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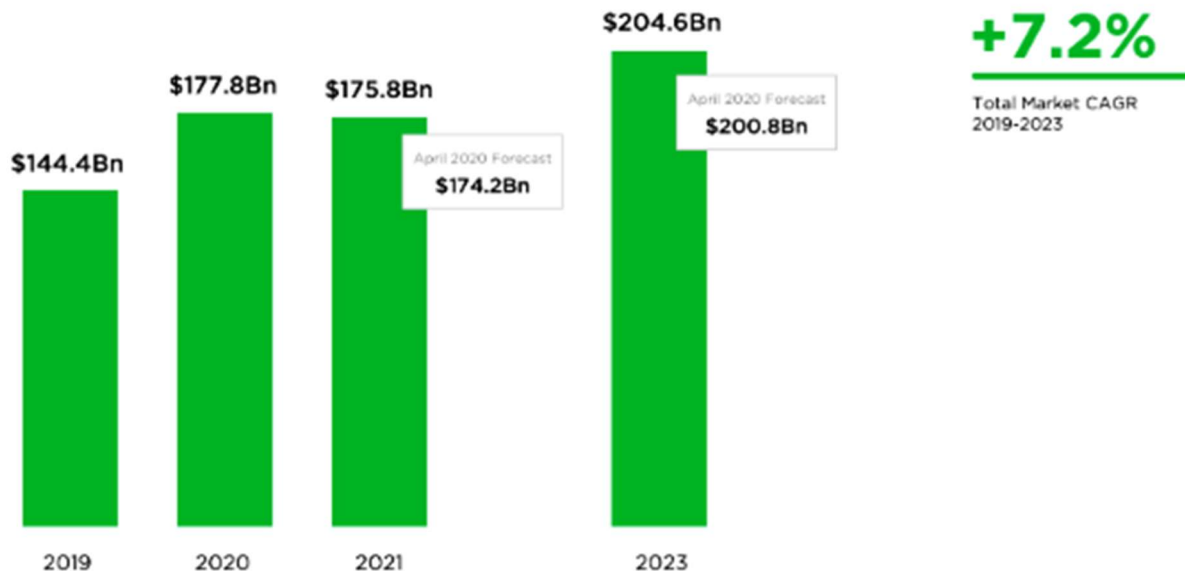
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"The Current State of the Global Gaming Industry: Trends, Opportunities, and Challenges"

The gaming industry is currently undergoing a period of rapid growth and diversification. Global games market to generate \$175.8 billion in 2021; despite a slight decline, the market is on track to surpass \$200 billion in 2023 (see the graph below). This can be attributed to the widespread adoption of mobile devices, the increasing prevalence of female gamers, and the democratization of access to gaming through cloud-based services. While digital content and subscription-based models are gaining popularity, there is still a significant market for physical games and hardware upgrades. As the gaming industry continues to evolve and attract a diverse range of players, it is essential for publishers and brands to understand and cater to the specific preferences and needs of underserved audiences.



Emerging technologies such as VR represent exciting new opportunities for the gaming sector. In order to stay competitive and effectively serve their audiences, gaming companies must stay attuned to these trends and continue to innovate in their content, delivery models, and marketing strategies. It is also important for gaming companies to embrace immersive content and consider the potential of new technologies, while staying sensitive to the diverse needs and preferences of their users.

Through this article, UN1TY discover that, the gaming industry is evolving rapidly and presents numerous opportunities for companies to grow and innovate. As the market becomes more diverse and inclusive, it is essential for companies to understand and cater to the specific needs and preferences of their audience. By embracing emerging technologies and delivering innovative content and marketing strategies, gaming companies can stay ahead of the curve and continue to thrive in this dynamic industry.

1. Demographics & Diversification

The gaming industry has been experiencing impressive growth over the past two decades, outpacing traditional entertainment options like music, and is currently valued at over \$175 billion globally. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this growth and it is projected to exceed \$268 billion by 2025. Gaming's success is partly attributed to its ability to pivot in response to emerging opportunities, such as digital distribution and in-game payments, but ultimately, its success is driven by the preferences of its audiences.

To better understand the gaming industry's audience, a research study was conducted on more than 2,000 active gamers in the UK and US. While the study revealed some expected adaptations, it also highlighted many underrated trends that businesses seeking to improve connections with gamers should consider leveraging. It is therefore essential for businesses to understand the gaming audience and their behaviors to influence the direction of gaming development.

1.1. "Unlocking the Power of Diversity: Strategies for Expanding Player Appeal in the Gaming Industry"

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant spike in gaming adoption, particularly in the UK, where 65% of gamers have increased their gaming activity. While the influx of free time is an obvious reason for this surge, other motivators have emerged that highlight gaming's social appeal and its ability to provide escapism. More than a quarter of gamers (27%) view gaming as a means to socialize with friends, and 16% cite the opportunity to make new connections. These findings suggest that gaming has a crucial social element that has grown under pandemic conditions and could provide lasting engagement opportunities. The desire for escapism has also fueled gaming adoption, with action and adventure ranking among the top three genres. The inclusion of casual gaming in this ranking indicates that gaming is appealing to audiences beyond the traditional user base of passionate "hardcore"

gamers. The increasing numbers of mobile gamers, in particular, have contributed to the popularity of casual games. Wish lists for 2022 include a blend of classic high-octane titles and casual games, indicating that brands and publishers must ensure their campaigns and content resonate with broader gaming communities to maximize impact.

To effectively target diverse gaming audiences, businesses and marketers must adopt a nuanced approach that considers the unique motivations, preferences, and behaviors of different segments of the gaming population. Several strategies can help businesses expand their reach and increase engagement with gamers.

One such strategy is to embrace diversity and inclusivity in gaming. Many gamers come from diverse backgrounds and identities, and businesses that prioritize inclusivity can establish a more meaningful connection with these audiences. This could involve creating diverse and inclusive game characters, storylines, and themes that resonate with a wider range of gamers. Businesses can also work to address issues of discrimination and harassment within gaming communities, which can alienate and deter potential gamers.

Another strategy is to leverage the social nature of gaming to create meaningful connections with gamers. Businesses can sponsor gaming events and tournaments, collaborate with gaming influencers and content creators, and engage with gaming communities on social media platforms. These efforts can help businesses establish a more personal and relatable brand image, fostering long-term relationships with gamers.

Finally, businesses can create immersive gaming experiences that provide a sense of escape and adventure. This can involve creating captivating storylines, offering expansive and visually stunning game worlds, and leveraging emerging technologies like virtual and augmented reality. By providing gamers with a truly immersive and engaging experience, businesses can establish a loyal following and attract new audiences.

In conclusion, the surge in gaming adoption during the COVID-19 pandemic has created new opportunities for businesses and marketers to engage with diverse gaming audiences. By embracing diversity and inclusivity, leveraging the social nature of gaming, and creating immersive gaming experiences, businesses can establish meaningful connections with gamers and increase their impact in the gaming industry.

1.2. "Examining Under-Served Audiences in the Gaming Industry: Strategies for Inclusivity and Expansion"

The gaming industry has undergone significant expansion in recent years, driven by a widening player base and a surge in gaming activity during the pandemic. Among the many trends emerging in this context, one that stands out is the growth in female gamers, who have become a significant and influential segment of the gaming population.

Contrary to outdated stereotypes of gaming as a predominantly male activity, recent data suggests that women are increasingly interested in gaming and are spending more time playing games. This is particularly true in the mobile gaming sector, where women are 10%

more likely to identify as active gamers and spend more time playing than their male counterparts.

To tap into the potential of this under-served audience, the industry needs to pay closer attention to the preferences and habits of female gamers. This includes catering to their interest in casual, word, and puzzle games, as well as improving understanding of what drives their engagement and loyalty. By doing so, the industry can drive sustainable growth and capitalize on the lucrative opportunities presented by the mobile gaming market.

As the gaming industry continues to evolve and expand, it is essential to prioritize inclusivity and diversity in order to remain relevant and appealing to a broad range of players. This means paying attention to under-served audiences, such as women gamers, and developing strategies that address their unique needs and preferences. By doing so, the industry can not only drive growth and profitability but also promote greater engagement and social connections among players of all backgrounds and identities.

1.3. "Beyond Digital: Exploring the Role of Analog Gaming in the Future of the Gaming Industry"

The rise of cloud-based gaming services and the increasing accessibility of mobile devices have led to the democratisation of gaming, making it easier for new and diverse players to access the world of gaming. The popularity of cloud-based services, such as Xbox Game Pass, has made access to games more affordable and available to a wider audience. This has led to a decrease in the urgency to purchase new hardware, especially with the current supply-chain issues and micro-chip shortages. As a result, older consoles like PlayStation 4, Wii, and Nintendo Switch remain popular among UK gamers despite the launch of new consoles.

However, it is important to recognize that gamers have not entirely lost their appetite for hardware or physical games. While many gamers have bought games digitally, almost as many have also purchased physical copies, and interest in new technology remains considerable. The majority of UK and US gamers plan to invest in next-gen consoles, citing better graphics, speedier loading, and access to next-gen games as top motivators. PC and laptop gamers also show eagerness to improve their setups, with 60% of UK gamers planning to build or upgrade their units in 2022. Additionally, VR headsets are becoming increasingly popular, with 51% of respondents planning to purchase one in the future.

As gaming becomes more mainstream, it is no longer just a small population of dedicated players, but a diverse range of communities, each with its own preferences and needs. Publishers and brands must recognize and adapt to this changing gaming landscape by aligning content with the increasingly mixed gaming preferences of players. Understanding and serving diverse players is key to ensuring effective connection and sustained growth in the gaming industry.

In conclusion, while the democratisation of gaming has led to an increase in mobile gaming and cloud-based services, it has not eliminated the demand for hardware or physical games. The future of gaming lies in understanding and serving the diverse communities of players

with their own preferences and needs. Publishers and brands must continue to adapt to this ever-changing landscape to ensure effective engagement with diverse players and sustained growth in the gaming industry.

2. Underserved Audiences

In recent years, the gaming industry has experienced tremendous growth and expansion, with an increasing number of people drawn to the diverse and engaging experiences offered by video games. While gaming has traditionally been associated with a predominantly male demographic, recent trends suggest that the industry is shifting towards greater inclusivity, with more and more underrepresented audiences finding their place in the gaming world.

One of the most notable groups of underserved audiences in the state of gaming is women. For years, women have been underrepresented in the industry, with female gamers often facing stereotypes and discrimination. However, recent data suggests that women are becoming a more significant force in gaming, with more female players entering the scene and making their voices heard.

According to a recent survey, women are 30% more likely than men to cite overall enhanced interest in gaming and to have increased their general playing time during the pandemic. Additionally, of the six in ten respondents using mobile devices for gaming, women are 10% more likely to class themselves as active gamers. This trend is further supported by the fact that female gamers typically spend more time playing games than their male counterparts, with women clocking in an average of 11 hours and 50 minutes per week, compared to the average UK gamer's 10 hours and 37 minutes.

However, despite the increasing presence of female gamers, the industry still has a long way to go in terms of addressing the needs and preferences of this demographic. Historically, the industry has focused on catering to the needs of male gamers, with little attention paid to the desires and interests of female players. As a result, many female gamers feel overlooked and underserved by the industry, with few games and gaming experiences designed with their needs and preferences in mind.

To better serve the needs of female gamers, the industry must take steps to improve its understanding of what this demographic wants and needs from gaming experiences. This means engaging with female gamers, seeking out their feedback and input, and using this information to inform the development of new games and gaming experiences that cater to their needs.

Another underserved audience in the state of gaming is older adults. While the industry has traditionally focused on appealing to younger gamers, recent trends suggest that older adults are increasingly turning to gaming as a way to stay engaged and active in their later years. However, the industry has been slow to cater to the needs and interests of this demographic, with few games and gaming experiences designed with older adults in mind.

To better serve the needs of older adult gamers, the industry must take steps to develop games and gaming experiences that are accessible and engaging for this demographic. This means designing games that are easy to learn and play, with intuitive controls and interfaces that are easy for older adults to navigate. It also means creating games that are engaging and meaningful for older adults, with content and themes that are relevant to their interests and experiences.

Overall, the gaming industry has made significant progress in recent years towards greater inclusivity and diversity, with more and more underserved audiences finding their place in the world of gaming. However, there is still much work to be done to ensure that all gamers feel valued and supported by the industry. By taking steps to better understand the needs and preferences of underserved audiences, and by designing games and gaming experiences that cater to these needs, the industry can continue to grow and expand while creating a more inclusive and diverse gaming community.

UN1TY originated some data from academic sources related to underserved audiences in gaming such as:

According to a study published in the Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, female gamers make up approximately 41% of the total gaming population in the United States (Duggan, 2015).

However, women remain underrepresented in the industry itself; a survey by the International Game Developers Association found that only 22% of game developers identify as female (IGDA, 2020).

LGBTQ+ individuals are also an under-served audience in gaming; a survey by GLAAD found that only 16% of respondents felt that video games provide adequate representation of LGBTQ+ characters and storylines (GLAAD, 2021).

People with disabilities are often overlooked in the gaming industry; a survey by AbleGamers found that only 17% of games released in 2020 included accessibility options for players with disabilities (AbleGamers, 2021).

Older adults are another under-served audience in gaming; a study by the University of California, San Francisco found that playing video games can improve cognitive function in older adults, but that many older adults are hesitant to try gaming due to negative stereotypes (Anguera et al., 2013).

These statistics highlight the importance of addressing under-served audiences in gaming and working to create more inclusive and diverse gaming experiences.

3. Immersive content

The gaming industry is constantly evolving, and the advent of new technologies is driving innovation in the sector. One area of gaming that has gained particular attention in recent years is immersive content. Immersive gaming experiences use virtual and augmented reality technologies to provide players with more realistic and interactive gameplay. In this

blog post, we will explore the opportunities and challenges associated with immersive content in the state of gaming.

3.1. Opportunities for Immersive Content

Immersive content has the potential to revolutionize the gaming industry by providing players with more engaging and interactive experiences. The use of virtual and augmented reality technologies allows players to immerse themselves in the game world, creating a more realistic and exciting experience. This technology can also help to overcome some of the limitations of traditional gaming, such as limited interaction and limited sensory input.

One area where immersive content has shown great potential is in the field of education. By using virtual and augmented reality technologies, educators can create immersive learning experiences that help students to engage with material more deeply. This technology can also help to overcome some of the limitations of traditional teaching methods, such as limited access to resources and limited interaction.

3.2. Challenges of Immersive Content

While immersive content holds great promise, there are also significant challenges that must be addressed. One of the biggest challenges is the cost of developing immersive content. The development of immersive games requires significant investment in hardware, software, and content creation. This can be a barrier to entry for smaller developers and publishers, limiting the availability of immersive games.

Another challenge is the need for specialized hardware. While virtual and augmented reality technologies have become more affordable in recent years, they still require specialized hardware such as headsets and controllers. This can be a barrier to entry for some players, limiting the potential audience for immersive games.

Another challenge is the potential for negative side effects. Some players may experience motion sickness or other side effects when playing immersive games, limiting the potential audience for these games. Additionally, there is a risk that players may become so immersed in the game world that they lose touch with reality, leading to negative consequences.

3.3. Future of Immersive Content

Despite the challenges associated with immersive content, the future looks bright for this technology in the gaming industry. As hardware and software become more affordable and accessible, we can expect to see more immersive games being developed. Additionally, as the technology improves, we can expect to see fewer negative side effects and a wider audience for immersive games.

Another area where we can expect to see growth is in the use of immersive content in fields beyond gaming. As mentioned earlier, immersive content has great potential in the field of education, and we can expect to see more educational content being developed in the coming years. Additionally, immersive content can be used in fields such as healthcare, architecture, and engineering to provide more realistic and interactive simulations.

Immersive content represents a significant opportunity for the gaming industry, but there are also significant challenges that must be addressed. As the technology improves and becomes more affordable and accessible, we can expect to see more immersive games being developed, and a wider audience for these games. Additionally, the use of immersive content in fields beyond gaming represents a significant opportunity for the technology to make a positive impact on society. It is clear that immersive content will continue to play an important role in the future of gaming and beyond.

4. The Subscription Economy: Exploring the Shift from Ownership to Access

In recent years, the concept of the subscription economy has gained significant attention across various industries, including gaming. The subscription economy refers to a business model where customers pay for access to products or services on a recurring basis rather than purchasing them outright.

This shift from ownership to access has disrupted traditional business models and transformed the way companies engage with their customers. In this blog post, we will explore the rise of the subscription economy in the gaming industry.

4.1. The Benefits of Subscription-Based Gaming

One of the main advantages of subscription-based gaming is the convenience it offers to consumers. Rather than having to purchase games individually, customers can pay a monthly or yearly fee to access a wide range of games. This allows them to experiment with different titles and genres without the need for a significant upfront investment. Subscription-based models also provide a more predictable revenue stream for gaming companies, as they can rely on a steady stream of recurring payments.

Another benefit of subscription-based gaming is the potential for increased engagement and loyalty among customers. By offering a variety of games through a single subscription, gaming companies can encourage players to spend more time on their platform. This can lead to a stronger sense of community and a more immersive experience for players.

4.2. The Success of Subscription-Based Models

The success of subscription-based models in the gaming industry is evident in the rise of platforms such as Xbox Game Pass, PlayStation Now, and EA Play. These services offer a wide range of games for a monthly or yearly fee, with the option to download and play games on-demand. According to a recent report by SuperData, the subscription-based gaming market is projected to reach \$4.8 billion by the end of 2021.

4.3. The Impact on Game Developers and Publishers

The shift towards subscription-based gaming has significant implications for game developers and publishers. One of the main challenges is the need to create a continuous stream of content that keeps subscribers engaged. This requires a shift away from traditional

development cycles, where games are released as standalone products, towards ongoing updates and expansions that provide fresh content for subscribers.

Another challenge is the need to balance the interests of subscribers with the need for profitability. While subscription-based models can provide a more predictable revenue stream, they also require significant investment in content creation and platform development. Game developers and publishers must find a way to balance the cost of content creation with the revenue generated by subscriptions.

4.4. The Future of Subscription-Based Gaming

The future of subscription-based gaming is likely to be shaped by continued innovation and evolution. As the market grows, companies will seek new ways to differentiate their offerings and attract subscribers. This could include the development of exclusive content or new features that enhance the gaming experience.

There is also the potential for subscription-based gaming to expand beyond traditional gaming platforms. As cloud-based gaming and mobile gaming continue to grow in popularity, subscription-based models could become a more prevalent part of the gaming landscape.

The subscription economy has disrupted traditional business models and transformed the way companies engage with their customers. In the gaming industry, subscription-based models have provided a more convenient and engaging way for players to access a wide range of games. As the market continues to evolve, game developers and publishers must find new ways to balance the cost of content creation with the revenue generated by subscriptions. The future of subscription-based gaming is likely to be shaped by continued innovation and evolution, providing new opportunities for players and companies alike.

5. Final Remarks

In conclusion UN1TY contemplates that the state of gaming worldwide is in a period of rapid growth and diversification, fueled by the widespread adoption of mobile devices, the increasing prevalence of female gamers, and the democratization of access to gaming through cloud-based services. While digital content and subscription-based models are gaining traction, there is still a significant market for physical games and hardware upgrades. As the gaming industry continues to evolve and attract an ever-growing range of diverse players, it is essential for publishers and brands to understand and cater to the specific preferences and needs of underserved audiences. Moreover, the potential of immersive content and emerging technologies such as VR represents exciting new opportunities for the gaming sector. In order to stay competitive and effectively serve their audiences, gaming companies must stay attuned to these trends and continue to innovate in their content, delivery models, and marketing strategies.