

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## A new gaming global superpower is born

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Gaming is rapidly becoming one of the most significant global leisure sectors, with year-on-year growth of almost 10 percent. Researchers at Newzoo predict that the market will be worth [more than \\$200 billion](#) by 2023. It is easy to assume that this growth stems from the tech giants and major development houses in the USA, China and Japan. However, the industry is also experiencing immense growth in what might seem the most unlikely places. New Zealand is a perfect example.

Earlier this year, the New Zealand Games Developers Association (NZGDA) published its [annual report](#), and it made remarkable reading. Industry revenue more than doubled from \$100 million in 2017 to \$203 million in 2019. That means New Zealand makes more money from gaming than Australia, despite the fact that the industry employs only 683 full time staff, compared to more than 1,200 in its neighbouring country.

### New Zealand developers leading the way

The average gamer might struggle to name a New Zealand developer, yet the island nation is behind some titles that have become household names. For example, NinjaKiwi has the *Bloons* series at the centre of its portfolio, while Little Lost Fox has brought us *Valleys Between*. RPG lovers will also be familiar with *Path of Exile* and its sequel, which are from Auckland-based Grinding Gear Games. It is developers like these that are responsible for more than 90 percent of the industry's incredible growth.

### A proactive approach to iGaming

New Zealand's sporting heritage is well known, and this is a country that has never been afraid to put its money where its mouth is. New Zealanders love a wager, and in the online age, that has quickly extended to real money casino gaming. This is an area in which regulatory restrictions have hampered domestic growth, the result being that there are literally [dozens of offshore providers](#) catering to the local market. The government has been quick to react, and is currently in the process of consulting on regulatory change. Expect local iGaming platforms to enter the fray sooner rather than later.

### Embracing eSport

If there is one area of gaming that is growing as quickly as iGaming, it is eSport. We've already mentioned that this is a sports-mad nation, and it was one of the first outside the heartlands of east

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Asia to establish its own eSport federation. Other nations have only just started to take eSport seriously, largely due to the dearth of other alternatives in the first part of 2020. New Zealand, with its existing infrastructure, is already ahead of the game and has locked in vital relationships with some key sponsors.

### **Future growth**

All these factors combine to mean New Zealand's role in the gaming landscape will only get stronger over the coming years. With more developers coming through the ranks, mature channels to market and proactive government supports, the nation has a strong position in a booming market. Industry insiders predict that the industry could be worth as much as \$1 billion by 2025, and given the performance over the past couple of years, that seems highly achievable.

*Photo by [Fredrick Tendong](#) on [Unsplash](#)*

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