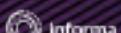


GDC

2025 STATE of the
GAME INDUSTRY



Foreword

It seems fitting that we've reached the 13th year

of GDC's State of the Game Industry, a number viewed as lucky in some cultures and unlucky in others, because it feels like the last 12 months have seen their share of fortune and heartbreak.

Industry layoffs have continued, to the point where one in 10 developers say they've lost their jobs in the past year. This is happening as more studios adopt Generative AI, even though it's increasingly unpopular among developers. Working hours are going up, investment opportunities are shrinking, and recent severe weather events like Hurricane Milton and the Southern California wildfires are drawing attention to the growing impact of climate disasters.

But the game industry is resilient, as are its developers. PC development has skyrocketed, more studios are prioritizing game accessibility, unionization support holds steady, and Hollywood continues to see the value in adapting games for the big (and small) screen.

This year, we surveyed over 3,000 developers (with a ±2 percent MoE), working with research partners at Omdia to analyze the survey data and collaborating with the team at Game Developer.

Thank you to everyone who participated by sharing your thoughts and perspectives.

GDC
GDC Team

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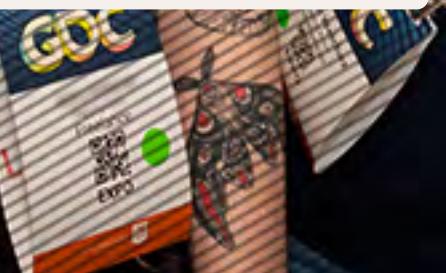
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2025 STATE OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

1

THE GLOBAL GAME DEVELOPER COMMUNITY



The Developers of 2025

The game industry continues to grow and change, along with its players. While the industry remains largely white and male, a few key data points show how the developer community is becoming more diverse.

Gender diversity in the game industry has seen a notable shift over the past few years. Women and non-binary developers now make up 32% of game developers, compared to 29% last year and 24% in 2022. Men still make up two-thirds (66%) of developers. However, that number was 75% in 2020, meaning we've seen a 9-point change over the past five years.

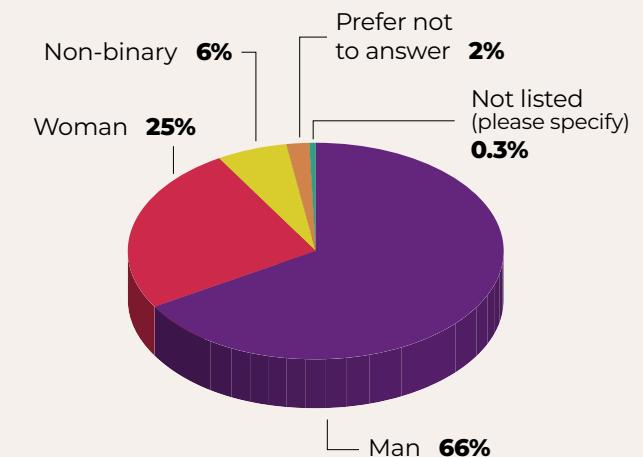
LGBTQ representation among developers has also increased, with one-fourth of respondents identifying as LGBTQ+ (up from 21% in 2024). Nearly half (43%) of 18–24-year-old developers identify as LGBTQ+, and women developers are almost four times more likely than men to do so.

AGE

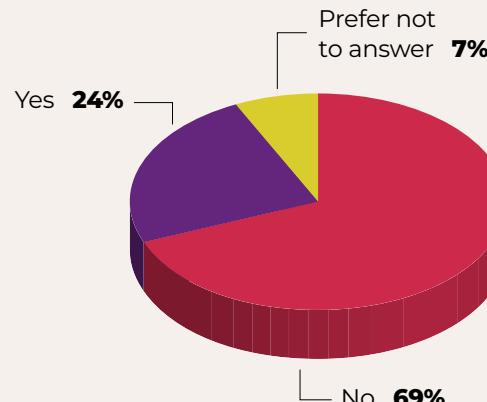
25-34	36%	18-24	10%
35-44	33%	55-64	5%
45-54	15%	65 or older	1%



GENDER



LGBTQ+



35%
**are white, male,
not part of the
LGBTQ+ community**



COUNTRIES WITH THE MOST RESPONDENTS

United States.....	58%	Poland.....	1.6%	France	1.4%
United Kingdom.....	7%	Brazil.....	1.6%	Germany.....	1.3%
Canada	6%	Sweden.....	1.4%	India.....	1.3%
Australia.....	3%				

The Global Game Development Community

This year's State of the Game Industry report includes developers from 86 countries, spread out over six continents.

The United States has the largest concentration of respondents, along with European countries like the UK, France, and Germany. Other countries of note include Canada, Brazil, India, China, and Mexico.

The Game Developers Conference is in the United States—as are many attendees, who tend to be the bulk of respondents to our annual survey. Some responses in this survey may overly represent the experiences of developers in the West and may not always reflect the views of the global community at large.





Race / Ethnicity

We have seen a change in racial and ethnic diversity in the game development community since last year—though it's a little more difficult to quantify, as many of the changes are too small to draw conclusions. According to the survey, 16% of developers are East, South, or Southeast Asian, one-tenth are Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin, and 3% are Black, African, or Caribbean.

The combined increases did manifest in a year-over-year decrease in the number of respondents identifying as White or Caucasian—going from 64% in 2024 to 59% today.

- White / Caucasian
- Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin
- East Asian
- Multiple ethnicities / Not listed
- Prefer not to answer
- Southeast Asian
- Black / African / Caribbean
- South Asian
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- American Indian or Alaska Native



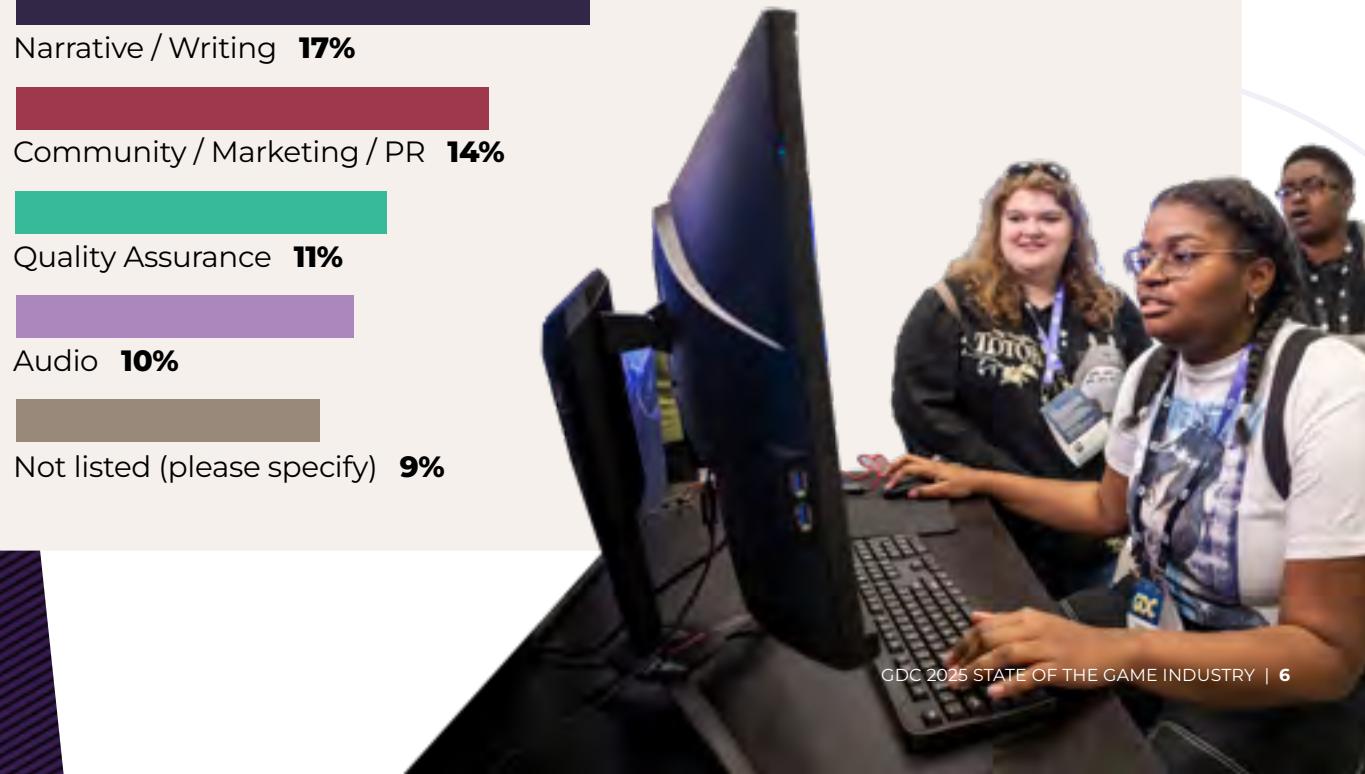
The Developer's Role

Despite the surge in layoffs, the breakdown of job roles in the game industry has remained consistent. The top roles are in game design, programming, and production & team management, like 2024.

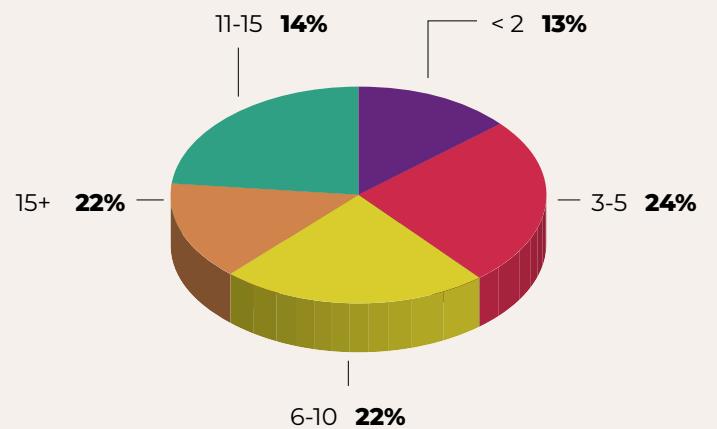
The majority of respondents (59%) are either solo developers or work for studios that are the primary developers of their games. When it comes to job roles, newer developers are more likely to have careers in game design, while those with more experience tend to favor production & team management.

Game narrative jobs have seen the most year-on-year growth, going from 14% of developers in 2024 to 17% of them today. However, game narrative professionals reported being excessively impacted by layoffs in the last year.

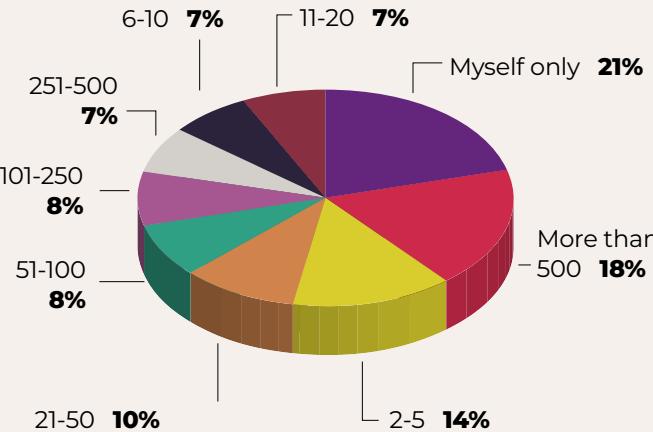
JOB ROLE



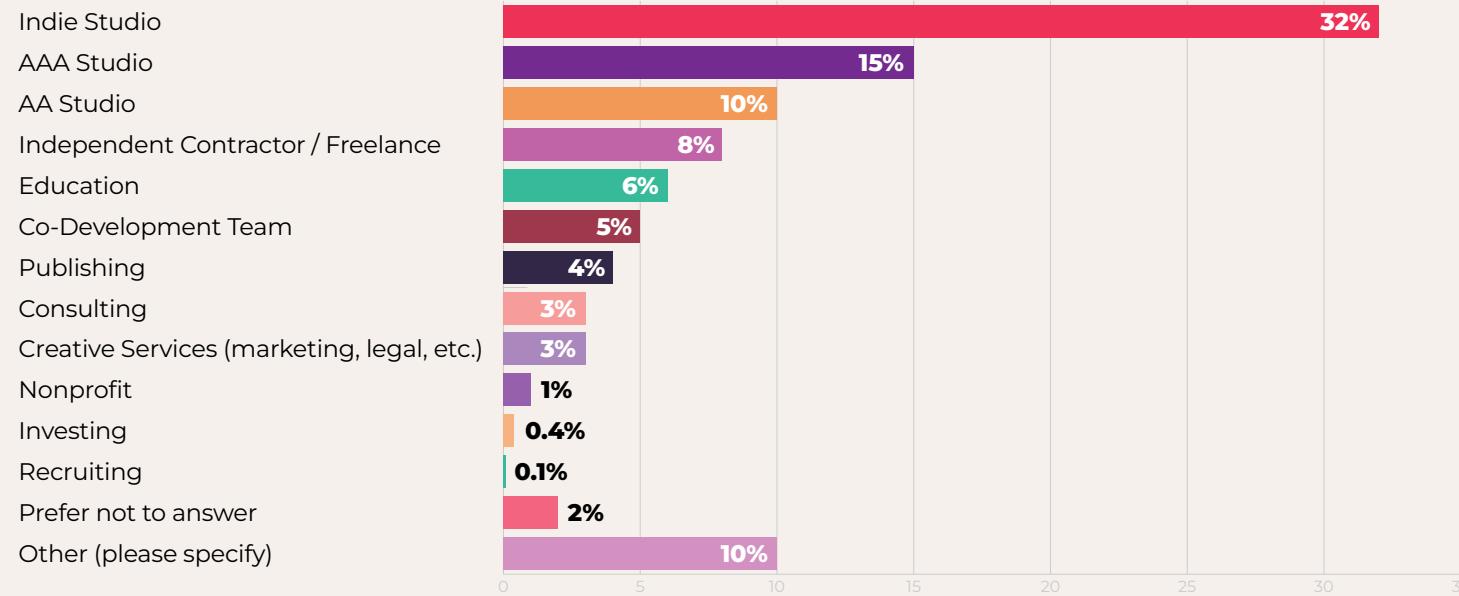
YEARS IN INDUSTRY



STUDIO SIZE



STUDIO TYPE



Currently, 60% of game developers report having 10 years or less experience in the industry. That's up from 56% last year and 57% the year before that.

We have seen a shift in the number of respondents who are working as solo developers, increasing from 18% in 2024 to 21% today. In fact, there are now more developers working alone than there are developers at studios with over 500 people.

21% *of developers work alone*

The percentage of respondents who work at indie studios or AA studios has not changed, but we have seen a decrease in AAA studio representation—going from 18% in 2024 to 15% today. Of those AAA developers, almost half of them work at companies with over 250 employees, while over half of indie developers work for companies with 20 people or fewer.

2025 STATE OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

2

INDUSTRY LAYOFFS

“I’ve been laid off before, but this was by far the longest it’s taken me to find work. It was scary, and my life was flipped upside down.”



One in 10 game developers have been laid off in the past year.

Layoffs have become part of the industry, with announcements now a weekly, if not daily, occurrence. About 11% of respondents reported being laid off in the past 12 months. Altogether, 41% of game developers have been impacted by layoffs this year, up from 35% in our 2024 report.

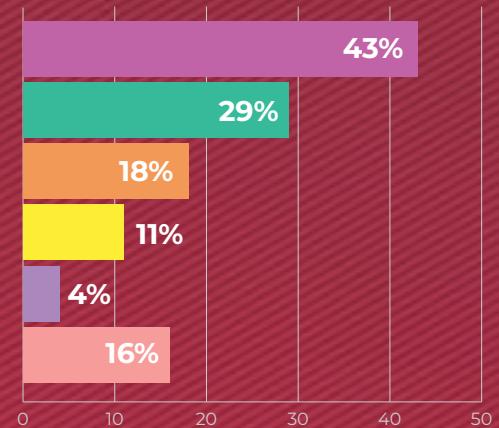
(That number may actually be higher, as many of our “N/A” write-in responses were from students and graduates who are having trouble finding jobs in the current market.)

Developers are feeling the weight of this across the board. Last year, a majority (53%) of developers said there had been no layoffs at their companies: Today, that number is down to 43%. More developers saw their direct colleagues (29%) being laid off than workers in other teams and departments (18%). In addition, 4% said their studios were shut down.

It's a widespread issue that has yet to stabilize.

HOW HAVE LAYOFFS IMPACTED YOU OR YOUR COMPANY? (CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY)

- There were no layoffs
- Colleagues were laid off
- Other teams / departments had layoffs
- I was laid off
- Our studio / company closed down
- N/A

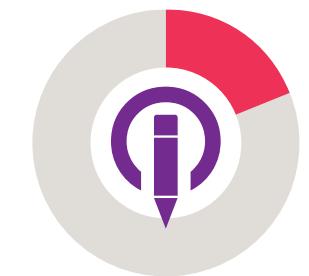


HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU ABOUT FUTURE LAYOFFS?

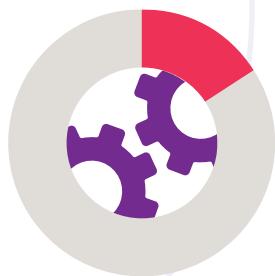


- Not at all concerned 30%
- Slightly concerned 24%
- Very concerned 18%
- Somewhat concerned 16%
- Other / N/A 12%

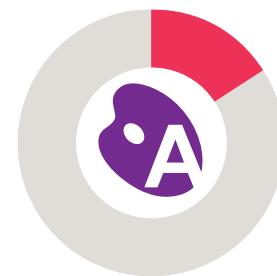
LAYOFFS BY JOB ROLE



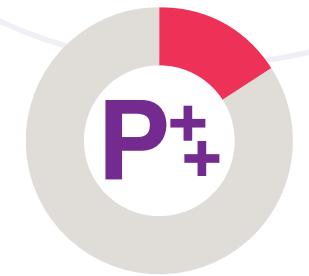
19% Narrative



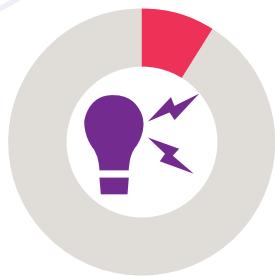
16% Production & Team Management



16% Visual Arts



12% Programming/
Engineering



9% Game Design

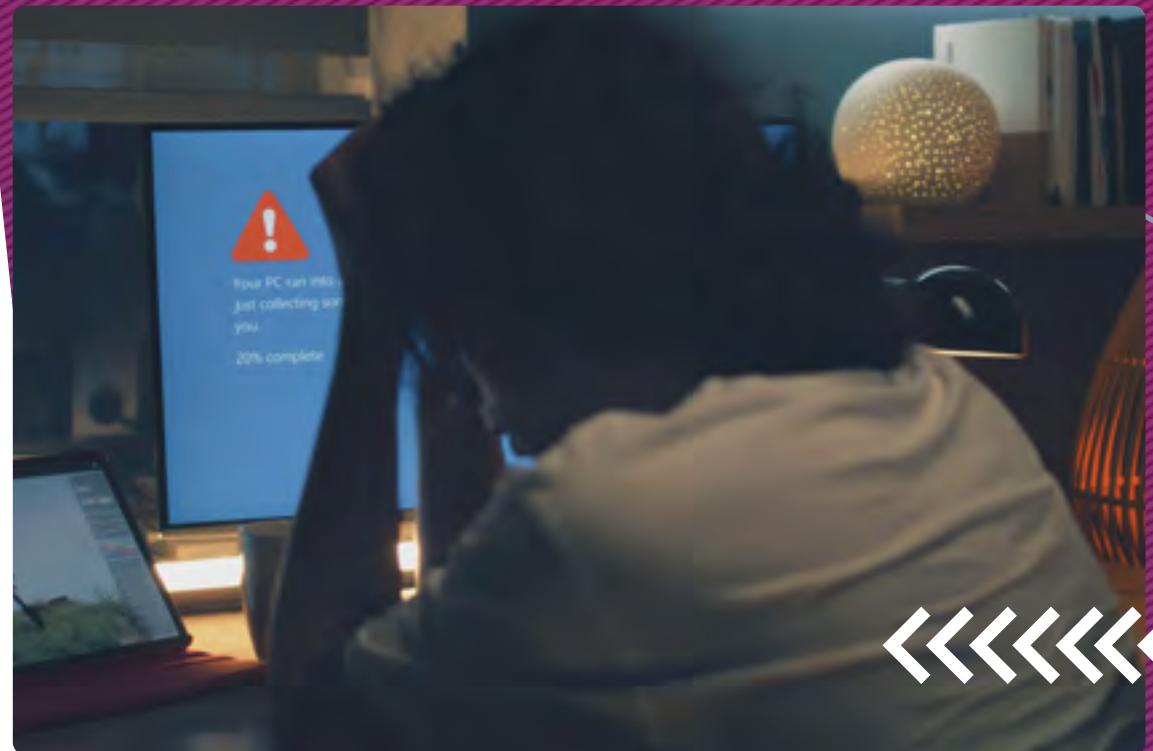


6% Business
& Finance

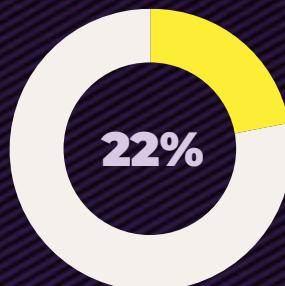
16% *of developers now working alone got laid off in the past year.*

However, when asked how concerned they were about future layoffs at their companies, the numbers didn't change much. About 58% of respondents expressed some level of concern, similar to last year. The number of people who weren't concerned at all did go down, though, from 35% in 2024 to 30% today.

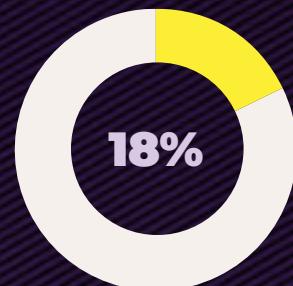
Interestingly, this question also saw an uptick in people writing in their own "N/A" responses, saying that the question didn't apply because they were already laid off or otherwise unemployed. In other words, it wasn't a concern now because, in some way, it had already happened to them.



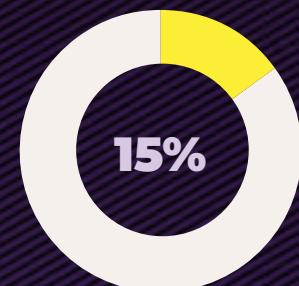
TOP 3 REASONS COMPANIES GAVE FOR LAYOFFS*



Restructuring



Declining Revenue

Market Shifts /
Industry Trends

*19% of developers said there was "no reason given"

FREQUENTLY MENTIONED TERMS:

Pandemic / Covid	25%
Greed	13%
Over-hiring	13%



Why Is This Still Happening?

As studios and publishers continue to lay off developers across the game industry, workers and industry leaders have been looking to place the responsibility somewhere.

According to our survey, the top reason companies have given their employees for layoffs is restructuring (a general term for reorganizing a business to make it more profitable), followed by declining revenue and market shifts.

That's for those who even got an explanation: 19% of developers told us there was "no reason given" for any of their company's layoffs.

"In this industry, we set impossible goals and then fire everyone if they prove to be impossible. We need to apply lean and agile processes instead of shooting for the moon every single time."

Developers were also asked to share what they feel is responsible for the rise in layoffs. While many of them recognized that revenue and market shifts were part of the problem, they placed most of the blame on specific issues like Covid-era overexpansion, rising production costs, declining player interest, unrealistic expectations for the "next big hit," and poor leadership and mismanagement.

IN YOUR WORDS:

If you lost your job, have you been able to find a new one?

"No. It's been over a year and 500+ applications while working to create and improve my portfolio. It feels hopeless at times."

"The games industry is killing me."

"Yes. Within about a month, I was able to find a better position than my former employer could offer."

"Yes. It was the worst job hunt I've had since I was a student."

"I have been laid off three times in the last year. The first two times I was able to find a role. My current studio just laid everyone off. I was only there four months and haven't found anything yet."

"I have a new job but it's a way worse pay level."

"It took me one year and eight months to build up enough consulting to survive. So hard to find a full-time gig right now still."

"Still unemployed after a year."

"I had to get a job in a different industry."

The background features a complex, abstract design composed of numerous thin, glowing lines in shades of purple and blue, creating a sense of depth and motion. A large, semi-transparent white rectangle is positioned in the lower-left quadrant, containing the main text elements.

2025 STATE OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

3

GENERATIVE AI

“Game development is supposed to be art and an expression of one’s imagination, not an AI-generated concept with no real thought process.”

Over the past year, Generative AI has shifted from a concept into a common tool. Investors are pumping billions of dollars into AI companies, studios are busy developing their own proprietary tools, and AI-generated content has a robust foothold in search engines, social media platforms, and advertisements.

The game industry is not immune to this change. According to our survey, a majority (52%) of developers work at companies where Generative AI tools are being used. One-third (36%) of developers say they use them personally, up from 31% last year.

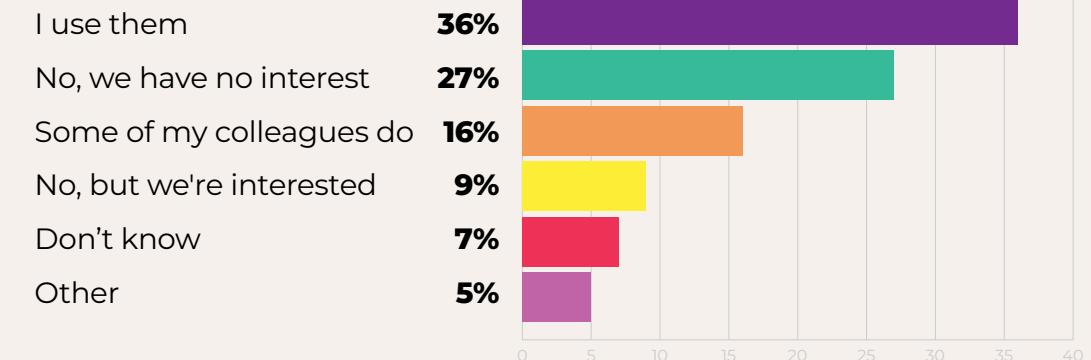
But it appears that as usage has gone up, curiosity has gone down. Less than one-tenth (9%) of developers say their companies are interested in Generative AI tools, down from 15% last year. In comparison, 27% say their companies have no interest in using them, a 9-point increase from 2024.

When asked what applications they saw for the use of Generative AI in the game industry, developers pointed to tasks like coding assistance, concept art and 3D model generation, and automation of repetitive tasks (developers made similar suggestions in our 2024 survey).

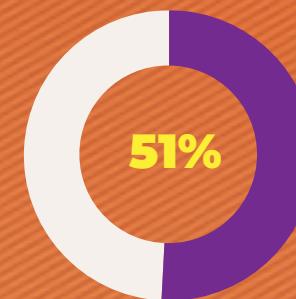
But the word used most frequently in their responses was “none.”

**OLDER DEVELOPERS
are more likely to
use Generative AI
than YOUNGER ONES**

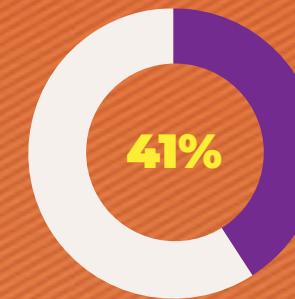
ARE GENERATIVE AI TOOLS USED AT YOUR COMPANY OR DEPARTMENT?



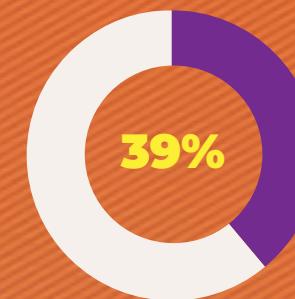
DEVELOPERS WHO USE GENERATIVE AI THE MOST



Business & Finance



Production & Team Leadership



Community, Marketing, & PR

More Companies Have AI Policies

As game developers have adopted Generative AI, employers have expanded policies regulating its usage.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of developers say they work at companies with some form of internal policy for Generative AI use, up from 51% in 2024. That amount increases to 78% for developers at AAA studios.

We've seen a more substantial rise in the number of developers whose companies allow optional use of Generative AI tools—along with companies that don't allow them to be used at all.

The number of developers who say they're required to use Generative AI tools on the job doubled, though it's still only at 4%.

“My workplace has implemented a strict ‘No Generative AI’ policy in all of our contracts, and I think it’s excellent.”

WHAT'S YOUR COMPANY'S POLICY ON GENERATIVE AI TOOLS?



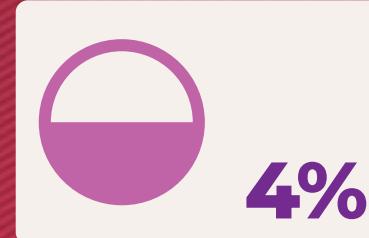
THEY'RE OPTIONAL



NO POLICY



WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO USE ANY



SELECT TOOLS ALLOWED, OTHERS NOT



THEY'RE MANDATED

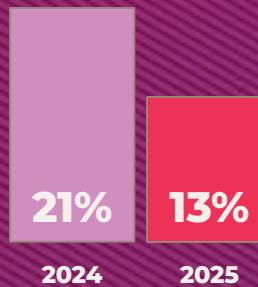


DON'T KNOW / N/A

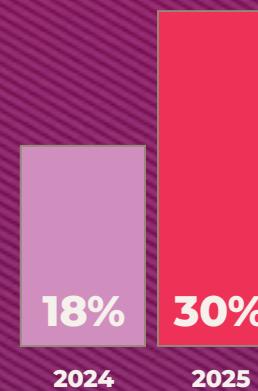


WHAT IMPACT DO YOU THINK GENERATIVE AI IS HAVING ON THE GAME INDUSTRY?

+ / Positive



- / Negative



1,500 DEVELOPERS shared their concerns about Generative AI for this year's survey.

Developer Concerns Grow

"I have a PhD in AI, worked to develop some of the algorithms used by Generative AI. I deeply regret how naively I offered up my contributions."

Generative AI awareness and use may have increased over the past year, but developer opinions on the technology are souring.

According to our survey, 13% of developers believe Generative AI is having a positive impact on the game industry, down from 21%. Meanwhile, 30% of respondents said it has had a negative impact, a 12-point increase from 2024. Last year, developers were more favorable than opposed to Generative AI. That is no longer the case.

It appears that developer opinions on the technology are hardening too. The number who said Generative AI is having a mixed impact decreased from 57% in 2024 to 51% today. While still a majority of respondents, this indicates that more developers are developing firmer (and increasingly negative) opinions on Generative AI.

The number of respondents who are concerned about the ethics of Generative AI in game development has not changed much, but the severity of their concerns has. This year, over half (51%) of developers say they are very concerned, up from 42% last year.

When asked to cite their specific concerns, developers pointed to intellectual property theft, energy consumption, the quality of AI-generated content, potential biases, and regulatory issues.

Several developers also pointed to fears of job displacement. However, our survey shows that developers who had been laid off in the past year were no more likely to have concerns with Generative AI than those who hadn't been.

IN YOUR WORDS:

What concerns do you have about Generative AI, and what can be done to address them?

"We should use generative AI to help people be faster at their jobs, not lose them."

"It can be a powerful tool, but people taking credit for work they did not do or using source code they do not understand can have consequences."

"AI is here, like it or not. Responsible use is key."

"AI companies need to incorporate the concept of consent into how they source data sets."

"No matter how you put it, Generative AI isn't a great replacement for real people and quality is going to be damaged."

4

2025 STATE OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

ENGINES & PLATFORMS

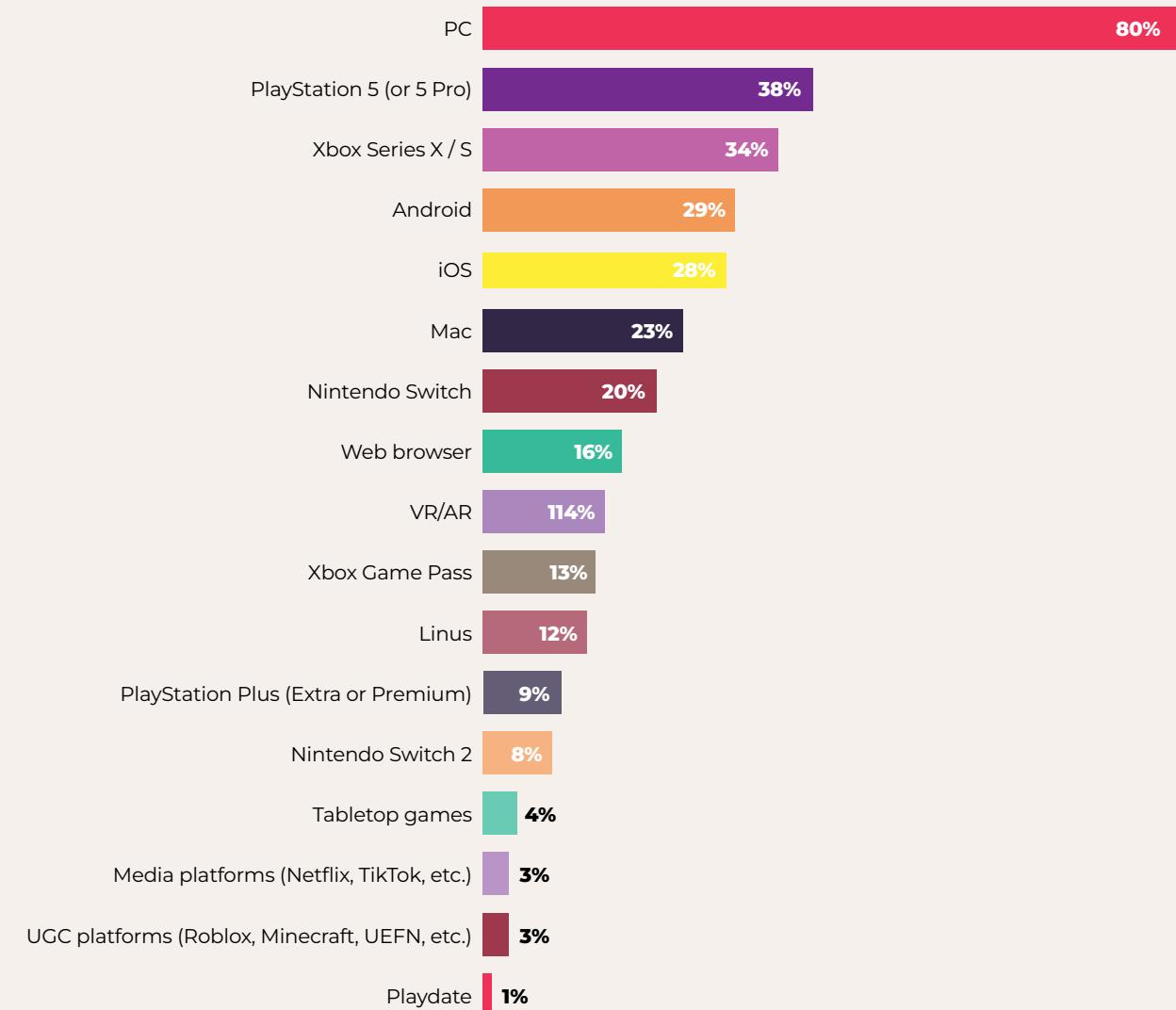
Passion for PC Development Explodes

Every year, we ask developers to share what platforms they've been making games for, and which ones they plan on supporting in the future.

PC has consistently been the platform of choice, but this year saw its dominance increase even more: 80% of developers said they're currently making games for PC (up from 66%), and three-fourths (74%) said the platform is of interest to them (up from 62%).

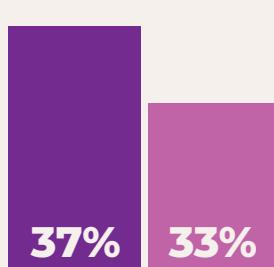
The exact reason for this jump is unclear, but it could be connected to the rising popularity of Valve's Steam Deck. This year's survey didn't single out Steam (or Valve's handheld gaming computer) as its own platform, because it's a hub for PC and Mac games. But it appears some developers do view it as a unique platform. For example, when asked to name other platforms that interest them, almost half (44%) wrote in Steam Deck.

WHICH PLATFORM(S) ARE BEING USED FOR YOUR CURRENT PROJECT?

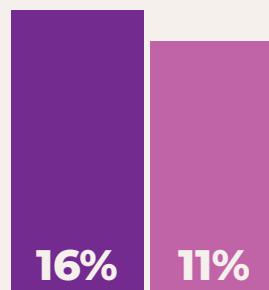


NEXT PROJECT (BY PLATFORM)

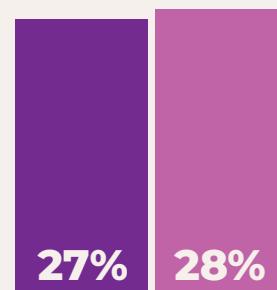
PlayStation vs. Xbox



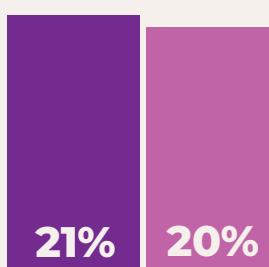
Xbox Game Pass vs. PlayStation Plus



iOS vs. Android



Nintendo Switch vs. successor



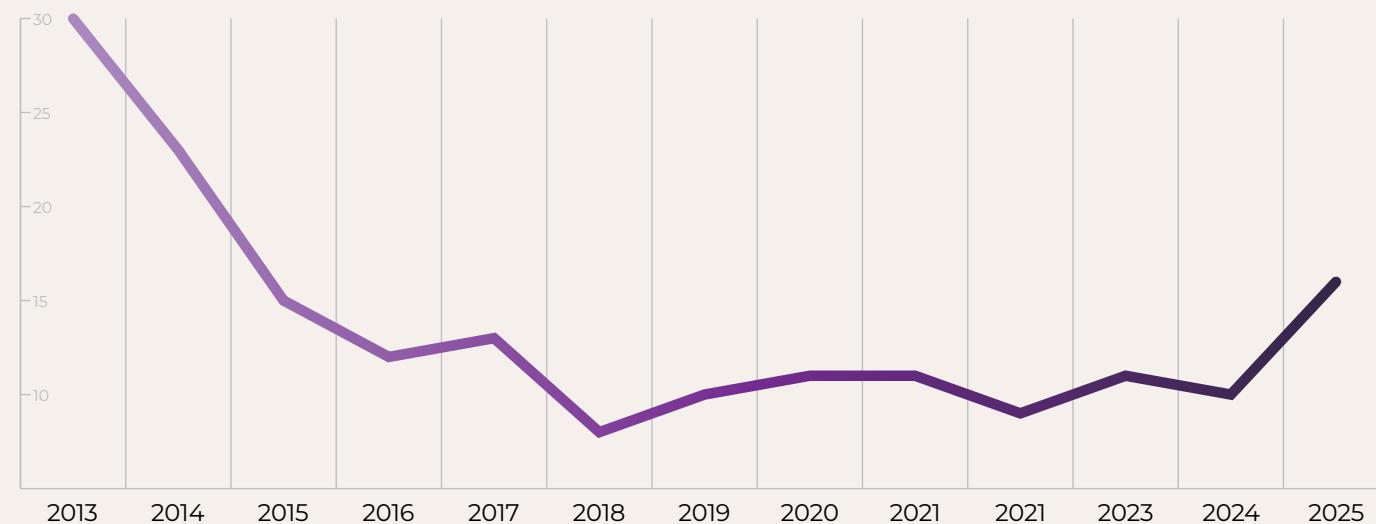
PlayStation continues its console lead over Xbox. About 38% of developers are currently making games for PS5 hardware (compared to 34% for Xbox Series X | S), and 37% are turning to PlayStation for their next projects (compared to 33% for Xbox).

However, Xbox is outperforming PlayStation in one area: cloud services. About 13% of developers are currently making games for Xbox Game Pass, compared to 9% for PlayStation Plus (Extra or Premium).

Mobile game development has increased for the first time since 2020, with 29% of developers currently making games for Android and 28% for iOS (up from 24% and 23% respectively). Much of that is in Brazil and the East and South / Central / West Asia regions, where over half of developers say they work on mobile games.

But the biggest surprise this year might be browser games. According to our survey, 16% of developers are working on releases for web browsers. That's up from 9% last year and 11% the year before. It's actually the highest percentage of developers we've seen working on web browser games in a decade.

WEB BROWSER DEVELOPMENT, YEAR BY YEAR



WHICH VR/AR PLATFORM(S) MOST INTEREST YOU AS A DEVELOPER RIGHT NOW?



35% of all game developers work in VR/AR development

The number of developers working in virtual and augmented reality has stayed consistent, as have the platforms of choice.

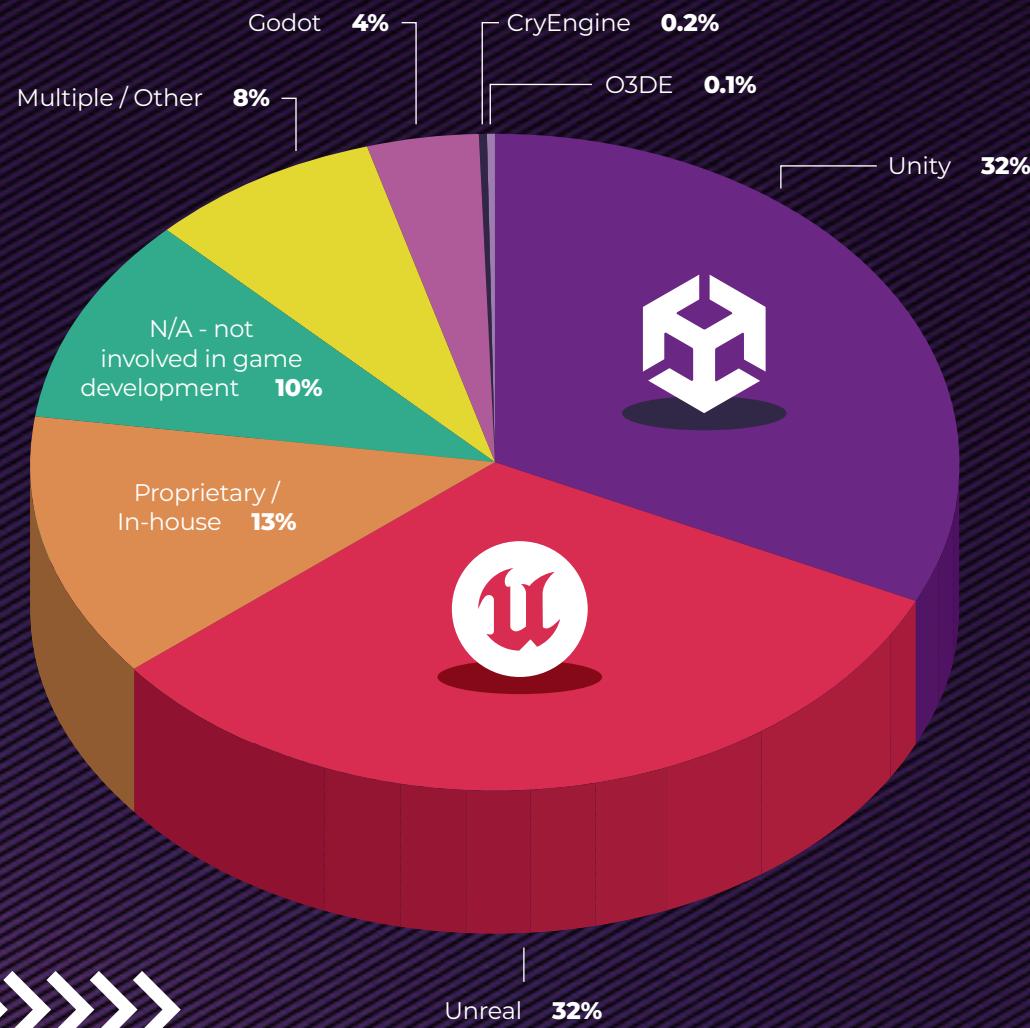
According to our survey, the Meta Quest / Horizon Store remains the dominant space for VR/AR developers, with 59% currently making games for the platform. This is followed by Steam VR (31%) and PlayStation VR/VR2 (16%).

Although only 8% of VR/AR developers are currently making games for Apple visionOS, the platform looks to be growing its foothold. Almost one-fifth (18%) of respondents say their next games will be on the platform, and one-fourth are interested in Apple's VR headset.

We can't accurately compare these numbers to previous years, as this was the first time these questions were asked exclusively of VR/AR developers.



WHAT GAME ENGINE ARE YOU PRIMARILY USING FOR YOUR CURRENT GAME?



Unity and Unreal Remain on Top

In September 2024, Unity announced it would be reversing its controversial Runtime Fee policy, which threatened to charge developers an extra fee based on revenue or installs. First reported by Game Developer, this announcement came on the heels of a yearlong backlash against the proposed fee, one that drove some developers away from Unity.

This year, we once again asked developers to identify the engines they're using to make their games, to see if there have been any notable changes following the backlash. Like last year's survey, Unity and Unreal Engine remain the most used game engines for developers, tied at 32% each. This is largely unchanged from 2024, when it was 33% each. At this time, it appears that few developers have moved on from Unity.

IN YOUR WORDS:

What's your one big idea that would improve the game industry?

"Oh my god this is a way bigger question than I expected in this survey!"

"Apprenticeships."

*"More public funding for indie studios.
Add games to public subsidized arts programs."*

*"Real-time profanity/
abuse filter for online chat interactions."*

"Talent Sovereignty Network that would allow creatives direct control over their digital likeness, voice, and creative output."

*"Pay transparency.
More competitive distribution options."*

"Widespread unionizing."

*"Make the minimum cost of a game be 99¢.
No free games."*

"Pay me."

"Teaching Studios: Studios built to produce titles using mostly new entrants into the industry explicitly."

"Cross-company insurance pooling (US-specific)."

"Make selling/releasing source code for old games a more common practice."

"Vet leaders as well as we vet new hires."

"Abolition of the NDA so people can talk about prior work. Even cancelled projects."

"I have no clue it's so fucked right now."

"More co-ops and employee -owned studios."

2025 STATE OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

5 **THE BUSINESS
OF GAMES**

Developers are Divided on Live-Service Games

Live-service games have become part of the industry's ecosystem, with games like *Fortnite*, *Warframe*, and *Genshin Impact* continuing to successfully engage players with new content and experiences.

But for every *Valorant*, there's been a *Concord*, an *Anthem*, or a *Redfall*. Live-service games can be a lucrative and sustaining business model, but it's one that's seen a lot of failures and missed opportunities.

All that being said: Are live-service games worth the risk for developers?

We asked our survey respondents whether they would be interested in developing a live-service game as their next title. About

33% of AAA developers work on live-service games

13% said they would, while 42% said they were not interested and 29% said they didn't know (or it wasn't applicable to them).

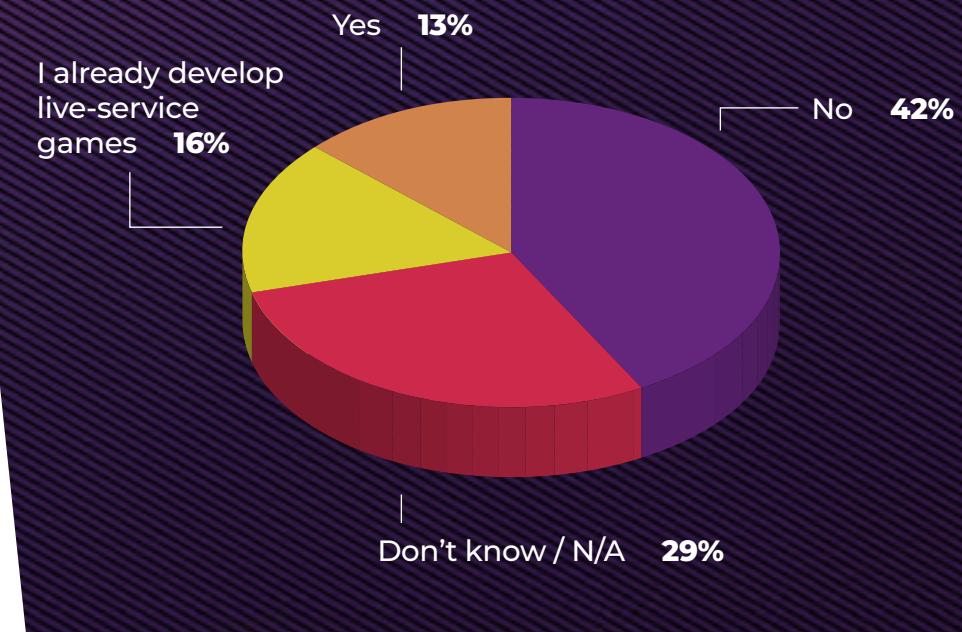
Around 16% of developers said they already work on live-service games, and that number increases to 33% for AAA developers.

Developer opinions on the value of live-service games were mixed. Many respondents said they saw the value in live-service—not only on the financial side, but also in the player experience and community building.

Others noted their concerns about declining player interest, creative stagnation, predatory practices and microtransactions, and the risk of developer burnout.

One of the biggest issues mentioned was market oversaturation, with many developers noting how tough it is to break through and build a sustainable player base.

WOULD YOU WANT TO MAKE A LIVE-SERVICE GAME AS YOUR NEXT TITLE?



TOP MEASURES OF LIVE-SERVICE SUCCESS

62%

Stable Concurrent User (CCU) base

40%

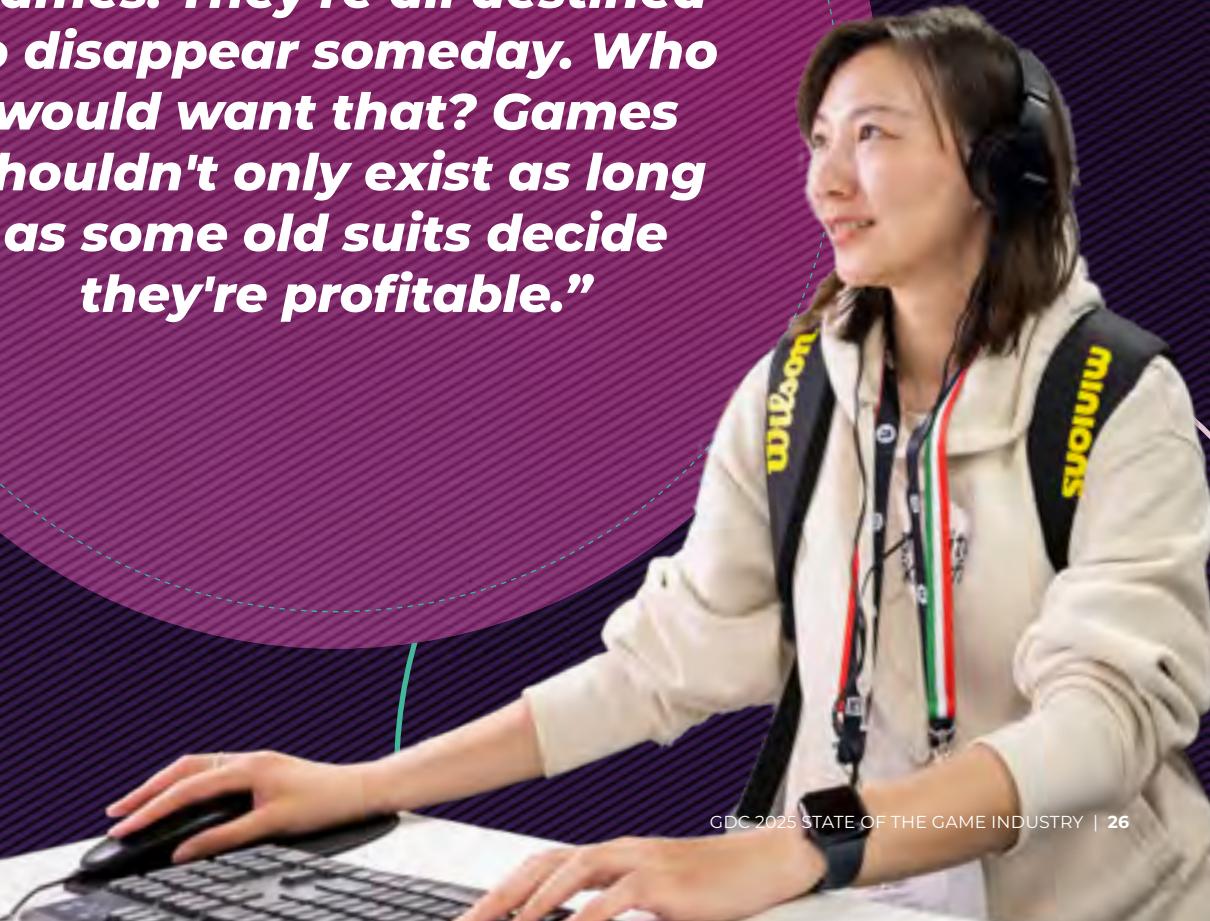
Percentage of daily active users

32%

Percentage of monetized players

“I love live-service as a developer. It allows for steady growth and quick feedback for iterative design loops. Ultimately, we need to create engaging and compelling gameplay and story for the player: Live-service is just a wrapper on the experience.”

“I despise live-service games. They’re all destined to disappear someday. Who would want that? Games shouldn’t only exist as long as some old suits decide they’re profitable.”



Hollywood Is Adapting More Video Games

Video game adaptations aren't going away anytime soon—especially ones based on AAA releases. According to our survey, 13% of developers have worked on games that are being (or have been) adapted into movies, shows, or other media—up from 10% in 2024.

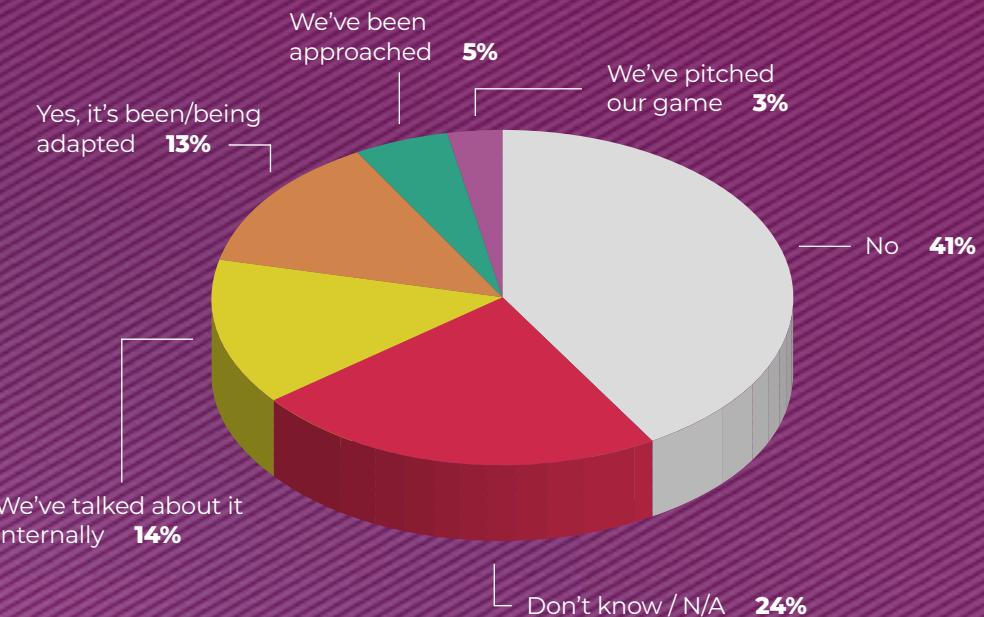
However, that number jumps to 36% for AAA developers, which is a 10-point increase from last year.

But as the number of adaptations has gone up, interest in trying to become the next multimedia hit could be going down. This year's survey has fewer developers who say they've talked internally about getting their games adapted, going from 20% in 2024 to 14% today.

There's also been an increase in the number of developers who don't know (or the question isn't applicable to them).

1/3

of AAA developers have games being adapted for film or TV



TOP 5 BUSINESS MODELS

- 57%** Premium game (digital or physical)
- 32%** Free to download
- 24%** DLC/updates
- 22%** Paid in-game items
- 18%** Paid in-game currency



DISCOVERY METHODS DEVELOPERS MOST "FREQUENTLY USE"

- 49%** Social media
- 48%** Word of mouth
- 41%** Real-time communications
- 28%** Promotion on a digital storefront
- 26%** Live streamers



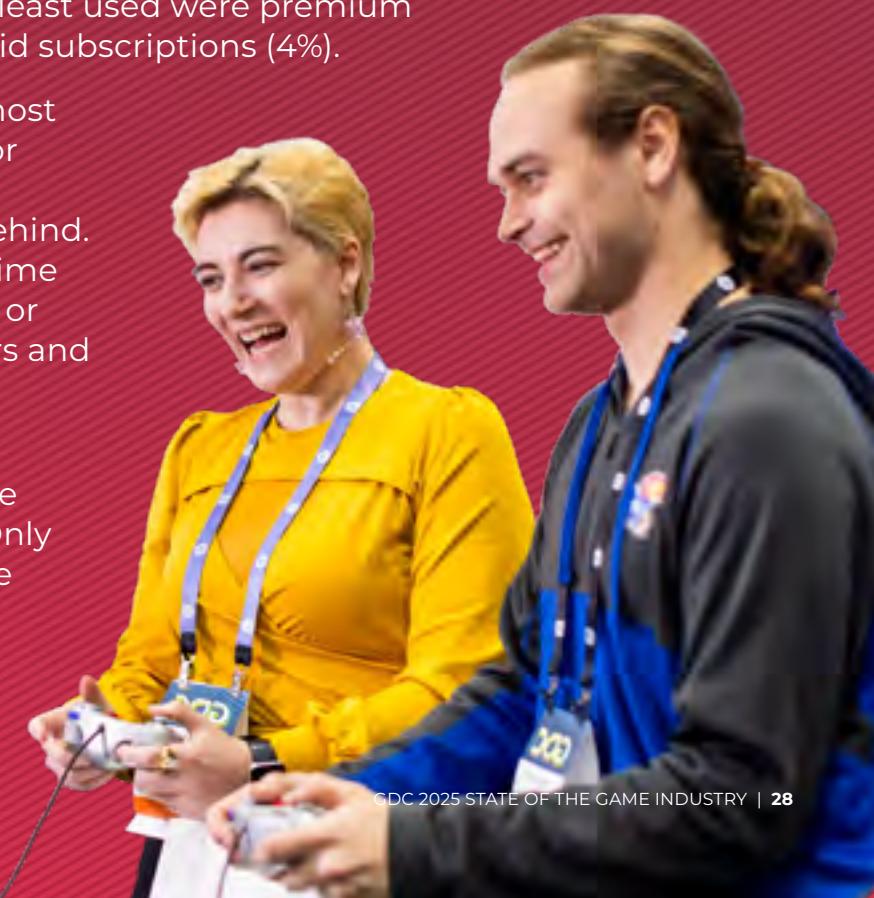
Premium Games & Word of Mouth Remain the Biggest Draws

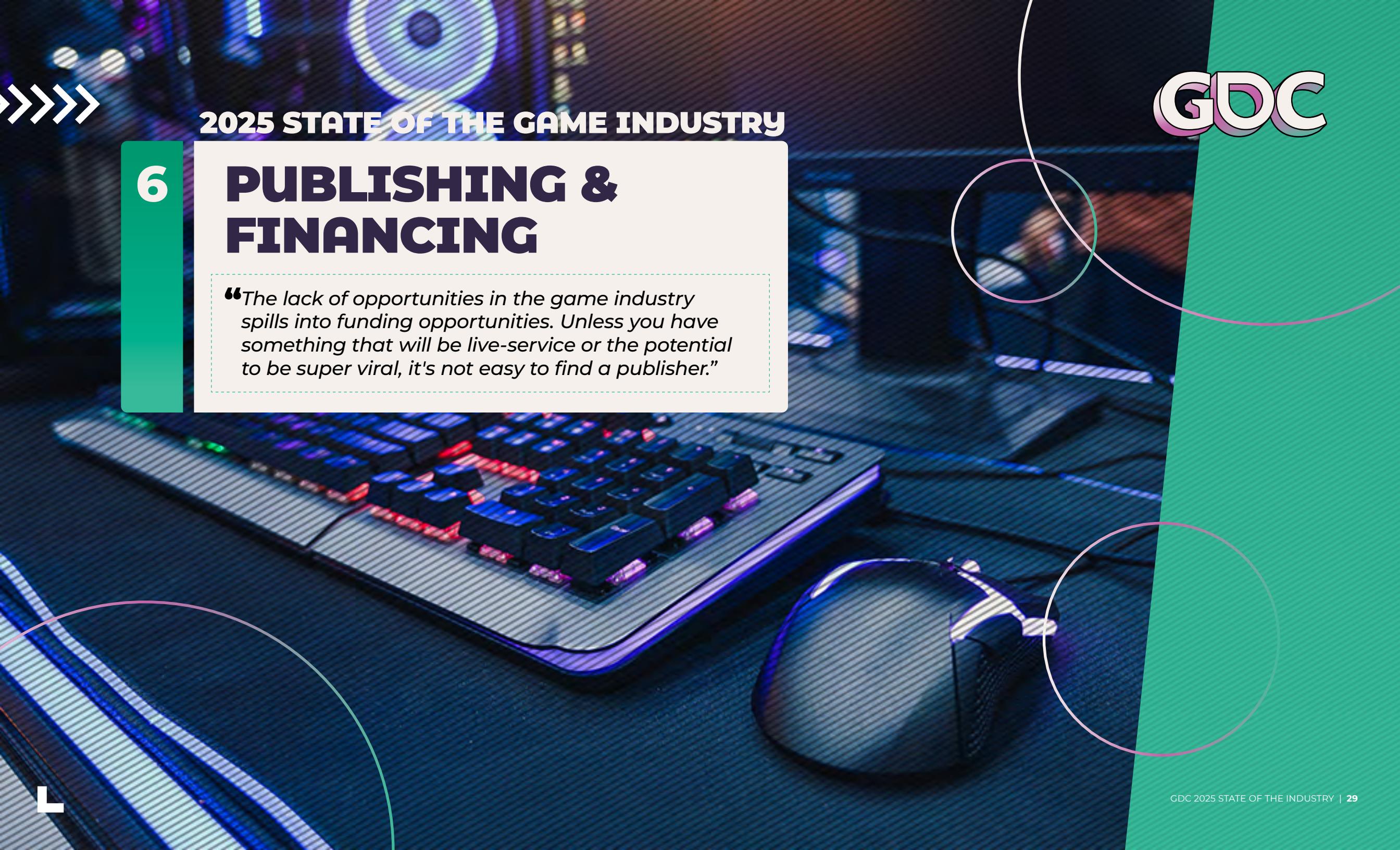
We asked developers to share the business models they're using for their current projects, as well as the discovery methods that are most effective in getting the word out.

Over half (57%) of respondents said they're currently working on premium games. This was followed by free to download, DLC/updates, and paid in-game items. The least used were premium tier subscriptions (3%) and paid subscriptions (4%).

Word of mouth (86%) is the most used marketing tool overall for game developers, with social media (84%) tracking close behind. These were followed by real-time communications like Discord or Slack (74%), and live-streamers and events (69% each).

The least popular marketing method this year was in-game crossovers and promotions. Only 28% of developers said they've made use of this method.





2025 STATE OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

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PUBLISHING & FINANCING

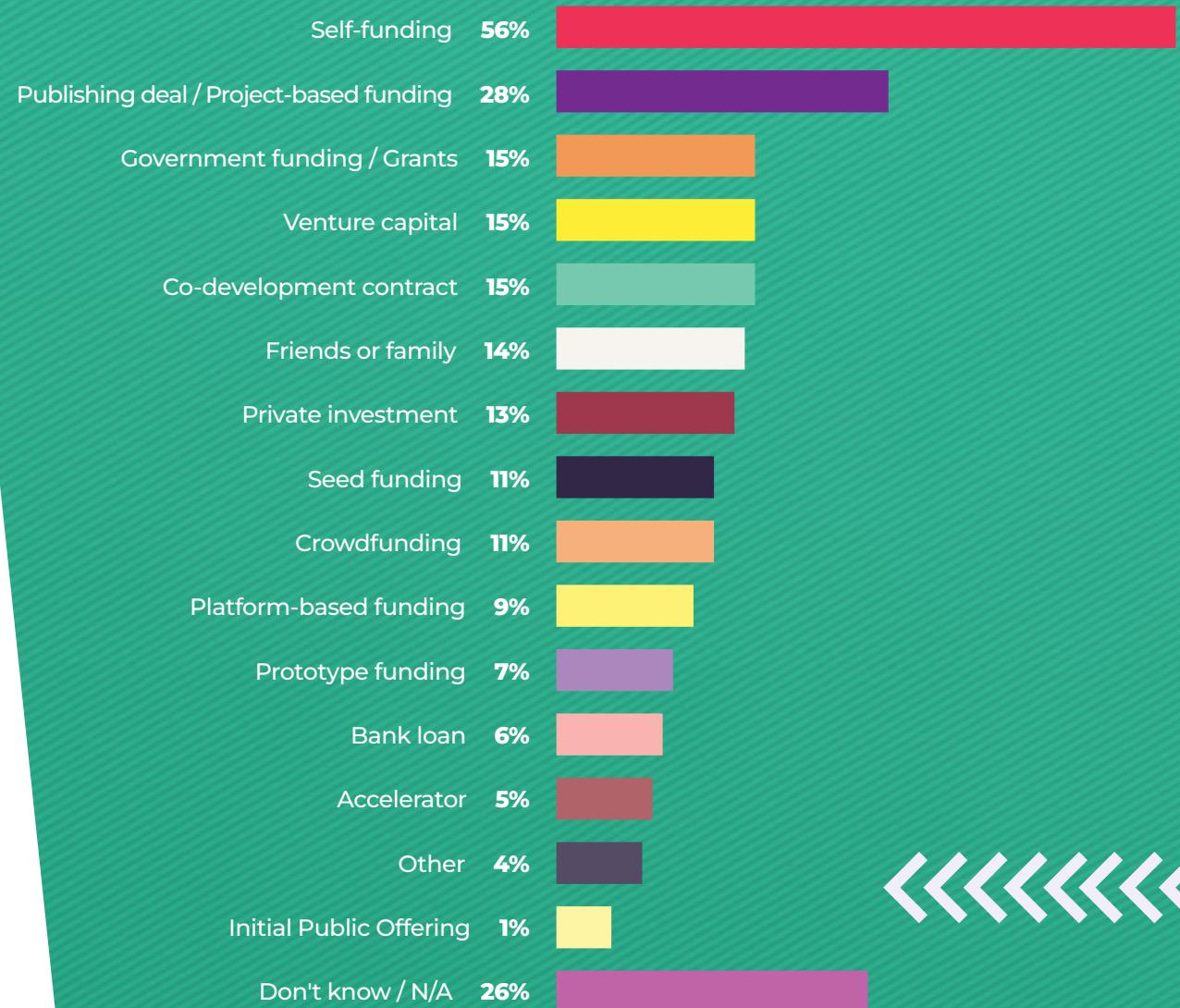
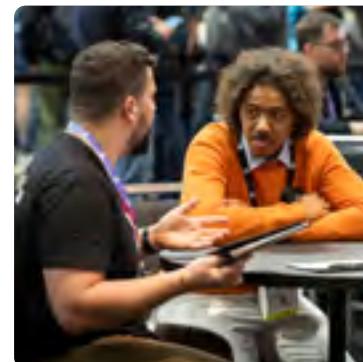
“The lack of opportunities in the game industry spills into funding opportunities. Unless you have something that will be live-service or the potential to be super viral, it's not easy to find a publisher.”

Half of Developers Are Funding Their Own Games

Finding and securing investment opportunities has been an ongoing struggle for game creators, and it appears to be getting tougher. We asked developers to share the publishing and financing options they've pursued over the past year, as well as how successful they've been.

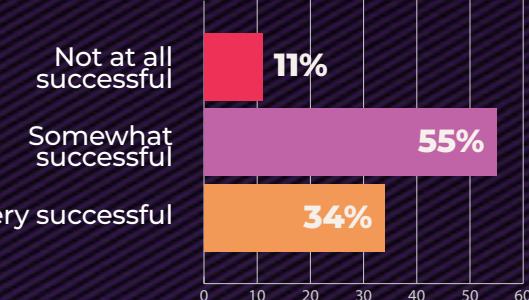
The most-used method, by far, is self-funding. Over half (56%) of developers said they've invested money into their own games. This was followed by publishing deals and project-based funding (28%), along with government funds or grants, venture capital, and co-development contracts (at 15% each).

Indie developers were the most likely to turn to self-funding, with 82% saying they've put their own money into their games. About 40% of AA developers and 29% of AAA developers have self-funded their games as well.

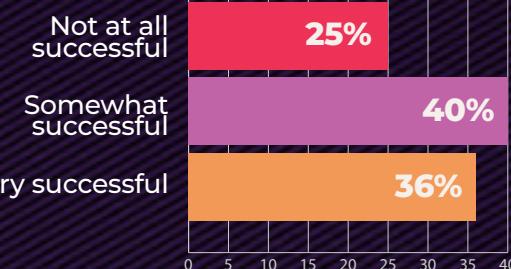


SUCCESS RATE OF MOST USED FUNDING OPTIONS

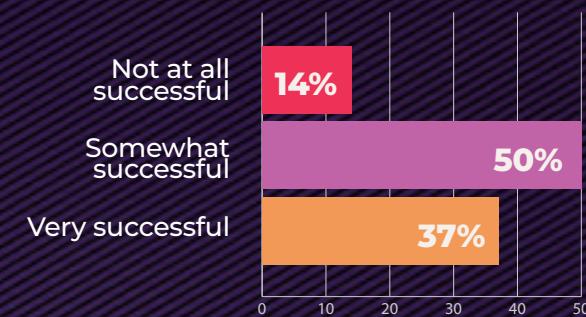
Self-funding



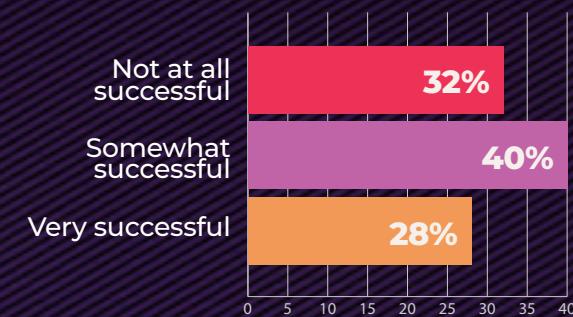
Publishing deal / Project-based funding



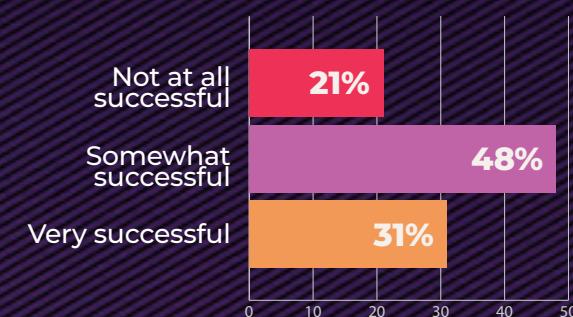
Co-development contract



Venture Capital



Government funding / Grants



Market Instability Impacts Funding Opportunities

But how successful have these publishing and financing options been for developers? Self-funding appears to be working, with 89% reporting it being at least somewhat successful.

However, co-development contracts have the highest satisfaction, with one-third (37%) calling the method “very successful.”

Accelerators saw the least success, with 43% of developers saying they were “not at all successful.” This was followed by venture capital (32%) and crowdfunding (31%).

Developers said securing funding from publishers, investors, venture capital, or other external sources has been a daunting task. The most-cited issues were time, market instability, lack of industry experience or connections, discrimination, creative conflicts, and too much competition.

Developer Challenges

"There are a lot of studios out there seeking funding, so it is more competitive now than ever before. There is less money to go around, and a huge amount of games being produced."

"Chicken and egg. Need to create a prototype to get funding, but need funding to create a prototype."

"Most investors want to already know your games are at least as popular as *Stardew Valley*. They don't want to take risks on unproven IP."

"Business loans are very expensive now. Being taken seriously as an older, minority game dev is an uphill battle."

"It is a lot of pressure to constantly keep a publisher happy and ensure they deem you worthy enough to stay open. If we ever have a moment where we aren't seen as a cash cow, it's over."

"Rent and expenses don't stop. Therefore, the work has stopped as we all need to support ourselves with any job."

Funding Risks

"We're publishers, so our biggest obstacles are finding games that we feel are being fair in their budgetary allocations, have a good idea that resonates with consumers, and that have the drive to take a game to market."

"When providing funding to co-develop a game, we gradually realize that the direction of the game's development is not meeting expectations. It's easy to get stuck in a predicament."

"As a publisher, we have more trouble seeing the external studios we work with get the funding they need."

"Investors don't want to throw money in a hole anymore and most games are financially unsuccessful."



7

2025 STATE OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

ADVOCACY

Steady Growth on Accessibility, Diversity, and Sustainability

Companies are seeing some success with their game accessibility, DEI, and sustainability measures. According to our survey, 71% of developers think their company's DEI and accessibility efforts have been at least slightly successful, while 51% feel the same way about their company's sustainability efforts.

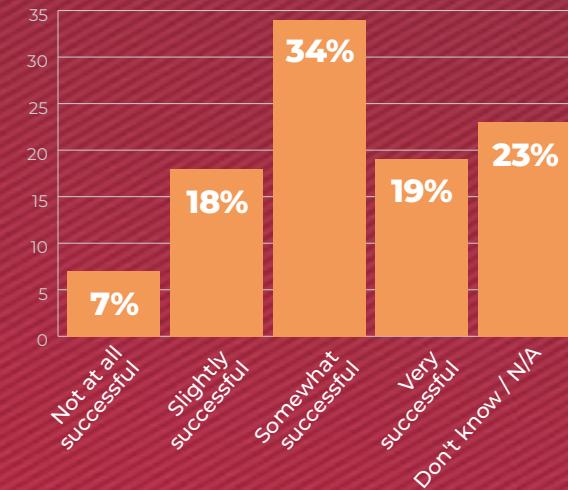
This was the first year we added “Don’t know / N/A” as an option to this question, so we could account for solo developers, small teams, and others who may not have these programs. Interestingly, one-third of developers chose this option for sustainability, while less than one-fourth said the same for DEI or accessibility.

Based on that data, it appears that fewer companies are implementing sustainability measures—and developers aren’t as confident in the programs from companies that do.

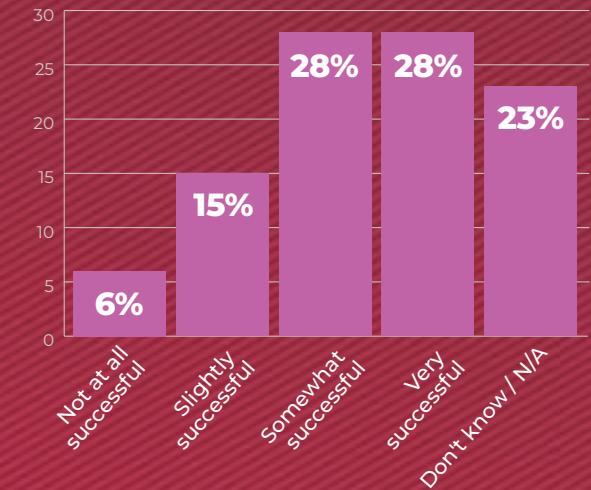
Developers were also asked to share their comfort level with understanding and implementing accessibility measures in their games. About 80% expressed some level of comfort, with “somewhat” being the most widely selected answer (37%).

HOW SUCCESSFUL DO YOU THINK YOUR COMPANY HAS BEEN AT THE FOLLOWING:

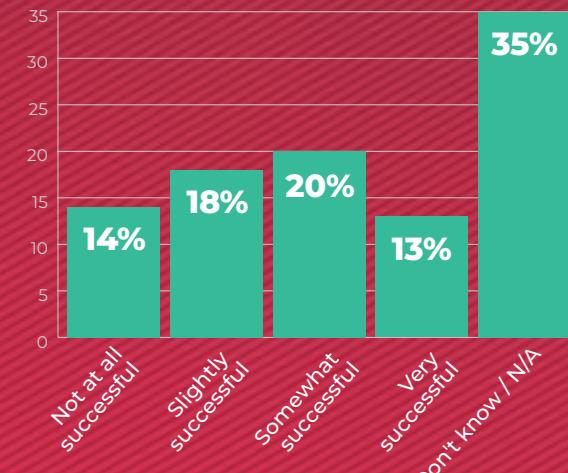
Game Accessibility



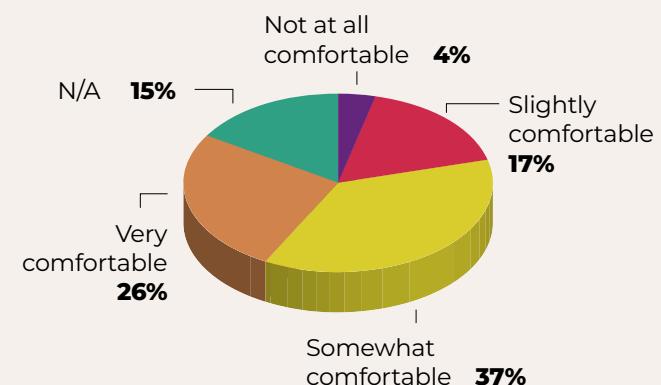
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Sustainability



HOW COMFORTABLE ARE YOU UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTING ACCESSIBILITY MEASURES IN GAMES?



16% of Developers Face Impact of Floods, Fires, and Other Natural Disasters

Severe weather and climate disasters have escalated over the past few decades—upending lives, communities, and businesses. The game industry is not immune to this.

According to our survey, 16% of developers said they or their company have been impacted by natural disasters in the past year, 76% said they haven't been, and 8% didn't know.

When asked to specify what natural disasters they or their company faced, 73% of respondents referenced floods, hurricanes, storms, and other water-related events (according to an analysis from our partners at Omdia). Other disasters referenced include extreme heat, wildfires, and earthquakes.

IN YOUR WORDS: WHAT NATURAL DISASTER(S) IMPACTED YOU OR YOUR COMPANY, AND HOW?

“I live in Florida. Hurricane Milton did some damage at my home office, causing me lots of unexpected financial hardship. I'm no longer able to pour money into my business as much as I did before.”

“Brutal two-month 105+F heat wave that required replacement of AC unit and delayed office work for one month.”

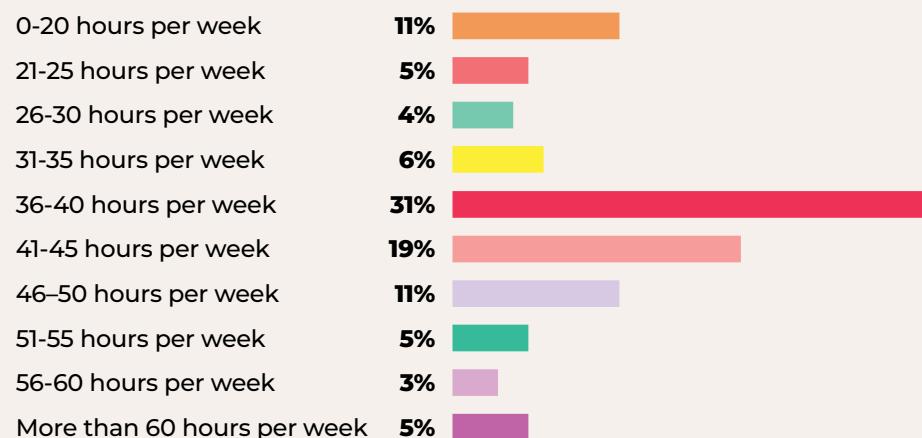
“Living in a tropical country we have frequent storms. There are days when some can't come to work for a week due to flooding.”

“Fire destroyed half of my town...”

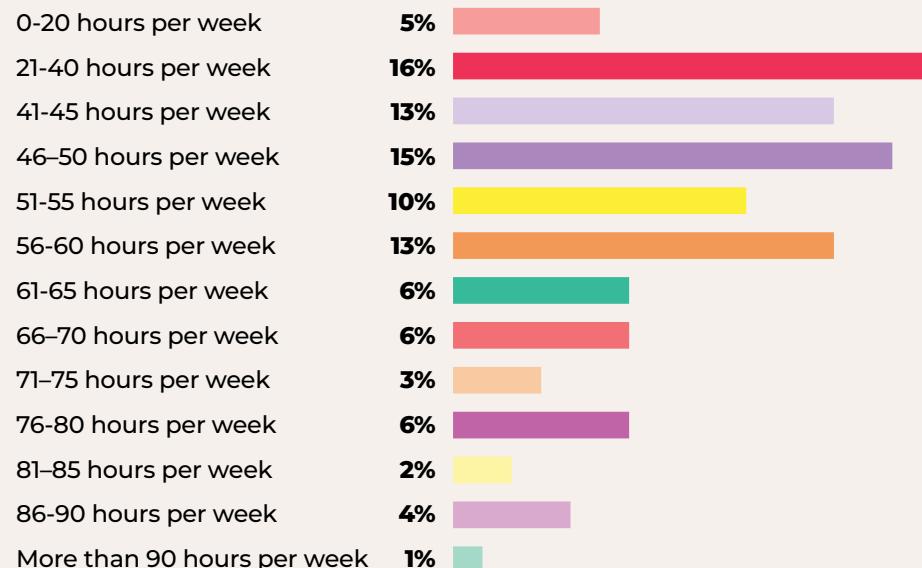
“Living in uncertainty does not encourage devs to do their best work. They also lose homes and loved ones. Are you for real with this ‘how’ part?”

“Four people in our team were affected by the flood on south of Brazil in May 2024. One of our colleagues had to seek shelter and couldn't work for three weeks... I had four people living in my house, which only fits two, because I was sheltering the other two.”

HOURS PER WEEK, ON AVERAGE



HOURS PER WEEK, MAXIMUM



Developers Report Working More Hours for the First Time in Years

We asked developers to share how many hours they work per week on average. While the majority of developers continue to work 40 hours or less per week, that percentage has decreased from 64% last year to 57% today. It's the first time the number has gone down since we started asking this question in 2019.

Longer workweeks are seeing an uptick: 13% of developers say they're working 51+ hours per week on average, compared to 8% last year.

The number of developers who have worked a maximum of 41+ hours in a single week stayed relatively the same, going from 77% last year to 79% now. Half (51%) of developers said they worked over 50 hours in one week (up from 46%) and 28% worked over 60 hours (up from 24%).

When asked why they worked over 40 hours in a single week, two-thirds (67%) attributed it to self-pressure, down from 71% last year. But the biggest change was in developers who didn't see their hours as excessive, decreasing from 36% in 2024 to 23% today. This indicates that more developers see their excess hours as an issue.

TOP REASONS FOR 41+ HOURS

- 67%** Self-pressure
- 14%** Fear of repercussions
- 23%** I don't consider it excessive
- 12%** Management pressure

Union Support Stays Consistent

Union support among developers is relatively unchanged from 2024, with 58% of respondents saying game industry workers should unionize, 10% saying they shouldn't, and 31% saying maybe or they don't know.

One-fifth (22%) of developers said they've talked about unionizing at their companies in the past 12 months. Of those who have talked about unionization, 29% said their companies have been supportive, 19% mixed, and 12% opposing.

When asked to share their thoughts on the game industry's ongoing unionization efforts, most responses were in support—arguing that unions could help improve working conditions, reduce crunch, and advocate for marginalized developers. Some also suggested profit-sharing, residuals, and employee-owned studios.

Those who were opposed said unions could harm indie studios, stifle creativity, and force companies to either close or move their jobs overseas.

UNION SUPPORT BY

Age	Job Role	Studio Type
69% 18-34	89% Narrative	59% Indie
52% 34-54	77% Quality Assurance	60% AA
27% 55+	33% Business & Finance	58% AAA

IN YOUR WORDS: WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT ONGOING UNIONIZATION EFFORTS IN THE GAME INDUSTRY?

“The best thing that could happen to the industry.”

“Feels very much like an American issue.”



“Mixed bag.”

“Better do it before AI takes all of our jobs!”

“Be careful what you wish for.”



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