

# Entertainment and Gaming Platforms: Steam vs. Epic Games Store

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## 1. ABSTRACT

This report aims to evaluate the usability of two famous gaming platforms, Steam and Epic Games, focusing on game discovery, purchasing process, and community features. Using the SUS (System Usability Scale) questionnaire-based evaluation method, each platform's strengths, such as user satisfaction and performance, were highlighted, noting where each one excels and improvements could benefit users.

*Index Terms: Usability Evaluation, Gaming Platform, User Satisfaction, Steam, Epic Games Store, System Usability Scale (SUS).*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Steam and Epic Games are the two most popular gaming platforms and have developed distinct user experiences, from discovering games to purchasing and engaging with other gamers. This study shows how well each platform performs depending on the users' needs by analyzing the ease of game discovery, simplicity of the purchasing process, and the depth of community engagement features and using the SUS evaluation method.

*Index Terms: Game Discovery, User Experience, Purchasing Process, Community Engagement, Platform Comparison, Usability Study.*

## 3. METHODOLOGY

SUS questionnaire-based method was used for the usability evaluation, focusing on user interaction experience with Steam and Epic Games. The questionnaire focuses on 3 main aspects, namely Game discovery, purchasing process, and community features. Google forms is used for data collection by 10 different people who experienced both gaming platforms, rating these aspects on a scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly Agree). This method of data collection and analysis will demonstrate a clear difference between both platforms.

*Index Terms: Evaluation Method, SUS Questionnaire, Data Collection, User Feedback, Interaction Analysis.*

## 4. RESULTS

The SUS analysis results, illustrated in Figures 1, 2, and 3, highlight significant differences between Steam and Epic Games in terms of usability. Both platforms reached 80% conclusiveness, indicating reliable responses from 10 participants per platform ([Fig. 1](#)). Steam achieved a SUS score of 73.25, with a compact range between 90 and 62.5, corresponding to a "Good" grade, or above-average B. This consistency reflects Steam's solid performance in usability, particularly in game discovery and community features. In contrast, Epic Games obtained a wider SUS score distribution with an average score of 52.5, ranging from 90 to 30, resulting in an "OK" grade or below-average D ([Fig. 2](#)). This variability indicates a less consistent experience for users, especially in features like community engagement and game discovery. [Figure 3](#) further underscores these differences, with Steam positioned at the 66.94 percentile, placing it in a higher usability tier. Epic Games, however, ranked in the lower 15.57 percentile, suggesting that its usability did not meet user expectations to the same extent. These findings reveal Steam's stronger usability and user satisfaction compared to Epic Games, especially in areas requiring deeper user interaction and engagement.

*Index Terms: SUS Analysis, Score Distribution, User Satisfaction, Conclusiveness Percentage, Performance Comparison.*

### 4.1 Performance Metrics

Based on the SUS questionnaire data, the key differences between both gaming platforms have become crystal clear. Game discovery, purchase process, and community features for both gaming platforms are well understood due to the SUS analysis results.

#### 4.1.1 Game Discovery

Steam excelled in game discovery. Not only is Steam ahead on quantity but it's better at helping users find games they might like within its huge selection. Discovery Queue offers recommendations to the users in Steam based on titles they've

played as well as what's new and popular [2]. This makes it easier for users to find games since the game discovery is personalized for them with many filters to narrow down their choices. In contrast, Epic Games Store offered fewer filters and less precise recommendations, which some users found limiting, especially when searching for specific or niche titles.

#### 4.1.2 Purchase Process

Both platforms provided a smooth and secure purchasing experience. Steam was praised for its transparency, especially with system requirements and detailed user reviews that help users understand what they need before buying a game. Steam also has frequent discounts and different pricing depending on where users live, so most users can buy games despite their country's economy. On the other hand, Epic Games received positive feedback for its straightforward checkout process and frequent discounts, especially when Epic Games regularly offers free games: users can claim and keep a game at no cost every week, additionally, Epic Games has exclusive rights to some games, making them only available through its platform [1], although some users desire more information about game details before purchasing [3].

#### 4.1.3 Community Features

Steam has an advantage with community features, including forums, reviews, achievement tracking, wishlist, and what games your friends own [3], which encourages user interaction and engagement. Epic Games, however, has fewer social features and achievement details compared to Steam, hence users feel less engaged while using the app.

*Index Terms: Performance Metrics, Game Discovery, Purchasing Process, Community Features, Platform Strengths.*

## 4.2 Analysis

The findings highlight Steam's strengths in delivering a rich experience that appeals to users seeking engaging community and personalized game recommendations. The game discovery filters and well-integrated community options contribute to a higher engagement level on Steam, allowing users to connect with others and explore games that are more relevant to them. Epic Games, on the other hand, is good for users who prefer a simpler and more streamlined experience. Its straightforward purchasing process and frequent sales that can have discounts of up to 100% make it a practical choice for budget-conscious or casual users [1], [2], [9]. However, the platform's limited community and game discovery features make the users feel more isolated and find it harder for them to find a game they would like. Overall, the SUS scores reflect these differences: Steam's higher score and compact score range projects a more consistent and favorable user experience, while Epic Games' broader score distribution shows mixed feedback, especially in the discovery and community engagement.

*Index Terms: Feature Comparison, User Needs, Engagement, Usability Differences, Platform Design.*

## 5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, both Steam and Epic Games Store offer distinct advantages designed to different user preferences within the gaming community. Steam stands out with its comprehensive game discovery and abundant community features [8], making it the ideal platform for users looking for a more engaging community and want to discover games that suit their taste. Meanwhile, Epic Games's simplicity and huge discounts that even AAA games can be purchased for free make it appealing to users prioritizing affordability and ease of use [1], [2], [9]. These results emphasize the importance of usability and design in shaping the user experience on gaming platforms. Steam's higher SUS score and percentile ranking demonstrate its success in creating a well-rounded user experience, while Epic Games Store's lower score highlights areas where additional features could improve user satisfaction. Both platforms illustrate how different design priorities can lure different kinds of users which gives them success in the competitive gaming market.

*Index Terms: User Demographics, Gaming Community, Usability, User Experience, Platform Loyalty.*

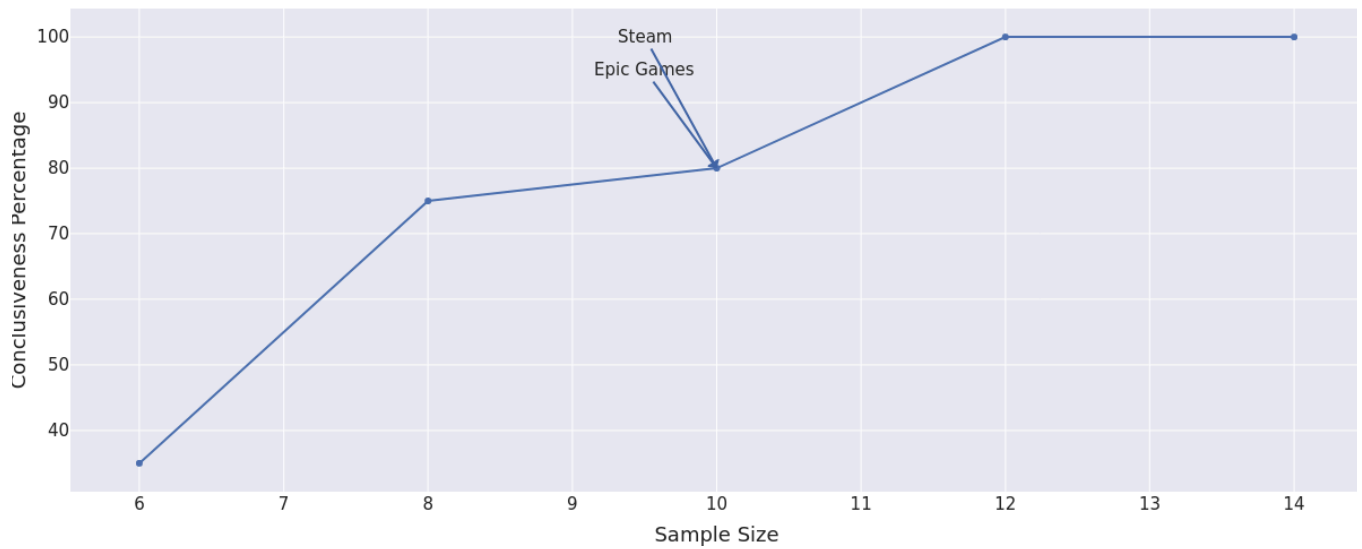


Fig. 1 | The graph above indicates the conclusiveness of SUS analysis. Both Steam and Epic Games have 10 people answering the questionnaire via Google Forms, which shows that both Steam and Epic Games have 80% conclusiveness.

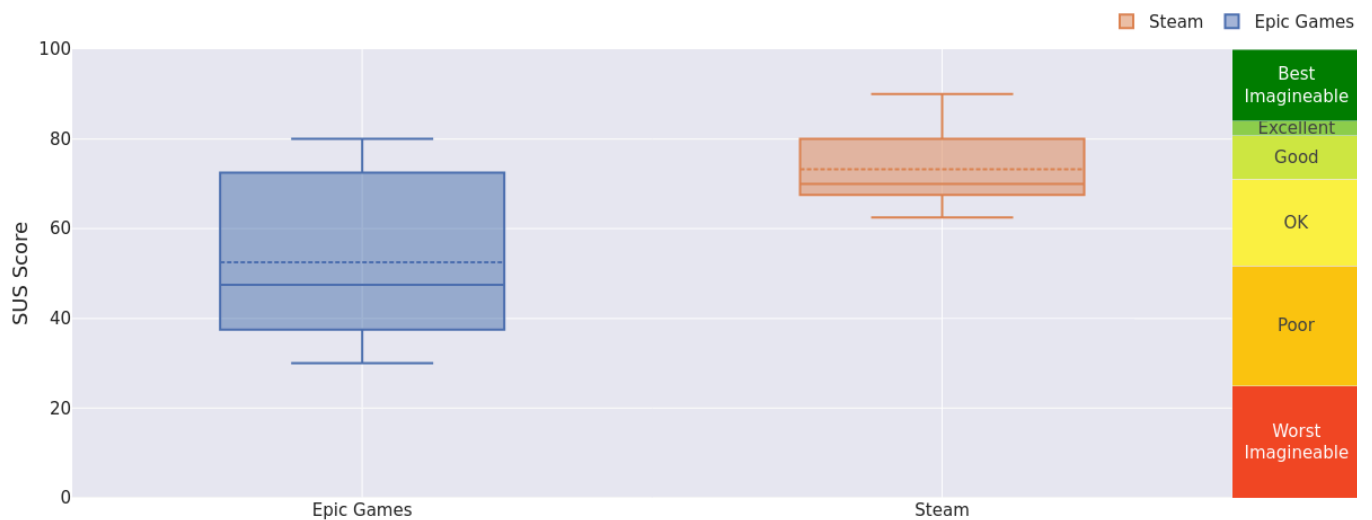


Fig. 2 | The graph above demonstrates the SUS score distribution for Steam and Epic Games. Steam has a more compact 73.25 SUS score with the maximum and minimum score outliers 90 and 62.5, respectively. The recently mentioned gaming platform receives a Good grade which is an above average B. Epic Games, on the other hand, has a wider 52.5 SUS score with the maximum and minimum score outliers 90 and 30, respectively. The recently mentioned gaming platform receives an OK grade which is a below average D.

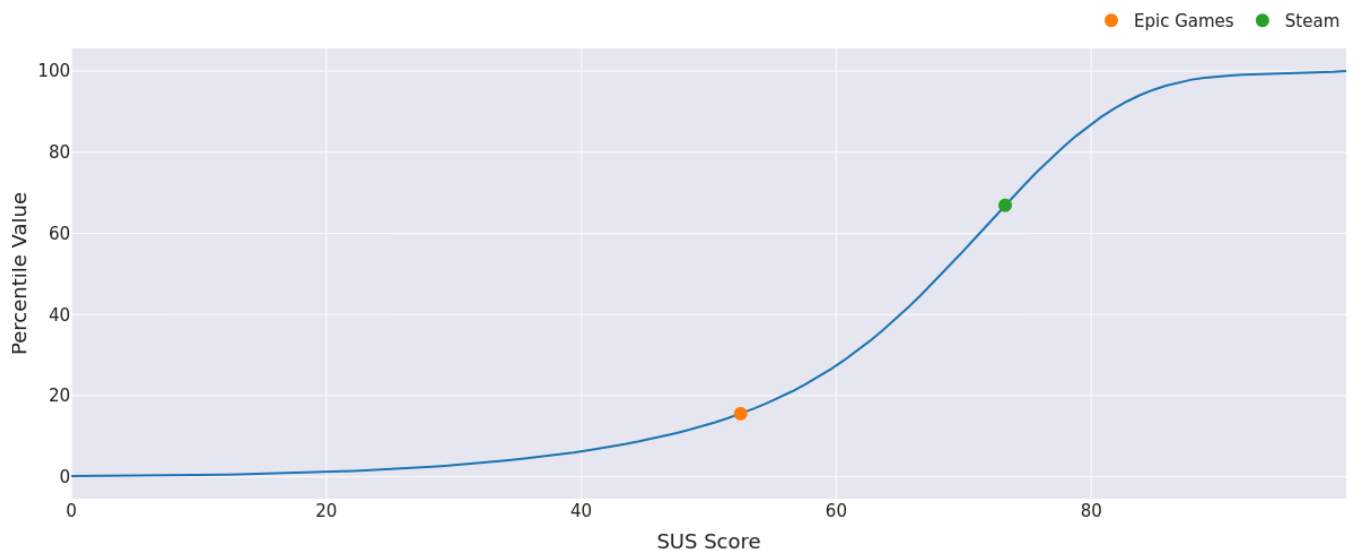


Fig. 3 | The graph above displays the percentile value for Steam and Epic Games depending on their SUS score. Steam achieved a higher ranking of 66.94 percentile value due to its 73.25 SUS score. Epic Games, however, achieved a significantly lower ranking of 15.57 percentile value as a consequence of its 52.5 SUS score.

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