

Game On! The Top 10 Video Game Trends In 2024



The video game industry is a source of constant innovation, with many of its breakthrough technologies being adopted by the business world.

While virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) applications are just beginning to be used in industry, gamers have been using headsets to enter fully immersive worlds for years. The concept of the metaverse is not new to gamers either - persistent, avatar-driven digital environments and even digital currencies have long been accepted as part of mainstream gaming.

Of course, in addition to serving as technological showcases, games are one of the most popular forms of modern entertainment and can be a great way to unwind when we can't face another spreadsheet or Zoom meeting. So here are some of the ways we can expect the \$350 billion video game industry to evolve in 2024, bringing us greater immersion, more realistic experiences, and, most of all, fun!

Generative AI In Gaming

In 2024, we will start to see the impact of the latest generation of generative AI tools really take off in the gaming space. Examples of how it will be used include generating dynamic storylines, creating more natural, believable characters who can converse with players without simply reading from scripts, and assisting in the building of vast game worlds and environments.

Gaming On-Demand

Google's Stadia streaming gaming service may not exist in 2023 - it proved to be a great idea, backed by solid technology, that just didn't catch on with consumers. However, other cloud services continued to grow, including Nvidia's GeForce Now and Microsoft's Xbox Cloud Gaming. Amazon and Netflix also entered the market, with Netflix taking a different approach by offering downloadable game content on users' devices. While none of these services can claim to have gone mainstream yet, they have all shown that on-demand gaming can be a viable market in its own right. This is a trend that we can expect to continue through 2024.

E-Sports And Pro-Gaming

Esports involves the merging of gaming with aspects of traditional sports – such as professional leagues, live audiences and broadcast coverage. Professional tournaments hosted by global sporting bodies, including FIFA and the FIA, are well established and will continue to grow in prominence as the market heads towards a projected valuation of \$6.75 billion by 2030. All of this means that youngsters with a passion for gaming will be tempted to look at professional gaming as a legitimate and potentially lucrative future career in 2024.



VR Gaming Continues To Grow, And A Resurgence Of AR?

It's becoming increasingly common for many games to launch with a VR mode these days – and if one isn't included, resourceful fans will often add their own. AR gaming, on the other hand, arguably hasn't had a big hit since Pokemon Go in 2016, but with a range of new headsets on their way, 2024 could see a resurgence in the use of reality-blending technology to create innovative games and experiences.

Consolidation And Acquisitions – Even Legends Aren't Safe

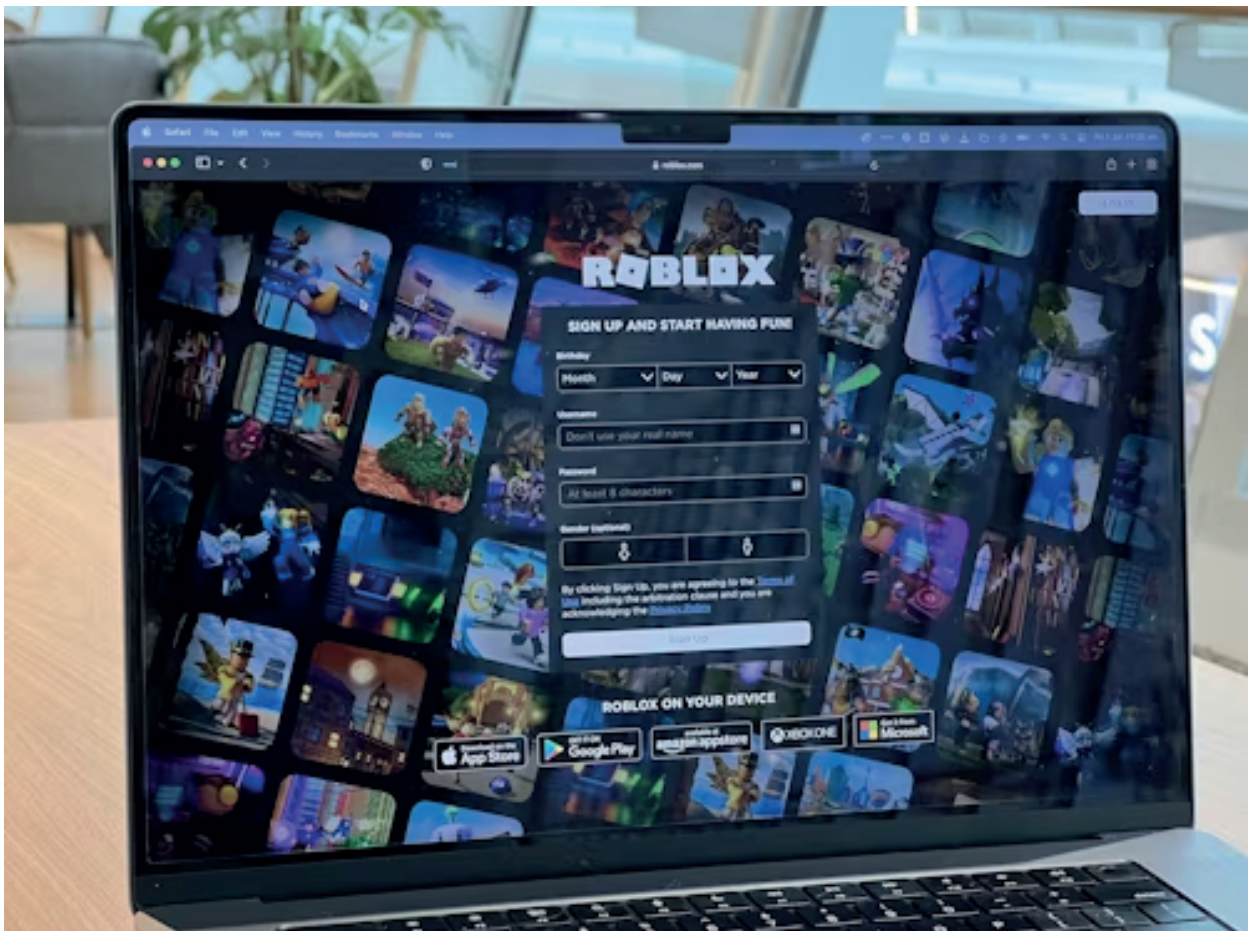
On the business side of things, we've seen a wave of consolidations and acquisitions – some on a truly epic scale, such as Microsoft's \$70 billion purchase of Activision Blizzard. This is likely to continue into 2024, with some rumors suggesting even the longest-established grandfathers of the industry – such as Nintendo – may not be too big for the appetites of the industry's titans.

Retro Gaming And Remakes – From Niche To Mainstream

Gamers enjoy playing with the latest cutting-edge tech, but sometimes they just want to blast away at some Space Invaders or chase ghosts around a maze munching dots. Retro gaming has become a strong trend in recent years, with many companies such as Atari taking the opportunity to repackage classic titles for a new audience, proving that classic gameplay can be just as enduring as beloved music and movies from days gone by. Remakes of games that were popular with previous generations – such as the upcoming Final Fantasy VII Rebirth – will also be a key trend.

Collaborative, Creative Gaming Continues To Engage Players

Games that encourage players to work together to build and create – rather than just blasting at waves of enemies – have grown increasingly popular, at least since the arrival of Minecraft more than a decade ago. Titles like Roblox have moved the concept on, allowing users to create their own games from scratch. Players have shown that they are keen to engage with this creative, collaborative form of play, and we can expect to see ongoing innovation in this field.



Bigger, More Immersive Game Worlds

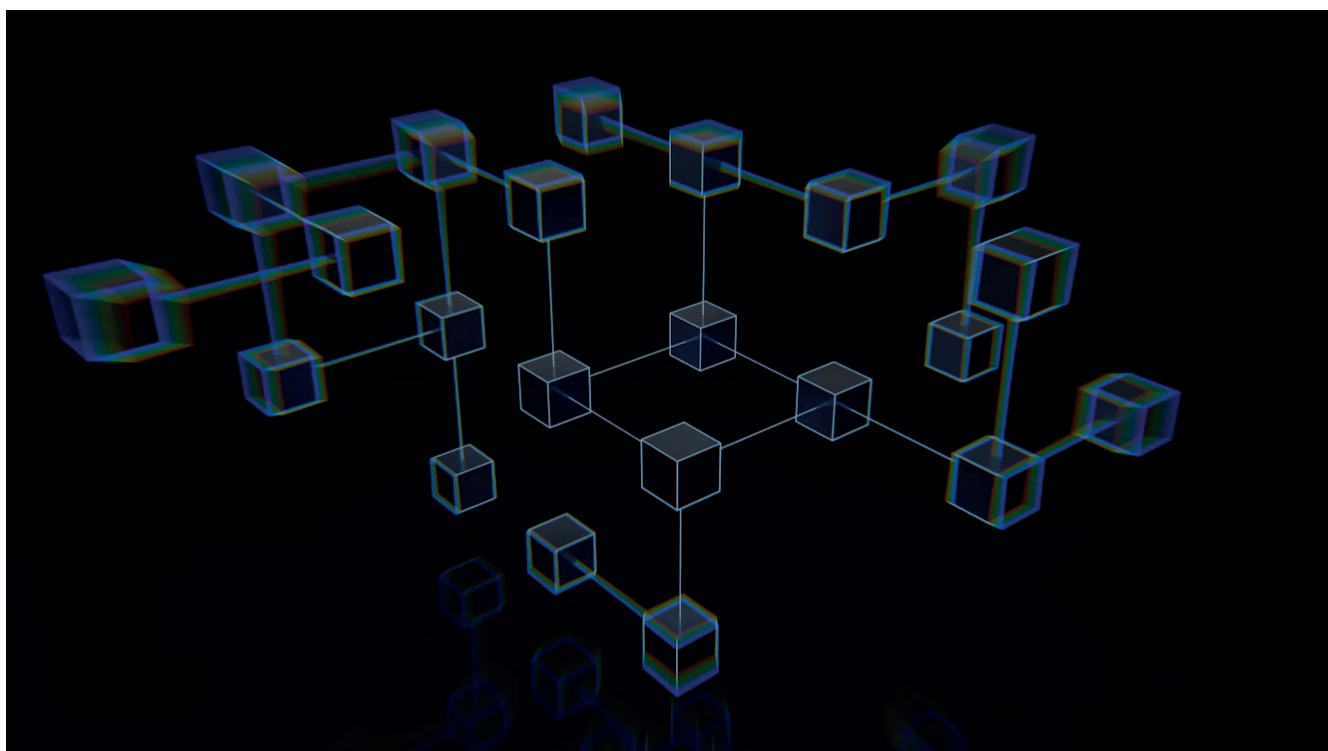
Advances in hardware power mean that game developers are consistently creating bigger, more immersive and more graphically impressive experiences with each passing year. Games are gradually becoming capable of producing photo-realistic levels of image fidelity in real-time – some of the most impressive being those built with the Unreal 5 engine. So far, we've seen very impressive tech demos, but as developers get to grips with the possibilities (and budgets) needed to unleash the latest techniques like real-time ray-tracing, games will become more realistic than ever.

A New Generation Of Portable Gaming Devices

Recent years have seen the rise in popularity of handheld gaming PCs, first in the form of the Steam Deck and then, as is often the case with the PC market, in a rush from manufacturers to create derivatives and compatibles. Rumors abound that 2024 will also see the launch of a new version of the Nintendo Switch, which would make sense as the original, still hugely popular, machine will celebrate its eighth birthday, practically making it a pensioner in games technology terms.

Declining Interest In Blockchain And Web3 in Gaming?

Okay – so this is one that's perhaps gone a little off the boil. Although previously predicted to make a large impact, big names in game development, including Electronic Arts and Activision, have canceled or scaled back plans for features such as NFT collectibles and loot crates in games. Additionally, disastrous "crashes" in cryptocurrency prices have led to a decline in the market for the sort of "play-to-earn" blockchain games like Axie Infinity that were once heralded as important to the future of gaming. Blockchain and Web3 enthusiasts point out that it's still early days for the technology in general, and some of these use cases may have just been ahead of their time. However, if the cryptocurrency market emerges from its current prolonged slump during 2024, we may well see a resurgence of interest. Time will tell.



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