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**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON**

**Project Objective vs Outcomes:**

Projecting the Popularity of Video Games

**ISDS 577**

**TEAM 2**

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# **Introduction**

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of global video game sales data from 1985 to 2019 with the primary objective to gather meaningful insights to enable data driven decision making for game development, market strategy, and platform investment. Our dataset encompasses critical metrics including global/regional sales figures, genre classifications, release year, platform distributions, and publisher information. Using the information provided in the dataset, we aim to identify market trends, genre popularity, and correlations between game ratings and commercial performance.

While our full findings are presented in the complete report, this document focuses on evaluating the evolution of our initial exploratory research, Phase 01, to the refined statistical modeling, Phase 02.

**Objectives & Methodology**

Initially, our analysis aimed to develop predictive forecasts by identifying historical sales trends across genres and platforms. However, upon deeper examination of the dataset, we discovered a fundamental limitation. Rather than containing longitudinal sales data over time, the dataset provided only a 2019 snapshot of cumulative lifetime sales for each title. This structural constraint prevented us from tracking year-over-year trends or measuring growth/decline patterns for specific genres.

Consequently, we adapted our research approach in two key ways. First, we revised our research questions to focus on comparative genre and platform performance rather than temporal trends. Second, we modified our methodology to emphasize cross-sectional analysis and regional comparisons using the available data.

While this represents a deviation from our original forecasting objective, the adjusted approach still yields valuable insights for strategic decision making. The limitations primarily affect our ability to speak to market trajectory rather than current performance.

**Key Takeaways**

This project highlighted the critical importance of thoroughly vetting datasets before designing analytical approaches. Our experience revealed how incomplete understanding of data limitations can fundamentally alter the scope and direction of research. Although we were fortunate that our dataset still yielded meaningful insights, this outcome shouldn't be taken for granted. Such data constraints could have easily rendered the analysis unusable for its original forecasting purpose.

# Moving forward, we recognize that robust analysis requires not just methodological rigor, but equally careful attention to the fundamental characteristics and limitations of the underlying data itself. This lesson about preliminary data assessment will inform our approach to all future analytical work.