

dentsu gaming

# GAMING, YOUR MARKETING CHEATCODE

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# FOREWORD

## GAMING ISN'T JUST A TREND — IT'S A CULTURAL SHIFT. AND IT'S NOT GOING AWAY.

Brands know they need to show up in gaming. But the truth is, too many still see it as a one-off sponsorship, a media buy, or something 'for the younger demo.' That mindset misses the bigger picture.

Gaming today is where fandoms are built, identities are explored, and communities gather. It's not a vertical — it's a horizontal layer that cuts across content, commerce, and connection. And it's changing how people experience culture.

At dentsu, we believe that if you want to win the future, you need to earn your place in the worlds that people care about. That's what this report is about. It's not just another data dump. It's a strategic map for brands who want to play smart — to create plans adapted from moment-based marketing to fandom-first thinking.

You'll find insights on gaming motivations, behavioral data across regions, and the most important part: how to connect gaming to your marketing funnel in a way that drives relevance, resonance, and return.

We've built this with input from the best — our partners at GWI, Anzu, Stream Hatchet, Newzoo, Activision Blizzard Media, Discord, PlayStation, Roblox, and our teams on the ground around the world. And we're just getting started.

With all this newfound power and knowledge — let's stop testing and learning — and get going!



**BRENT KONING**  
EVP, Global Gaming Lead at dentsu





# GAMING IS THE GROWTH ENGINE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF BRANDS

THIS REPORT IS YOUR GUIDE TO NAVIGATING A GROWING, AND MORE COMPLEX, GAMING LANDSCAPE, UNLOCKING THE STRATEGIES, MOTIVATIONS, AND CHANNELS THAT WILL DRIVE THE NEXT WAVE OF MARKETING SUCCESS.

**01** **Gaming IPs are fuelling the transmedia boom** with adaptations like A Minecraft Movie, The Last of Us show, and upcoming Angry Birds 3 movie, are turning games into global storytelling engines. As franchises expand across screens and formats, fandoms deepen and cultural relevance compounds.

**02** **Time spent in gaming continues to rise**, especially among Gen Z and Millennials, making it one of the most dominant engagement platforms today.

**03** **Relaxation and Achievement** now drive the majority of gameplay and livestreaming motivations, redefining how and why players engage.

**04** **New formats like Discord Quests, Rewarded Video, and immersive UGC** worlds are unlocking mid-funnel and conversion-stage opportunities for brands.

**05** Despite massive attention, **gaming still captures less than 5% of global media investment** — leaving significant white space for brands willing to build nuanced, full-funnel strategies.





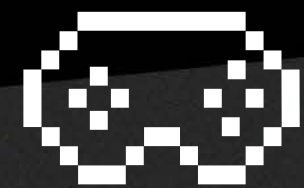
The background is a solid teal color. Scattered around the central text are several 3D, grey, textured objects. These include a large plus sign, a large hash symbol (#), a large play button triangle, a large square with a smaller square inside, and a large pixelated character resembling a 'W' or a similar symbol. The central text is contained within a black rectangular box.

# **GAMING POWERS GROWTH**



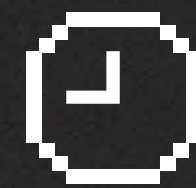
# A GROWING INDUSTRY WITH UNTAPPED **POTENTIAL**

A LARGE INDUSTRY WITH A SIGNIFICANT WHITE SPACE FOR BRANDS:



**3.4B**

GAMERS WORLDWIDE<sup>1</sup>



**+6%**

YOY TIME SPENT IN GAMES<sup>2</sup>



**<5%**

TOTAL MEDIA INVESTMENT<sup>3</sup>

Source: <sup>1</sup> Newzoo Games Market Report & Forecasts (Updated May 2025); <sup>2</sup> Newzoo Game Performance Monitor – 37 Markets (excluding China, India) – PC, PlayStation, Xbox; <sup>3</sup> eMarketer “US Ad Spending 2024” Report from May 9, 2024



# GAMING IPS FUEL THE TRANSMEDIA BOOM

In 2024, video game adaptations surged, with over 60 game-based productions in development, including major titles like Mario Bros. and God of War. This trend continues into Super2025, with at least 44 video game movies actively in the works<sup>1</sup>.

A standout example is A Minecraft Movie, which broke records with a \$301 million global opening weekend<sup>2</sup>, becoming the biggest Hollywood movie of the year. Simultaneously, Minecraft's daily active players increased by 17% week-on-week following the film's release<sup>3</sup>.

**GAMING IS A CULTURAL ROCKETSHIP — TIME SPENT IS CLIMBING FAST, AND THE BIGGEST GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES ARE STILL UP FOR GRABS. THE BRANDS WHO BOARD NOW WILL DEFINE WHAT COMES NEXT.**





# **GAMING POWERS** **FANDOM**



# GAMING IS THE NEW SOCIAL PLATFORM

Forget fan followers, connection now happens through gameplay. Platforms like Discord, Twitch, and in-game chats are making gaming a more social experience. The emergence of VR and AR also offers immersive experiences to enhance social interaction in gaming.

**70%** | **OF GAMERS SAY GAMES HELP THEM CONNECT WITH OTHERS<sup>1</sup>**

**36%** | **WATCH GAMING CONTENT TO LEARN, LAUGH, AND BELONG<sup>2</sup>**

## GAMING FANDOM IS THE NEW FUEL FOR SOCIAL CONNECTION

In today's landscape, gaming isn't just a way to play, it's how people connect, belong, and build culture. It has become the new social network, not because it replaces platforms like Instagram or TikTok, but because it gives fans something richer: shared experiences.



# WHY IT'S DIFFERENT, AND WHY IT MATTERS

Traditional social platforms are built around observation. Gaming is built around immersion, interaction, and identity. It's not just where fandom lives, it's where fandom deepens, spreads, and sticks.



## 68%

OF PLAYERS TRY GAMES  
BECAUSE OF A SHOW, MOVIE,  
OR BOOK<sup>1</sup>



## 49%

FEEL MORE POSITIVE ABOUT A  
FRANCHISE WHEN IT EXPANDS  
FORMATS FROM GAMES TO  
SHOWS, OR VICE VERSA<sup>2</sup>



## 45%

GEN Z & MILLENNIALS ARE  
INTERESTED IN BUYING  
PHYSICAL PRODUCTS  
WHILE GAMING

CONNECTION HERE DOESN'T JUST DRIVE ENGAGEMENT,  
IT DRIVES ACTION.



# GAMING IS GEN Z'S SOCIAL GLUE AND FANDOM ENGINE

In gaming, connection happens through participation. Platforms like Roblox, Discord, and Twitch are where Gen Z:

## SPENDS TIME

2.5 hours/day on Roblox<sup>1</sup>

## FORM FRIENDSHIPS

1.62 billion friendships are made each month on Roblox<sup>2</sup>

## BUILD IDENTITY

And trust through play & co-creation

Gen Z gamers are 32% more likely than the average gamer to play for the purpose of socializing with friends. Over half agree that gaming is a great way to make friends and socialize<sup>3</sup>.

Expanding entertainment IP into gaming is a powerful way to engage and grow fandom, especially among Gen Z. According to dentsu's entertainment research, global consumers are 10 times more likely to feel positively about entertainment franchises when a video game adapting the franchise IP is released<sup>4</sup>.

These adaptations don't just entertain, they activate communities, spark social connection, and drive shared identity through play.

In a world where gaming is Gen Z's social glue, transmedia expansions become the connective tissue between culture, community, and commerce. Fueling a fandom flywheel that travels across platforms, stories, and screens.



Source: <sup>1</sup> Roblox 1P data. Q1 2025. Global Data; <sup>2</sup> Roblox 1P data. Q1 2025. Global Data; <sup>3</sup> GWI Gaming Q2 & Q4 2024. Base: 60,096 gamers aged 16+ (including 10,615 who are Gen Z); <sup>4</sup> Dentsu Consumer Navigator





# **GAMING POWERS COMMERCE**



# THE NEW FRONTIER FOR CONSUMER INFLUENCE AND BRAND DISCOVERY

If your brand plays in fashion, beauty, food, retail, or entertainment, gaming is already where your customers are shopping with their time, attention, and dollars.

It's where people shop, self-express, and get influenced. From in-game purchases to real-world product drops, players are active consumers.

**43%** | SAY A GAMING PARTNERSHIP IMPROVES THEIR PERCEPTION OF A BRAND<sup>1</sup>

**44%** | OF TWITCH VIEWERS HAVE PURCHASED A PRODUCT BECAUSE THEIR FAVORITE STREAMER RECOMMENDED IT<sup>3</sup>

Gen Z and Millennial gamers are 64% more likely than Gen X and baby boomer gamers to discover new brands and products through ads seen in mobile games, and 82% more likely to do so through celebrity/influencer endorsements<sup>4</sup>.

**45%** | OF GEN Z & MILLENNIALS ARE INTERESTED IN BUYING PHYSICAL PRODUCTS WHILE GAMING<sup>2</sup>



Source: <sup>1</sup> Dentsu Consumer Navigator; <sup>2</sup> GWI Core Q3 - Q4 2024. Base: 168,709 aged 16+ who use any device to play games.  
<sup>3</sup> Social Narrative Survey. Twitch Research Power Group (RPG) Fielded Feb 2023. US data. A18+. N=792 ; <sup>4</sup> GWI Core Q3 & Q4 2024 Base: 168,709 internet users aged 16+ who use at least one device to play games. Market: Global



# GAMERS SHAPE LIFESTYLE TRENDS



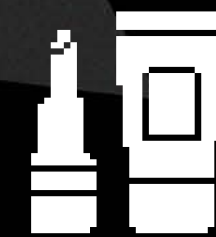
## FOOD & DRINK

54% of gamers show an interest in food and drink. 43% of people look up recipes online weekly while 12% share their opinions about fast food each month<sup>1</sup>.



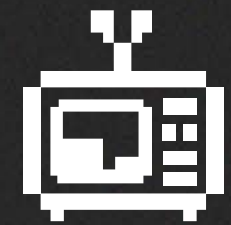
## FASHION & STYLE

29% are interested in fashion, and 27% see themselves as fashion-conscious. More than half (52%) purchase clothing monthly, and 13% post fashion-related opinions online<sup>2</sup>.



## BEAUTY & GROOMING

45% say they take care of their appearance, and 32% are interested in beauty or cosmetics. 23% buy cosmetics each month, and 19% watch beauty or make-up tutorials on a weekly basis<sup>3</sup>.



## ENTERTAINMENT

50% are interested in film and cinema, and 46% are into TV. 1 in 5 share their opinions online about movies or television each month<sup>4</sup>.



# WHY PLAYERS SPEND



**42%**

FOR SELF-EXPRESSION<sup>3</sup>



**43%**

TO GAIN AN ADVANTAGE<sup>1</sup>



**44%**

TO KEEP UP WITH OTHERS<sup>2</sup>



The background features a dark blue gradient with various 3D geometric shapes in a lighter blue-grey color. These shapes include a large circle at the top, a large triangle on the left, a large square with a central square cutout at the bottom, and several smaller, more complex polyhedral forms scattered throughout. The shapes have a slightly textured, metallic appearance.

**BUT YOU NEED TO  
ACTIVATE PURPOSEFULLY...**





**BECAUSE EVERYONE IS  
A GAMER BUT NOT ALL  
GAMERS ARE THE SAME**



# MOTIVATIONS TO PLAY GAMES DRIVE HOW & WHERE TO ACTIVATE

88%

RELAXATION

55% game for the fun of it, and 45% game to pass the time.

This group skews older compared to other gaming motivation segments, with 29% aged 45 and over.

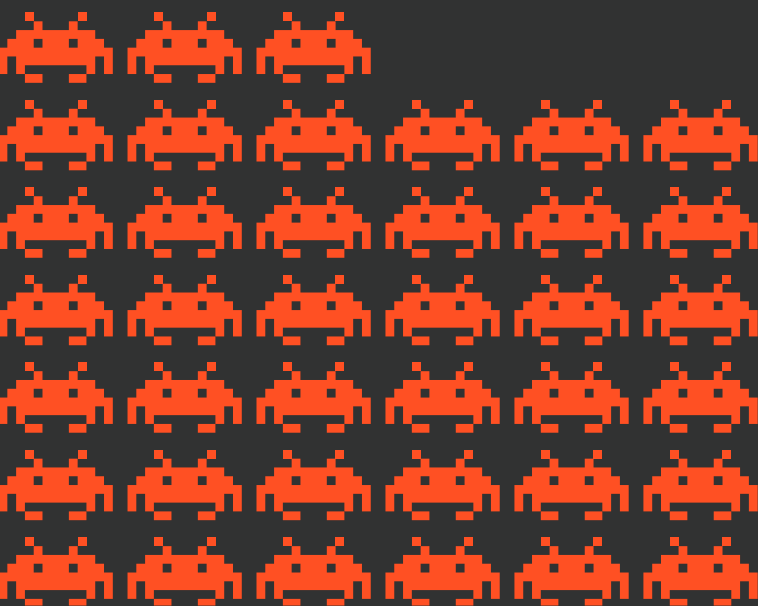


39%

ACHIEVEMENT

20% game to learn new skills, and 16% game to compete online. Those who game for these reasons are 45% more likely than the average gamer to be from India, and 20% more likely to be from the Philippines.

They're also 64% more likely to use a gaming/smart TV to game, and 74% more likely to use a media streaming device.



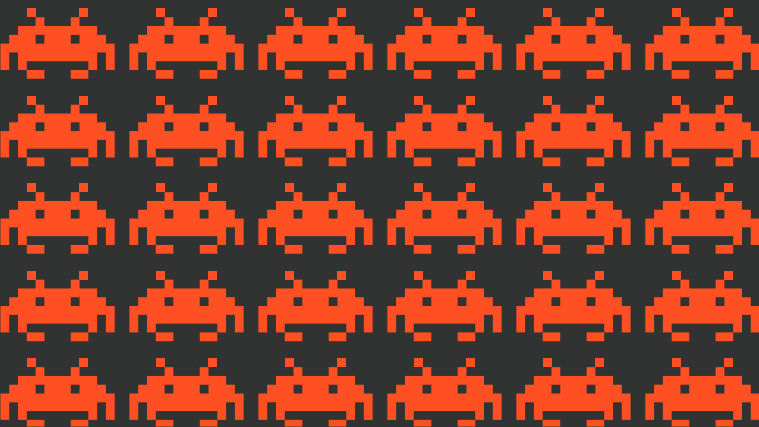
30%

IMMERSION

19% game to escape from reality, while 17% game for the storylines / narratives.

They're 19% more likely to be from Australia, and 18% more likely to be from the UK.

They're 73% more likely to use a VR headset to game, and 52% more likely to use a console.



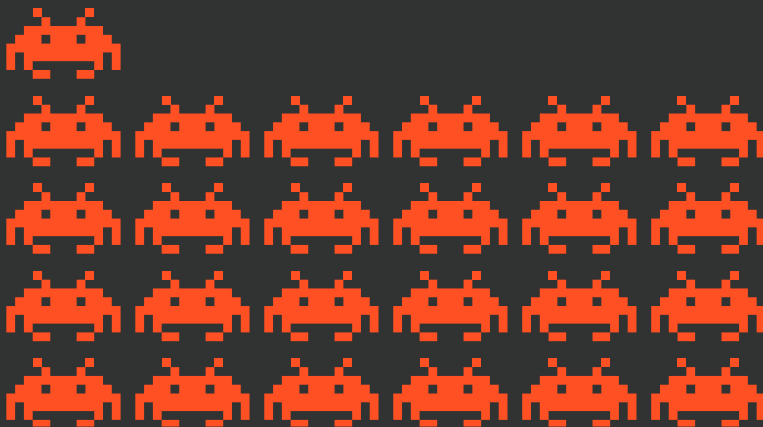
25%

SOCIAL

25% game to socialize with their friends.

They're 13% more likely to be from Indonesia, and 12% more likely to be from China.

They're 33% more likely to use a laptop to game, and 32% more likely to use a PC.



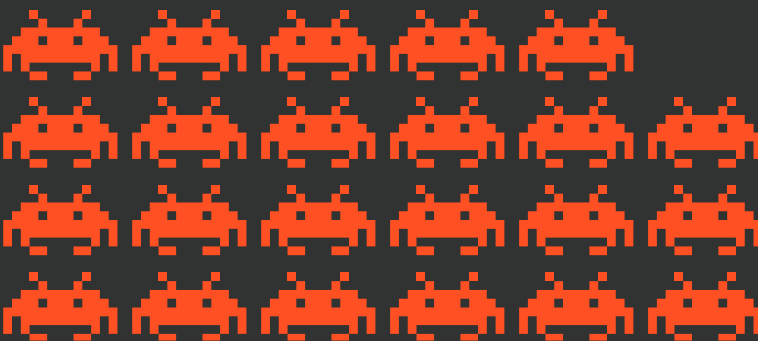
23%

THRILL

23% say they game for the challenge.

They're 28% more likely to be from Brazil, and 20% more likely to be from the US.

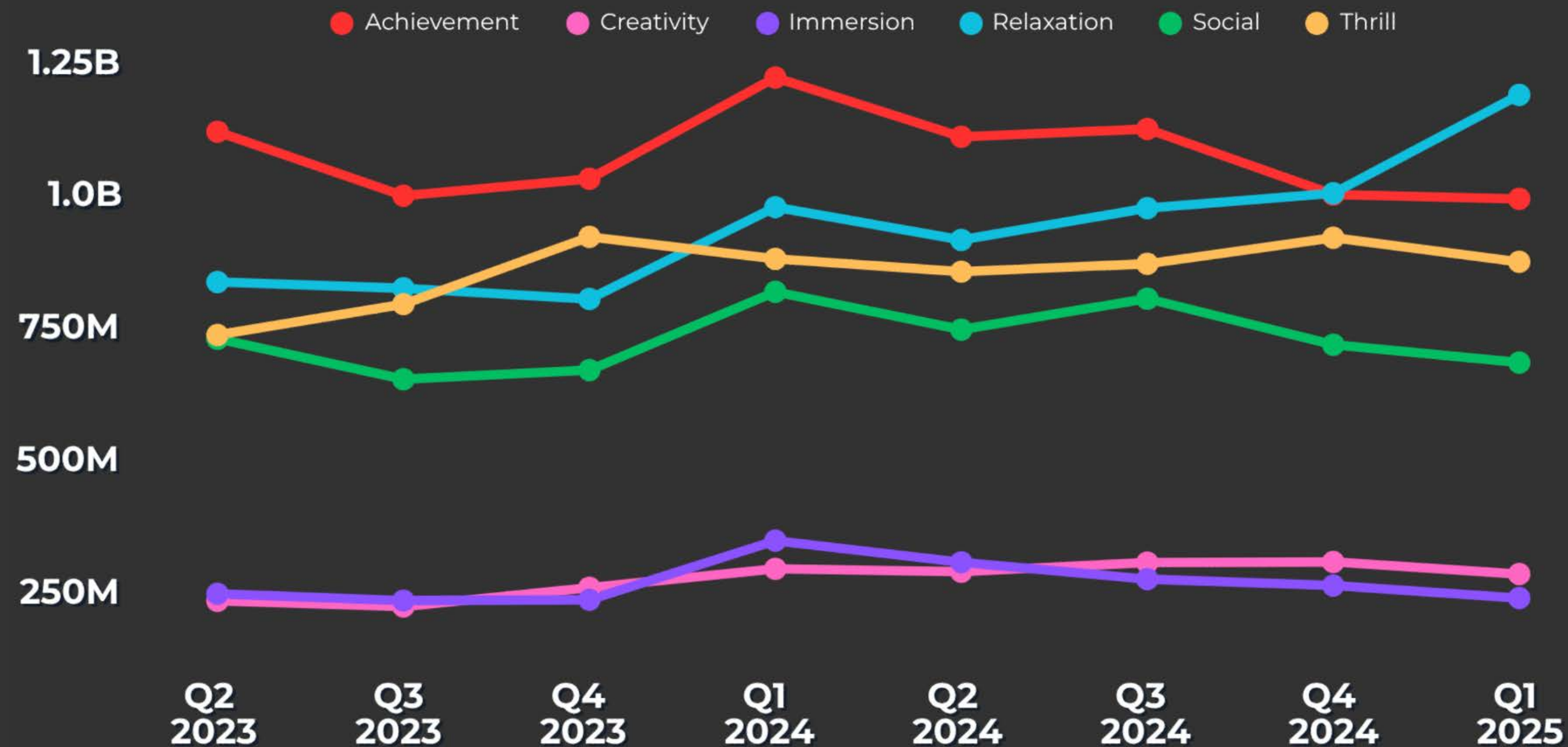
They're 45% more likely to use a handheld gaming device to game.





# THE SAME MOTIVATIONS THAT DRIVE PLAYING, ALSO DRIVE VIEWING

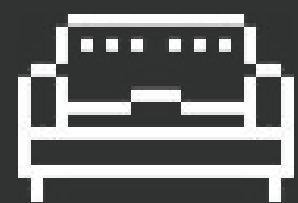
TWITCH HOURS WATCHED BY CONTENT TYPE (DERIVED FROM TWITCH TAGS)



In 2025, relaxation is the #1 motivator (viewership up +22% YoY). Achievement is #2 with over 4B livestreaming hours watched in the last year, which aligns with the playing motivations. Whereas the Thrill motivation ranks higher in livestreaming vs playing.



# BREAKING DOWN PLAYER MOTIVATIONS & BRAND OPPORTUNITIES



## RELAXATION

Seeking calm, distraction, and low-stress engagement



## ACHIEVEMENT-DRIVEN

Focused on learning new skills and competing to progress



## IMMERSION-DRIVEN

Drawn to deep stories, characters, and emotional connection



## SOCIAL-DRIVEN

Gaming to socialize and connect with friends



## THRILL-DRIVEN

Seeking challenge, adrenaline, and excitement

MINDSET

ACTIVATION

Casual mobile games, ambient branded placements, rewarded video ads

Progression-based brand experiences (e.g., leveling up to unlock prizes), tournaments, leaderboard sponsorships

Branded story arcs, cinematic integrations, narrative-based formats

Social UGC campaigns, multiplayer experiences, in-game social hubs (e.g., Discord)

Competitive events, speed challenges, time-limited rewards, action sponsorships

### MOTIVATION ≠ DEMOGRAPHIC

Each motivation isn't just about what players play — it's about why they stay, engage, and eventually convert. Understanding motivation, mapping mindset, and activating in the right format is the way to unlock an effective gaming strategy.



The background is a solid teal color. It features several large, 3D geometric shapes in a light gray, stone-like texture. These include a large circle at the top center, a square in the top left, a triangle in the bottom left, a large square with a teal square cutout in the bottom center, and a stepped pyramid-like shape in the bottom right. The text is centered in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The words 'BECAUSE GAMING' and 'IS BOTH' are in white, while 'GLOBAL' and 'AND LOCAL' are in a bright cyan color. The text is contained within a black rectangular frame.

**BECAUSE GAMING  
IS BOTH GLOBAL  
AND LOCAL**



# BRANDS THAT LOCALIZE THEIR STRATEGY UNLOCK DEEPER ENGAGEMENT, BETTER ROI, AND CULTURAL RELEVANCE

## MORE THAN HALF OF GAMERS ARE BASED IN APAC AND THEY PLAY WITH PURPOSE

53% of total global players are in APAC<sup>1</sup>. They are more likely to play with a purpose compared to the global average (16% more likely to play to improve reflexes and coordination)<sup>2</sup>.

## IN NORTH AMERICA, GAMERS LEAN INTO GAMING AS A BREAK FROM REALITY

38% more likely to play to escape reality and are 64% more likely to play word/trivia games<sup>3</sup>.

## YOUTUBE HAS BEEN GROWING FOR GAMERS IN JAPAN

28% year-over-year growth in Japan in YouTube gaming hours watched<sup>4</sup>.

## IN MENA, LIVESTREAM IS ON THE RISE DRIVEN BY REGIONAL INVESTMENT IN ESPORTS & CREATORS

149% YoY growth on Arabic-language game streams<sup>5</sup>.

## WINNING IN GAMING MEANS ACTIVATING WITH CULTURAL FLUENCY — NOT JUST MEDIA DOLLARS.

Gaming is global and it's deeply local. Global scale means little without local nuance.

Cultural Events like Golden Week and Ramadan cause seasonal CPM fluctuations and spikes in engagement.



The background is a dark blue gradient with various 3D geometric shapes in a lighter blue-grey color. These shapes include cubes, a large circle, a triangle, a square with a central square hole, and a pixelated hash symbol (#).

**YOU NEED A STRATEGY  
THAT FITS WITHIN YOUR  
MARKETING FUNNEL**



# GAMING ISN'T A ONE-OFF CAMPAIGN CHANNEL, IT'S A FULL FUNNEL ENGINE



Note: This framework is meant to be illustrative and does not represent an exhaustive list of partners or tactics. It is not intended to replace a full media plan. Final partner and tactic selection should be guided by the specific objectives of the brief. For tailored recommendations, please reach out to Dentsu Gaming.





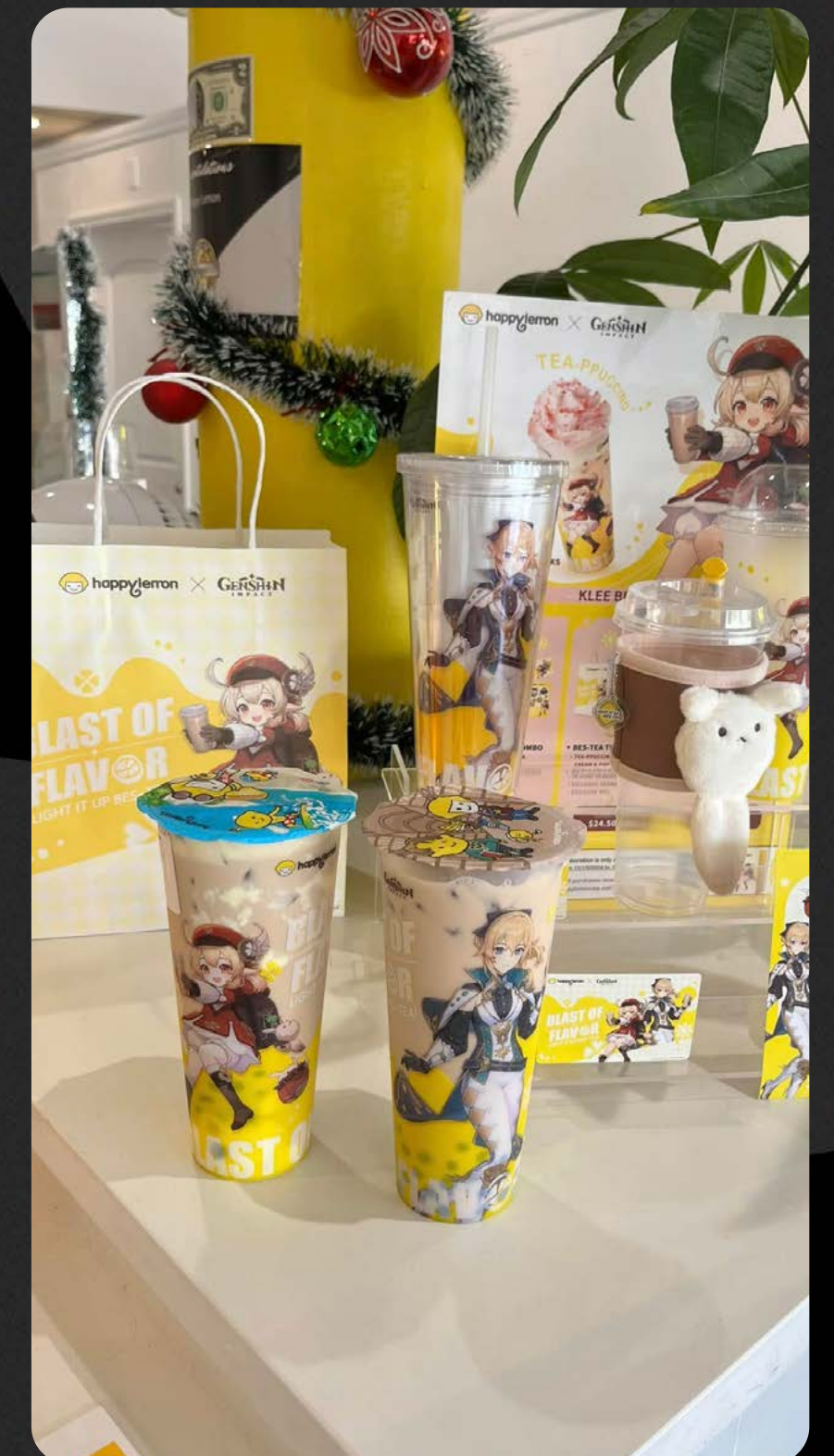
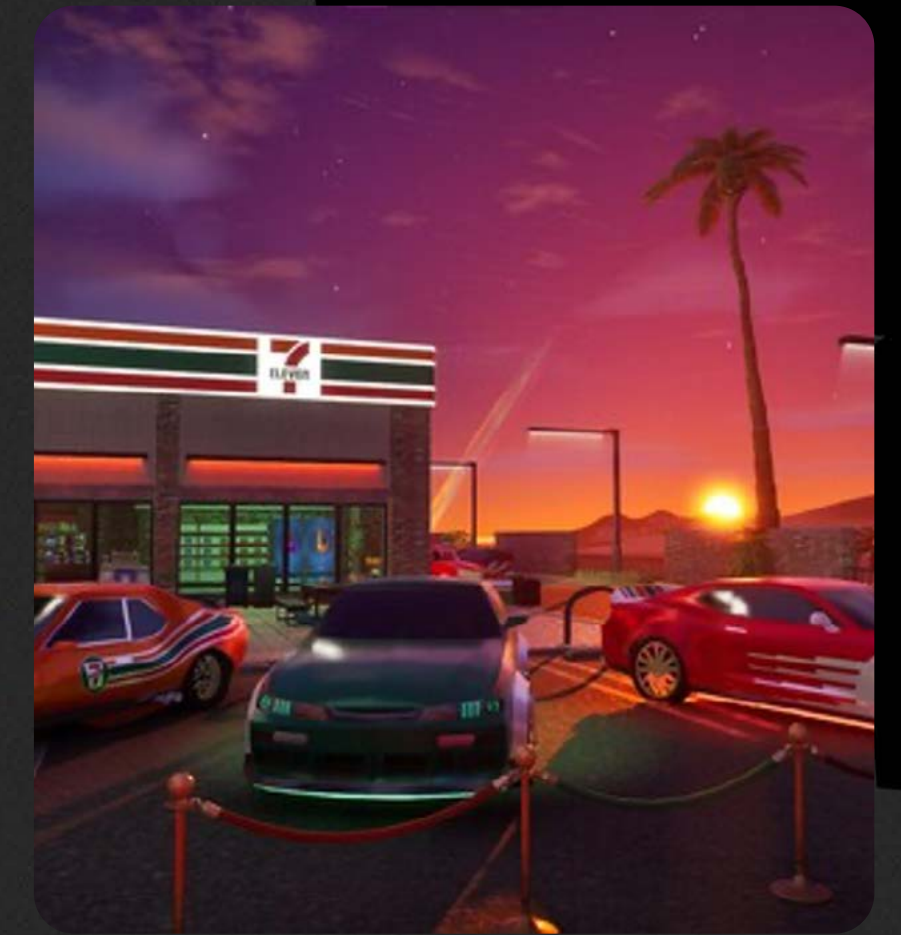
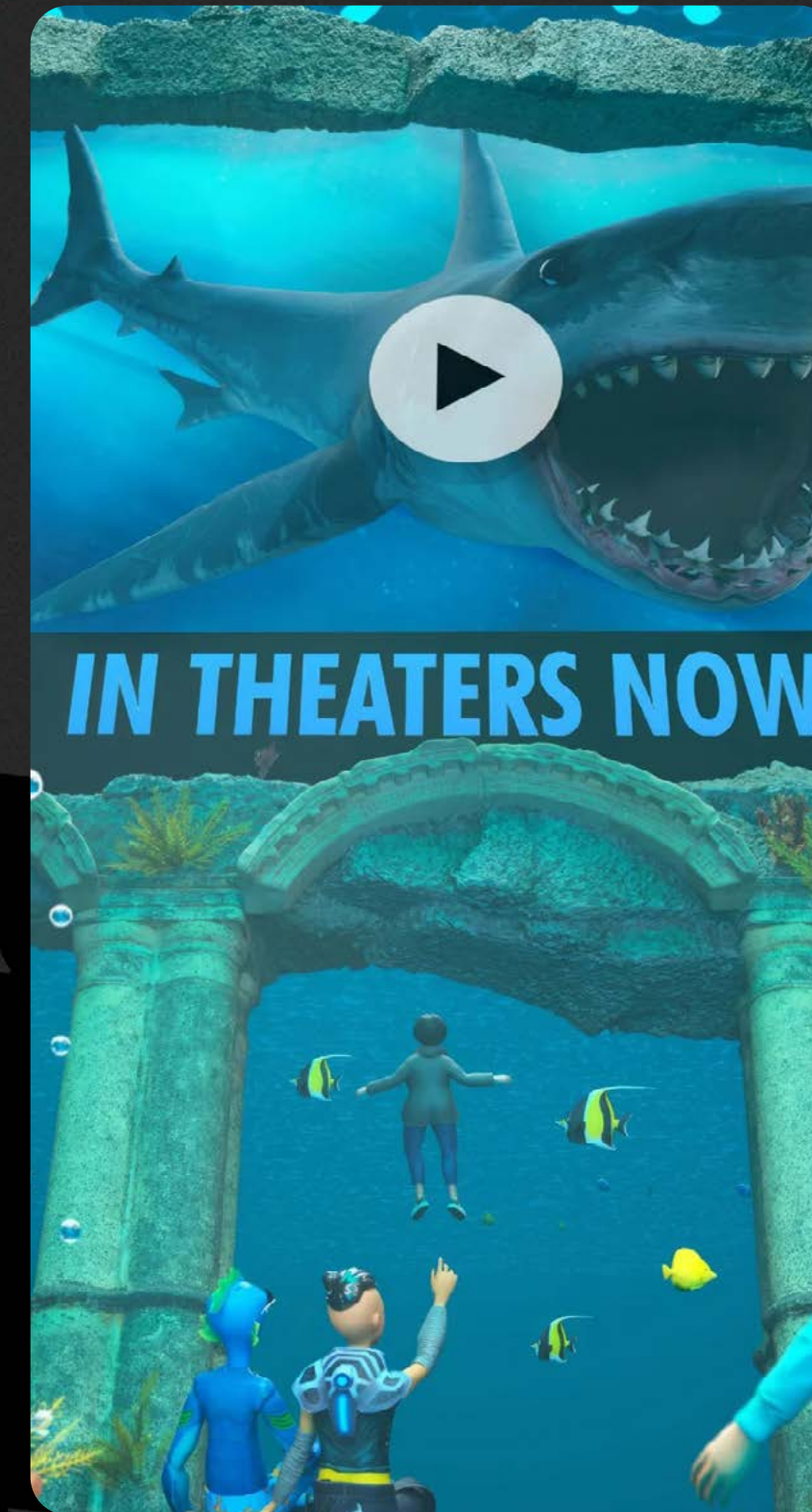
# HOW TO DO AWARENESS



# BUILDING AWARENESS IN THE WORLD OF PLAY

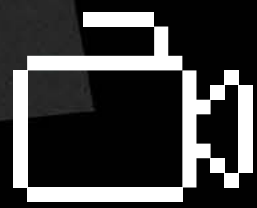
GAMING'S TOP OF FUNNEL IS FUELED BY  
COMMUNITY, CREATORS, AND CULTURE.

THIS IS WHERE BRANDS EARN VISIBILITY BY  
BECOMING PART OF THE CONVERSATION —  
NOT INTERRUPTING IT.





# AWARENESS



**PREMIUM  
VIDEOS**



**REWARDED  
VIDEOS**



**HIGH IMPACT  
TAKEOVERS**



**CUSTOM  
PARTNERSHIPS**



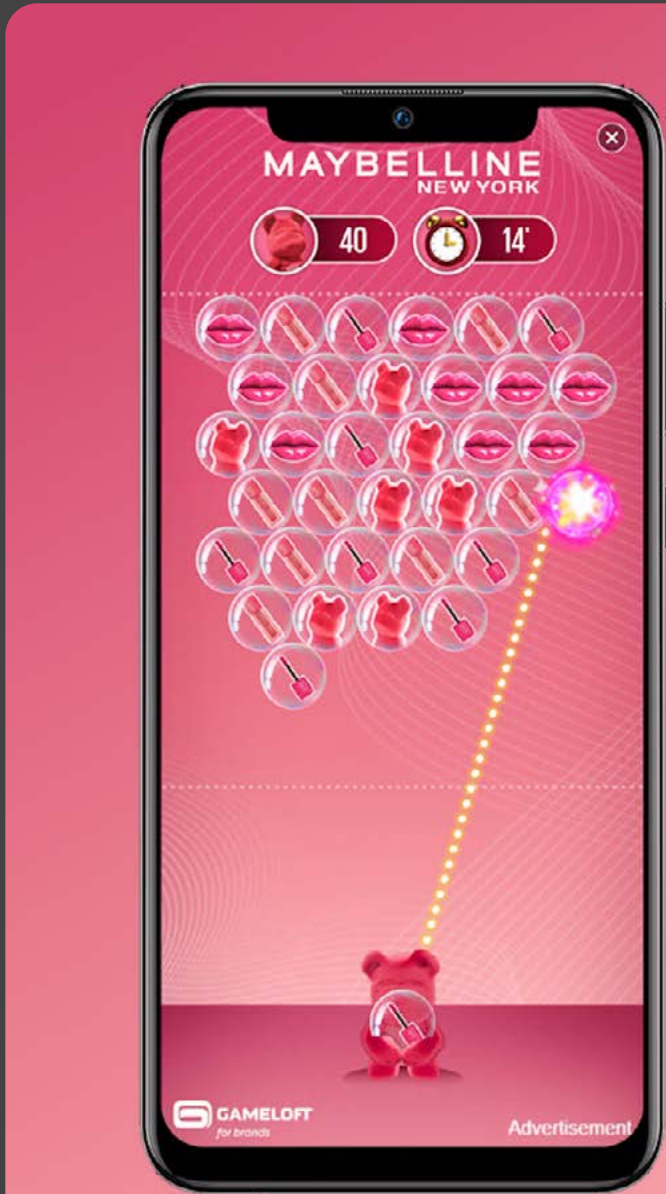
**GAMING  
INFLUENCERS**



# AWARENESS: PREMIUM VIDEO

Your current video asset could be reused in these formats – vertical video for mobile and landscape for desktop experiences.  
**PRO TIP:** Any contextually relevant asset would perform better but testing can take place with your current video asset.

## IN-GAME



**KING GAME PORTFOLIO:  
REWARDED VIDEO**

**95%+**

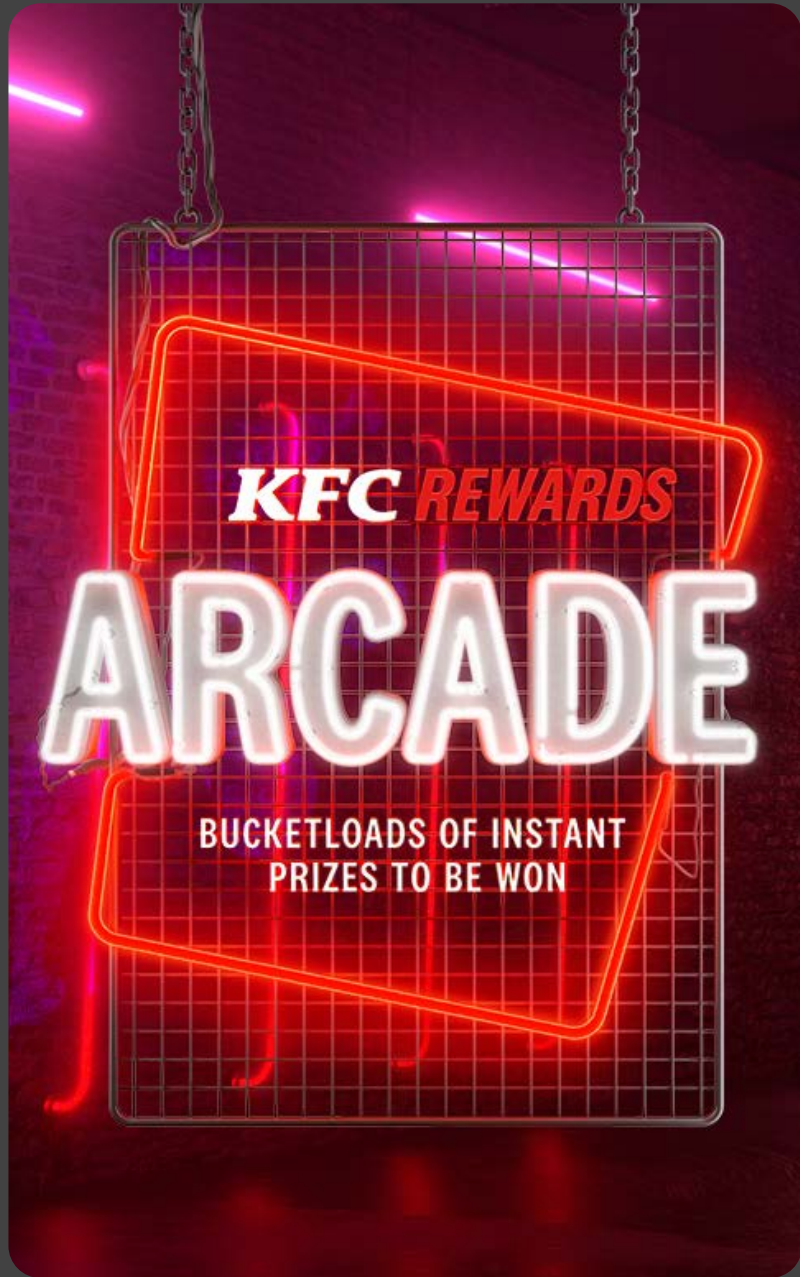
VCR on King games  
(e.g. Candy Crush)<sup>1</sup>



**ROBLOX: IMMERSIVE  
VIDEO**

**75%**

of Roblox users say they are more  
likely to notice brands advertised  
on Roblox vs. elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>



**OVERWOLF: IN-GAME ADS &  
MOMENT TRIGGERED ADS**

**85%**

Avg VCR<sup>3</sup>



**ANZU: INTRINSIC DISPLAY  
& VIDEO**

**13pt**

higher recall than other  
digital media

## OUT OF GAME



**DISCORD: VIDEO  
QUESTS**

**80%**

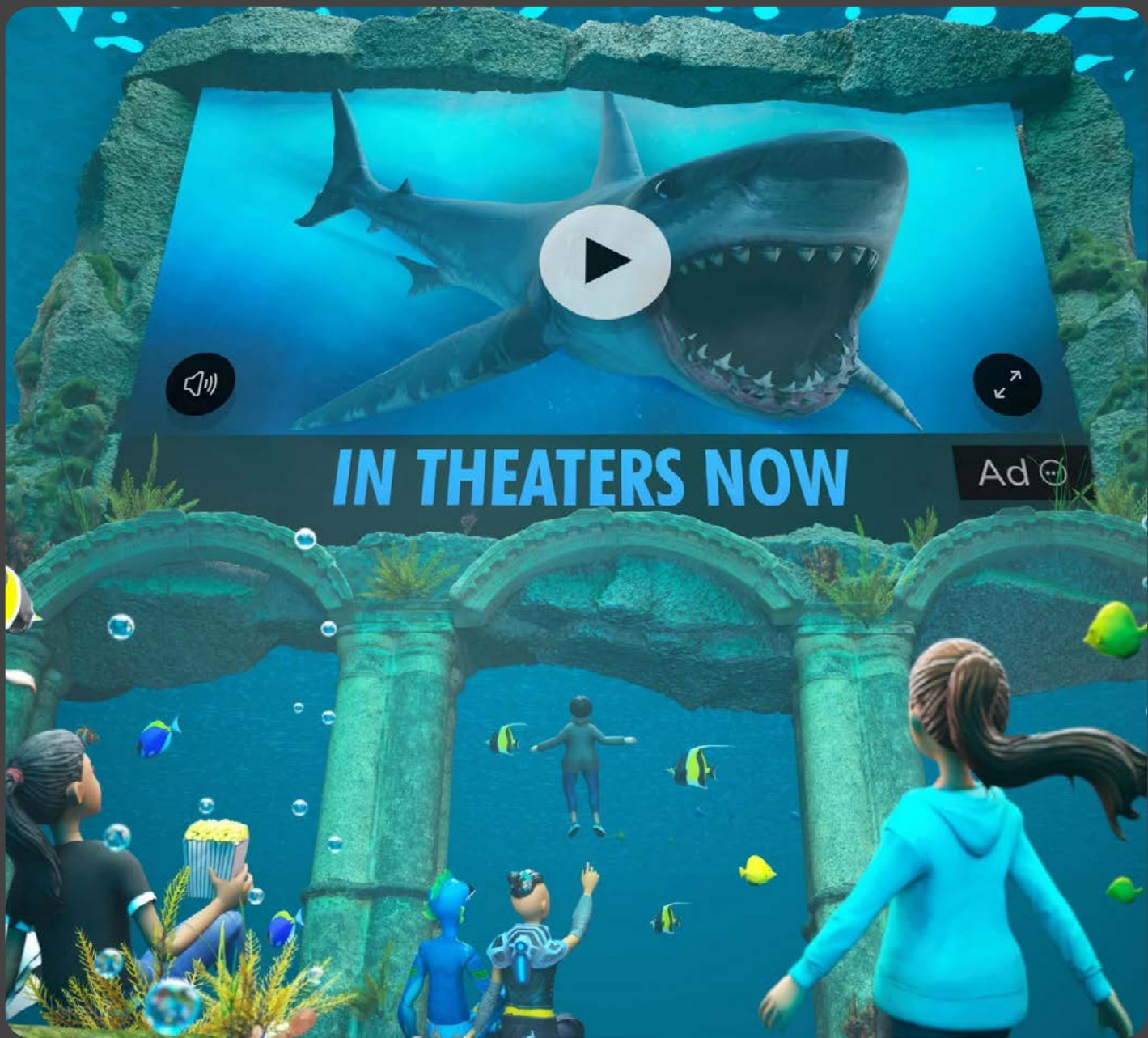
VCR on video quests<sup>5</sup>



# AWARENESS: REWARDED VIDEO

Rewarded video in-gamer are a great scale play: 1 in 4 smartphone gamers watch ads in exchange for in-game rewards<sup>1</sup>. And just like an unskippable ad on social, it's important to manage the types of games and ad load in order to ensure you're still viewed as premium.

**WATCH OUT:** Partners like King will have a better sense of what the right ad load is but if you're buying through programmatic players, it's worth considering frequency capping on the platform.



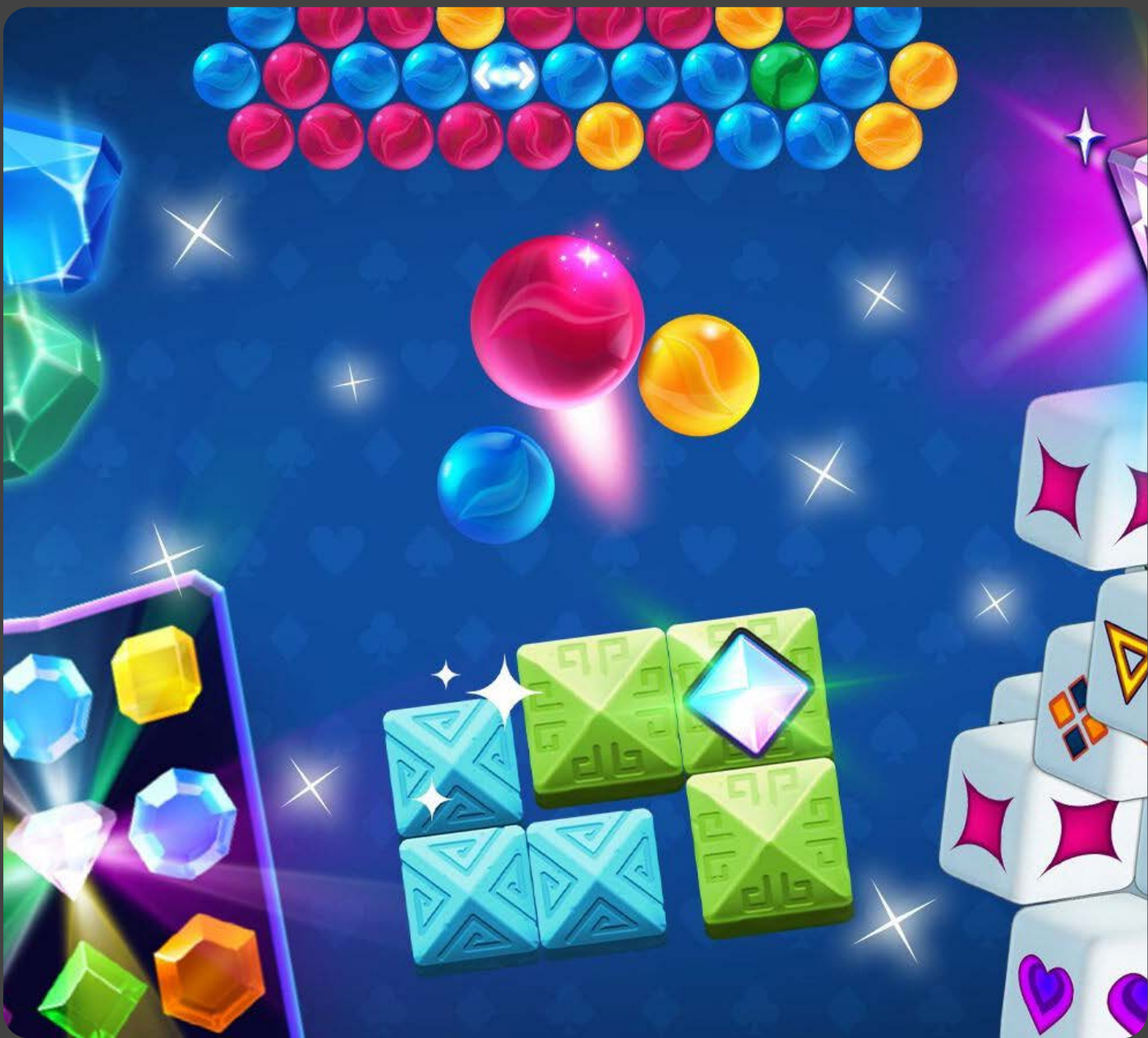
**ROBLOX**  
**87%+**

of Roblox users have a favorable opinion of Roblox Rewarded Video ads<sup>2</sup>



**KING'S GAME PORTFOLIO**  
**0.63%**

CTR on King games (e.g. Candy Crush)<sup>3</sup>



**MICROSOFT CASUAL GAMES**  
**96+%**

VCR on MCG (e.g. Solitaire, Mahjong, etc.)<sup>4</sup>



# AWARENESS: HIGH IMPACT TAKEOVER

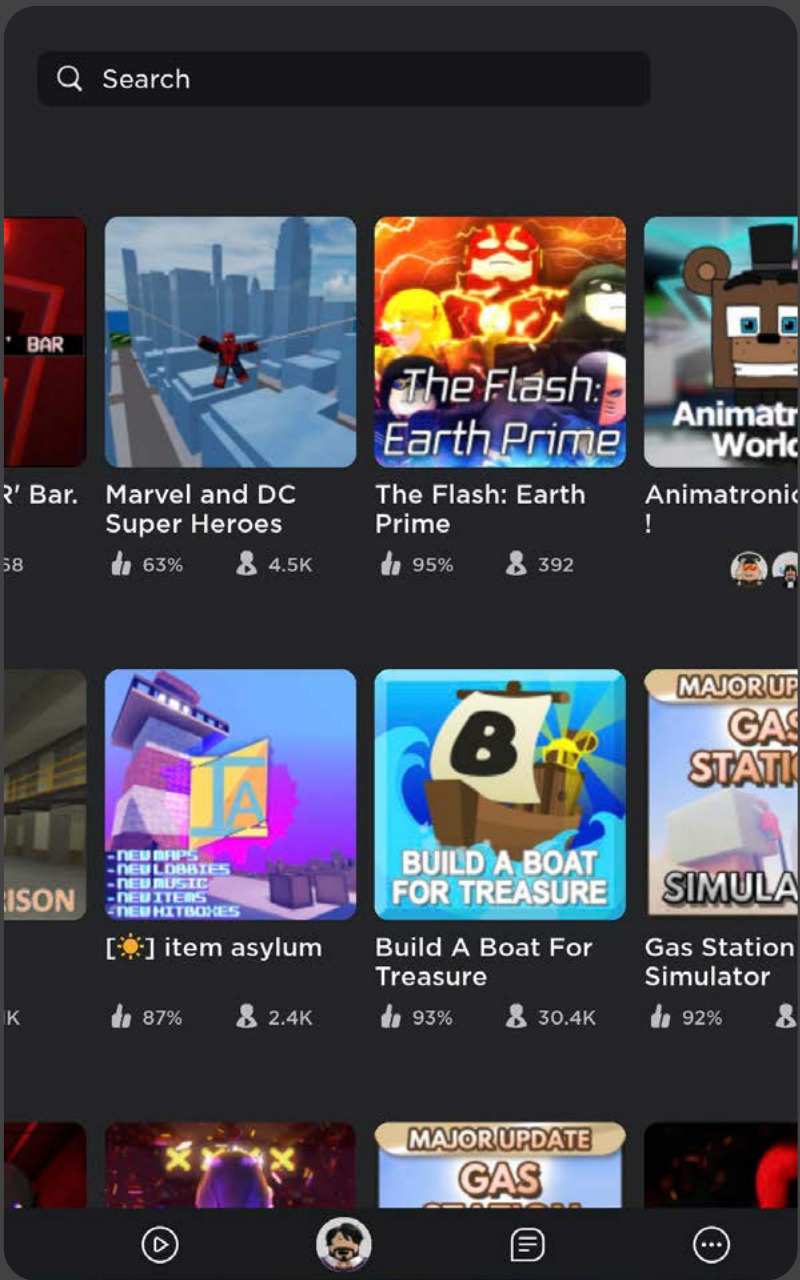
Focus on meeting users where they are, even if they don't immediately convert. The real value comes from consistent brand visibility in high-attention environments. Much like TV, it's about being present in the moments that matter. High reach and visibility drive long-term brand impact.

## IN-GAME



### KING: GAME TAKEOVERS

Become part of the game with native integrations



### ROBLOX: HOMEPAGE

**100%**

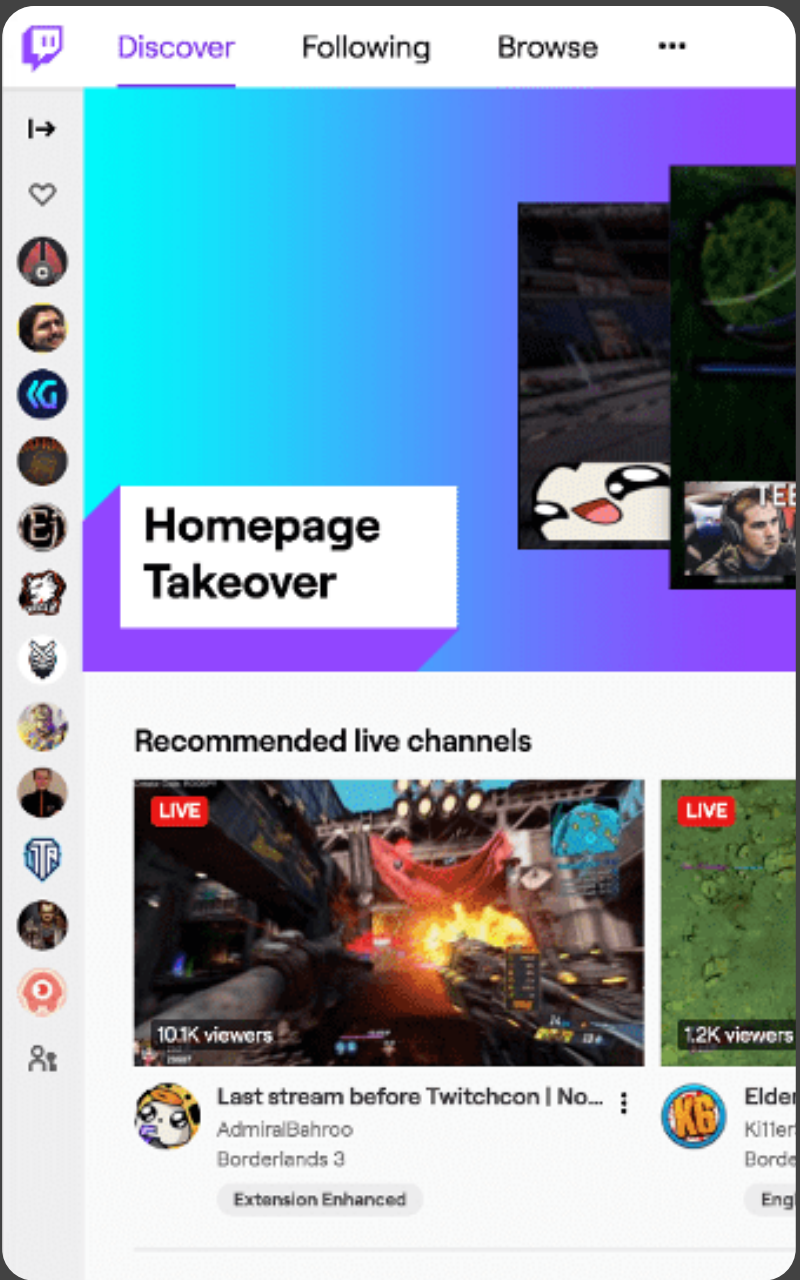
SOV with an estimated 80-100M+ impressions<sup>1</sup>



### OVERWOLF: TAKEOVERS

**30-40**

attention score on average (Across all formats)<sup>2</sup>

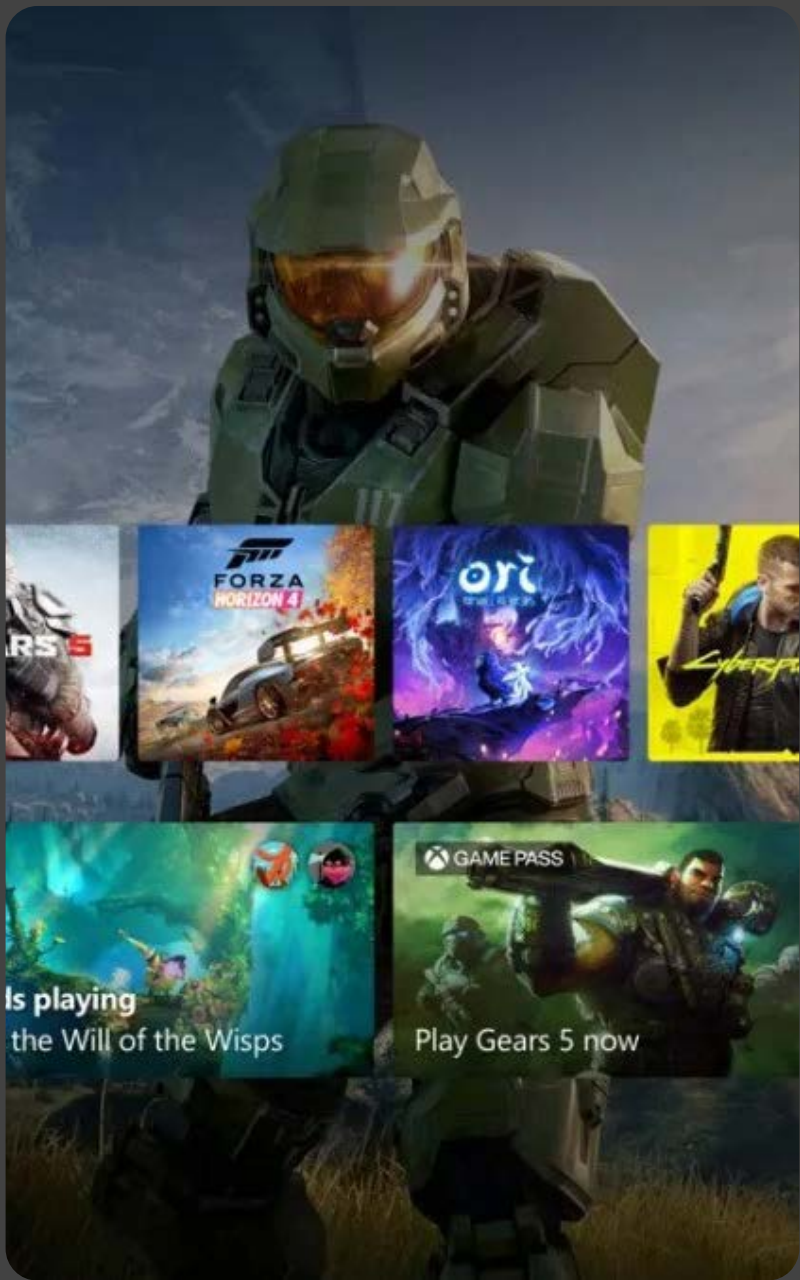


### TWITCH: TAKEOVER

**79%**

of Twitch's audience want to have a long-term relationship with brands<sup>3</sup>

## OUT OF GAME



### XBOX: LANDING PAGES

Offers visible and impactful formats to showcase your brand on the biggest screen in the house



# AWARENESS: CUSTOM PARTNERSHIPS

A custom partnership means we're bringing real, strategic, value to the consumer: what's the value exchange between your brand and the game's ecosystem?  
Similar to sports' sponsorships; on-pack initiatives; or content marketing efforts with cultural brands – it's a plus up to your fandom.



## PARTNERSHIP IN-GAME

Partner with upcoming game title release and create custom in-game branded items, maps, and events



## PARTNERSHIP OUT-OF-GAME

Extend your partnership with a game publisher on an upcoming game title with on-pack integration & co-marketing.

OR Partner with a Games Publisher on their esports initiatives  
(sponsor a tournament, league, athlete)



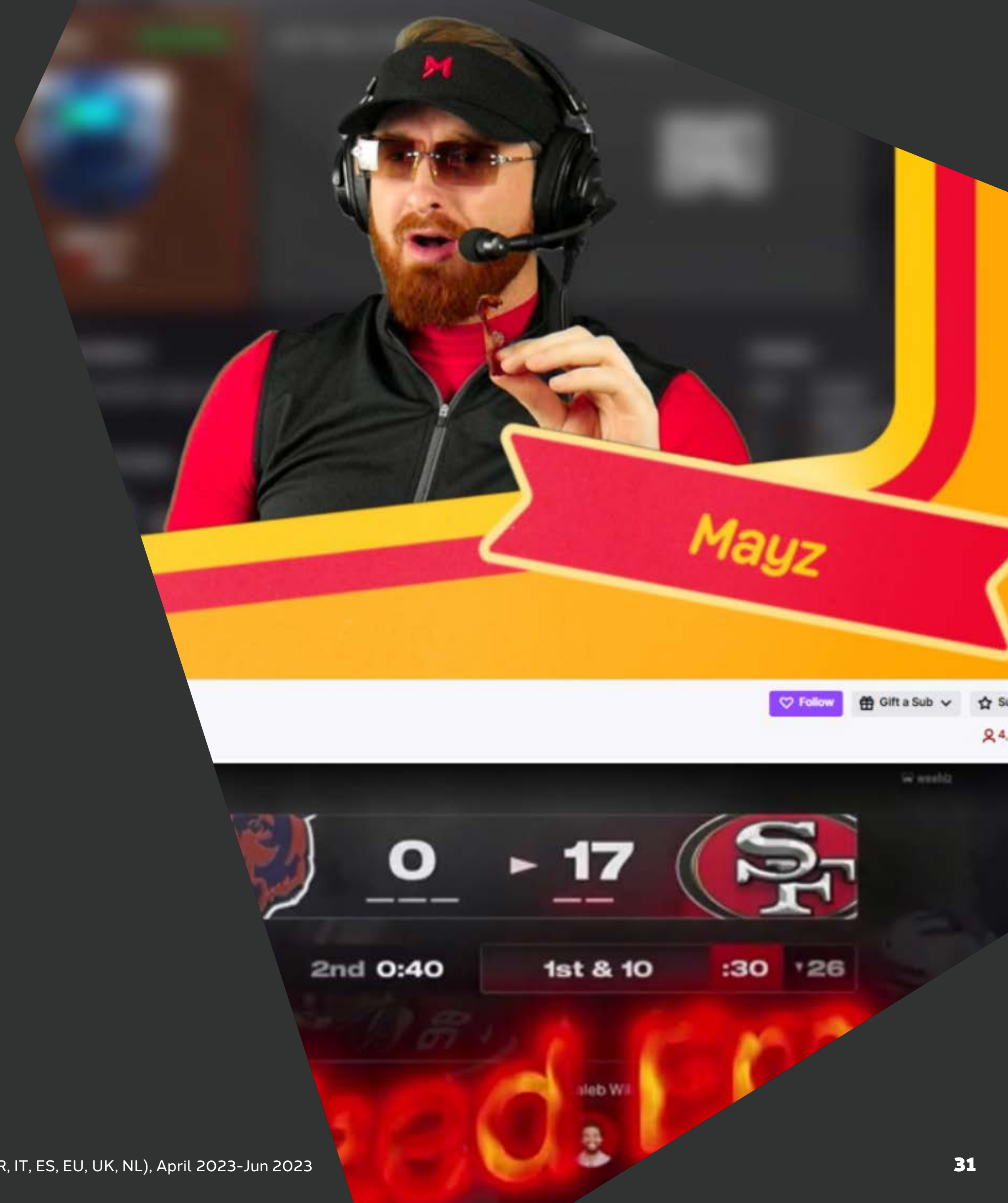
# AWARENESS: GAMING INFLUENCERS

Your brand is part of a community constantly talking about your brand. Work with your community and recognize what they say about you. It's a part of your social media ecosystem, it's the same habit you should be exploring across all of your community platforms. In gaming, digital word of mouth is impactful and the trust that communities build with influencers run deep.

## TWITCH LIVESTREAMS / BRANDED STREAMS

**8.9B** hours watched across all livestreaming platforms<sup>1</sup>

**67%** are likely to consider a brand that supports their favorite streamer<sup>2</sup>





# DENTSU CHINA HAPPY LEMON X GENSHIN IMPACT: CONVERTING FANDOMS INTO FOOT TRAFFIC

During the 2024 holiday season, Happy Lemon teamed up with HoYoverse's massively popular Genshin Impact for a limited-time U.S. crossover. With fan-favorite characters Klee and Jean as brand ambassadors, the partnership blended bubble tea culture with one of the world's most successful gaming IPs, creating an irresistible draw for fans.

The collaboration capitalized on Genshin Impact's massive global player base and cultural influence, translating digital fandom into real-world store visits and sales. Limited-edition drinks, exclusive collectibles, and unique merchandise in over 100 US stores sparked viral social engagement, driving both online buzz and in-store conversions.

**55M**

IMPRESSIONS  
DRIVEN BY UGC

**232%**

INCREASE IN  
FANBASE

**120%**

YOY SALES  
GROWTH





# DENTSU X BUNKA FASHION COLLEGE X ROBLOX: BRIDGING PHYSICAL & DIGITAL FASHION

To bring our “Innovating to Impact” brand promise to life, Dentsu partnered with Bunka Fashion College and Roblox to launch a pioneering Digital Fashion Program. Students created 3D fashion designs using Roblox’s “layered clothing” and “Roblox Studio,” showcased through both immersive virtual exhibitions and physical runway shows.

This initiative highlights how brands can leverage gaming and digital platforms to nurture creativity, engage new audiences, and blur the lines between virtual and real-world experiences – unlocking new opportunities at the intersection of fashion, technology, and culture.





The background is a vibrant green with several grey, 3D-style geometric shapes scattered around. These include a large gear at the top, a complex stepped shape at the top right, a triangular shape at the bottom left, and a rectangular shape at the bottom center. The main title is centered in a black rectangular box.

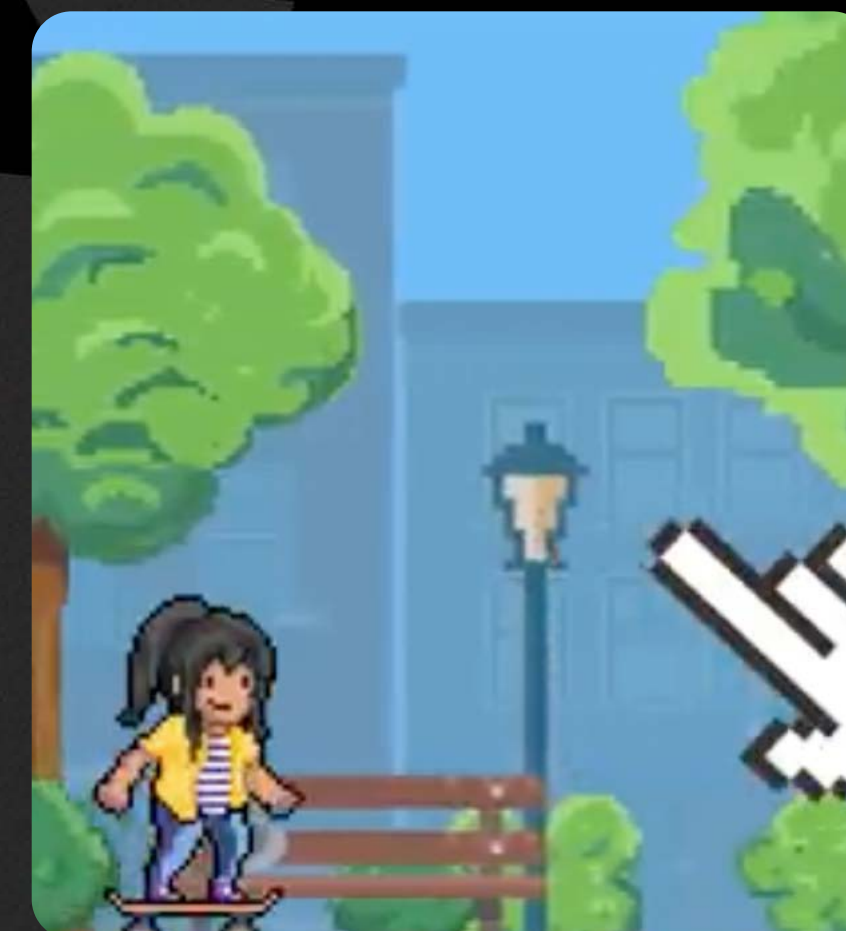
# HOW TO DO CONSIDERATION



# DRIVING CONSIDERATION THROUGH IMMERSIVE ENGAGEMENT

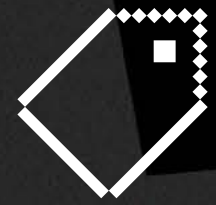
GAMING'S MID-FUNNEL IS WHERE  
ATTENTION BECOMES INTENT.

THIS IS WHERE BRANDS MOVE BEYOND  
VISIBILITY AND INTO MEANINGFUL,  
MEASURABLE INTERACTION.

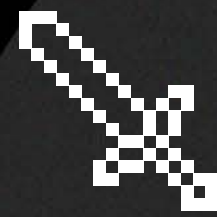




# CONSIDERATION



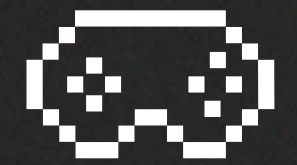
**BRANDED  
DIGITAL ITEMS**



**CUSTOM  
EXPERIENCES**



**TOURNAMENTS**



**IN-GAME  
CHALLENGES**



# CONSIDERATION: BRANDED DIGITAL ITEMS

154m players are interested in gaming collaborations with luxury/designer brands. Among them, 47% would be interested in branded worlds/quests/minigames, and 55% would be interested in branded in-game/virtual fashion items for characters or avatars.

**HELPS PLAYERS EXPRESS IDENTITY  
THROUGH YOUR BRAND**

**45%**

of Roblox players (18–34, US) say creativity & self-expression are core reasons they use the platform<sup>2</sup>





# CONSIDERATION: CUSTOM EXPERIENCES

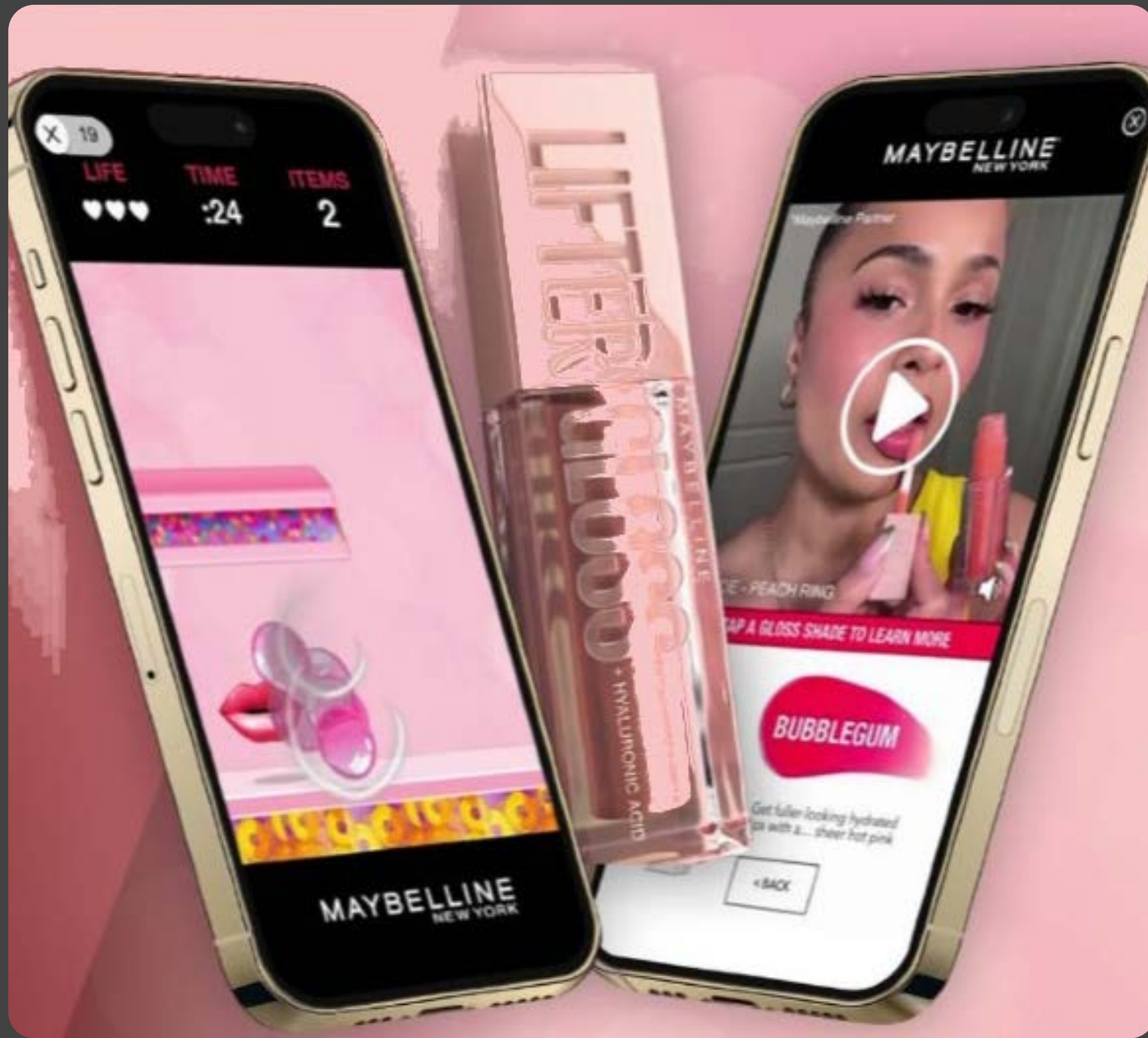
Turn an ad unit into a playable moment to increase time spent with your brand. It's a great way to engage with your consumers. Custom experiences are a longer investment strategy, just like spinning up a new social media channel, requires building and managing communities.



## ROBLOX: CUSTOM WORLDS

57%+

Lift in emotional engagement & 100x higher brand attention compared to social media.<sup>1</sup> 11 mins spent per Gen Z user in each branded experience per month.<sup>2</sup>



## KING'S GAME PORTFOLIO: CUSTOM

98%

Engagement Rate and +2.29% CTR on Playable Ads<sup>3</sup>



## OVERWOLF: INTERACTIVE ADS

Interactivity should align with game logic or environment. Ads that mimic native game-specific messaging generate high interaction and attention



# CONSIDERATION: TOURNAMENTS

Tournament formats are a powerful way to engage competitive, high-intent audiences. They tap into the thrill of winning and community-driven participation, making them ideal for brands looking to drive deeper engagement and emotional connection.



## PLAYSTATION: TOURNAMENTS

Activate on PlayStation's Esports platform directly on the PS5



## PLAYSTATION: REPEAT TOURNAMENTS

Players compete in free tournaments to win real money and prizes



## TWITCH: THE GLITCH INFLUENCER TOURNAMENTS

Each tournament brings together 16x of the top Fortnite streamers on Twitch. The Glitch has generated over 17 million total views and 100k chat engagements<sup>1</sup>



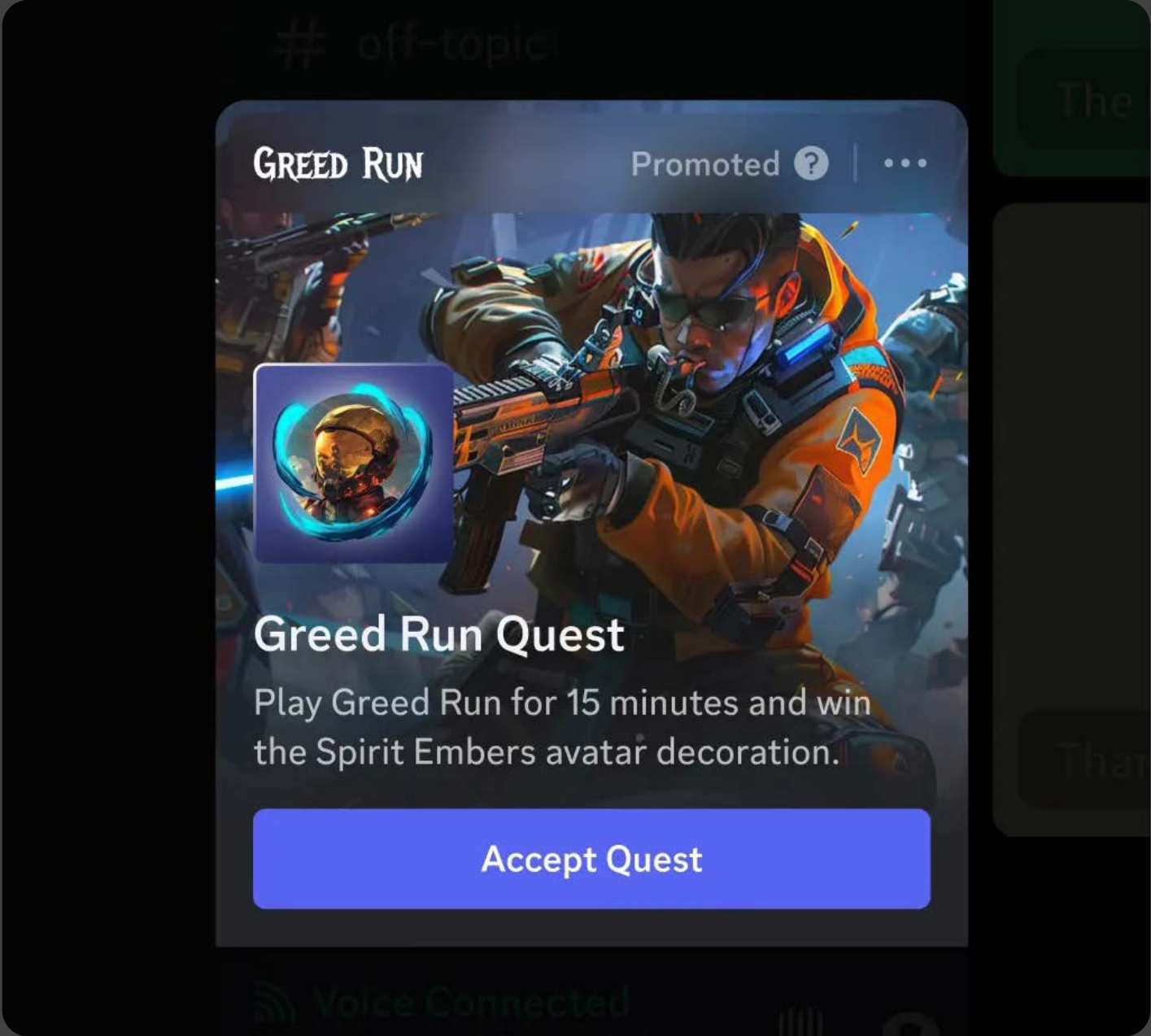
## OVERWOLF: TOURNAMENTS

Branded tournaments that include exclusive digital rewards (e.g. skins, in-game currency) drive up engagement and brand favorability substantially



# CONSIDERATION: IN-GAME CHALLENGES

Turn traditional sweepstakes into play-driven engagement, in-game challenges reward participation and make your brand part of the experience.



**DISCORD: REWARDED EXPERIENCES**

Users are 3X more likely to accept a second quest after completing the first<sup>1</sup>



**TWITCH: THE GLITCH  
BRANDED CHALLENGES**

Custom challenges for your brand to connect with Fortnite players. Players can earn branded merch, Twitch gift cards, Fortnite specific rewards like V-Bucks and Battle Passes



**OVERWOLF: IN-GAME CHALLENGES**

Behavior-based triggers (e.g. reward after key milestone) ensure high completion and brand sentiment



# LOVE, YOUR MIND WORLD ON ROBLOX

Young people are facing an urgent mental health crisis, with nearly half reporting struggles that impact their daily lives. Despite this, many don't receive the necessary support or understand how to prioritize their mental well-being. With the Ad Council, we set out to meet teens where they are—on Roblox. The Love, Your Mind World is a first-of-its-kind experience dedicated entirely to supporting teen mental wellness. We age-gated the experience to 13+ users to ensure age-appropriate access, anonymized usernames to protect user identity and create a judgement-free environment where users can focus on their own mental health journey.

Developed with guidance from mental health experts, and in partnership with the developer studio The Gang, the experience centered around three interactive zones where players practiced coping strategies like managing stress and anxiety through mindfulness, asking for help, and overcoming obstacles and self-doubt to build emotional resilience.

Gameplay, quests, dialogue with NPCs, meditations, and free limited items were crafted to make learning feel natural, fun, and repeatable. Brand partners like e.l.f. Beauty, Headspace, Pacsun, and Walmart donated portals, meditation content, and exclusive UGC rewards to boost engagement and incentivize learning. On-platform promoted tiles and portal ads, Twitch livestreams, and TikTok amplification from Roblox creators reached teens already immersed in play.

**650K+**

Visits the first month<sup>1</sup>

**500+  
HOURS**

Mindful meditation<sup>1</sup>

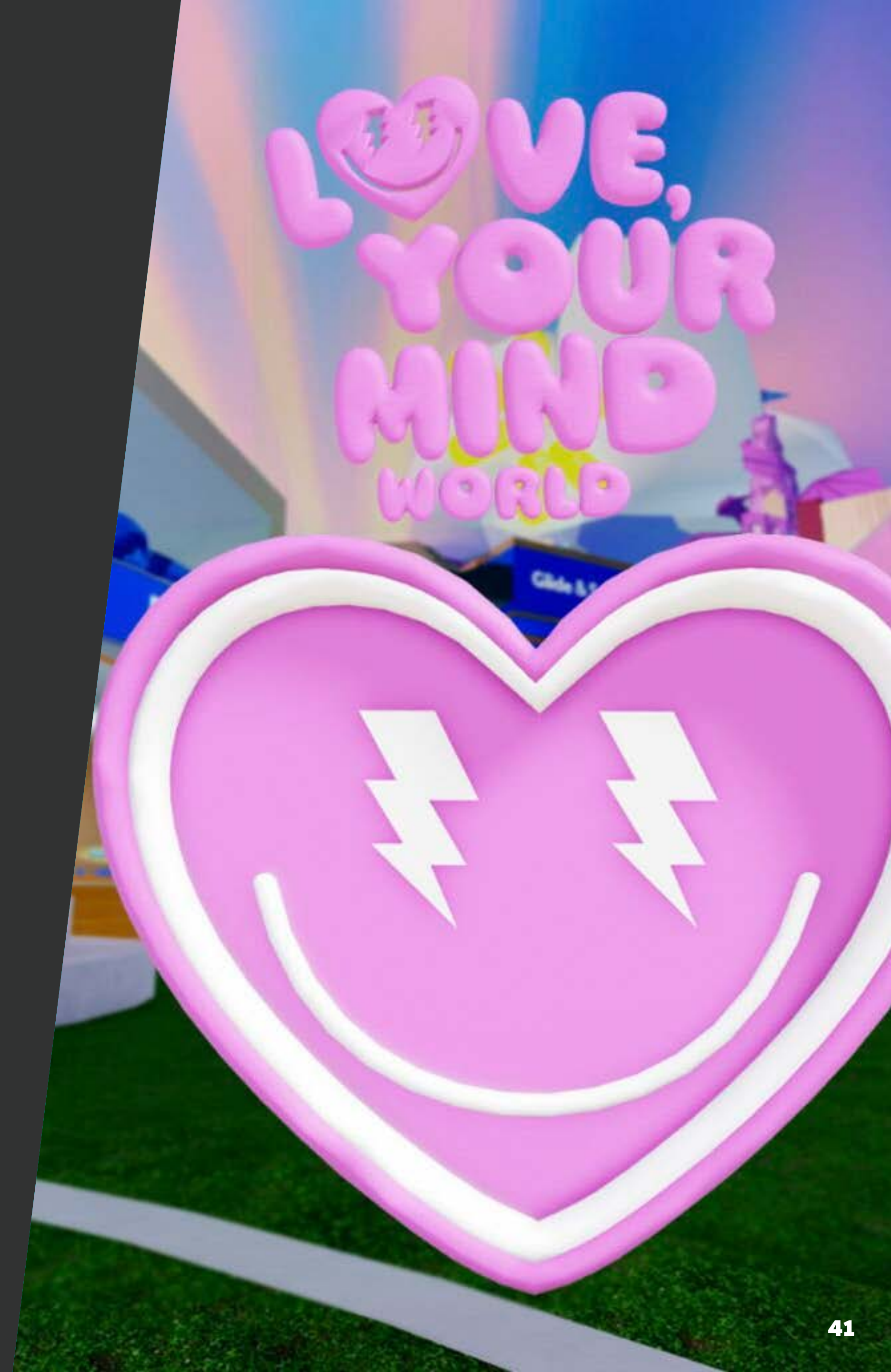
**67%**

had a favorable  
opinion of the  
campaign<sup>2</sup>

**89%**

Rated the experience on Roblox  
as a great or good way to  
promote the Headspace brand<sup>2</sup>

Source: <sup>1</sup> Roblox 1P data from 3/5/2025 to 4/5/2025 <sup>2</sup> Latitude study - Source: Roblox & Love Your Mind, World Audience Impact and Brand Lift Study in partnership with Latitude. Fielded March 2025. n = 1209. A13-17. US. Among monthly Roblox users. Top 2 box where applicable





# MIO X TWITCH: TURNING HYDRATION INTO INTERACTIVE GAMEPLAY

To drive consideration and shift brand perception, we partnered with Twitch influencers to create an immersive experience that blended gameplay with product relevance — all without interrupting the stream.

**THE CONCEPT:**

Streamers were challenged to complete in-game tasks while viewers used channel points and chat commands to encourage hydration breaks — integrating Mio naturally into the flow of content.

**THE INTEGRATION:**

Twitch’s Product Zap extension turned the chat into an interactive mini-game. Viewers typed #hydrate to zap falling Mio icons. Once enough were cleared, a “Hydrate Disrupter” was revealed — unlocking:

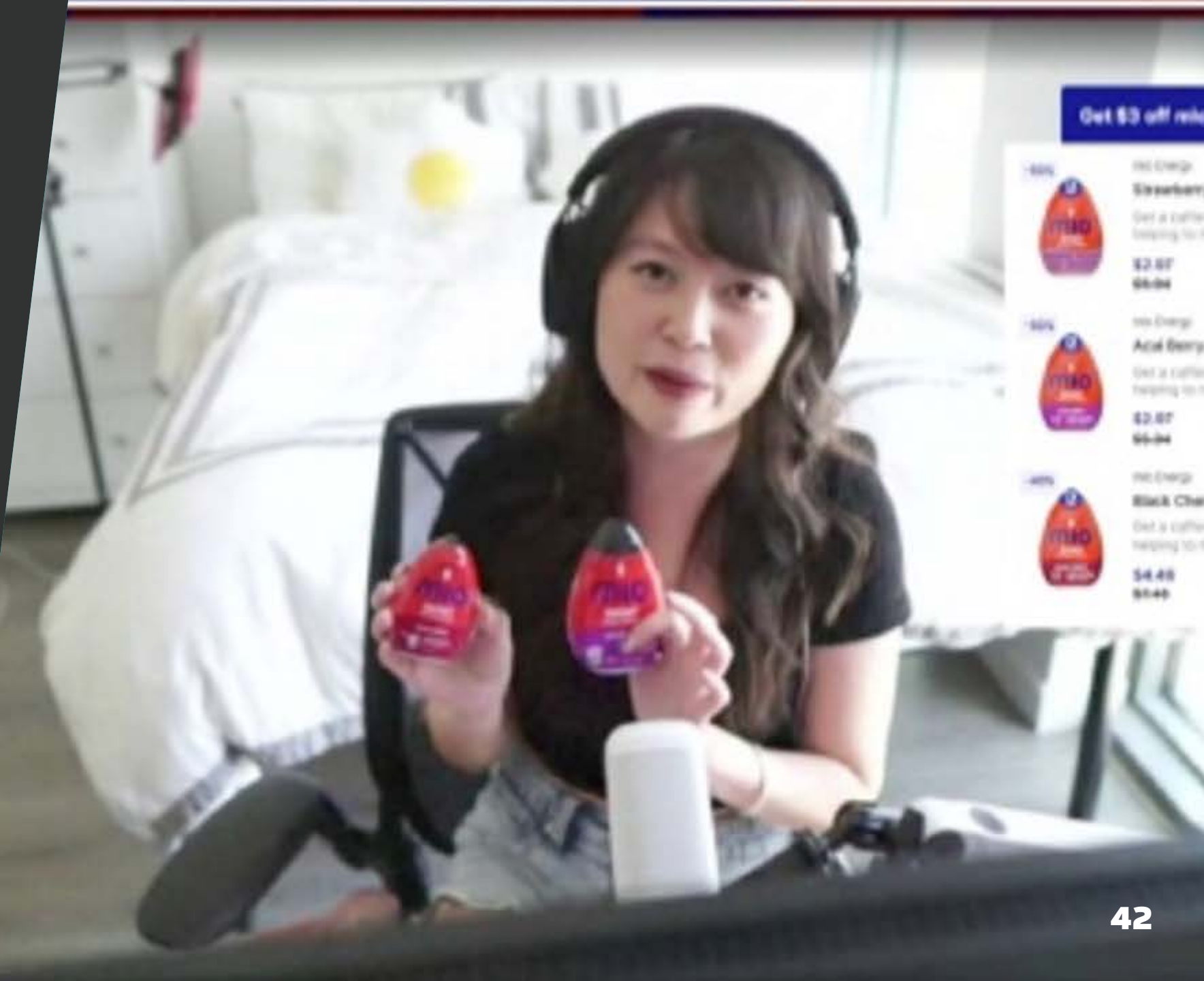
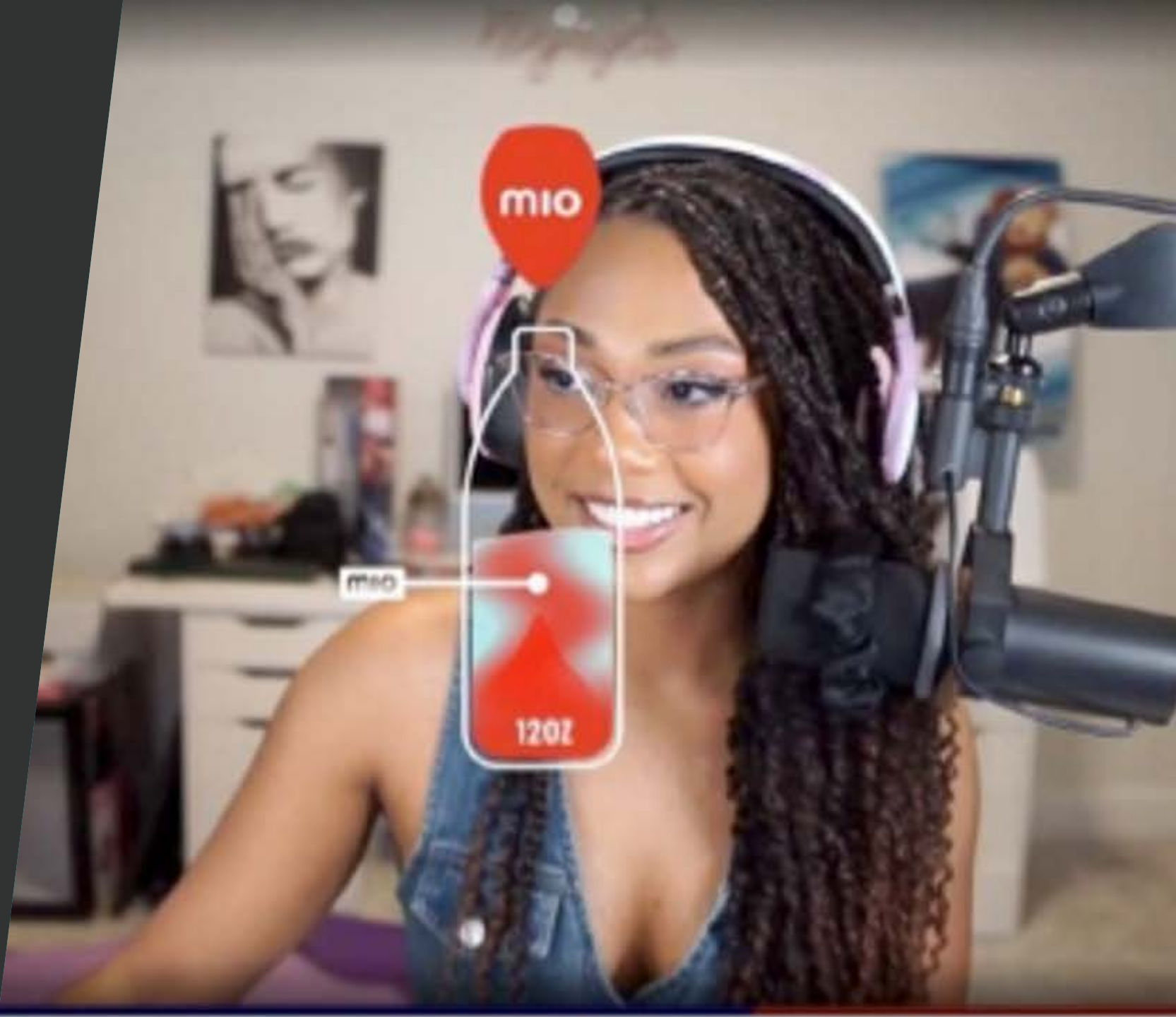
- \$3 off Mio products via Amazon
- Gifted Twitch subscriptions courtesy of Mio

**1.6M**  
TOTAL VIEWS

**+2.5%**  
AWARENESS

**+1.6%**  
CONSIDERATION

**0.03%**  
ABOVE CTR  
BENCHMARKS





The background is a solid teal color. Scattered throughout are various grey, 3D geometric shapes. These include a large semi-circle at the top center, a large square with a triangular cutout at the bottom center, a large square with a square cutout at the bottom left, a large square with a triangular cutout at the bottom right, and several smaller cubes and rectangular blocks. A large, stylized grey shape resembling a pixelated letter 'A' is in the top right corner.

# HOW TO DO CONVERSION



# DRIVING CONVERSION THROUGH CONTEXTUAL COMMERCE

GAMING'S BOTTOM FUNNEL IS NO  
LONGER THEORETICAL, IT'S DELIVERING  
**MEASURABLE RESULTS.**

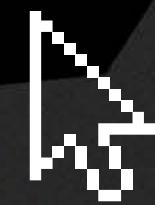
FROM SHOPPABLE MOMENTS TO LOYALTY  
LOOPS, THIS IS WHERE **FRICTIONLESS  
MEETS EFFECTIVE.**



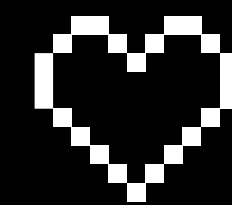


FORMATS OVERVIEW

# CONVERSION



**CLICK-TO-BUY**



**LOYALTY  
ACTIVATIONS**



# CONVERSION: CLICK-TO-BUY

It's your retail media strategy expanded to gaming: one click to buy from the gaming environment you're in (in-game or out-of-game). Turn your entertainment experience into a commerce experience.



## ROBLOX COMMERCE

Twin Atlas, a developer studio on Roblox, gets 90% of their total orders via their in-game commerce Roblox integration resulting in six figure revenue. This demonstrates the strong demand for physical products, particularly when paired with in-game items<sup>1</sup>.



## OVERWOLF SHOPPABLE AD UNIT

Integrates purchase page experience without leaving gameplay



## XBOX CLICK TO STORE/APP PLACEMENTS

Drive players directly to the Xbox Marketplace to seamlessly drive downloads and purchases from your store page



# CONVERSION: LOYALTY ACTIVATIONS

Integrate gamified moments into your loyalty program to boost repeat engagement. Rewarding players in-game can drive real-world actions and create a seamless bridge between digital rewards and IRL value, while capturing valuable first-party data.

## IN-GAME



### LOYALTY EXTENSIONS IN-GAME

Everyday, an average of 97.8M users come to Roblox and there is a tremendous opportunity for brands to build a real connection.

## OUT OF GAME



### GAMIFICATION OF LOYALTY PROGRAMS

Burger King’s gamification strategy includes crafting unique in-app games to serve guests and Royal Perks loyalty members rewarding experiences. These immersive games ultimately lead to driving incremental engagement and revenue.

- 40% of guests play 4+ times
- 11-12% increase in purchase rate during gamified campaigns
- 64% higher spend per guest who participate in gamified campaigns





# HOW TO PROVE ROI



# GAMING ISN'T A ONE-OFF CAMPAIGN CHANNEL, IT'S A FULL FUNNEL ENGINE

	GAMING TACTICS			KEY PARTNERS	KPIs
AWARENESS	Livestreaming Branded Streams Video On-Demand Influencers/Creators	In-Game Ads Out of Game Ads Sponsorships Video Quests		Twitch Anzu Discord Activision Blizzard Media Overwolf Roblox	Impressions Reach Video Completion Rate Brand Lift Unaided Awareness
CONSIDERATION	Branded UGC Rewarded Video Ads Intrinsic Video Playable Ads Play Quests	Moment Triggered Ads In-Game Challenges Branded Mods Tournaments	Xbox Landing Page Xbox Video Ads Custom Integrations	Roblox Activision Blizzard Media Anzu Overwolf Twitch Discord	Engagement Rate Time Spent Brand Favorability Purchase Intent Uplift Actions (e.g. CTR, completions, etc.)
CONVERSION	In-Game Commerce Loyalty Xbox App/Store Placements	Video, Display & Creators		Roblox Activision Blizzard Media Twitch Anzu	Sales Lift ROAS Incremental Sales Attributed Conversions

Note: This framework is meant to be illustrative and does not represent an exhaustive list of partners or tactics. It is not intended to replace a full media plan. Final partner and tactic selection should be guided by the specific objectives of the brief. For tailored recommendations, please reach out to Dentsu Gaming.



The background features various 3D geometric shapes in shades of gray and white, including cubes, a sphere, a triangle, a square, and a pixelated structure, all set against a dark gray background.

# WHAT TO WATCH IN 2026



# GAMING IS NOT STANDING STILL — IT'S EVOLVING FAST.

HERE ARE FOUR KEY TRENDS THAT WILL SHAPE HOW BRANDS SHOW UP IN GAMING THIS YEAR AND BEYOND.

## TRANSMEDIA FANDOMS: IP ACCELERATION

Gaming and entertainment IPs are increasingly cross-pollinating:

The success of The Last of Us, Arcane, A Minecraft Movie proves that game-to-screen can go mainstream.

Netflix, Amazon, and Apple are building gaming into their content ecosystems.

### WHY IT MATTERS FOR BRANDS?

68% of players try a game because of a movie, show, or book.<sup>1</sup>

Brands can ride this wave by inserting themselves into transmedia journeys.

## SWITCH 2: A PLATFORM REBOOT = NEW BEHAVIORS TO MONITOR

Nintendo's next-gen console (released June 5th 2025) promises better performance and cross-platform continuity.

### WHY IT MATTERS FOR BRANDS?

The first Switch brought gaming into more hands than ever — and families, women, and casual gamers led that growth.

Switch 2 is poised to expand this further with hardware that supports more sophisticated experiences without losing the “play” DNA.

## CLOUD GAMING

Lower barrier to entry, broader audiences, access without hardware  
Services like Xbox Cloud Gaming, Nvidia GeForce Now, and PlayStation streaming are making AAA games accessible on phones, browsers, and smart TVs.

### WHY IT MATTERS FOR BRANDS?

Lowers the barrier for entry: you no longer need a \$500 console to play.

Expands gamer demographics in regions with lower device penetration (think MENA, Southeast Asia, Latin America).

Great fit for casual and time-constrained players.

## GTA VI: DELAYED TO 2026

The return of a cultural Titan - UGC meets AAA IP: early opportunities for culture-led brand partnerships.

The most anticipated game of the decade is launching this year. GTA is not just a game, it's a massive cultural phenomenon.

### WHY IT MATTERS FOR BRANDS?

Rockstar has hinted at deeper online features and possibly user-generated content tools.

Expect social media to light up during gameplay moments: a real-time cultural engine!

Huge potential for organic branded content, creator partnerships, and fandom tapping into parody, chaos, and satire.



The background is a dark, textured surface featuring several large, 3D geometric shapes. These include a large triangle on the left, a large square with a smaller square cutout in the center at the bottom, and a large, pixelated square on the right. A blue rectangular box is centered horizontally, containing the text "WHY DENTSU GAMING?".

# WHY DENTSU GAMING?



# WE DON'T JUST BUY MEDIA, WE BUILD **FANDOM** **STRATEGY**

## ACCESS TO:

- Data from partners like Anzu, GWI, Stream Hatchet, Roblox
- Creative studios & platform relationships
- Cultural POV with regional nuance

## LET'S CO-DESIGN YOUR GAMING STRATEGY:

- Understand where your audience plays and why
- Map motivations to funnel opportunities
- Build meaningful, measurable activations

**YOUR  
BRAND.**

**YOUR  
PLAYERS.**

**OUR  
STRATEGY.**



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# ABOUT

## DENTSU METHODOLOGY: MERKURY

Merkury is dentsu’s person-based identity and data platform. With 95% coverage of individuals and HHs in the US, Merkury enables us to know who our customers are, find them reliably and in real-time, and deliver hyper-personalized brand experiences across the entire marketing ecosystem.

### DENTSU CONSUMER NAVIGATOR SURVEY – OCTOBER 2024

The survey was conducted by dentsu via Toluna, an online research panel. Administered on September 27th, 2024.

Distributed among a random sample of 1,000 U.S. respondents 18 years of age or older.

Controls for nationally representative weighting across age, gender, region, race and ethnicity (using the latest publicly available U.S.Census numbers).

## GWl METHODOLOGY

Figures in this report are drawn from GWl’s online research among internet users. The data in this report is taken from GWl Core, our main flagship survey of internet users; and GWl Gaming, our research into gamers across 18 markets.

### OUR RESEARCH

As part of our ongoing global research, each year GWl interviews over 960,000 internet users aged 16-64 (and in some markets 16+ with no age cap) across 50+ markets.

Respondents complete an online questionnaire that asks them a wide range of questions about their lives, lifestyles and digital behaviors. We source these respondents in partnership with a number of industry-leading panel providers.

Each respondent who takes a GWl survey is assigned a unique and persistent identifier regardless of the site/panel to which they belong, and no respondent can participate in our survey more than once a year (except for internet users in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, where respondents are allowed to complete the survey at 6-month intervals).

### OUR QUOTAS

To ensure that our research is reflective of the online population in each market, we set appropriate quotas on age, gender and

education – meaning that we interview representative numbers of men vs women, of 16-24s, 25-34s, 35-44s, 45-54s, 55-64s and 64+ (in certain markets), and of people with secondary vs tertiary education.

To do this, we conduct research across a range of international and national sources, including the World Bank, the ITU, the International Labour Organization, the CIA Factbook, Eurostat, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics as well as a range of national statistics sources, government departments and other credible and robust third-party sources.

This research is also used to calculate the ‘weight’ of each respondent; that is, approximately how many people (of the same gender, age and educational attainment) are represented by their responses.

### AUDIENCE DEFINITIONS

For data taken from GWl, the following definitions of “gamers” are used:

- GWl Gaming: those who play video games at least once a week.
- GWl Core: those who play video games on any device.



# ABOUT

## DENTSU

Dentsu is an integrated growth and transformation partner to the world's leading organizations. Founded in 1901 in Tokyo, Japan, and now present in approximately 120 countries, it has a proven track record of nurturing and developing innovations, combining the talents of its global network of leadership brands to develop impactful and integrated growth solutions for clients. Dentsu delivers end-to-end experience transformation (EX) by integrating its services across Media, CXM and Creative, while its business transformation (BX) mindset pushes the boundaries of transformation and sustainable growth for brands, people and society.

Dentsu, innovating to impact.

Find out more:

[www.dentsu.com](http://www.dentsu.com)

[www.group.dentsu.com](http://www.group.dentsu.com)

## DENTSU GAMING

At Dentsu, we celebrate gamers' uniqueness by helping brands create custom strategies and authentically integrate into the gaming landscape. Dentsu Gaming helps you find success in gaming and become a part of the cultural conversation.

[Gaming@dentsu.com](mailto:Gaming@dentsu.com)

## GWI

GWl is modernized consumer research – global, on-demand, and accessible to everyone, not just data experts. It's a platform designed for companies that want fresh and insightful data about their consumers. Values, purchase journeys, media usage, social media habits – we cover it all. With data representing nearly 3 billion people across 50+ countries, GWl has become the go-to for agencies, brands and media companies that want to know what really drives their audience to action.

For more, visit [www.gwi.com](http://www.gwi.com)

[Gaming@dentsu.com](mailto:Gaming@dentsu.com)

