

# 2019 ESSENTIAL FACTS

About the Computer and Video Game Industry



entertainment<sup>®</sup>  
software  
association

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The Entertainment Software Association (ESA) released *2019 Essential Facts About the Computer and Video Game Industry* in May, 2019. Ipsos conducted the annual research for the ESA. The study is the most in-depth and targeted survey of its kind, gathering data from more than 4,000 Americans about their video game playing habits and attitudes. The *2019 Essential Facts* also includes data provided by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) and The NPD Group.



## FOREWORD

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2018 was a record-breaking year for our industry, with total video game sales exceeding \$43.4 billion. Over 164 million adults in the United States play video games, and three-quarters of all Americans have at least one gamer in their household. It's now more important than ever to understand who America's video game players really are and what's driving them.

That's why I'm thrilled to share the *2019 Essential Facts About the Computer and Video Game Industry*. For the first time, we at the Entertainment Software Association have taken a comprehensive look at the individual Americans who enjoy video games and their lifestyles in order to better understand their profiles and interests.

The resulting data speaks for itself. Video game players represent a diverse cross-section of the American population spanning every age, gender, and ethnicity. They live healthy lives, are civically engaged, and are socially active. More than three-quarters report that video games provide them with mental stimulation (79%) as well as relaxation and stress relief (78%). The role of video games in the American family is also changing: nearly three-quarters (74%) of parents believe video games can be educational for their children, and more than half (57%) enjoy playing games with their child at least weekly.

The *2019 Essential Facts* simply illustrates what we in the industry already know to be true: we are living in the golden age of video games, and video game players are thriving.

– Stan Pierre-Louis, Chief Executive Officer, Entertainment Software Association



of American adults  
play video games

The average age  
of a gamer is

**33** years  
old



# AT-A-GLANCE



**90%**

of parents **pay attention** to the games their child plays



**59%**

of gamers are certain **they will vote** in the next presidential election



**75%**

of Americans have at least **one gamer** in their household

Gamers are more likely to

have a creative hobby  
(drawing, singing, writing, etc.)



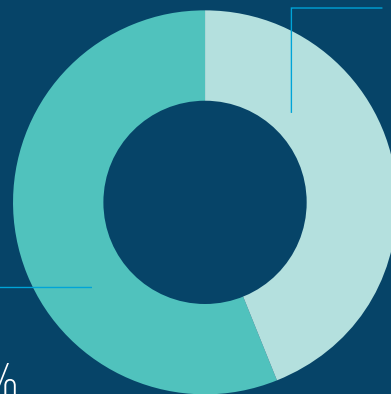
**56%**  
**49%**

play a musical instrument



**32%**  
**27%**

Gamers are



**54%**  
male

**46%**  
female

■ Gamers ■ Average Americans

# AVERAGE GAMER



**65%**

of American adults **play video games**

The most common devices used for video game play among adult gamers



**60%**  
Smartphone



**52%**  
Personal computer



**49%**  
Dedicated game console

Most popular game genres



**71%**  
Casual



**53%**  
Action



**47%**  
Shooter



**52%**

of gamers are college educated

Gamers feel that video game play has a positive impact on their lives



**79%**

of gamers say games provide mental stimulation



**78%**

of gamers say games provide relaxation and stress relief



**46%**

of gamers  
are **female**

Average age  
for women

**34**



**54%**

of gamers  
are **male**

Average age  
for men

**32**

- Overall average age of gamers is **33**
- They have been playing for **14 years** on average



When it comes to adult gamers



**63%** play with others

Adult gamers spend

**4.8**

hours a week  
played with  
others online



**3.5**

hours a week  
played with  
others in person

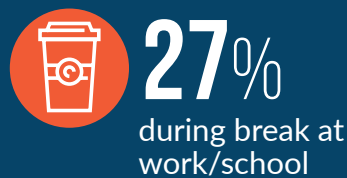




# SOCIAL & LIFESTYLE

GAMERS AS COMPARED TO AVERAGE AMERICANS

## Gamers play throughout the day



## Gamers get the same amount of sleep at night



## Gamers are just as likely to

### Take camping/hiking trips



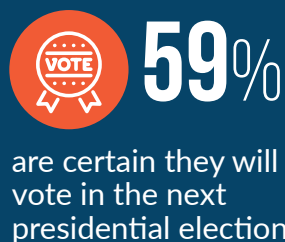
### Vacation internationally



### Exercise



## Gamers are civically engaged



### POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

- 37%** Democrat
- 33%** Republican
- 18%** Independents
- 12%** Other

## Gamers are more likely to

### have a creative hobby (drawing, singing, writing, etc.)



### play a musical instrument



### meditate regularly



### be vegetarian



■ Gamers ■ Average Americans

# PARENTS OF GAMERS



**87%** of parents are **aware of ESRB ratings**



**98%** of them are **confident that ratings are accurate**

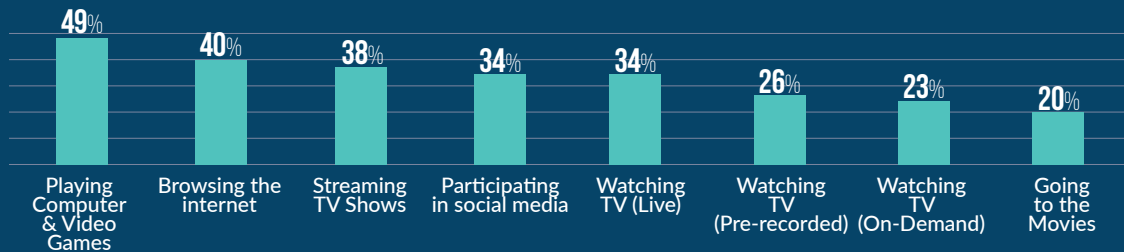


**90%** of parents **pay attention to the games their child plays**



**77%** of parents **regularly use the ESRB ratings**

Parents limit the amount of time spent on the following activities



## ESRB RATING DATA

Of the 2,768 physical and downloadable console games assigned ratings by the ESRB in 2018:

**42%**  
received



**19%**  
received



**30%**  
received



**9%**  
received



Among parents of gamers



**57%**

of parents play games with their child at least weekly



**74%**

of parents believe video games are educational





70%

of families have a **child**  
who plays video games

# HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

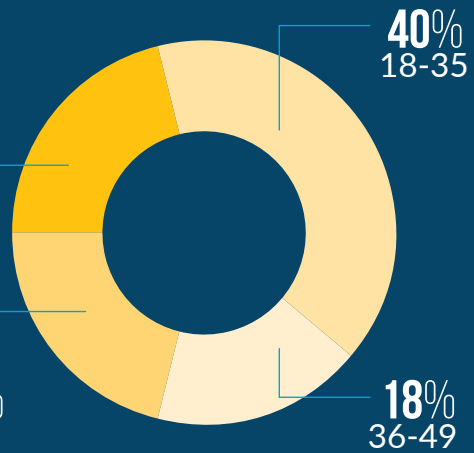


**75%** of Americans have at least **one gamer in their household**

When it comes to households,



**21%** of gamers are under 18



**87%** of parents **require permission** for new game purchases



**91%** of the most frequent purchasers of console, PC, and mobile games in gamer households are **adults**

Average age of most frequent game purchasers for



PC  
**38**



Smartphone  
**37**



Console  
**33**



## MILLENNIAL GAMERS (18-34)

### Male Millennial Gamers

AGES: 18-34

FAVORITE GENRES:  
**Action, Shooters & Sports Games**

FAVORITE GAMES:  
*God of War, Madden NFL and  
Fortnite*



## Female Millennial Gamers

AGES: 18-34

FAVORITE GENRES:  
**Casual & Action Games**

FAVORITE GAMES:  
*Candy Crush, Assassin's Creed,  
Tomb Raider*



of male Millennial gamers most often **play games on their game console**

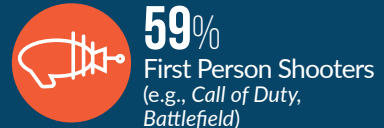


of male Millennial gamers most often **play Action games**



of male Millennial gamers prefer to **play with friends**

#### FAVORITE GAMES:



**59%** of male Millennial gamers have a creative hobby (drawing, painting, singing, writing) outside of video game play

## MILLENNIAL GAMERS (18-34)



of female Millennial gamers most often **play games on their Smartphone**

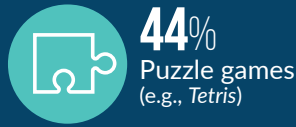


of female Millennial gamers most often **play Casual games**



of female Millennial gamers prefer to **play with friends**

#### FAVORITE GAMES:



**67%** of female Millennial gamers have a creative hobby (drawing, painting, singing, writing) outside of video game play

GEN X GAMERS (35-54)

## Female Gen X Gamers

AGES: 35-54

FAVORITE GENRES:  
**Casual Games, including Puzzle  
and Classic Arcades**

FAVORITE GAMES:  
**Tetris & Pac-Man**



## Male Gen X Gamers

AGES: 35-54

FAVORITE GENRES:  
**Sports, Racing & Shooters**

FAVORITE GAMES:  
**Forza, NBA 2K, Call of Duty**





of female Gen X gamers most often **play games on their Smartphone**

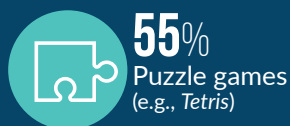


of female Gen X gamers most often **play Casual games**



of female Gen X gamers prefer to **play alone**

FAVORITE GAMES:



**62%** believe video games can be **educational**

**68%** believe they provide **mental stimulation**

## GEN X GAMERS (35-54)



of male Gen X gamers most often **play games on their Smartphone**

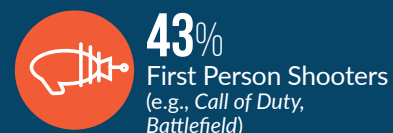


of male Gen X gamers most often **play Casual games**



of male Gen X gamers prefer to **play with friends**

FAVORITE GAMES:



**62%** believe video games can be **educational**

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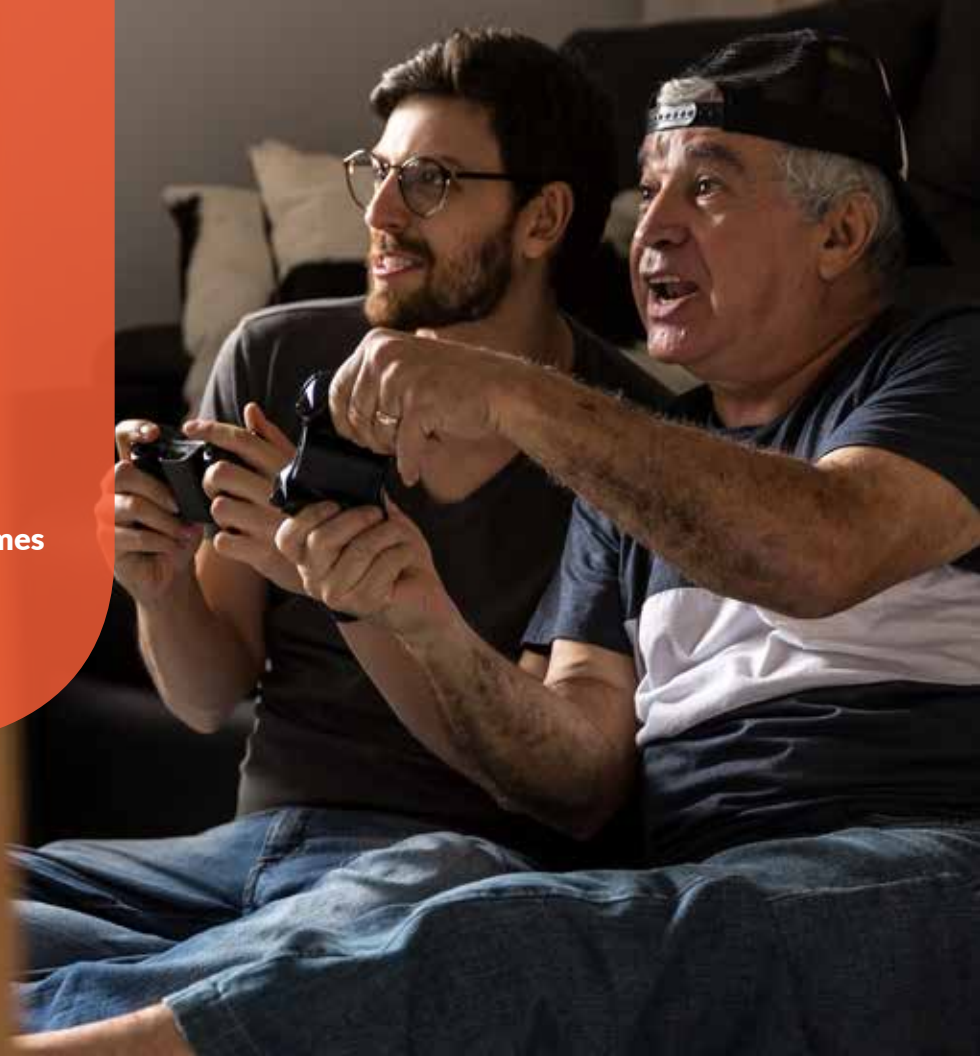
BOOMER GAMERS (55-64)

## Male Boomer Gamers

AGES: 55-64

FAVORITE GENRES:  
**Card, Puzzle and Virtual Board Games**

FAVORITE GAMES:  
***Solitaire & Scrabble***



## Female Boomer Gamers

AGES: 55-64

FAVORITE GENRES:  
**Card, Puzzle & Virtual Board Games**

FAVORITE GAMES:  
***Mahjong & Monopoly***



of male Boomer gamers most often **play games on their PC**

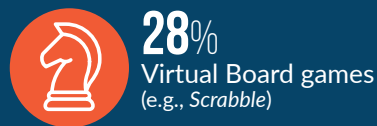


of male Boomer gamers most often **play Casual games**



of male Boomer gamers prefer to **play alone**

#### FAVORITE GAMES:



**25%** of Male Boomers have been video game players for **25+ years**

## BOOMER GAMERS (55-64)



of female Boomer gamers most often **play games on their Smartphone**

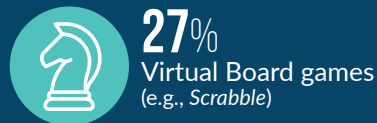
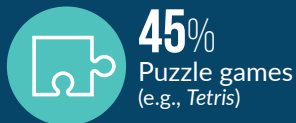


of female Boomer gamers most often **play Casual games**



of female Boomer gamers prefer to **play alone**

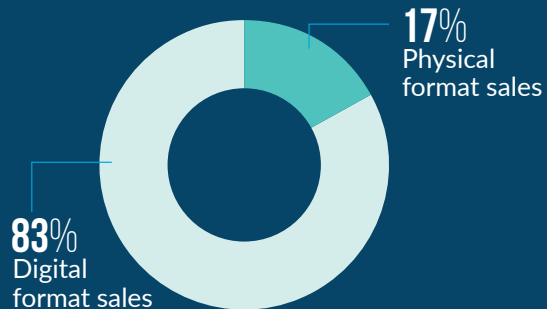
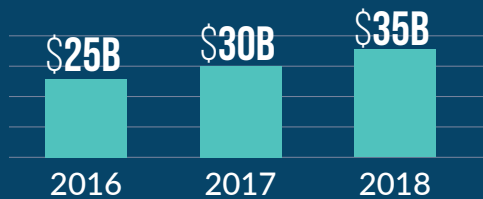
#### FAVORITE GAMES:



**22%** of Female Boomers have been video game players for **25+ years**

# PURCHASING

## Content



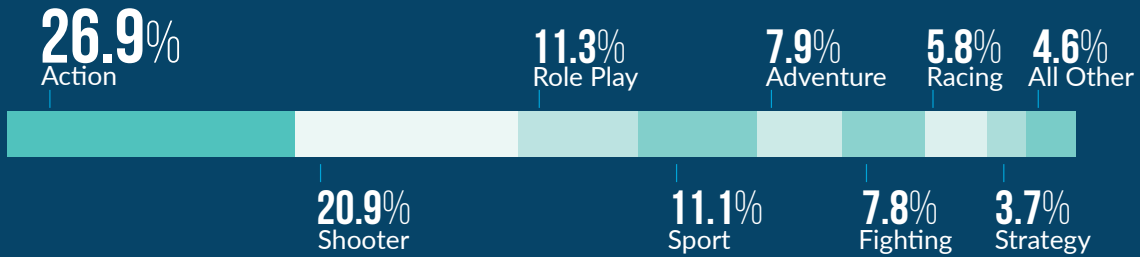
$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \$35.8\text{B} & + & \$5.1\text{B} & + & \$2.4\text{B} & = & \$43.4 \\
 \text{Content} & & \text{Hardware} & & \text{Acc \& VR} & & \text{TOTAL}
 \end{array}$$

## Top 20 Best-Selling Video Games of 2018 by Units Sold

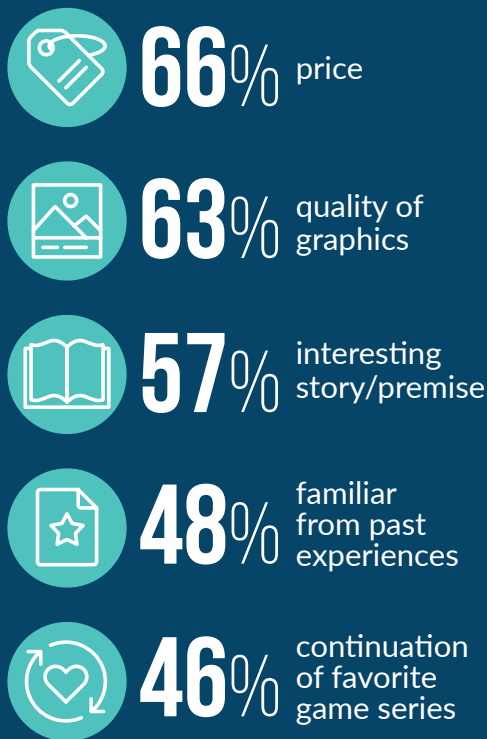
RANK	TITLE	ESRB
1	<i>Call of Duty: Black Ops IIII</i>	Mature (M)
2	<i>Red Dead Redemption II</i>	Mature (M)
3	<i>NBA 2K19</i>	Everyone (E)
4	<i>Madden NFL 19</i>	Everyone (E)
5	<i>Grand Theft Auto V</i>	Mature (M)
6	<i>Super Smash Bros. Ultimate</i>	Everyone 10+ (E10+)
7	<i>Marvel's Spider-Man</i>	Teen (T)
8	<i>Far Cry 5</i>	Mature (M)
9	<i>God of War 2018</i>	Mature (M)
10	<i>Monster Hunter: World</i>	Teen (T)
11	<i>Minecraft</i>	Everyone 10+ (E10+)
12	<i>Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Siege</i>	Mature (M)
13	<i>Assassin's Creed: Odyssey</i>	Mature (M)
14	<i>FIFA 19</i>	Everyone (E)
15	<i>Mario Kart 8</i>	Everyone (E)
16	<i>Rocket League</i>	Everyone (E)
17	<i>PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds</i>	Teen (T)
18	<i>Battlefield V</i>	Mature (M)
19	<i>Call of Duty: WWII</i>	Mature (M)
20	<i>Super Mario Odyssey</i>	Everyone 10+ (E10+)

Source: The NPD Group/Retail Tracking Service/Digital Games Tracking Service

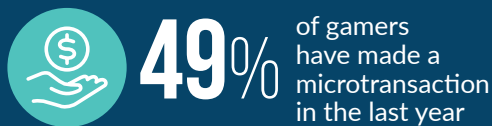
## Best Selling Video Game Super Genres



## Top 5 influences for purchase



## Gamers say the following are useful when deciding on a purchase



# ESA PARTNERS

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## **ACADEMY OF INTERACTIVE ARTS & SCIENCES | [WWW.INTERACTIVE.ORG](http://WWW.INTERACTIVE.ORG)**

The Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences (AIAS) was founded in 1996 as a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement and recognition of the interactive arts. The organization has more than 30,000 members consisting of game developers in the United States and around the world. The mission of the AIAS is to promote and advance the worldwide interactive entertainment community; recognize outstanding achievements in the interactive arts and sciences; and host an annual awards show, the D.I.C.E. (Design, Innovate, Communicate, Entertain) Awards, to enhance awareness of the interactive art form. Other special programs and initiatives led by the AIAS also include the prestigious D.I.C.E. Summit and D.I.C.E. Europe, bringing together the top video game designers and developers from around the world and business leaders from all major publishers to discuss the state of the industry, its trends and the future; and Into the Pixel, an exploration and celebration of the art of video games. Please visit our website at: [www.interactive.org](http://www.interactive.org)

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## **INTERNATIONAL GAME DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION | [WWW.IGDA.ORG](http://WWW.IGDA.ORG)**

The IGDA supports and empowers game developers around the world in achieving fulfilling and sustainable careers through connecting worldwide game developers at all stages of their careers to peers with shared interests and goals, advocating on issues that are important to the professional and personal success of game developers, and providing educational resources for students, game developers, and game development studios that help solve game development's most difficult challenges.

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## **ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD | [WWW.ESRB.ORG](http://WWW.ESRB.ORG)**

The ESRB is a non-profit, self-regulatory body that assigns age and content ratings for video games and mobile apps so parents can make informed choices. It also enforces advertising guidelines adopted by the video game industry and helps companies implement responsible online and mobile privacy practices under its Privacy Certified program.

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## **ESA FOUNDATION | [WWW.ESAFUNDATION.ORG](http://WWW.ESAFUNDATION.ORG)**

Created by the American entertainment software industry, the ESA Foundation works to make a positive difference in the lives of America's youth by providing scholarships to the next generation of industry innovators and supporting charitable organizations and schools that leverage entertainment software and technology. The ESA Foundation receives its primary funding proceeds from the signature annual fundraiser Nite to Unite and other charitable initiatives.

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## **THE NPD GROUP, INC. | [WWW.NPD.COM](http://WWW.NPD.COM)**

NPD is the leading global provider of market information and business solutions covering brick-and-mortar, e-commerce, and emerging channels in more than 20 industries. We combine our unique data assets with analytic solutions to help our clients measure performance, predict trends, and improve results, advising them to help drive successful growth. Practice areas include apparel, appliances, automotive, beauty, books, consumer electronics, e-commerce, entertainment, fashion accessories, food consumption, foodservice, footwear, home, juvenile products, mobile, office supplies, retail, sports, technology, toys, travel retail, games, and watches/jewelry.

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## ESA MEMBERS

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- |  |                                    |   |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| 505 Games                                    | Intellivision Entertainment, LLC   | Sega of America                                 |
| Activision Blizzard, Inc.                    | Kalypso Media Group                | Six Foot LLC                                    |
| BANDAI NAMCO<br>Entertainment America, Inc.  | Konami Digital Entertainment, Inc. | Sony Interactive<br>Entertainment, Inc.         |
| Bethesda Softworks, LLC                      | Legends of Learning                | Square Enix, Ltd.                               |
| Bungie, Inc.                                 | Magic Leap, Inc.                   | Take-Two Interactive<br>Software, Inc.          |
| Capcom U.S.A., Inc.                          | Microsoft Corporation              | Tencent America                                 |
| Deep Silver                                  | Natsume, Inc.                      | THQ Nordic                                      |
| Disney                                       | NCSOFT                             | Ubisoft, Inc.                                   |
| Electronic Arts, Inc.                        | NEXON America, Inc.                | Warner Bros. Interactive<br>Entertainment, Inc. |
| Epic Games, Inc.                             | Nintendo of America Inc.           | Wizards of the Coast                            |
| Focus Home Interactive                       | NVIDIA Corporation                 | XSEED Games                                     |
| Gearbox Publishing, LLC                      | Paracosma, Inc.                    |   |
| GungHo Online<br>Entertainment America, Inc. | Phosphor Studios                   |   |
|  | Rebellion Developments, Ltd        |   |
|  | Riot Games                         |   |

ESA offers a wide range of services to interactive entertainment software companies, including: conducting business and consumer research; providing legal and policy analysis and advocacy on First Amendment, intellectual property, and technology/e-commerce issues; managing a global content protection program; owning and operating E3; and representing video game industry interests before federal and state governments.

To learn more, visit [theESA.com](http://theESA.com), email at [info@theESA.com](mailto:info@theESA.com), and follow us on Twitter [@theESA](https://twitter.com/theESA).

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