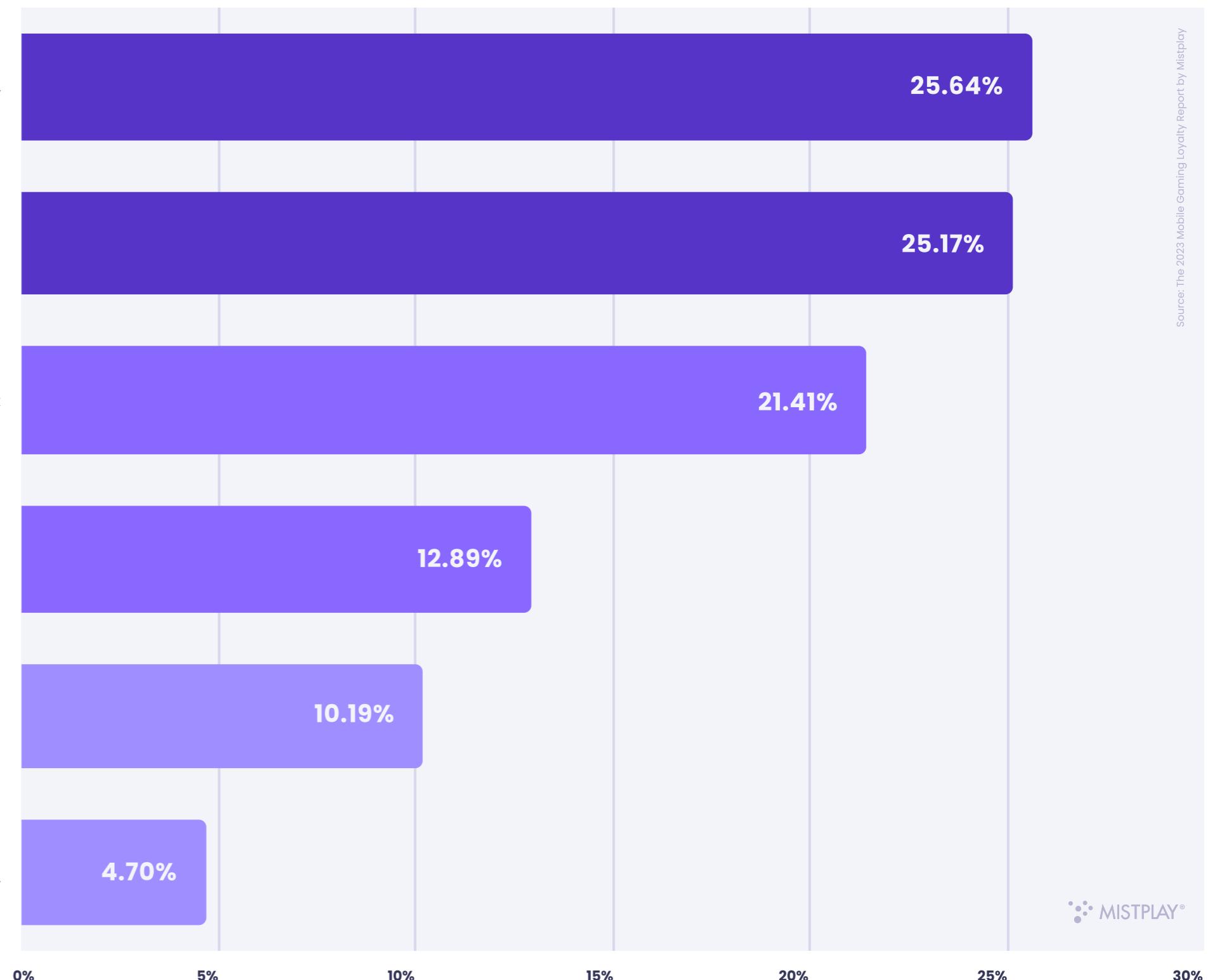
Player satisfaction

Impact of poorly received updates

While players may enjoy frequent updates, over one in three are likely to stop playing if that update negatively impacts their experience: **39% of players will quit playing if the publisher releases a poorly received update that isn't fixed within a week.** This puts a lot of pressure on developers – one week is a very rapid turnaround time to make and test a fix, resubmit the update to app stores, have that update approved, and then roll it out globally.

To prevent this time crunch, developers should ensure their updates are rigorously tested and balanced before rollout. A/B testing with smaller audiences, user surveys for direct feedback, and platform-supported beta programs can help you mitigate the potential for rolling out poorly received changes.

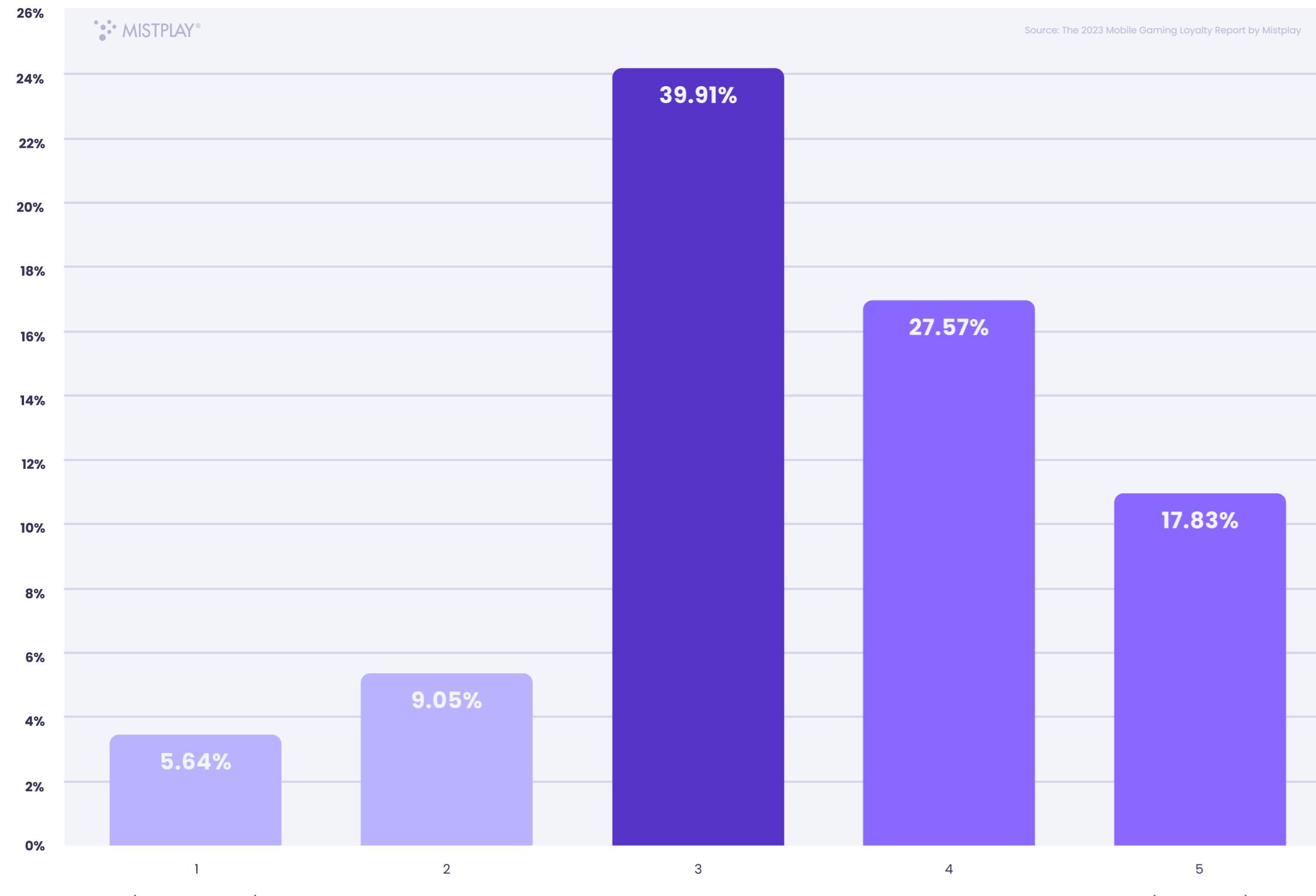
Time to abandon after negative update



Question: If your favorite game released an update that you didn't enjoy, how long would you wait for improvements before you stopped playing the game?

Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by MISTPLAY

Customer service satisfaction



Question: How satisfied are you with the typical customer support you receive from the games you play?

Customer service satisfaction

While 40% of mobile gamers state they have not reached out to customer service before, nearly half of gamers who have reached out (46.8%) say that they're satisfied with the overall experience. Only 14.4% of players are dissatisfied with customer service – an indicator that most customer service teams are doing a good job retaining players after poor experiences.

High-value spenders are more demanding of their customer service experiences. 

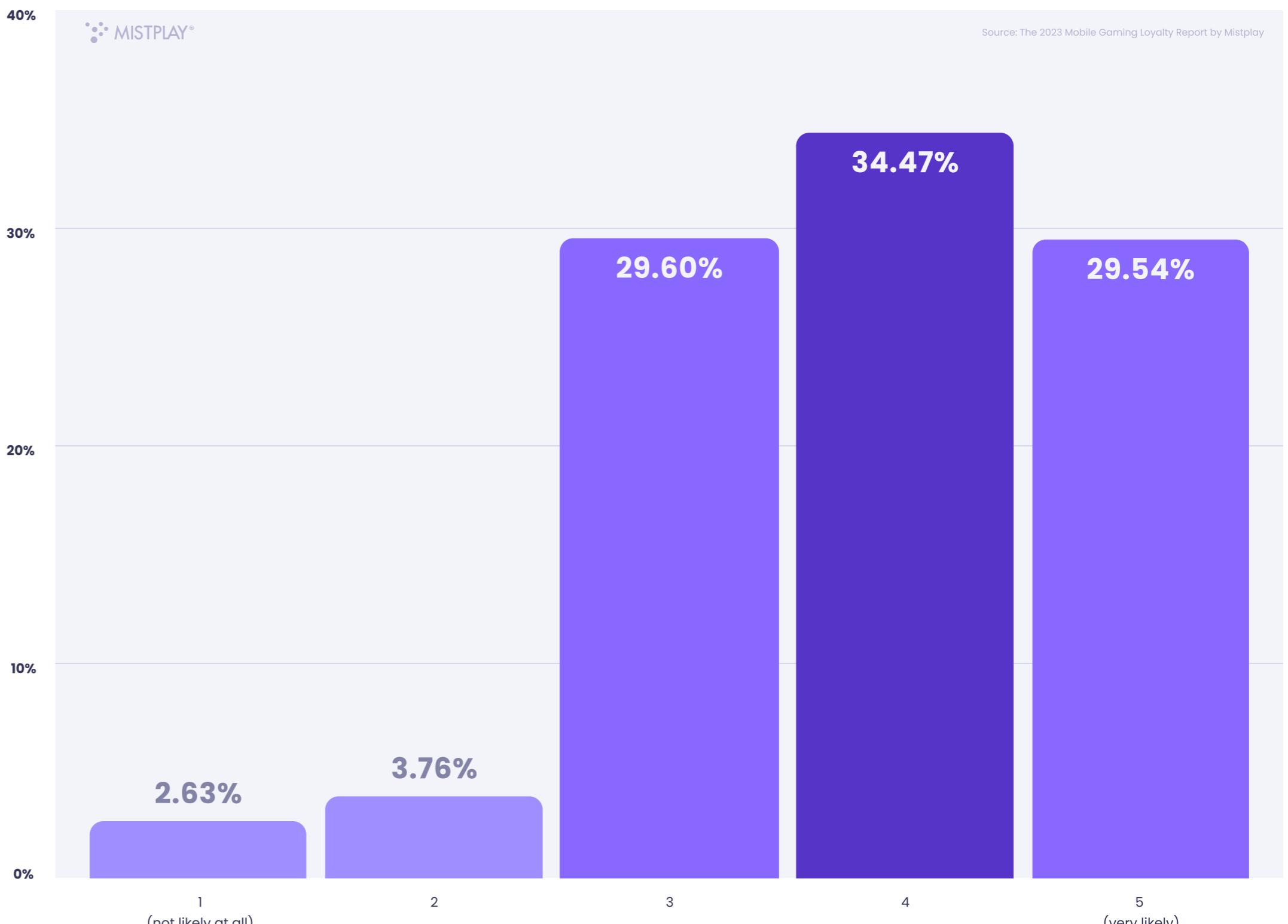
While **68%** of players who spend \$100+ have reached out to customer support (13% more than average), only 36% are satisfied with the service they received, 27% less than average.

Likelihood of downloading different games from the same publisher

If players enjoy their time with a mobile game, they're more likely to try out other games from the same publisher, according to 64% of players – and nearly 30% say they're **very** likely to try another game from the publisher's portfolio, which all bodes well if you're looking to establish long-lasting brand loyalty. Strategic cross-promotion of other titles within your games can boost user acquisition and LTV across your whole catalog in a balanced way. Utilize player segmentation to determine which titles speak best to each audience, then design ad creative and promotional tie-in campaigns to maximize engagement.



Player willingness to try new games from the same publisher



Question: If you're really enjoying a game, how likely are you to try a different game from the same publisher?

Monetization

Spend behavior

It's rare for players to exclusively play a single game: 77.3% of spenders rotate between two to seven games at any given time throughout the week – and nearly 10% play over ten games throughout the week. However, spenders don't spend at the same rate as they play. **92.8% of spenders only spend money on one to four games, with 53% spending on only one game per week.**

Plus, in-game spenders are more likely to be playing multiple games per week compared to non-spenders – only 1% of spenders play one game per week, compared to nearly 4% of non-spenders.

High-value spenders are more likely to play more games than other players. 

26.9% of players who spend over \$100 have at least eight games in their weekly rotation – 28% higher than the average player.

High-value spenders also exhibit a significantly higher inclination towards spending on 2-4 games simultaneously. Around 47% of high-value spenders spend in 2-4 games, compared to 24% of other players. This indicates that high-value spenders are 95% more likely to invest their money in 2-4 games concurrently.

Number of games players play and spend in per week

	Play (non-spenders)	Play (spenders)	Spend
One game	3.6%	1.1%	53.3%
2-4 games	49%	42.6%	39.5%
5-7 games	30.5%	34.7%	4.1%
8-10 games	8.7%	11.6%	1.4%
10-15 games	4.5%	5.2%	0.5%
15-20 games	1.8%	1.9%	0.3%
20+ games	2%	3%	0.9%

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Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by Mistplay

Spend motivations

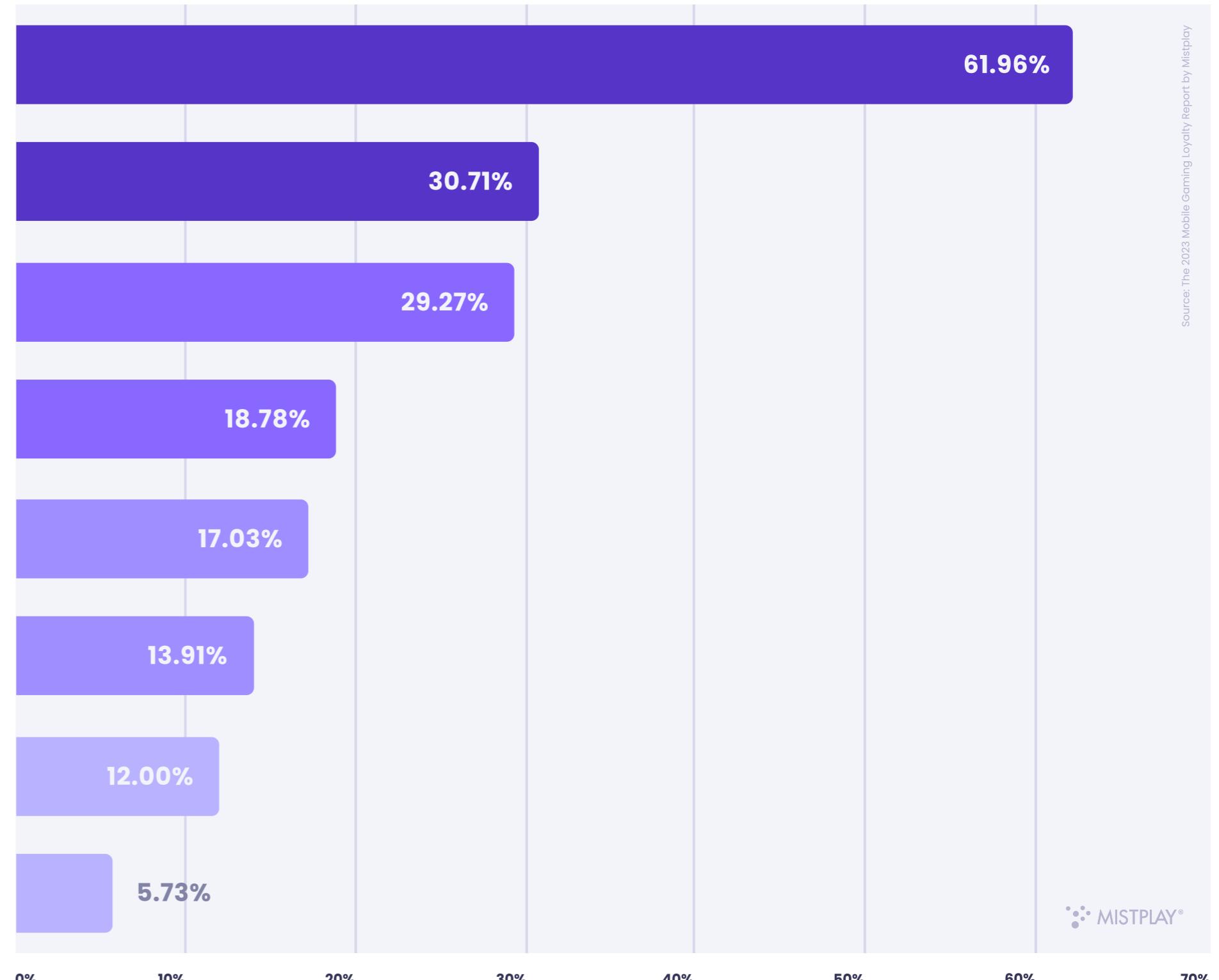
Why players spend money

Progression is a key driver in spending motivations, as in player motivations: 65.7% of players cite the desire to progress further in the game and reach new milestones as a significant reason for spending money on IAP. Other reasons include adding exclusive benefits or improving the player experience – 32.5% of players cite the desire to own rare or exclusive content as a purchase driver.

Additionally, nearly one in three (31%) of gamers will spend money to enjoy an ad-free experience.



Player motivations to spend on IAPs within free-to-play games



Question: What motivates you to spend money within free-to-play mobile games? (Select all that apply)

What IAP models players prefer

Of all the IAP models available, players love the options that provide immediate benefits. These benefits can be in the form of a bundled discount on usable items (63.8%) or one-time purchases that offer immediate value (49.2%).

High-value spenders love bundles.



74.1% of players who spend over \$100 prefer bundles, 17.2% higher than average.



What IAP models players prefer

Bundles containing multiple items of value

59.55%

One-time (ad-hoc) purchase of an item/perk that offers benefits

45.95%

Premium in-game currency to be spent as needed

28.64%

Exclusive/collectible content only available for certain periods of time

21.63%

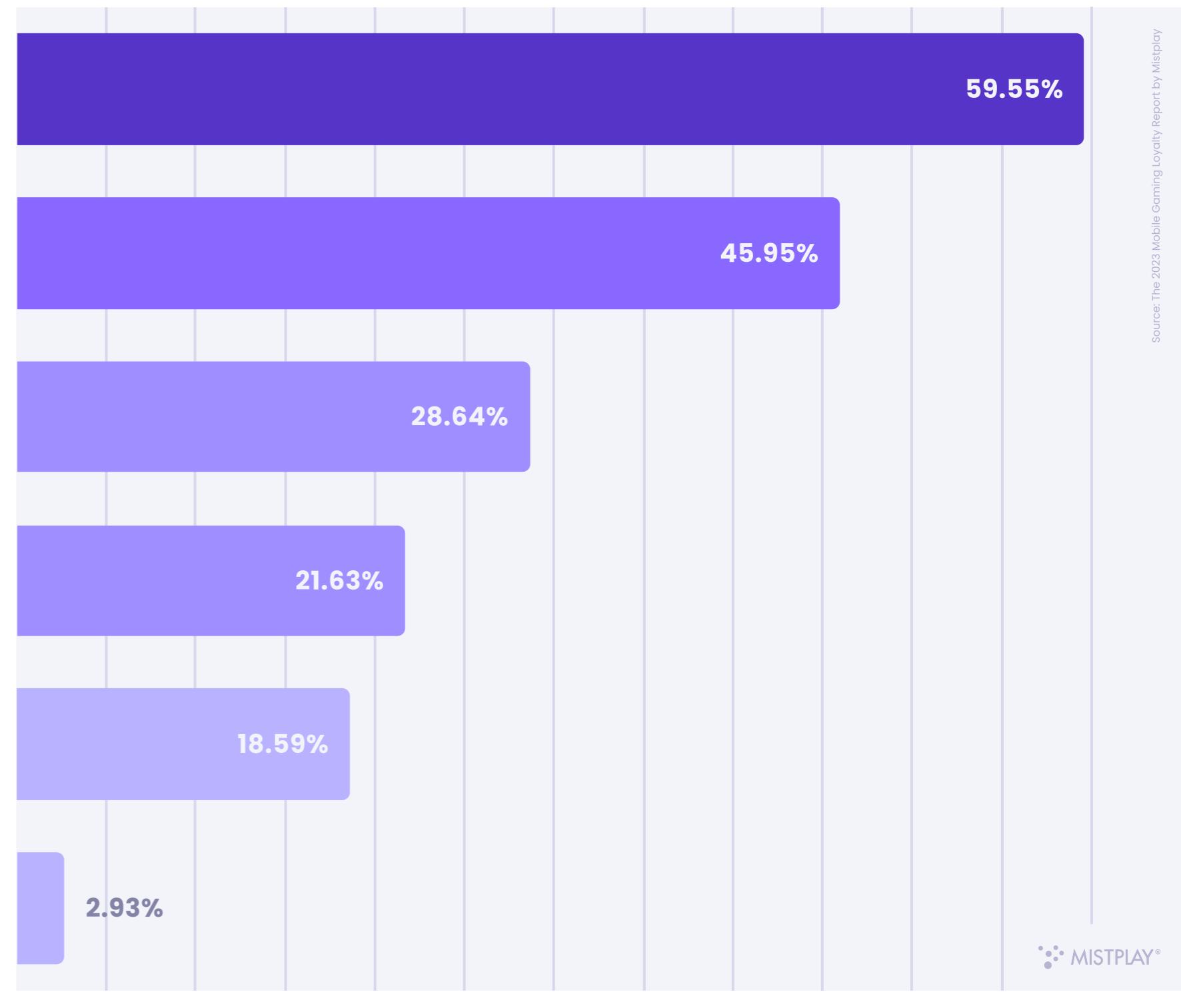
Battle passes and/or subscriptions

18.59%

Other

2.93%

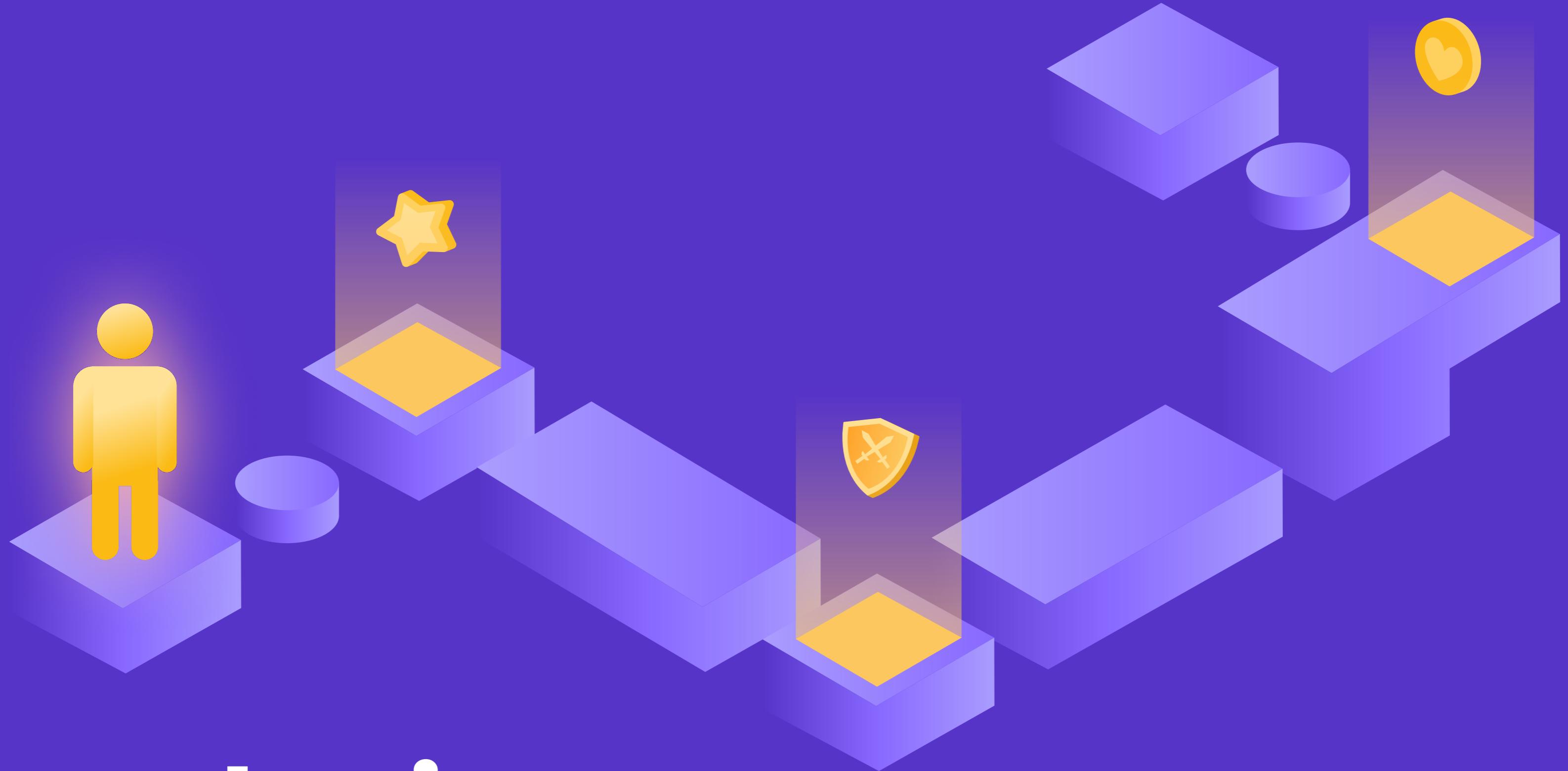
Question: What types of in-app purchases do you prefer most? (Select all that apply)



Source: The 2023 Mobile Gaming Loyalty Report by Mistplay

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Conclusion



Conclusion

Player loyalty is the key to maximizing lifetime value and achieving sustainable growth in today's rapidly evolving industry. Fostering loyalty starts at the top of the funnel, driving discovery and ultimately install conversion. It continues from the initial player experience, building across game progression systems and the value exchange of in-app purchases, and throughout the user lifecycle.

Our Loyalty Index and Loyalty Survey insights further shine light on the multiple levers that publishers can optimize to maximize your retention and monetization, pulling from the successful trends of top genres and direct input from players.

Key takeaways

The feeling of progressing is a key motivator for players to stay engaged and spend in their favorite mobile games, so take notes from genres like RPG and Strategy to see how you can build in compelling progression loops, provide fresh and challenging content, and introduce diverse monetization models to boost engagement and spending.

Negatively-received updates can impact player retention, and many players will quit a game if issues aren't fixed within a week, so keep a close watch on how your community reacts to a new update.

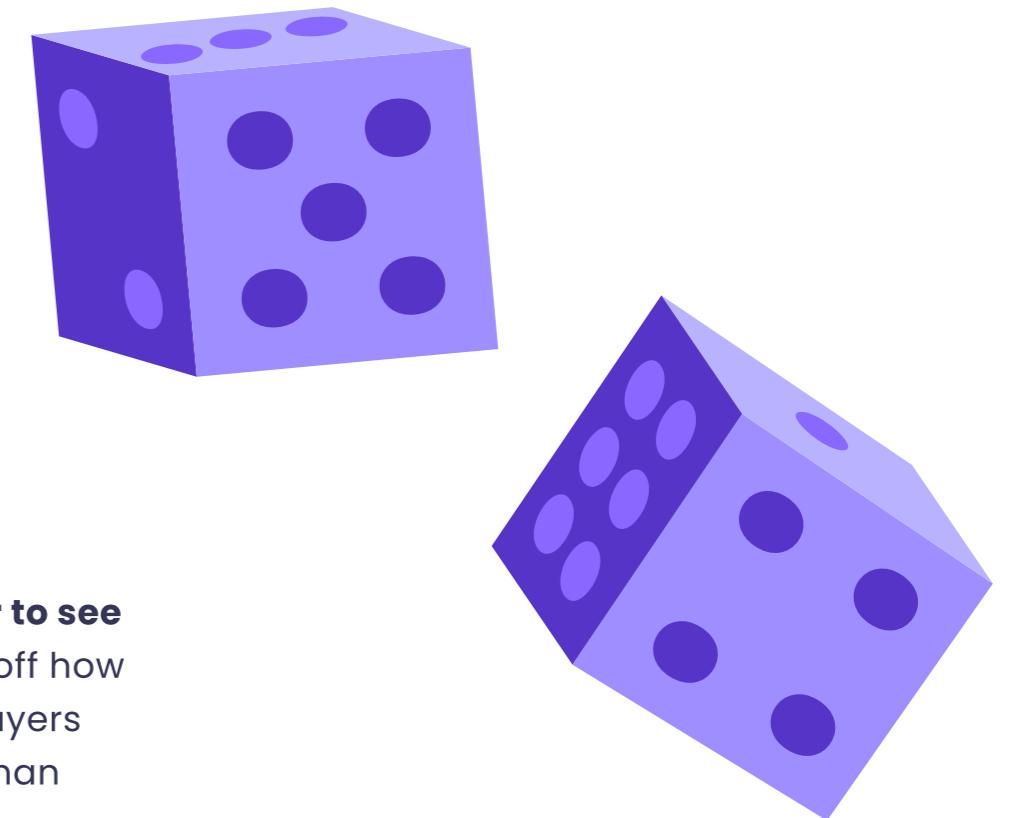
By leveraging these insights, marketers, monetization teams, and product teams can foster improved loyalty by deepening the connection between player and brand. And by forging this connection with players, your game will, in turn, increase engagement and monetization rates and ultimately boost the lifetime value of its player base.

Players enjoy multiple games at once but only spend money on a few. In fact, most spenders only spend money on a single game in a week, so optimizing your monetization strategies to provide the best-perceived value is critical.

Word of mouth is a top-3 acquisition source, with over one-third of players discovering new games from friends and family – yet still behind ads and app store rankings. Built-in referral systems can boost the shareability of your game and may help power your referral-driven acquisitions.

Nearly three-quarters of players prefer to see real gameplay in advertising, so show off how your game really looks in ads to give players a sneak peek of what to expect, rather than simulating gameplay experiences.

Reviews and ratings are crucial in the decision-making process for nearly two-thirds of gamers looking to install a new game, so focus on delivering quality gameplay, customer service, and content updates to keep the ratings and reviews positive.



Methodology

Index

Mistplay analyzed millions of users in over 500 mobile games listed within the Misplay platform. The majority of data was pulled from the first half of 2023, and genres lacking sufficient data were widened to include 2022. Once collected, we used the Sensor Tower Taxonomy to categorize the games by genre. We then analyzed each genre to determine overall averages and the top and bottom quartiles for each metric category.

We then combined the results of these averages and ranked each genre relative to the others to create the primary loyalty index. This index tells us which game genres have the most loyal players. Individual metrics were indexed relative to the top performer in each category. In this case, the top performer is ranked 100, and lower performers are ranked as a percentage of that total.

Survey

We surveyed 3,000 mobile gamers, aged 18+, in the US and Canada who use the Mistplay platform in Q3 2023. We asked a series of 20 questions regarding topics such as acquisition, engagement, and spending habits. The sample set is a mix of spenders and non-spenders, with players who spend more than \$100 labeled “high-value spenders.” Responses containing numbered rankings (e.g., “satisfaction”) have been summarized using Top 2 Box or Bottom 2 Box methodology.

In the Loyalty Survey section, we refer to respondents as “players” or “spenders,” referring to either all players or specific groups of players who spend.

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