



# GAMING 360

SEP  
2025

The growing role of gaming in  
consumers' entertainment lives



ENTERTAINMENT  
RESEARCH

EXCERPT OF FINDINGS



# What's the goal of this Hub Entertainment & Tech Tracker?



## Connected Home:

Tracks ownership of entertainment and smart devices—TVs, streamers, smartphones, tablets, speakers, and smart home tech—since 2019

## Evolution of the TV Set:

How new TV features and smart TV apps are changing the way consumers find, choose, and watch video content

## Gaming 360:

Explores the role of gaming in consumers' lives – what they play, how gaming influences their social connections with others, and the opportunities for game IP in television

## AI & Entertainment:

Uncovers how viewers feel about AI's role in creating, distributing, and recommending entertainment content

A woman with blonde, wavy hair is sitting on a large, light-colored beanbag chair. She is wearing a white t-shirt and dark jeans. She is holding a white video game controller with both hands and looking towards the right with an excited expression, her mouth open as if shouting or cheering. The background is a solid blue color. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

# 1

# INTRODUCTION



# THIS RESEARCH EXPLORES...

## WHO'S PLAYING?

Who's playing video games? Which devices and platforms are they using?

## HOW AND WHAT ARE THEY PLAYING?

How much are they gaming? What kinds of games are most popular? How does gaming co-exist with other media?

## IP: AUDIENCES ACROSS CATEGORIES

How does IP attract audiences across categories like gaming, TV, and movies?

## GAMING AND CULTURE

How important is gaming to friendships? To social interactions with friends and family?

## ADS IN GAMES

What is the impact of gaming as an advertising vehicle? How does it compare to traditional media?

# WE CONDUCTED AN ONLINE SURVEY OF 2,549 U.S. CONSUMERS

---



- Respondents were age 16-74
- Data collected in August 2025
- Responses are balanced to U.S. census



A woman with blonde hair is sitting on a large, light-colored beanbag chair. She is holding a white video game controller with both hands and looking towards the right with a joyful expression. The background is a solid, warm orange color. The entire image has a semi-transparent orange overlay.

# 2

## KEY FINDINGS





**#1**

In general, gamers spend as much time on gaming as they do on watching TV (and young gamers spend more)

**#2**

For young players, games are a critical part of how they connect other people

**#3**

Gamers will follow their favorite game IP to TV shows (and TV IP into games)

**#4**

Almost all gamers play free-to-play games, and the great majority (71%) pay to download content for them

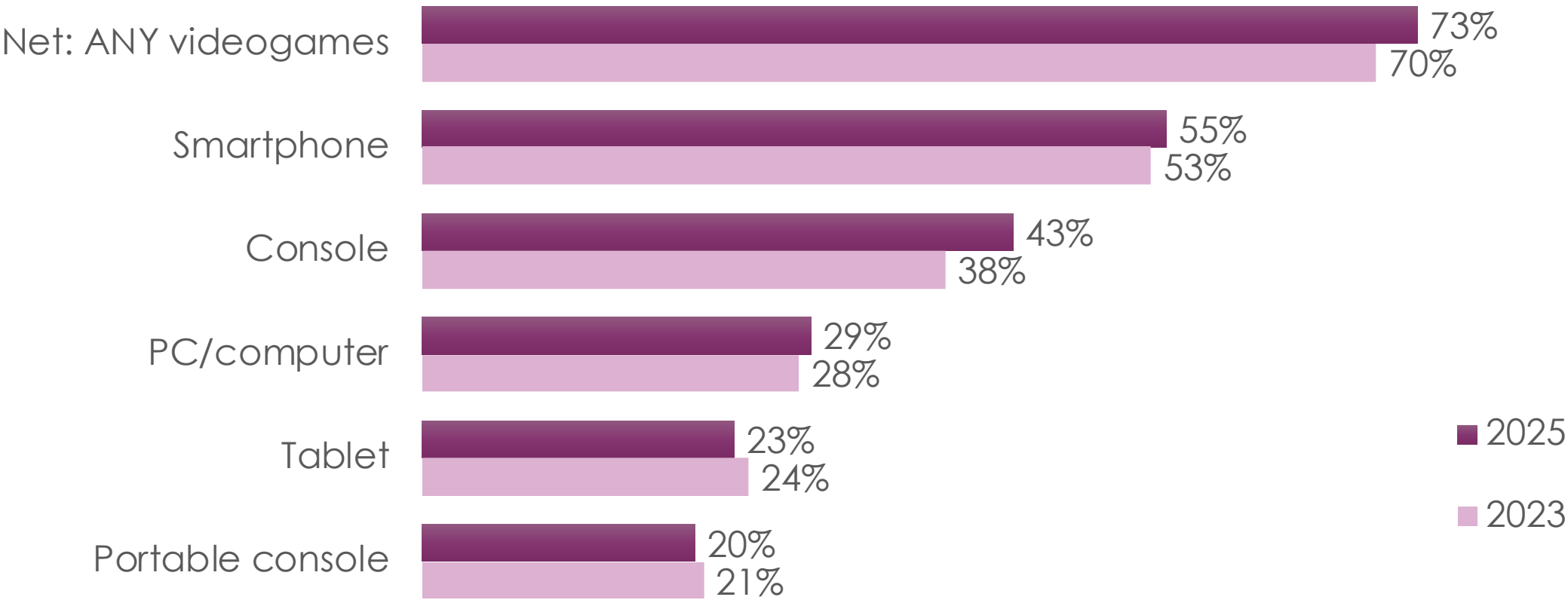
**#5**

Branded playable DLC is not just great advertising – it also makes the games more fun



# MORE THAN HALF PLAY MOBILE GAMES ON A SMARTPHONE

Which types of videogames do you play?



BASE: TOTAL RESPONDENTS – 2023 (n=2,518), 2024 (n=2,554), 2025 (n=2,549)  
Q1. Which of the following kinds of videogames do you play?

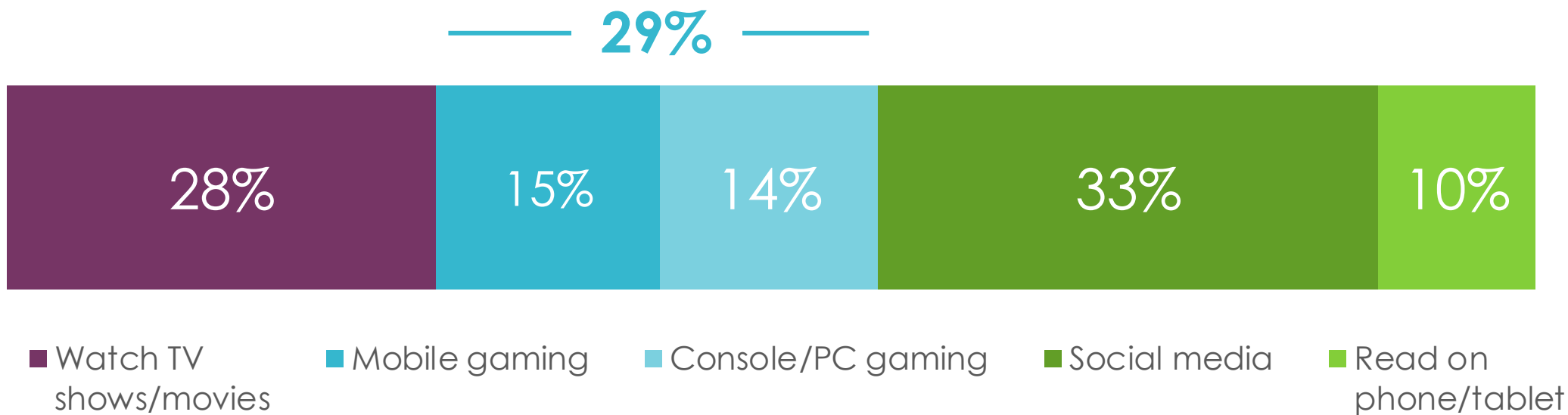


# THE AVERAGE GAMER SPENDS 29% OF THEIR SCREEN TIME ON GAMING – AS MUCH TIME AS THEY SPEND WATCHING TV



How much of your time do you spend on each of these?

- Among weekly+ gamers -



BASE: WEEKLY+ GAMER – 2025 (n=1,747)

Q3x. Here are some different kinds of entertainment content you can consume on a screen. In general, how much of your free time do you spend on each of these? **Here are some different kinds of entertainment content you can consume on a screen.** In general, how much of your free time do you spend on each of these? Divide 100 points across them. You can assign any number between zero and 100. The activities you do most should get a higher number, the ones you do less should be scored lower, and they should add up to 100%.

↑ = significantly higher than previous wave

hub | ENTERTAINMENT RESEARCH

# GAMING IS A FAMILY EXPERIENCE:

Among parents with kids who game...

23%

say they play together with their kids



BASE: TOTAL RESPONDENTS (n=2,549)

QE. Not including yourself, how many of the other people in your household are

Q90. How many kids under age 16 do you have in your home who play video games?

Q94. How often do you play video games with your kids?

# NEARLY ALL GAMERS PLAY FREE-TO-PLAY GAMES, AND THE MAJORITY ARE PAYING TO DOWNLOAD CONTENT



89%

...of gamers play free-to-play  
games

71%

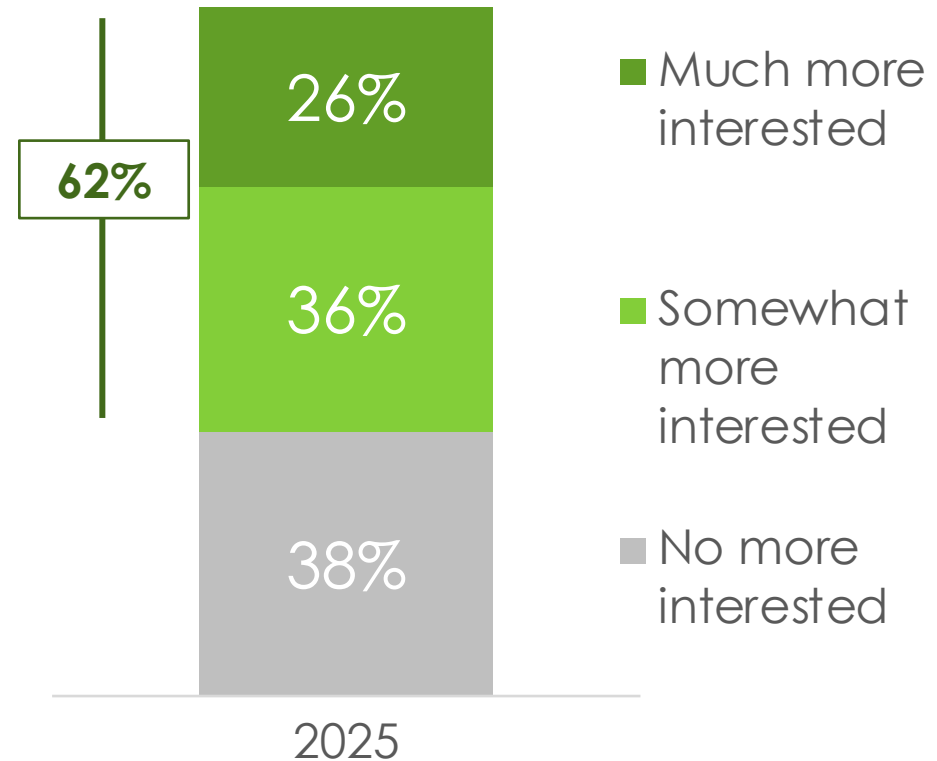
...of FTP gamers pay to  
download content

# AND THE MAJORITY SAY THEY ARE MORE INTERESTED IN PLAYING GAMES BASED ON CHARACTERS OR STORIES BASED ON OTHER IP

How interested are you in playing videogames that use characters or stories from other media?  
- Among weekly+ gamers -

55%

...of gamers play games based on characters or stories from movies, comic books, or toys



BASE: WEEKLY+ GAMER 2024 (n=1,730), 2025 (n=1,747)

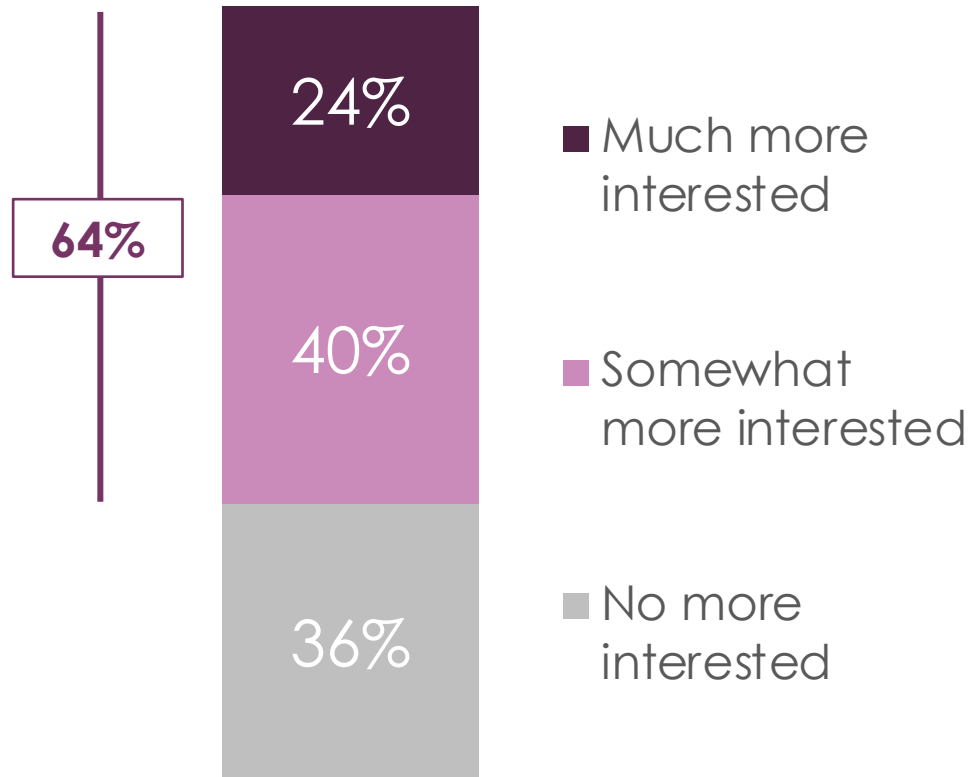
Q60a. Do you play any videogames like these that use characters or stories originally from toys, movies, comic books, or other media?

Q60. Overall, how interested are you in playing videogames that use characters or stories from other media, such as movies, comic books, or toys? For example: Star Wars: Battlefront, Marvel's Spiderman on PlayStation, and the series of videogames from Lego.



# IT GOES BOTH WAYS: GAMERS ARE ALSO MORE INTERESTED IN WATCHING TV BASED ON GAMES

How interested are you in shows or movies based on videogames?  
- Among weekly+ gamers -



BASE: WEEKLY+ GAMER (n=1,747)  
Q61. And, how interested are you in watching TV shows or movies that are based on videogame characters or stories?



# GAMES ARE CENTRAL TO HOW YOUNG GAMERS COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR FRIENDS



Among gamers age 16-24...

68%

game together with friends

68%

use game chat to talk about things other than the game

50%

say “most” or “all” communication with friends happens inside a game

39%

Have at least one friend they game with that they’ve never met in real life



BASE: WEEKLY+ GAMER - 2025 (n=348)

Q40. Some people use videogames to build friendships. Which of the following is true for you? You may pick more than one.

BASE: WEEKLY+ GAMER THAT HAS VIDEOGAME FRIENDS - 2025 (n=286)

Q41: Do you use one or more videogame platforms as a way to communicate with your friends about topics other than gaming?

BASE: WEEKLY+ GAMER THAT COMMUNICATES WITH VIDEOGAME FRIENDS - 2025 (n=193)

Q42. How much of your communication with your friends happens while you're gaming (as opposed to talking on the phone or in person, texting, etc.)?



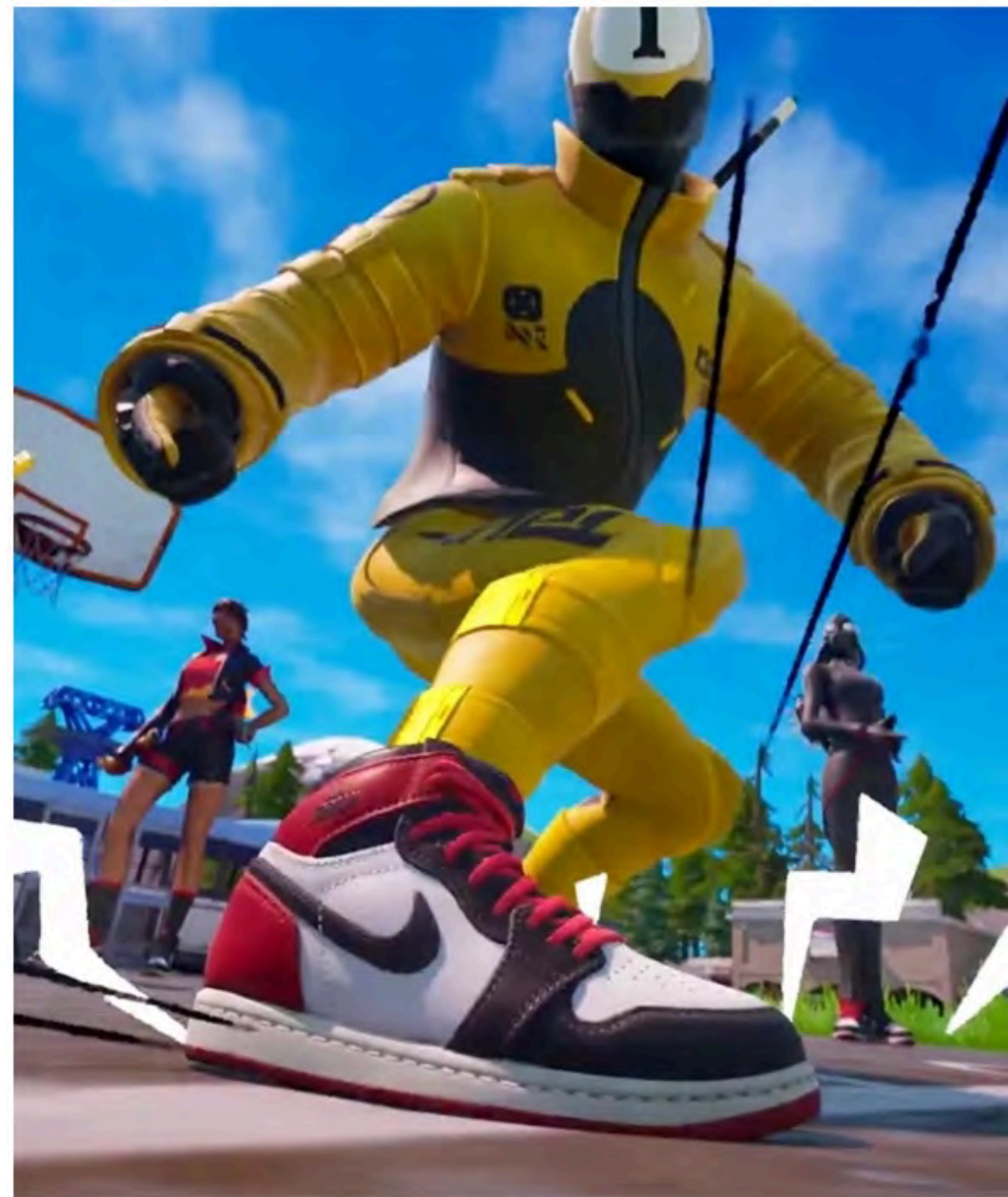
## BRANDED GAME CONTENT MATTERS SIGNIFICANTLY TO GAMERS

# 44%

... of gamers have  
downloaded branded  
playable content

BASE: WEEKLY+ GAMER (n=1,107)

Q71. Have you ever downloaded any advertiser-related playable content like this?



## AND PLAYABLE CONTENT MAKES THE GAME PLAY MORE FUN

63%

say playable content is more relevant than "regular" commercials

65%

say playable content makes the game more enjoyable

BASE: DOWNLOADED AD-RELATED CONTENT (n=489)

Q72. Does playable content like this impact your enjoyment of the game?

Q73. Is playable content like this more or less relevant to your interests than "regular" TV commercials or other advertising?





# 3 | CONCLUSIONS





#1

In general, gamers spend as much time on gaming as they do on watching TV (and young gamers spend more)

#2

For young players, games are a critical part of how they connect other people

#3

Gamers will follow their favorite game IP to TV shows (and TV IP into games)

#4

Almost all gamers play free-to-play games, and the great majority (71%) pay to download content for them

#5

Branded playable DLC is not just great advertising – it also makes the games more fun

hubINTEL



[hubintel.substack.com](https://hubintel.substack.com)





A hand is raised in the air, palm facing forward, with fingers slightly spread. The hand is wearing a watch with a dark strap and a small digital display. The background is a blurred crowd of people in a dimly lit room with warm, bokeh-style light spots.

# QUESTIONS?

**JASON PLATT ZOLOV**

SENIOR CONSULTANT

[JASONZ@HUBRESEARCHLLC.COM](mailto:jasonz@hubresearchllc.com)

**JON GIEGENGACK**

PRINCIPAL/HUB RESEARCH

[JONG@HUBRESEARCHLLC.COM](mailto:jong@hubresearchllc.com)