

PREMIUM BY DESIGN

Defining Premium
Gaming Experiences



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01

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF QUALITY GAMEPLAY EXPERIENCES

Not all games are created equal. What elevates established gaming franchises and much-loved titles over others is the superior nature of the gameplay experience, from high quality graphics and audio, to compelling storytelling and carefully crafted game mechanics.

Yet premium gameplay experiences have traditionally only been associated with PC and console games, leaving mobile out of the conversation. With more people playing on mobile today than any other gaming platform, mobile games are an important part of the gaming ecosystem and have led to a shift in player behavior and expectations.

Consequently, the framework by which premium games have previously been defined hasn't evolved to recognize this shift due to the exponential growth of mobile gaming. This change in player behavior is important, as no one can better identify a high-quality game experience than the very people who are playing it. If a game isn't fun, engaging or fulfilling the emotional

need states of players, they'll simply stop playing it.

Just as not all games are created equal, neither are in-game advertising experiences. The right execution in high quality game environments will deliver a more integrated and engaging experience for players while driving the best possible results for brands. Partnering with premium publishers and games allows marketers to position their brand in much-loved game titles, resulting in positive brand association.

To better define premium games and understand player behaviors, Activision Blizzard Media surveyed 2,000 mobile game players in the US. The study focused on how game players think about 'premium' experiences in gaming and what shapes this opinion – from the quality of the game design and game mechanics, to platform type and game genre. The research also uncovers what makes a premium ad experience in the eyes of players, and how these are contextualized within a quality game environment.

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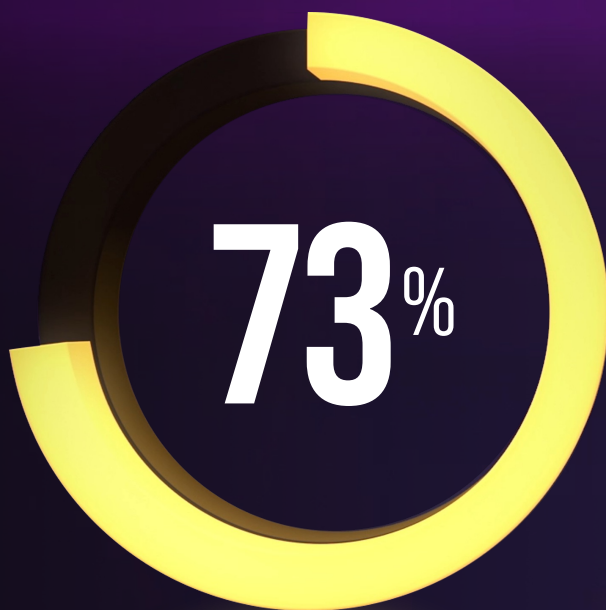
CAN MOBILE GAMES BE PREMIUM?

Mobile games have not typically been associated with premium gameplay experiences. This is partly due to the legacy of PC and console games, which until recently was how most people played, as well as the ability of those games to deliver big experiences on big screens.

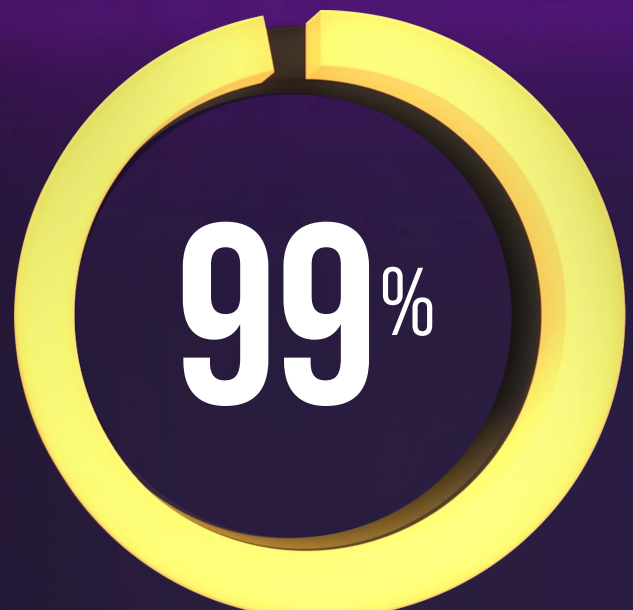
But as mobile technology has advanced, consumer behavior and entertainment

habits, both specific to gaming and beyond, have increasingly shifted to smaller screen experiences, and the quality of mobile games has increased.

73% of all gamers surveyed consider mobile games to be high quality. The vast majority of mobile gamers can also identify at least one attribute that can make a mobile game premium.



Consider mobile games to be **high-quality**

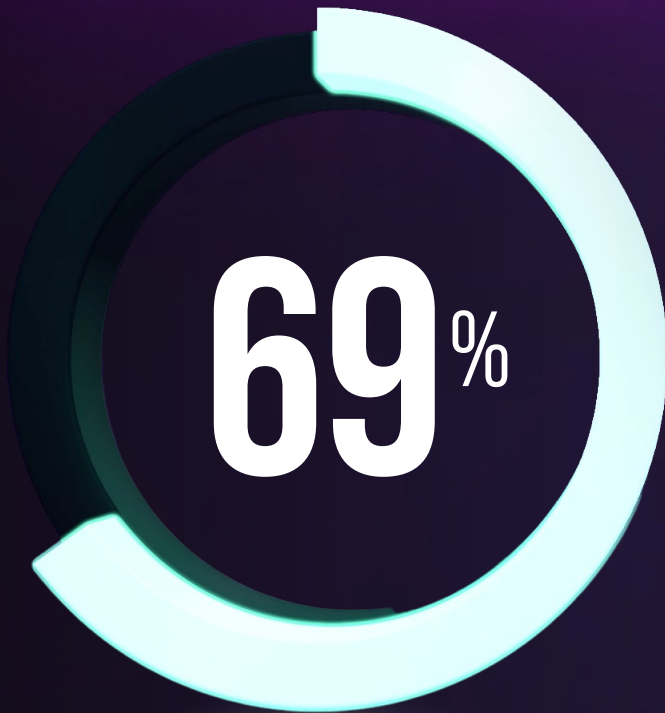


of Mobile Gamers say at least **one attribute can make a mobile game premium**



This idea of mobile games as premium also holds true for players who primarily play on PC and console. 69% of those

who primarily play on PC or console think of mobile games as quality.



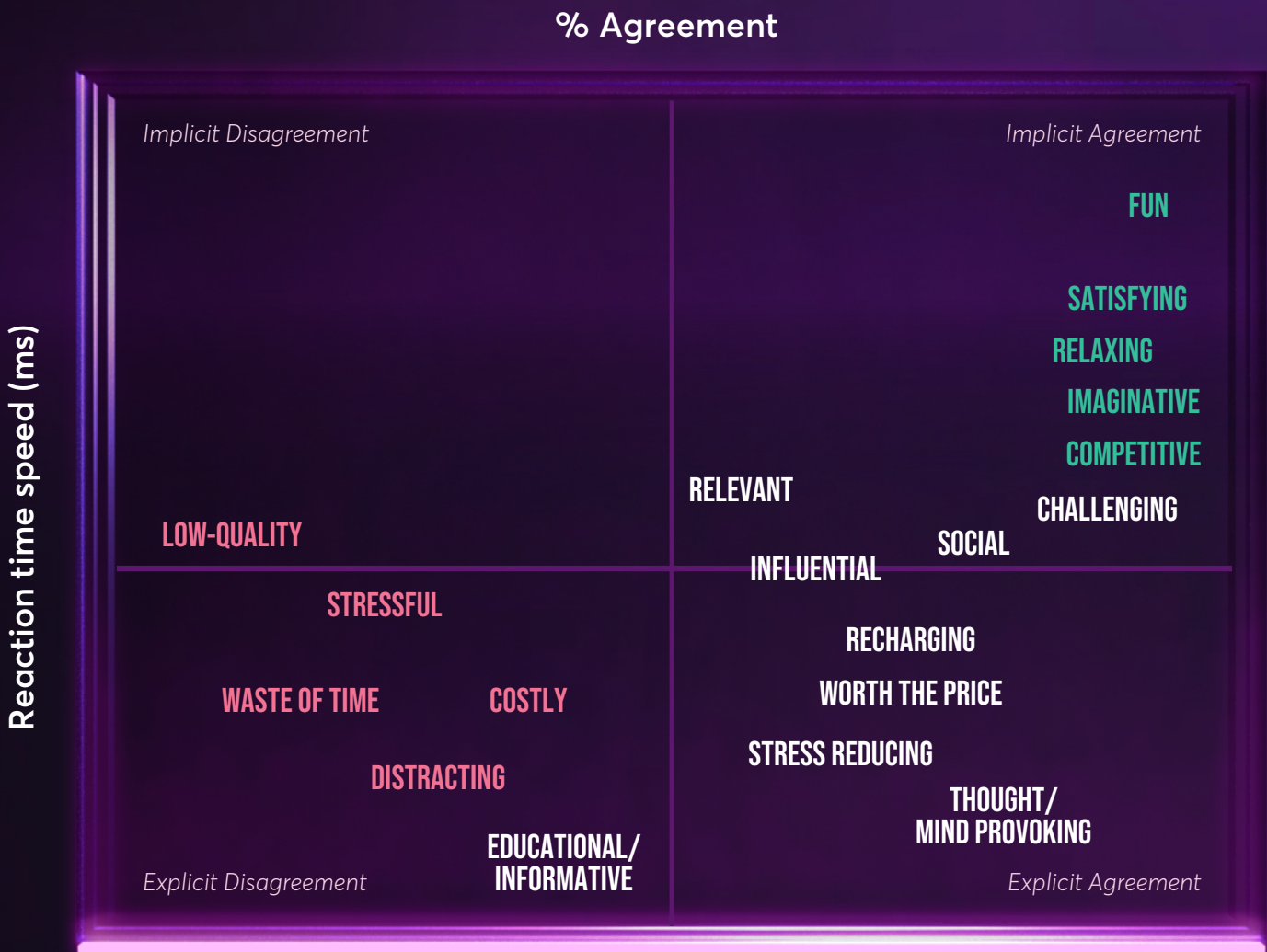
**OF NON-MOBILE
GAMERS PRIMARY
PLAYERS THINK OF
MOBILE GAMING AS
HIGH QUALITY**

03

WHAT MAKES A GAME PREMIUM?

The definition of a 'premium experience' is subjective. Thus, identifying the attributes that make a high quality game experience means closely aligning with player associations and expectations.

Players have implicit (subconscious) and explicit (conscious) feelings as to what makes a game premium.



— Overall, when players think of premium mobile games, they think of experiences that are **Fun (92%)**, **Satisfying (90%)**, **Relaxing (87%)**, **Imaginative (87%)**, and **Competitive (86%)**.

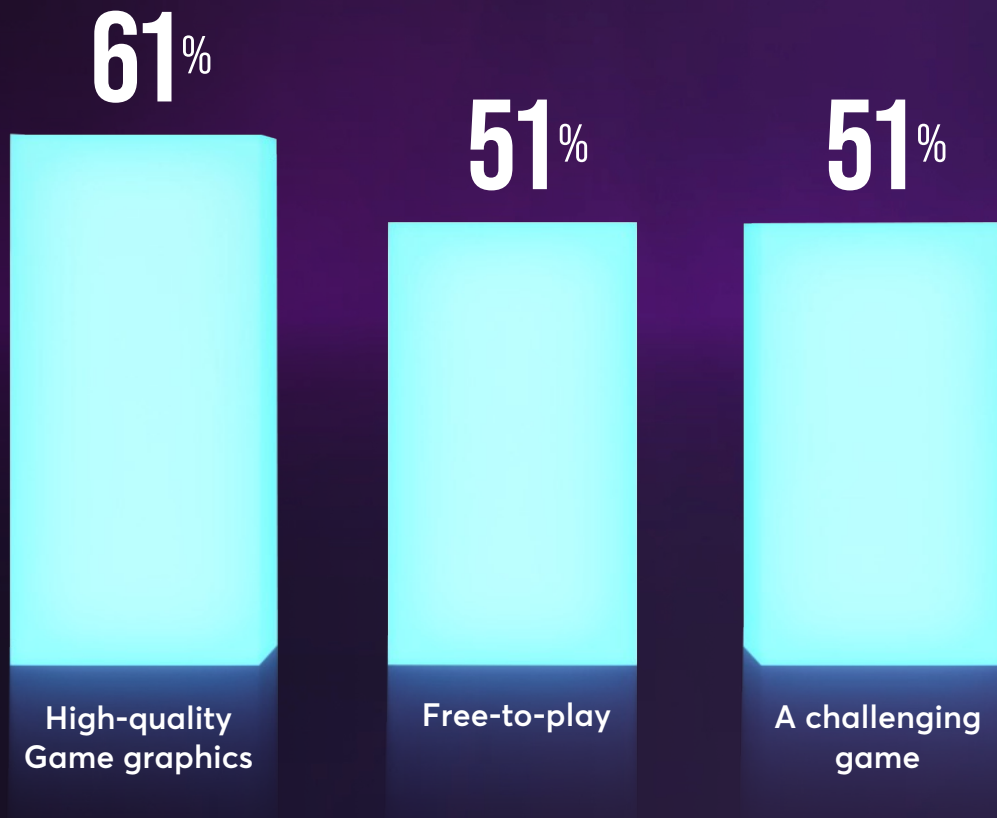
— Players were less likely to think of experiences that were **Costly (47%)**, **Distracting (39%)**, **Stressful (26%)**, **a Waste of Time (19%)**, and **Low Quality (18%)**.



To consider a mobile game to be premium, it must first address a range of criteria. Players want a mobile gaming experience with high-quality graphics and the sense of accomplishment that comes with overcoming a challenge.

Of all premium mobile game "must-haves," players identified "high-quality game graphics" as the most important, followed by free-to-play, challenging, winnable, and up-to-date.

WHAT MAKES A GAME "PREMIUM"?



*"The idea is for a game to not be frustrating. I don't like a game you can't grow in, get points, and level up. **Games are for rewards**, whether moving up or getting points, so if it's too hard, one loses interest."*

- Female, aged 65 years

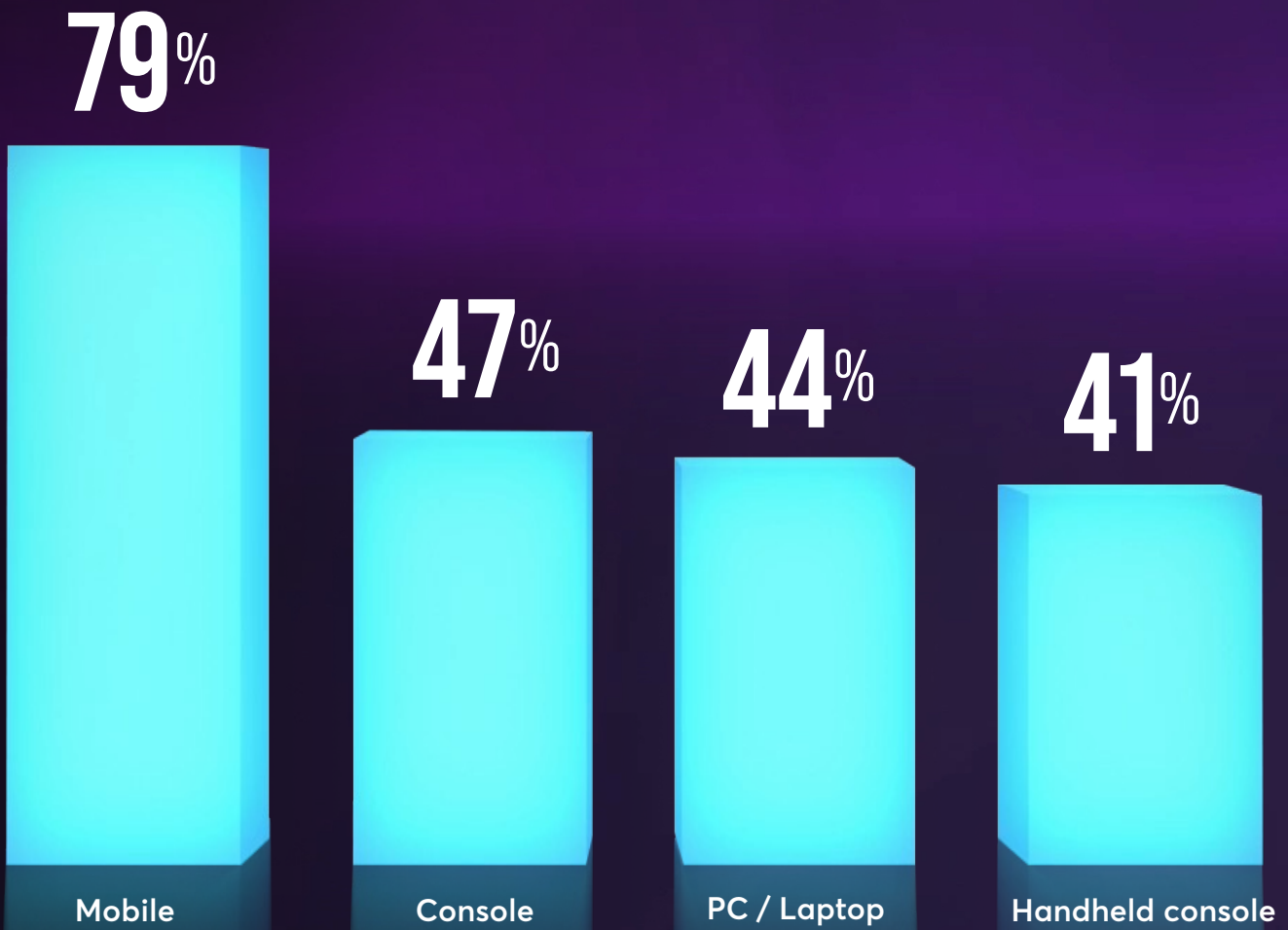
04

DOES PLATFORM MATTER?

Mobile gaming is ubiquitous, providing an opportunity to tap in whenever, wherever, offering players all day

entertainment. Four-in-five mobile gamers play daily, nearly double that of other platforms.

DAILY GAMEPLAY BY PLATFORM





Additionally the distinction between "traditional" and "mobile" gamers is an increasingly false dichotomy – individuals play games when/where they can. 42% of mobile gamers play on PC/Laptop, while 55% of mobile gamers play on console.

Mobile gaming is well established, and therefore, most Mobile Gamers are not new to the space. In fact, 64% have been playing for five years or more.

64%

Have played on mobile for **five years or more**

55%

Of mobile gamers play games on **console**

42%

Of mobile gamers play games on **PC/laptop**

When comparing premium game 'must haves' between mobile only players with those who play on multiple platforms, it is mobile only players that tend to have nearly universally higher needs for various quality dimensions. Since mobile is the primary method of play, they expect the very best from this platform.

For cross-platform players, the biggest differences come through in graphics,

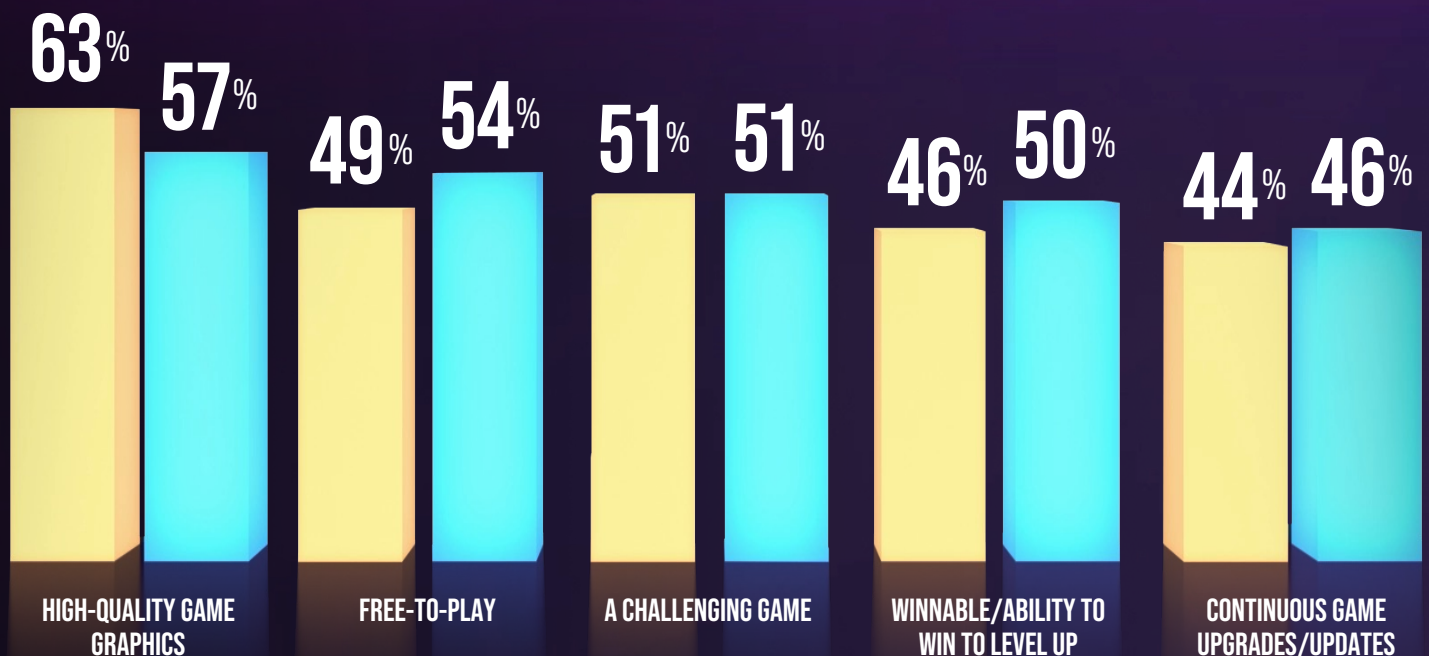
multiplayer options, narrative or storyline, and player base. In this instance their expectation is aligning the traditional game experience with the mobile deployment of the game experience.

Some areas, however, show that these groups aren't so different, and that anyone looking for a premium mobile game wants to see high-quality game graphics, challenge, and winnability.

PREMIUM MOBILE GAMES "MUST-HAVES"

Mobile/PC/Console Players

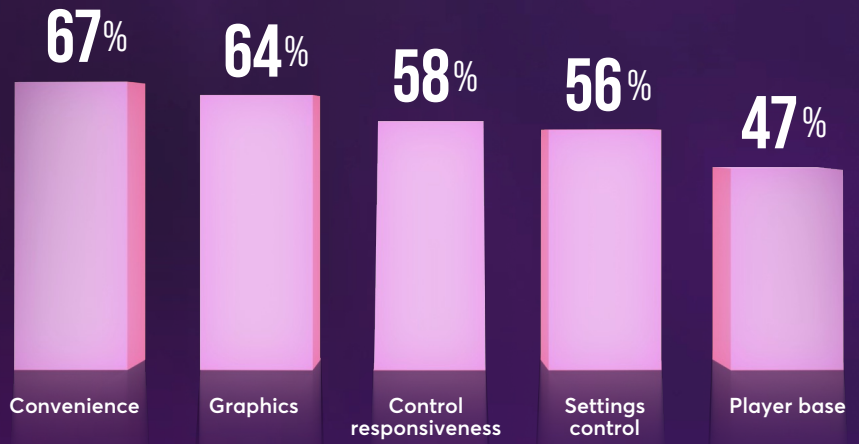
Mobile Only Players



While the specifics of a premium gaming experience will differ platform to platform, for those looking

specifically at a premium mobile game experience, one thing is constant - convenience.

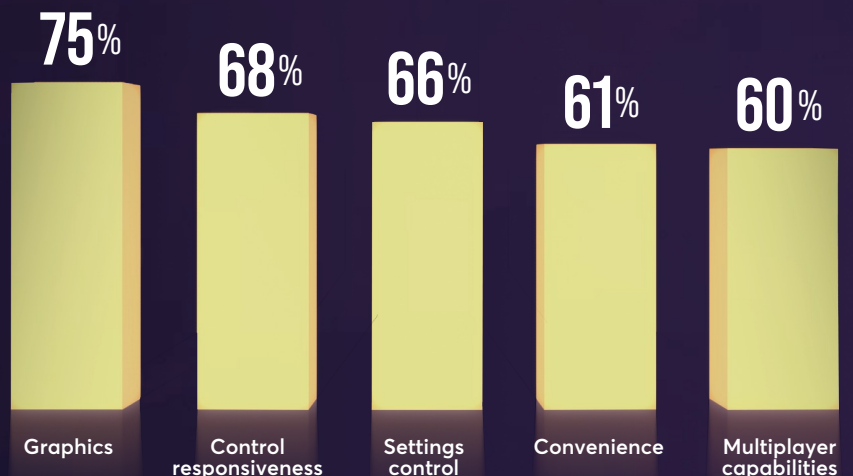
MOBILE GAME EXPECTATIONS



When it comes to gaming on PC or console, mobile gamers expect higher quality graphics, control responsiveness and settings customization. In a PC or console environment, convenience is

less important. However, the love and appreciation of mobile gaming is aligned with experiences that are simple, easy and accessible.

NON-MOBILE GAME EXPECTATIONS

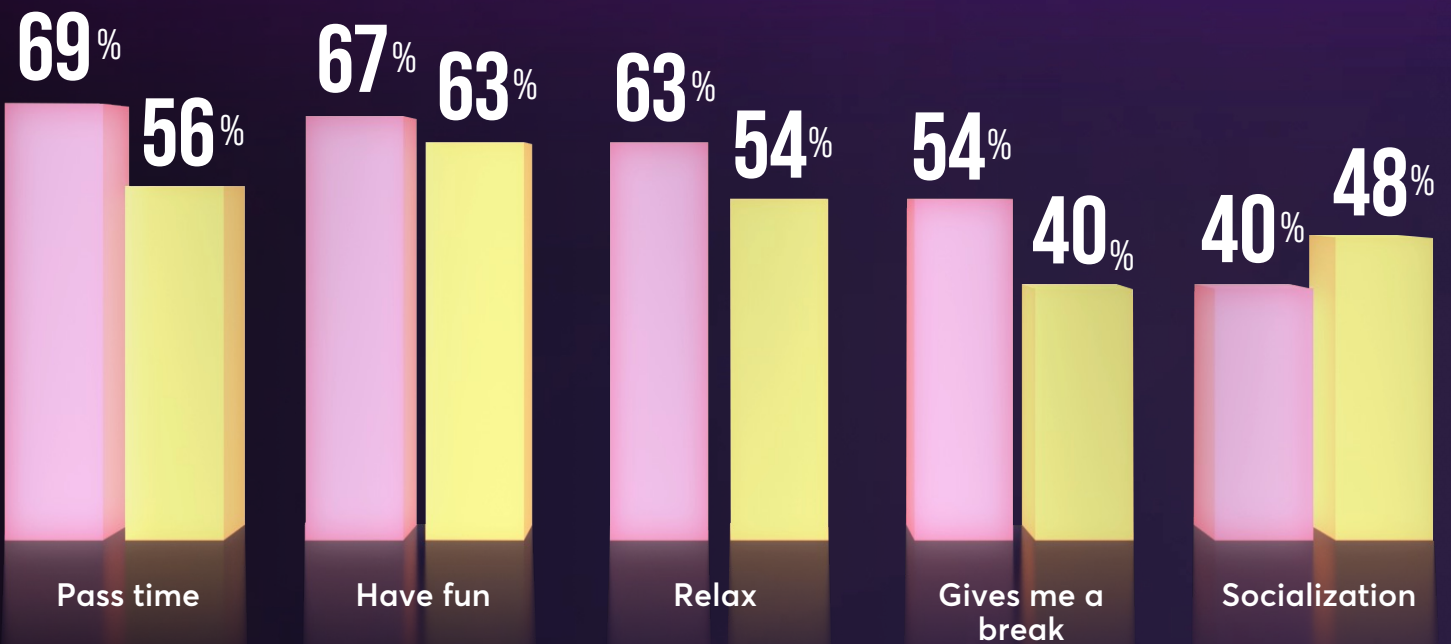


Across all differences between mobile game expectations and non-mobile game expectations of premium games, some of the most significant come through in need states. Overall, mobile is more likely to fulfill needs associated with giving breaks, passing time, and distracting oneself while non-mobile platforms are more likely to be sought out for interacting and competing with others.



REASONS FOR PLAYING

Mobile PC/Console



05

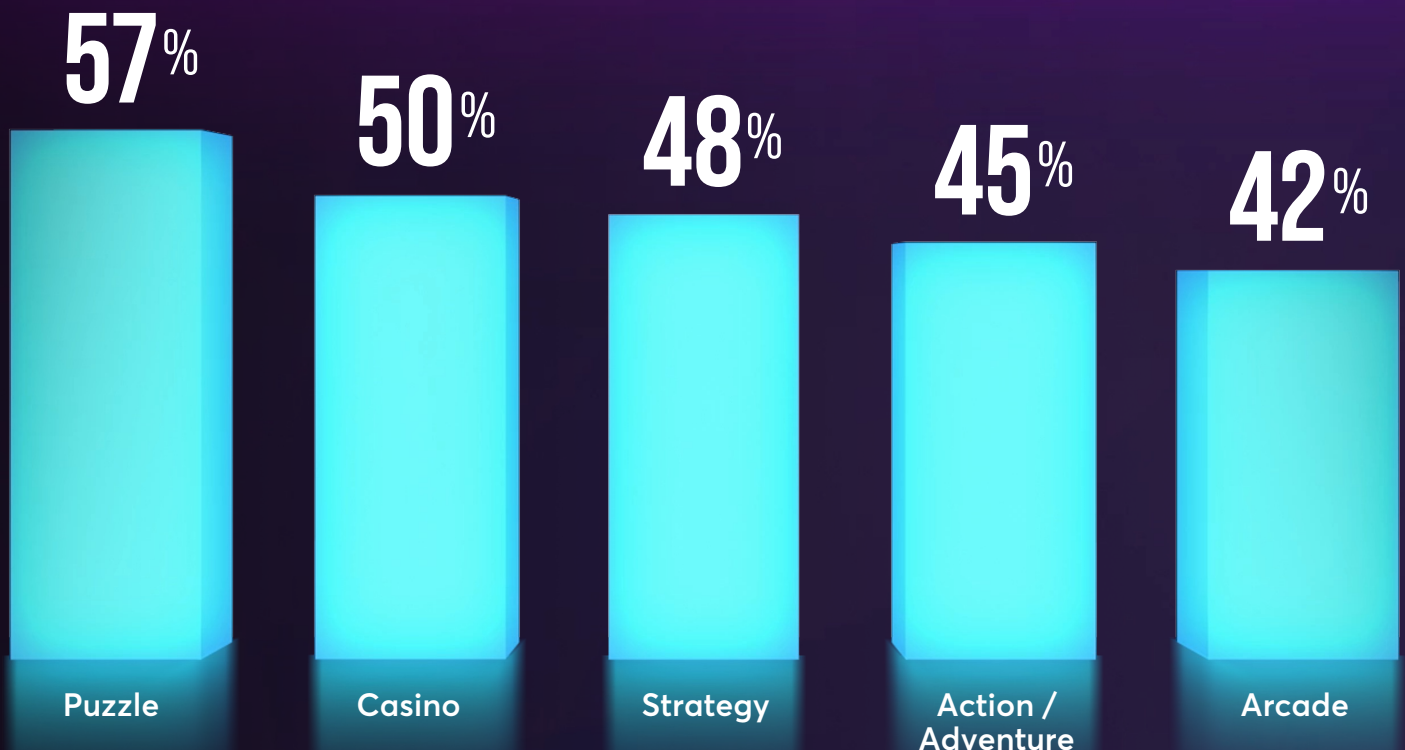
WHAT GENRES OF GAMES ARE PREMIUM?

It's not only the platform that should be taken into consideration when identifying premium games, the genre or type of game is also important.

For all players, puzzle games are not only the most played genre among

mobile gamers, they also set the standard for premium mobile games. They are followed by casino games, strategy, action/adventure and arcade. The average Mobile Gamer dabbles in many genres, with 5 on average being played in the past 30 days.

PREMIUM GAMES BY GENRE

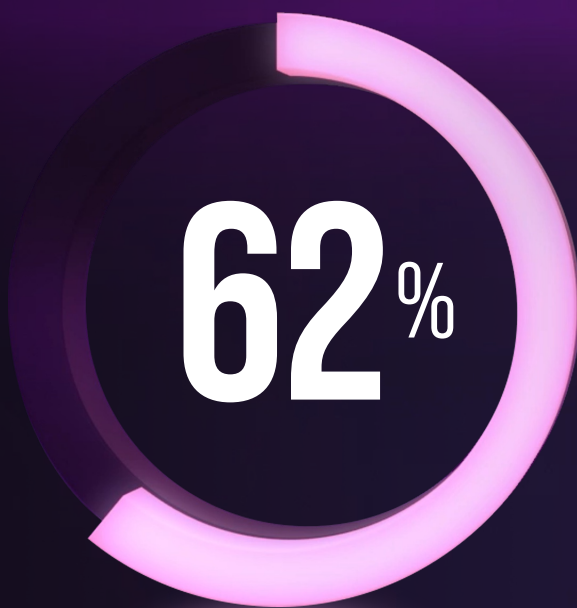


Puzzle's dominance as the leading mobile game type remains evident when looking at the split between mobile only players and cross-platform players, with over half of both groups identifying it as the number one most premium genre.

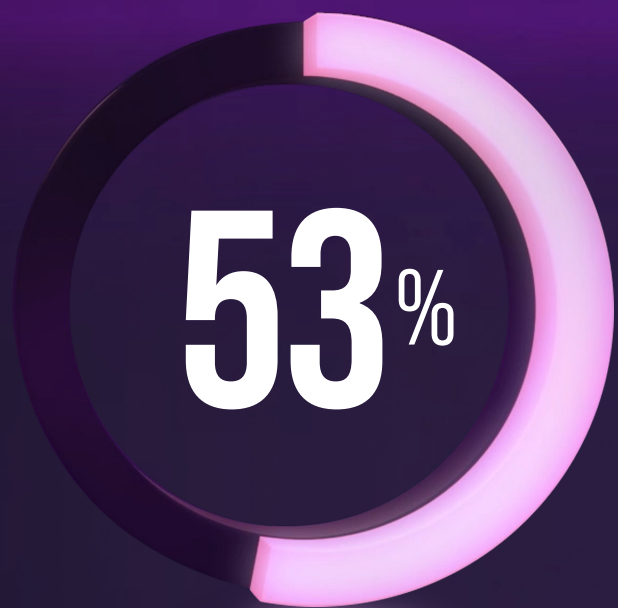
The trend goes deeper, as men are more likely to play sports, shooter, and battle

royale mobile games, and, therefore, are more likely to associate those genres with being premium. Women are more likely to play puzzle games and associate those types of games with premium, which might also play a role in their more favorable view of Candy Crush and King games, more generally.

PUZZLE IS #1 GENRE ACROSS BOTH



Mobile Only Players



Mobile / PC / Console Players

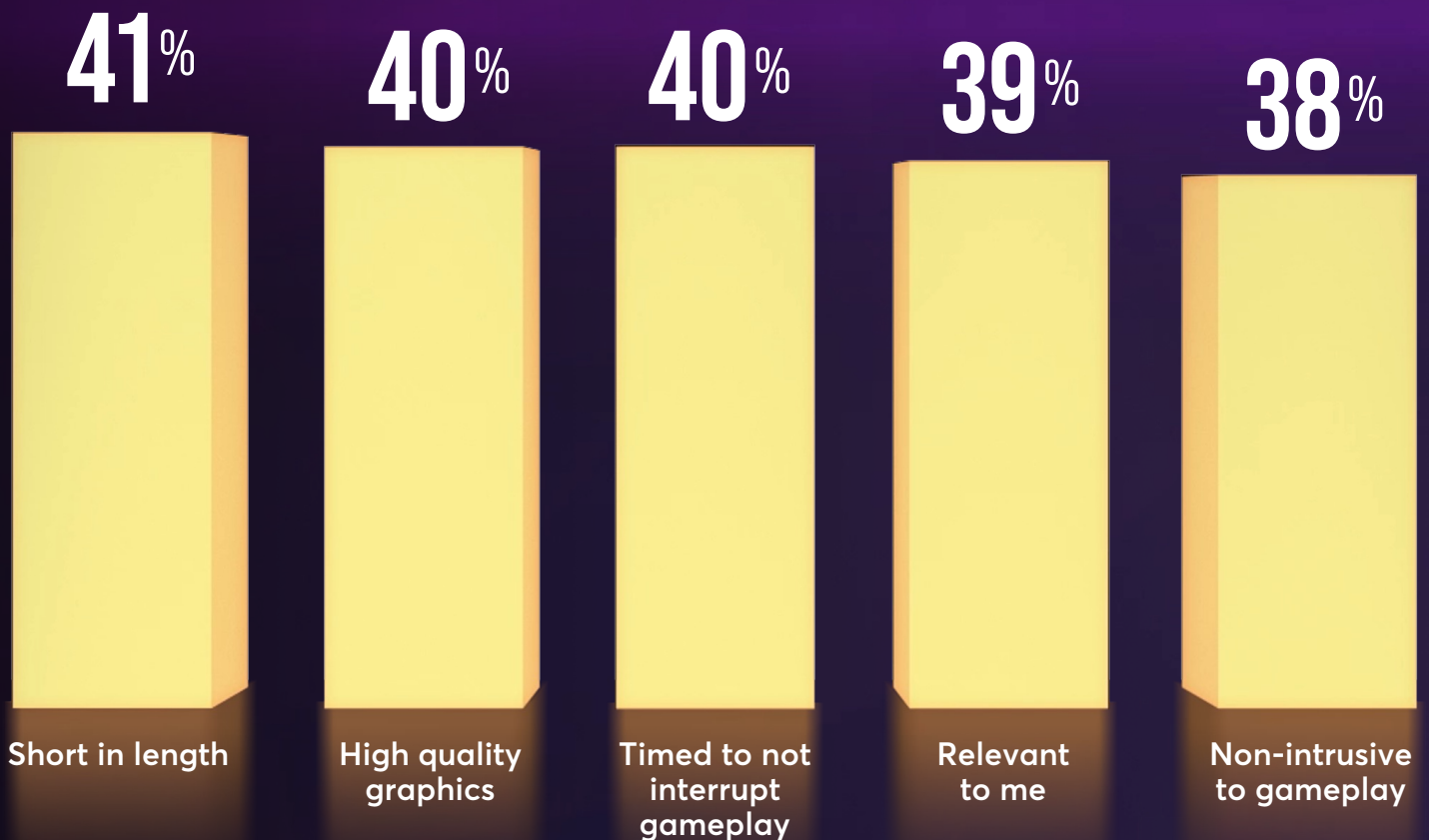
06

WHAT MAKES A PREMIUM AD EXPERIENCE?

Players' expectations around premium games also extends to premium ad experience. For ads to be premium, and thus be part of premium gaming experience, they have to consider the

overall gaming experience. For players, a premium mobile ad experience should be short, have good graphics, be non-intrusive to gameplay, relevant, and interactive.

PREMIUM MOBILE AD "MUST-HAVES"



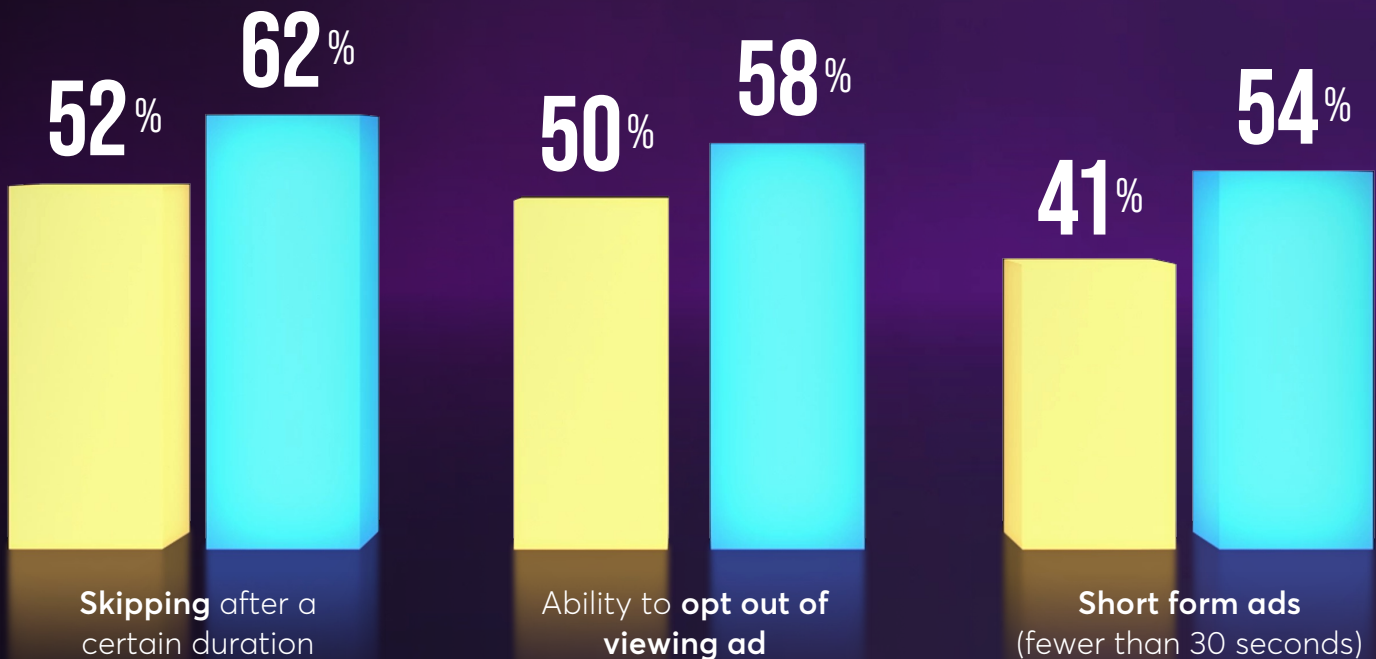
When looking at the expectations by player type, mobile-only gamers expect that ads should be skippable, be able to opt out of viewing an ad, and want ads to be as short as possible.

Cross-platform players have higher expectations around the ads being game related, offer discounts on other games, be interactive, and be woven into gameplay.

PREMIUM AD EXPECTATIONS

Mobile only Players

Mobile/PC/Console Players



"A highly positive mobile gaming experience has ads that are unobtrusive. They aren't frequent and don't interrupt game play. When I think high quality I think of games that are highly immersive. Something with good graphics and world building."

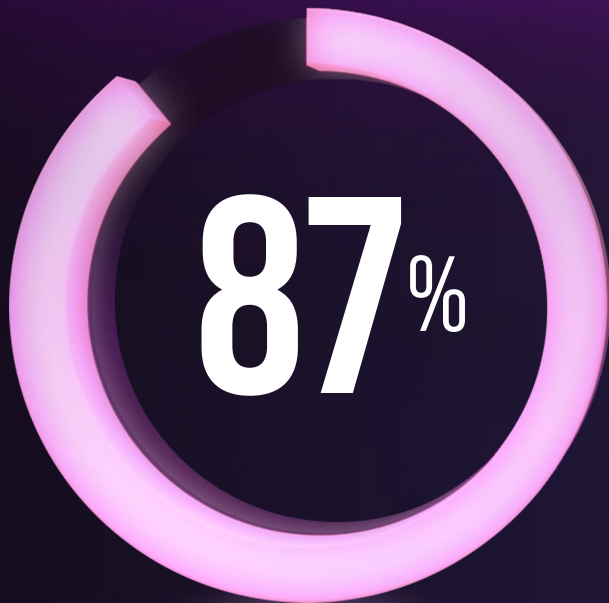
- Female, aged 22 years



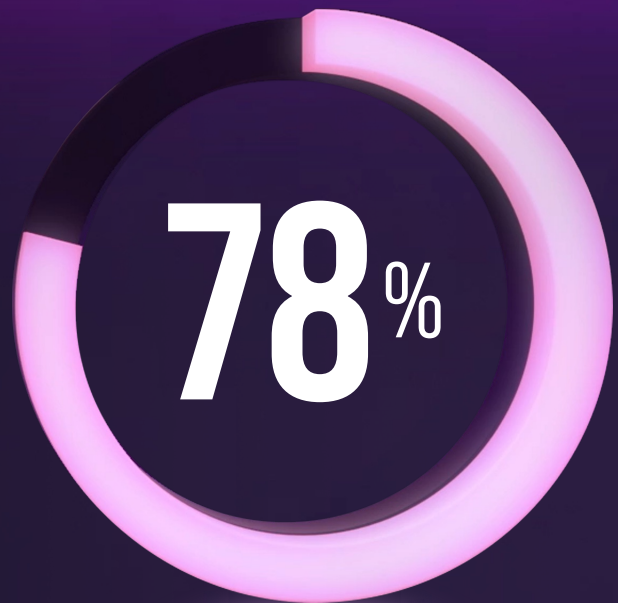
When looking more generally, about players' mobile game ad preferences, what's clear is a desire for something short in length and rewards based. Two-

in-five say they like product placements and integrated ad experiences. However, how well it's executed is just as important as having it.

MOBILE GAME AD PREFERENCES



Prefer ads to be **short**



Prefer ads in game to be **reward based**

07

PARTNERING WITH PREMIUM

When evaluating premium games, studio reputation, game IP and franchise awareness are all important. This holds true especially for brands looking to partner on opportunities in the premium gaming space.

King is a long tenured name in the mobile gaming space, and that long history resonates with mobile gamers, with over half of this audience considering King games to be premium.



66%

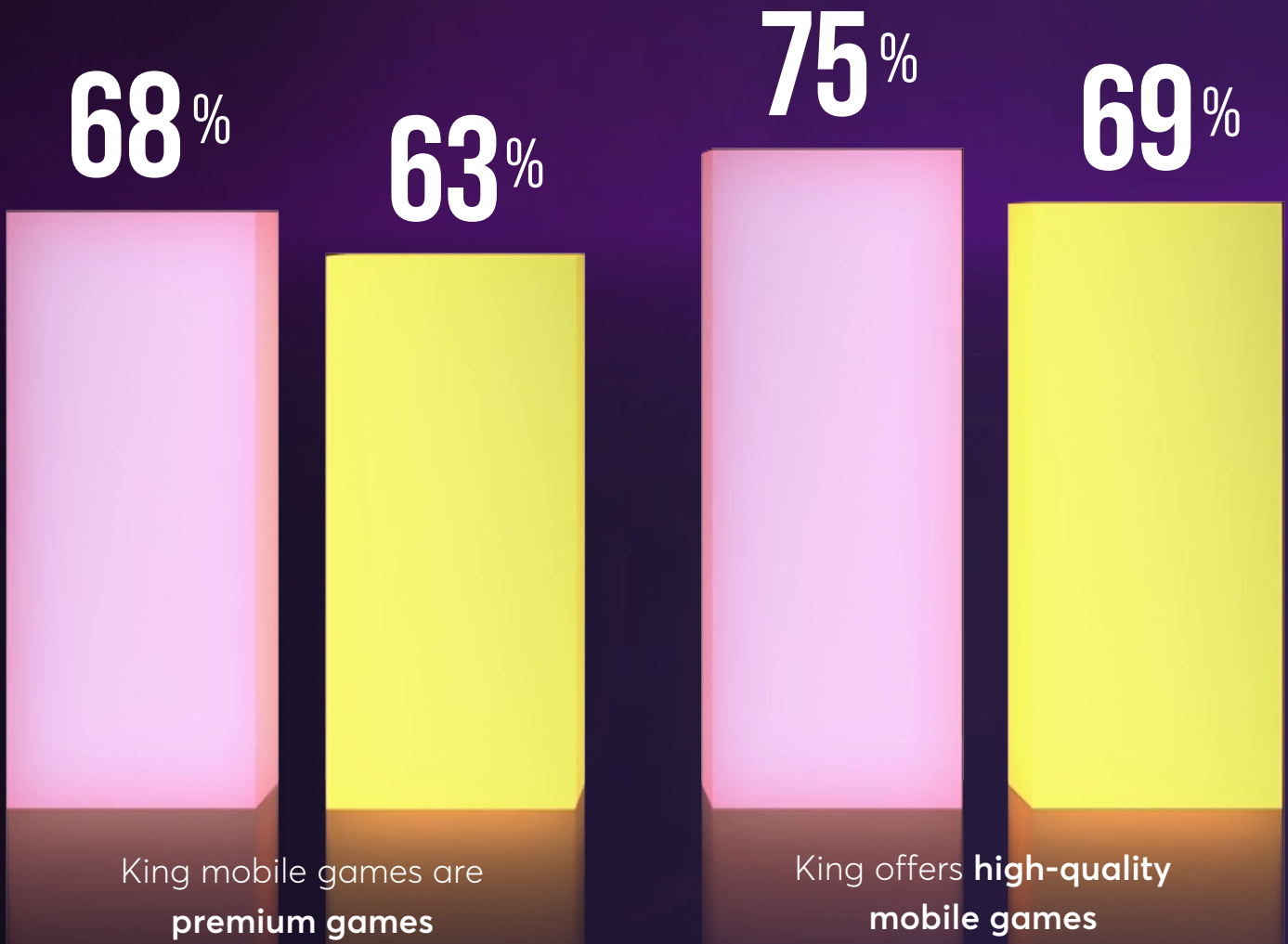
OF MOBILE GAMERS
CONSIDER KING GAMES
TO BE PREMIUM

Mobile Gamers with over five years of play experience hold stronger, positive opinions of King - more specifically,

that, "King offers high quality mobile games" and that, "King's mobile games are premium."

STUDIO REPUTATION MATTERS

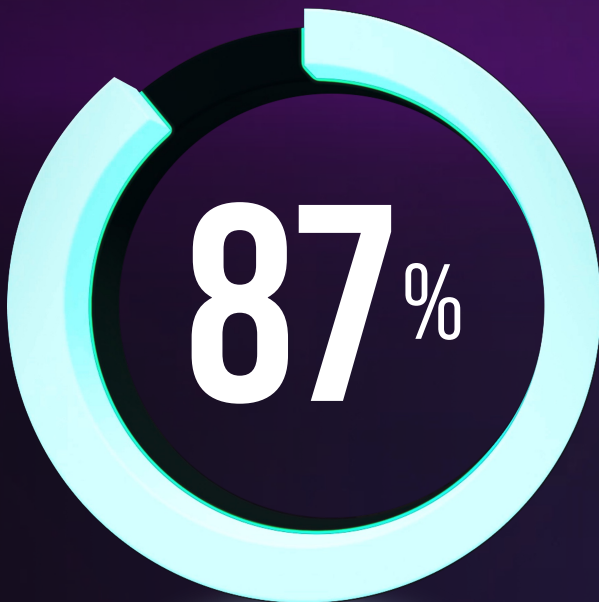
— Played more than 5 years — Played less than 5 years



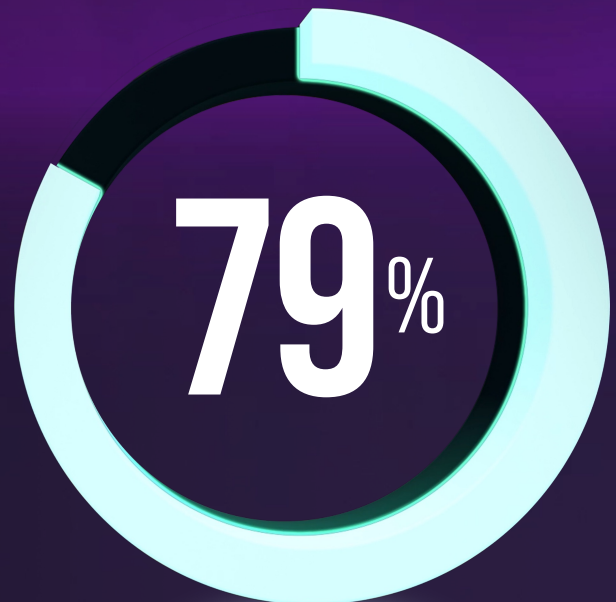
Game IP and brand also has a bearing on the perception of a premium title. This is especially true of Candy Crush, one of the most successful mobile games of all times, which celebrated its 10 year anniversary in 2022.

79% of Candy Crush Saga players think of it as a premium mobile game. This is +13pts Greater than puzzle games overall, which 66% of Candy Crush Saga players identify as premium.

Another iconic franchise title, Call of Duty: Mobile, also scores highly on the premium scale. Despite shooters being somewhat lower on the premium genres list, largely led by a lower base of mobile shooter players, 87% of Call of Duty: Mobile players think of it as a premium game, +18pts greater than shooter mobile games overall of which 69% of Call of Duty: Mobile players describe as premium.



of Call of Duty: Mobile Players think of it as a **premium mobile game**



of Candy Crush Saga Players think of it as a **premium mobile game**

DEFINING PREMIUM GAMES

What makes a game premium isn't the platform it is played on, but rather a set of key attributes that contribute to a high-quality, engaging and sophisticated gaming experience.

For mobile games, the quality of the graphics, the balance of winnability and challenge, and a free-to-play experience distinguish premium games and franchises from other titles. Similarly, premium ad experiences in mobile games are defined by being intrinsic to the gameplay and non-interruptive, reward-based and having high quality graphics.

By identifying and understanding premium games and premium ad experiences, brands are better positioned to reach attentive audiences within mobile gaming. The bar for premium games is high but the payoff for brands is clear. Players have expectations for how they want experiences to look and feel and brands should be committed to meeting them where they are. When they do, everyone wins.

Premium Games have/are:

Winnability • Challenging • Free-to-Play • Continuous Upgrades • Quality Graphics + Gameplay.

Premium Ad Experiences have/are:

Short • Reward-based • Non-interruptive • High Quality Graphics • Intrinsic to Gameplay

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Activision Blizzard Media partnered with Alter Agents to perform a quantitative analysis of 2,000 Adults (18+) in the US. All respondents play on mobile, all

players play two or more game genres, and all respondents recall seeing an advertisement or product placement in a video game in the past 30 days.

ABOUT ACTIVISION BLIZZARD MEDIA

Activision Blizzard Media Ltd is the gateway for brands to the leading interactive entertainment company with hundreds of millions of monthly active users around the world. Our legendary portfolio includes iconic mobile game franchises such as Candy Crush™,

esports like the Call of Duty League™, the Overwatch League™ and some of the top PC and console gaming franchises such as Call of Duty®, World of Warcraft®, and StarCraft®. The idea is simple: great game experiences offer great marketing experiences.

Learn more at:

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