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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Has gaming reached its peak?

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Gaming has grown popular in a big way, especially in 2020, and sales were expected to rise to as much as almost \$180 billion globally. Thanks to the release of the next generation PlayStation and Xbox consoles, experts don't envisage any slowdown in the growth and gaming may march on to create new, record-breaking stats. Below is a look at whether gaming has gone as far as it's going to go and what the future holds for the industry.

### Has gaming reached its peak?

To claim gaming has reached its peak would be folly. The question was asked back in 2019 when the market was expected to take a turn for the worst. Some experts had placed the blame on China getting stricter about game approach, on the lack of big console games, and on a general fatigue of gamers brought on by titles such as Fortnite.

But 2020 has seen the popularity of gaming return with an unbridled vengeance, with more than 2.7 billion gamers worldwide, according to stats on the World Economic Forum website, and forecasts of the industry generating some \$196 billion in revenue. For 2020, the forecasts were of around \$159.3 billion.

This is partly because the industry is innovating so much. Mobile gaming has grown from single-player games to immersive, multiplayer experiences, and gaming, in general, has taken on a social dimension, rather than just being pure interactivity. Not only that, but people aren't just casually playing games now; they're becoming committed to playing them.

### Has online gambling peaked?

Forecasts reflect optimism that online gaming hasn't peaked here in the US. Analysts have predicted that sports betting will reach \$2.5 billion in 2021. Fast forward to 2025 and this figure has ballooned to \$8 billion.

Recent new legislation allows states to manage their own legal affairs around gambling. Depending on where you are in the country, you'll either have to play at an online casino or in person to bet on sport, although some states will allow both. Ultimately, mobile became the go-to option in 2020.

### If it's not peaked, how do online casinos continue to attract players?

When it comes to attracting customers in such a highly competitive market, online casinos have

lots of different tricks up their sleeve:

- No deposit bonuses, which new players receive for creating an account and playing at the casino for the first time.
- Smart marketing, which may include creating content such as blogs, being active on social media and target certain games or types of game at specific demographics.
- A wide variety of games, which give new players a good chance of finding a game that suits their tastes.
- Clear shows of trustworthiness — by displaying certifications and seals of approval, operators convince potential new customers they're reliable.

### **What does the future hold for gaming?**

Browse the web and you'll see some fascinating predictions about what the future holds for gaming. Here are a few to tantalize your technical taste buds:

#### **Mixed reality gaming**

Fans of gaming have already witnessed augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) enter gaming, but experts believe that games will feature both technologies.

That being said... they comment that VR goes against the social elements people look for in gaming, since it involves strapping on headgear and, in essence, blocking out the real world. This contrasts with AR, which merges reality and virtual worlds, is more accessible, and creates new social experiences, and which could become the bigger winner of the two.

#### **Streaming games will become (more) mainstream**

Streaming games is already popular, but as networks improve more and more, some industry insiders feel streaming games will become the norm. Players will be able to buy standalone games for a while yet, but come 2030, things will have changed: people will buy the game and immediately start streaming it to play it.

#### **Console wars may come to an end**

NES, Megadrive, SNES, PlayStation, Xbox, Wii, Gameboy... the last thirty years have seen nothing short of all-out warfare between games console makers, all vying to gain a greater share of the vast gaming market.

However, industry experts feel the days of the industry being a battleground between console makers are numbered. Just as some have felt that streaming will become even more the norm, others have commented that cloud servers will be the next big battleground.

There are some who feel some of the big names in video gaming have one more console left in them before we eventually see consoles disappear by 2030, though.

#### **5G will improve mobile gaming**

5G is gradually being rolled out and will improve the mobile gaming experience. Fans will have to put up less and less with the slow spinning wheel, as internet speeds get faster and faster. This will

be especially beneficial if they're playing AR games, in which playing in real time is a key part of the gaming experience.

By improving the experience, it's also expected that 5G will attract more people to mobile gaming and create something of a network effect. As a result, even more people may get into AR gaming.

The gaming industry is constantly innovating, partly because it's so highly competitive and gamers are always looking for new experiences. The company that can offer them will steal the edge on their competition and, while other companies are playing catch-up, they'll be looking for the next innovation in this constantly changing market.

*Photo by Sean Do on Unsplash*

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