Gaming in 2024

A Review of the Year's Biggest
Games, Genres, Trends and more across
Console, PC, and Mobile Games

2024 Gaming Industry Recap: Stability, Saturation, and What's Next

- **Stabilization Amid Saturation:** The gaming market has shown signs of reaching a mature stage, with overall metrics like revenue, player engagement, search volume, and streaming stabilizing post-pandemic. While platforms like PlayStation, Xbox, Steam and iOS continue incremental growth, others like Google Play and Nintendo have faced minor declines. While paid games continue to dominate overall market value, the increasing prevalence of free-to-play models and subscription services is driving down the average entry price for players, creating both opportunities and challenges for developers. This shift has heightened competition for player engagement and spending, underscoring the need for innovative monetization strategies in a market with limited room for explosive growth.

- **Power Law Dynamics and Crowded Competition:** The gaming ecosystem is increasingly concentrated, with a small number of top games capturing the majority of attention and revenue. While the overall market is largely flat, the number of new games continues to increase. This forces developers to compete for the same limited pool of consumer spending, creating a scenario where more games are chasing the same amount of money—a losing situation for most titles and a challenge for the industry. With the market saturated and players increasingly focused on familiar experiences, proper marketing—leveraging paid, earned, and owned media—will be more critical than ever to ensure new games capture attention and carve out a profitable share of engagement.

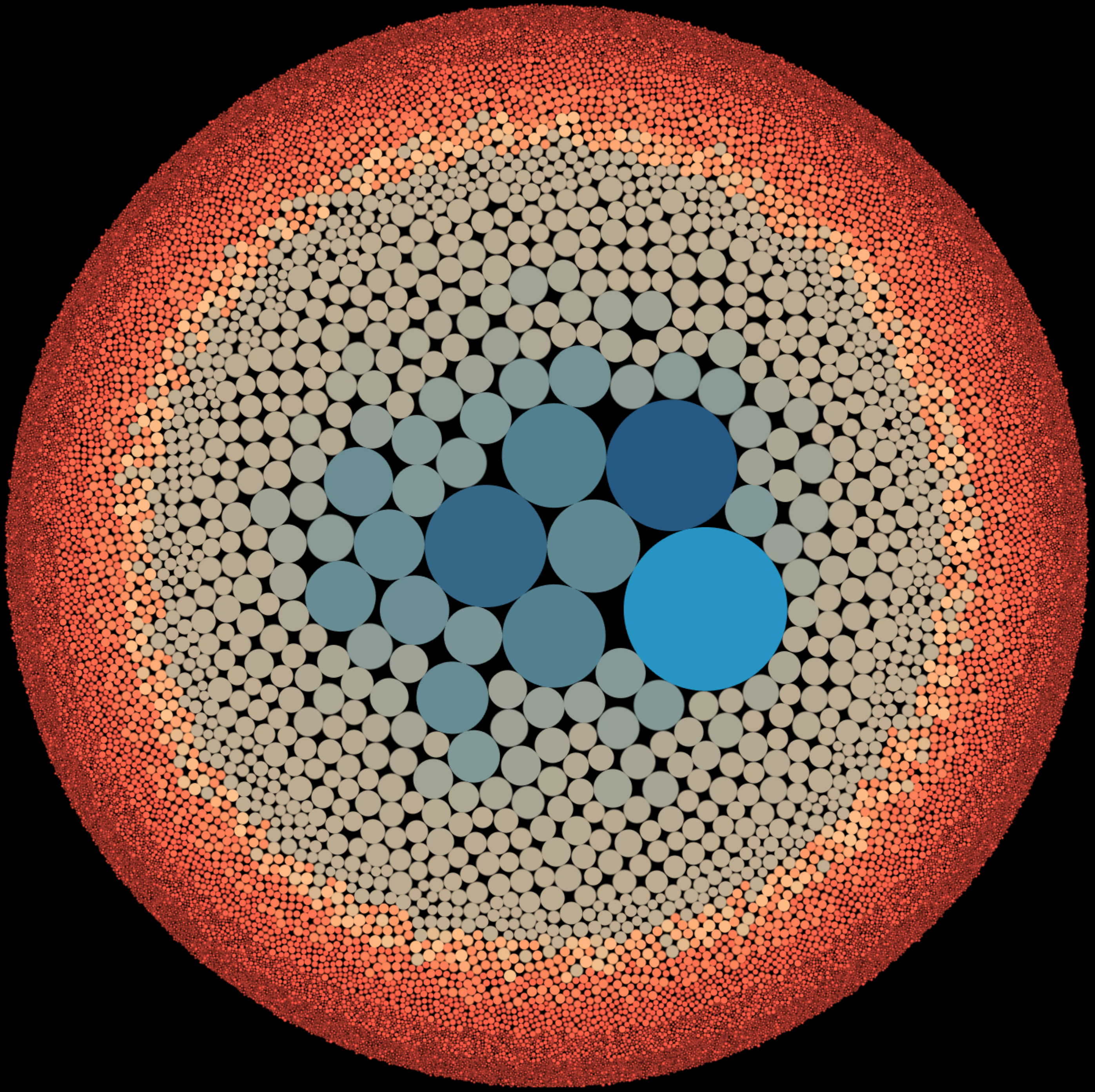
- **Enduring Legacy Games:** Older titles continue to dominate player interest, with some games nearly two decades old still commanding significant mindSHARE. This entrenched dominance highlights the challenges new releases face in breaking through a saturated market. The trend of legacy live service games and user-generated content (UGC) platforms maintaining a strong player base will likely continue. Players are increasingly drawn to the familiar but ever-evolving nature of these platforms, making them cornerstones of the gaming ecosystem.

- **Live Service Overload:** Live service games still account for the majority of market engagement but have seen a slight pullback since peaking in 2021. With an oversaturated pool of established live service games, new entrants will continue to find it increasingly difficult to carve out significant market share. Gamers must often abandon a current live service game—and the time, money, and friendships invested in it—to take on a new one, making such tradeoffs rare and difficult.

- **Hardware Innovations:** In the near term, new hardware innovations, like the highly anticipated Nintendo Switch successor and emerging handheld PCs, are likely to be the primary drivers of market growth. While software sales and in-app purchases face challenges in expanding the market, these hardware advancements promise to reignite consumer interest with enhanced portability and performance, potentially offsetting stagnation in other areas.

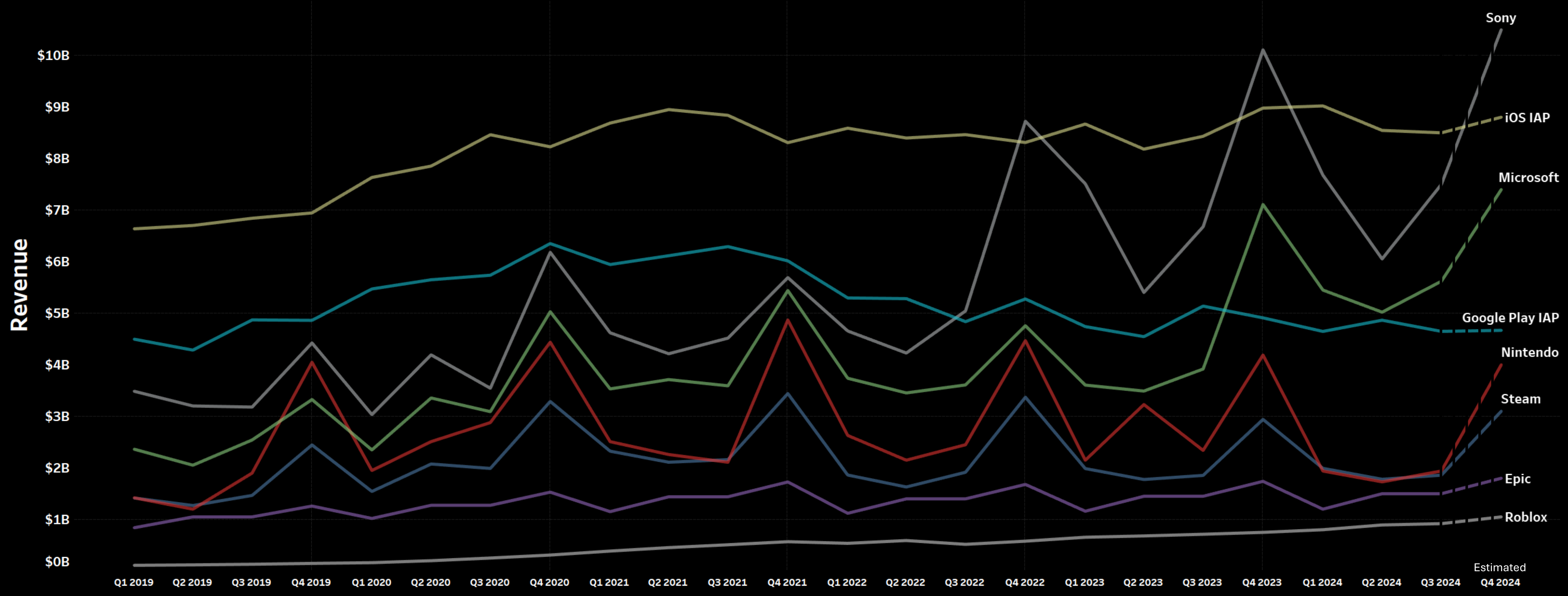
The Market

A Big Picture View of Gaming Trends



Global Platform Revenue

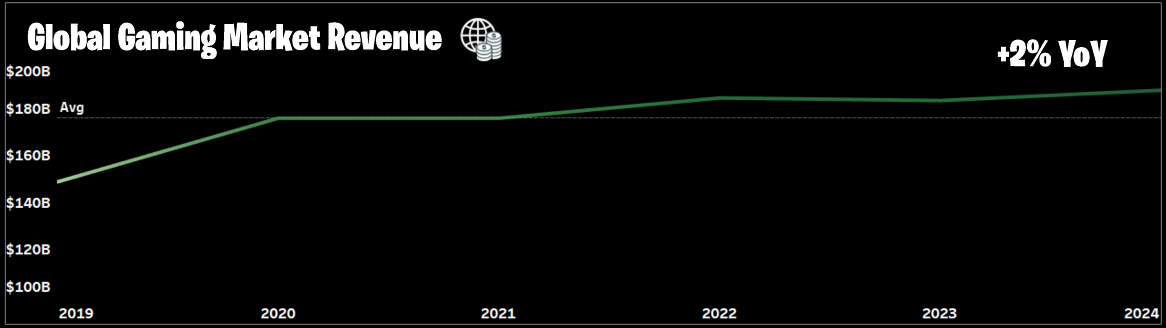
The video game industry in 2024 tells a story of mixed trajectories among platform holders. Sony and Microsoft are surging ahead, driven by ongoing hardware sales, subscription models, and strategic acquisitions, while mobile gaming via iOS remains a dominant and steady force. Platform and content providers like Steam, Epic, and Roblox exhibit long-term momentum, buoyed by growing engagement and community-driven content. In contrast, Google Play has lost some momentum and Nintendo has seen a modest decline as its hardware cycle matures. Despite individual fluctuations, the industry as a whole remains resilient and steady.

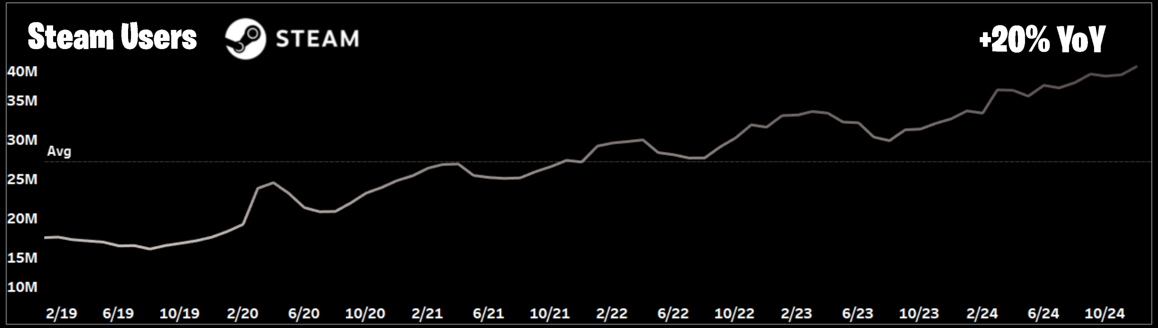


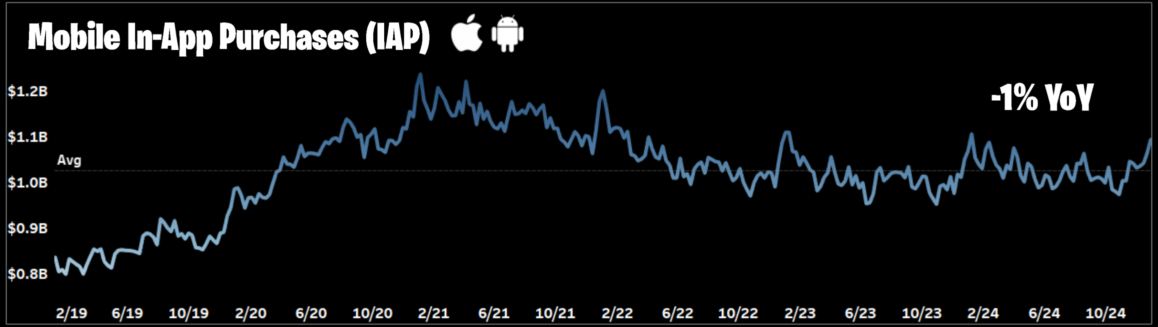
Sources: Sony – Sony Quarterly Financial Statements, Game & Network Services at https://www.sony.com/en/SonyInfo/IR/library/presen/er/archive; iOS/Google Play – App Store and Google Play Mobile In-App Purchases (IAP) among top 1,000 grossing games per week at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps; Microsoft – Microsoft Quarterly Financial Statements, Gaming at https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/investor/earnings; Nintendo – Nintendo Quarterly Financial Statements, Net Sales at https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/en/library/earnings; Steam – Yearly Revenue Estimates at https://www.demandsage.com/steam-statistics with quarterly and seasonal calculations; Epic – Epic Games Yearly Revenue Estimates at https://sacra.com/c/epic-games with quarterly and seasonal calculations; Roblox – Roblox Quarterly Financial Statements at https://ir.roblox.com/financials/quarterly-results

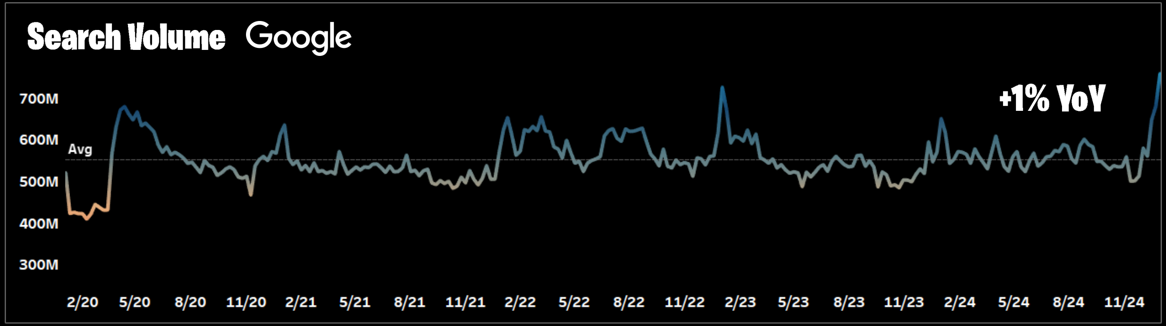
A Mature and Steady Market

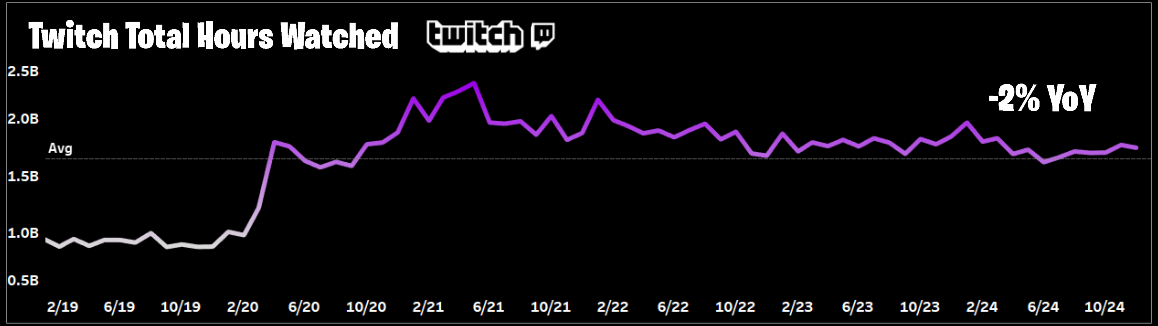
The global gaming market appears to be reaching a saturation point, with most indicators stabilizing and showing only modest year-over-year changes, far from the explosive growth seen during the pandemic. While market revenue and Steam users continue to grow incrementally, declines or stagnation in metrics like mobile downloads, in-app purchases, search volume and Twitch viewership suggest the industry is hitting a ceiling in its expansion.









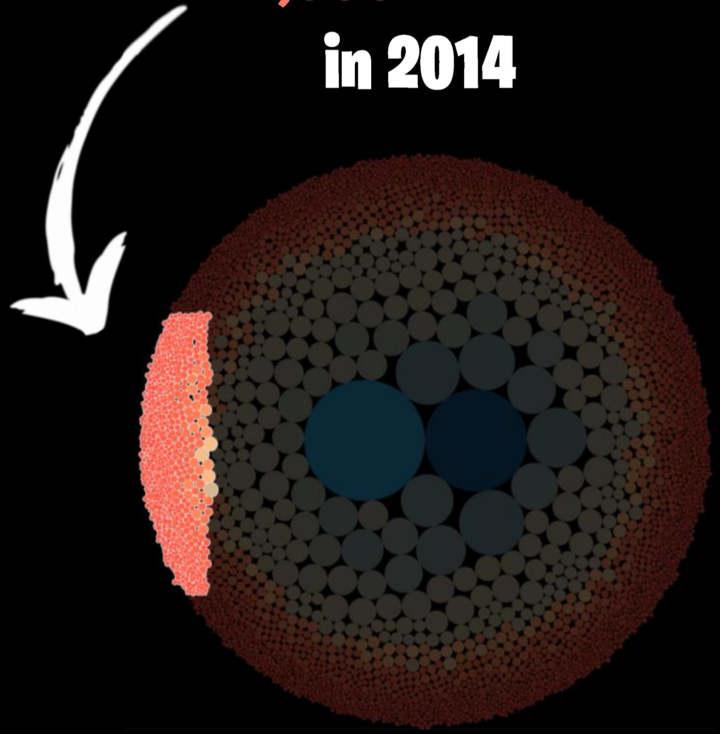


Sources: Global Gaming Market Revenue including physical and digital Console, PC, and Mobile software sales, in-app purchases and subscriptions, not including advertising or hardware revenue, at Newzoo at https://newzoo.com/resources/blog/newzoo-games-market-numbers-revenues-and-audience-2020-2023, https://newzoo.com/resources/blog/the-latest-games-market-size-estimates-and-forecasts, https://newzoo.com/resources/blog/games-market-estimates-and-forecasts-2023, https://newzoo.com/resources/blog/global-games-market-revenue-estimates-and-forecasts-in-2024; Steam Users, at https://steamdb.info/app/753/charts/#6y; Mobile Downloads among top 1,000 downloaded games per week at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps; Mobile In-App Purchases (IAP) among top 1,000 grossing games per week at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps; Google Search Volume among all tracked games per week via mindGAME Data's custom global search tracking; Twitch Total Hours Watched by week, mindGAME Data's Twitch tracker via Twitch API; pre-2024 historical data via Sully Gnome at https://sullygnome.com/

Lost in the Crowd: The Fierce Battle for Visibility

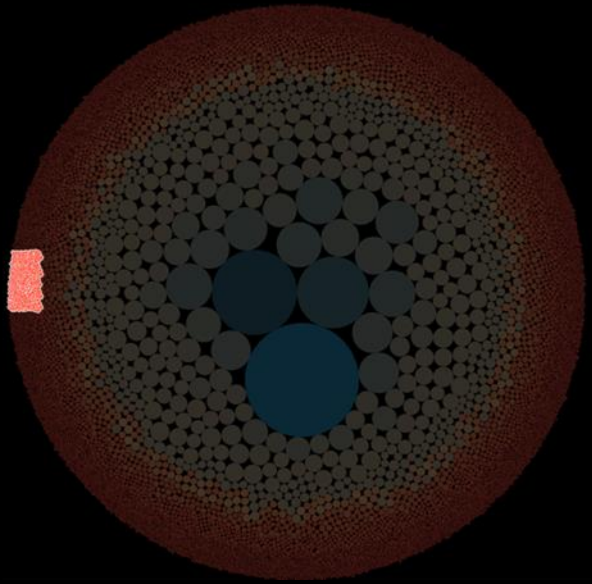
Though the overall gaming market remains strong, it's harder for any individual title to stand out. Launching a new game today means entering the most crowded market in history. To make things even tougher, the market remains dominated by older, established games. Breaking through as a new release has never been more challenging.

1,000 Games in 2014



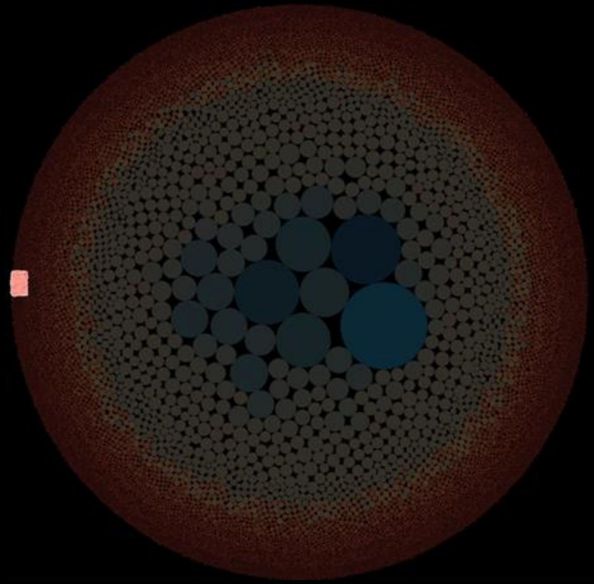
In 2014, a new release game competed with around 8,000+ active and new release games

1,000 Games in 2019



In 2019, a new release game competed with around 25,000+ active and new release games

1,000 Games in 2024

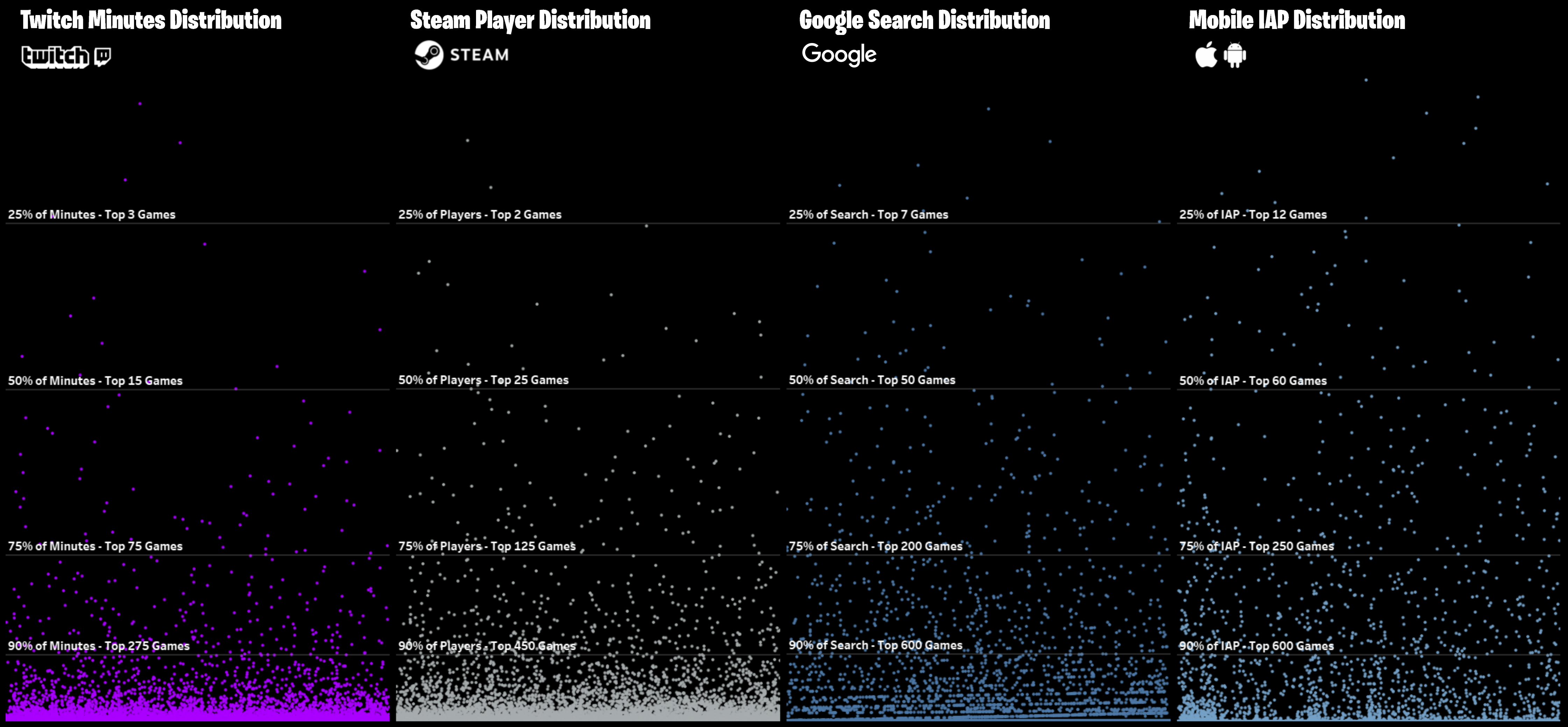


In 2024, a new release game competed with around 100,000+ active and new release games

Sources: Total new yearly game releases and active historical games, with size and status determined by search volume, viewership, Steam players, Twitch streams, and social media engagement, via mindGAME Data

The Power Law in Gaming

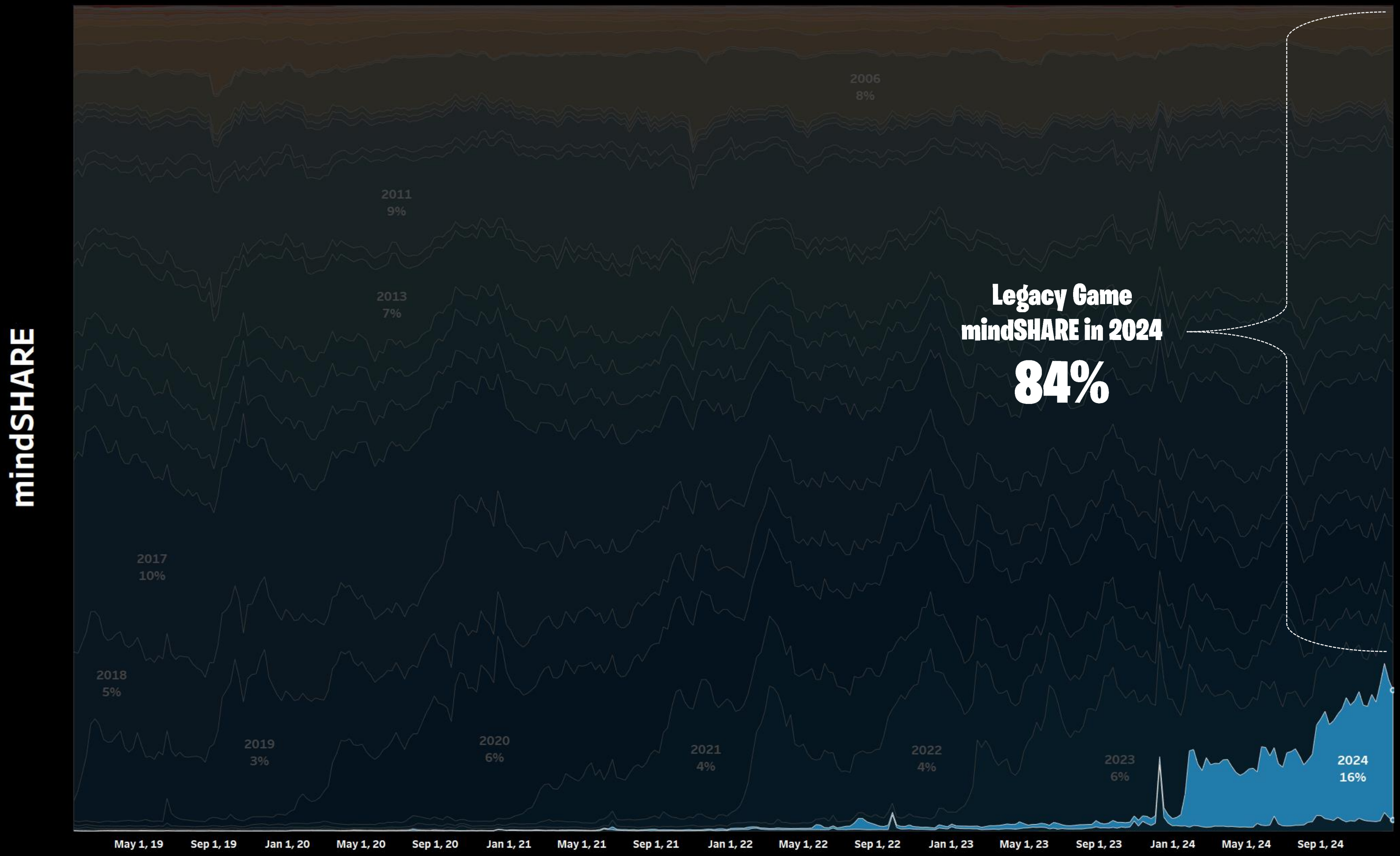
Despite the release of tens of thousands of games annually, the gaming ecosystem across all channels – players, viewers, purchasers, really... wherever you look – operates under a power law distribution. The vast majority of attention and revenue is concentrated in the top 100 games, with definitive dominance by the top 500 games, leaving the remaining thousands of games vying for a small fraction of the market.



Sources: Twitch Minutes Distribution, cumulative share of total stream minutes by game across all games streamed on Twitch during December 2024, mindGAME Data's Twitch tracker via Twitch API; Steam Player Distribution, cumulative share of total concurrent players by game across all games played during December 2024, mindGAME Data's Steam tracker via Steam Powered API; Google Search Volume, cumulative share of total search volume by game across all tracked games during December 2024, via mindGAME Data's custom global search tracking; Mobile In-App Purchases (IAP), cumulative share of total IAP by game across all games during December 2024 at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps

Unshakable Giants: The Impact of Legacy Games

Legacy games continue to shape the gaming market, with historical titles, some nearly two decades old, commanding an overwhelming 84% of total mindSHARE at the end of 2024. Reflecting a deeply entrenched preference for established franchises and enduring classics, any new releases are only competing for a modest 15–20% of the overall market.



2006 - 8% Current mindSHARE
Top Games: Roblox | The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion

2011 - 9% Current mindSHARE
Minecraft | The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim | Terraria

2013 - 7% Current mindSHARE
Grand Theft Auto V | Path of Exile | Dota 2

2017 - 10% Current mindSHARE
Fortnite | Free Fire | PUBG

2018 - 5% Current mindSHARE
Brawl Stars | Among Us | Red Dead Redemption 2

2020 - 6% Current mindSHARE
Valorant | Genshin Impact | Call of Duty: Warzone

2023 - 6% Current mindSHARE
Baldur's Gate 3 | Honkai: Star Rail | Diablo IV

2024 - 16% Current mindSHARE
COD: BO6 | Marvel Rivals | Path of Exile 2

Sources: Weekly trended mindSHARE of all games released within indicated year with label indicating most recent mindSHARE at 12/29/2024, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024, via mindGAME Data mindGAME DATA

Identifying the Year's Biggest Moments and Trends Using mindGAME Data's Cross-Channel Tracking

What is mindSHARE?

Based on digital behaviors of billions of gamers, mindSHARE is an all-in-one metric measuring a game's relative popularity

mindSHARE is used for trend, competitor, and marketing measurement but is also directly correlated with sales and players

Primary Sources

Covering billions of searches and billions of hours watched, the world's most used search, video, and streaming platforms are the primary drivers of the mindSHARE calculation

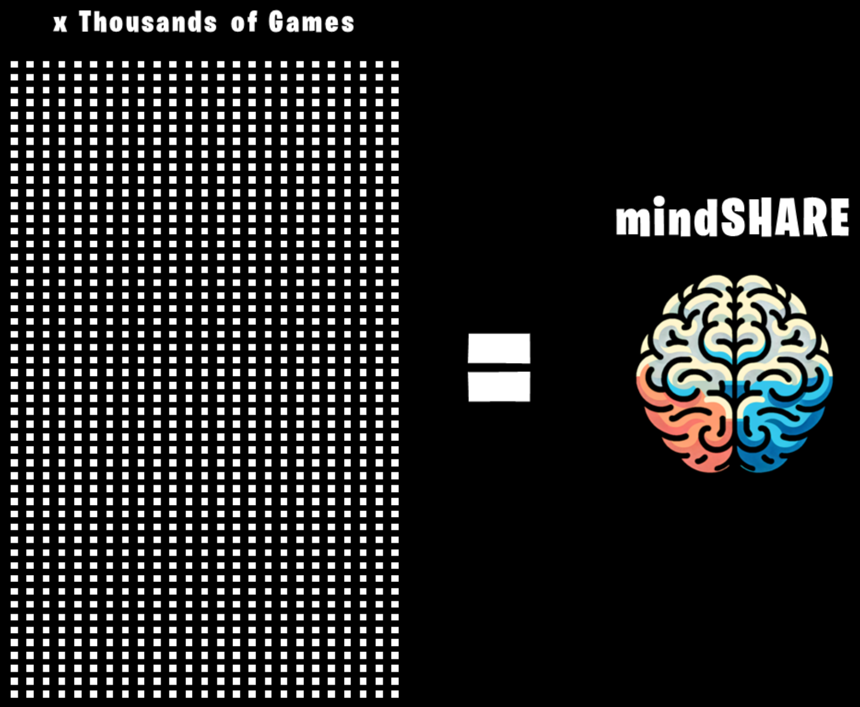
Google YouTube twitch

Additional Sources

mindSHARE trends are cross-referenced against PC players and social media, ensuring full coverage of gaming trends

STEAM TikTok reddit

Every week, digital behavioral metrics are pulled for thousands games, from the biggest AAA games to the smallest hobby games



Top Games by Average mindSHARE - 2024

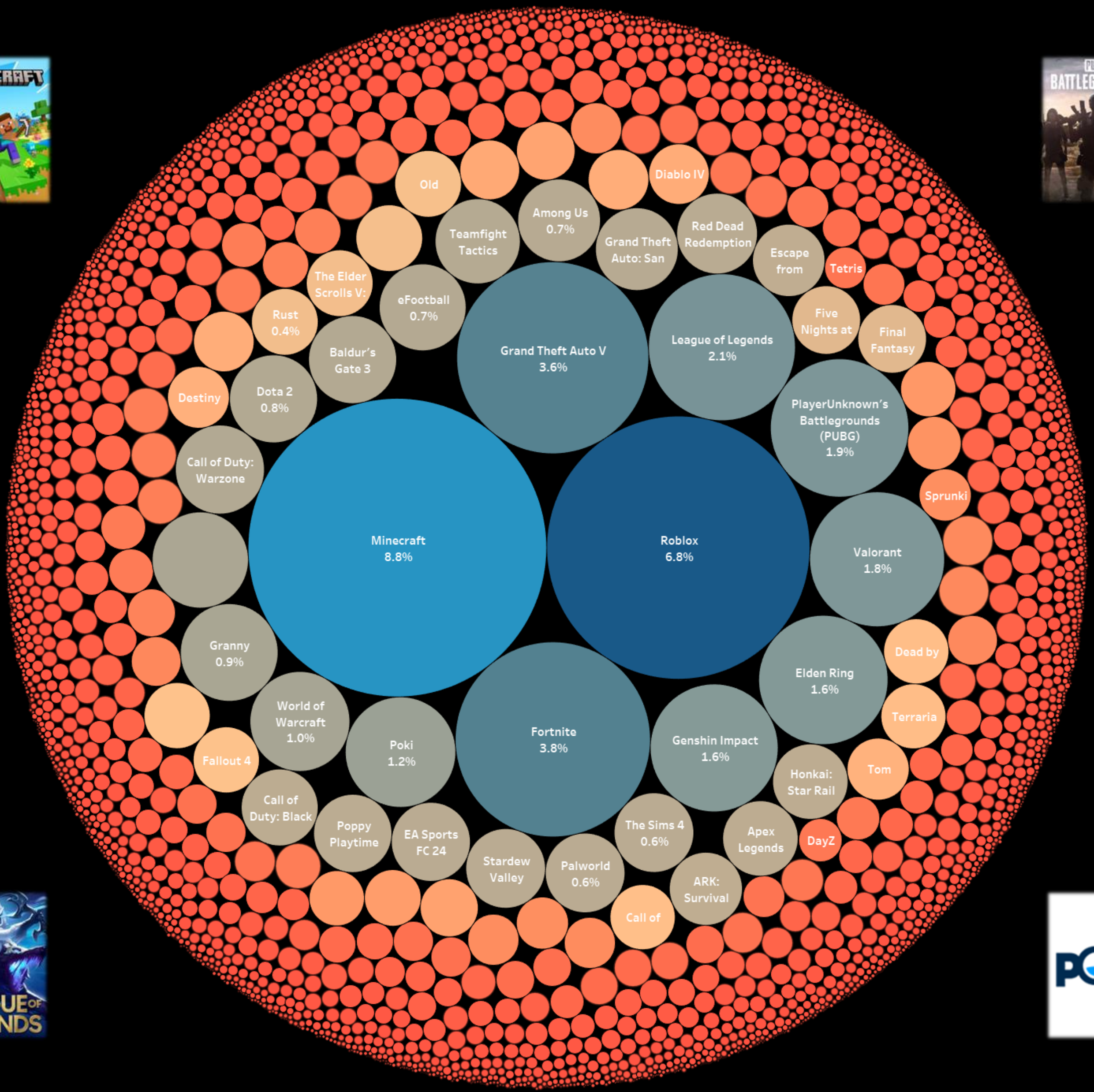
Avg mindSHARE 8.8%
Avg Search Rank #1
Avg Video Rank #1
Avg Streaming Rank #9
Social Media Rank Top 5

mindSHARE 6.8%
Search #2
Video #2
Streaming #42
Social Top 3

mindSHARE 3.8%
Search #4
Video Rank #5
Streaming #5
Social Top 3

mindSHARE 3.6%
Search #10
Video #4
Streaming #1
Social Top 10

mindSHARE 2.1%
Search #9
Video #13
Streaming #2
Social Top 20



mindSHARE 1.9%
Search #22
Video #6
Streaming #24
Social Top 10

mindSHARE 1.8%
Search #11
Video #12
Streaming #4
Social Top 20

mindSHARE 1.6%
Search #13
Video #15
Streaming #23
Social Top 40

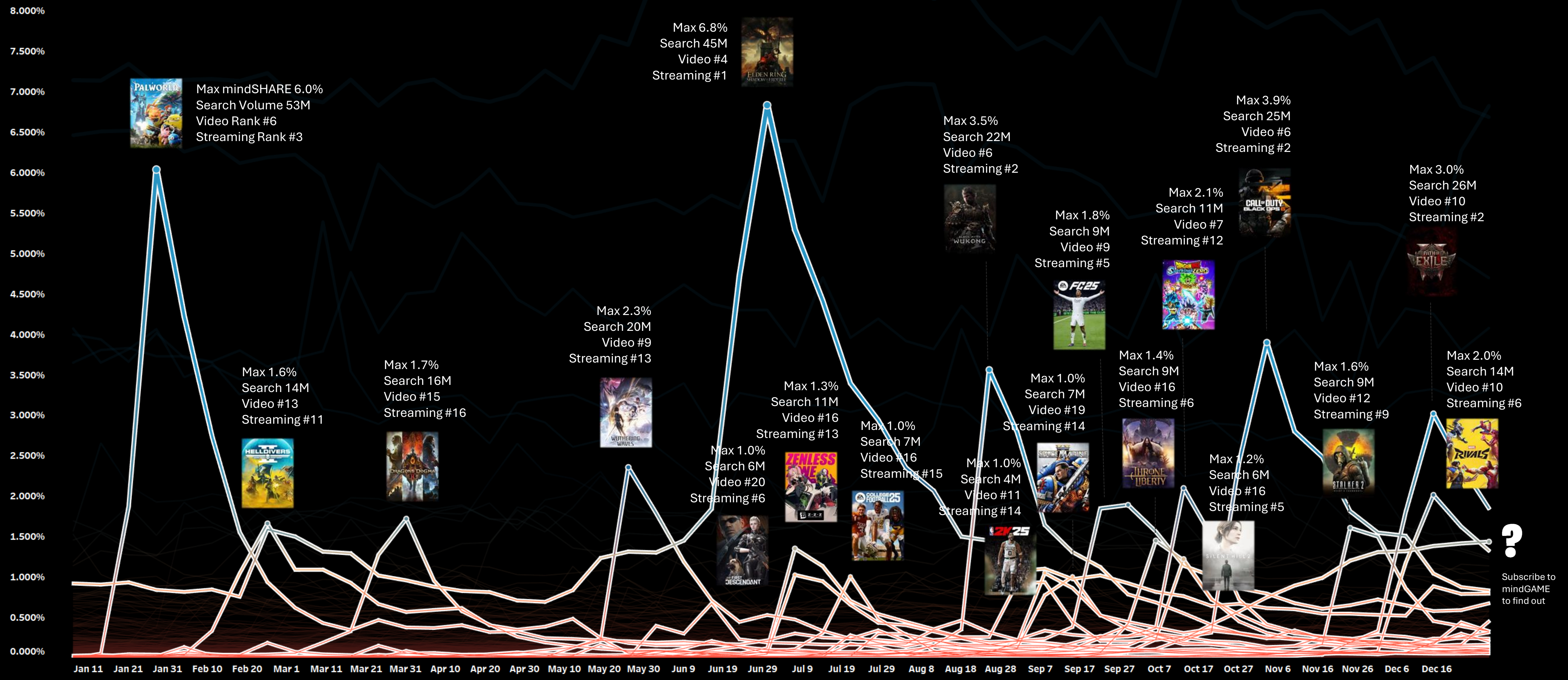
mindSHARE 1.6%
Search #7
Video #11
Streaming #33
Social Top 10

mindSHARE 1.2%
Search #4
Video #318
Streaming >1,500
Social >1,000

Sources: Average mindSHARE, average Google Search rank, average YouTube viewership rank, average Twitch minutes watched rank, estimated Social Media placement across TikTok and Reddit, among console, PC, and cross-platform games (no mobile exclusives), 1/1/2024-12/29/2024, via mindGAME Data

Biggest Launch Moments - 2024 Releases

The highest mindSHARE launches of 2024



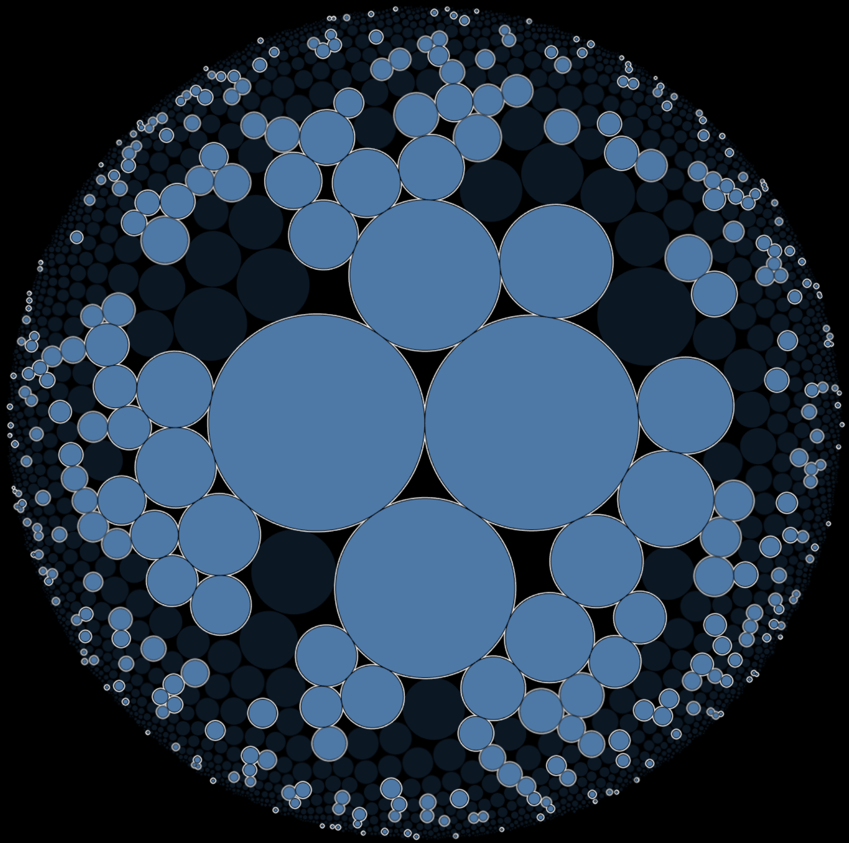
Sources: Weekly mindSHARE among console, PC, and mobile games, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024, via mindGAME Data

Live Service and Static Games

Comparing the share and prevalence of Live Service and Static games

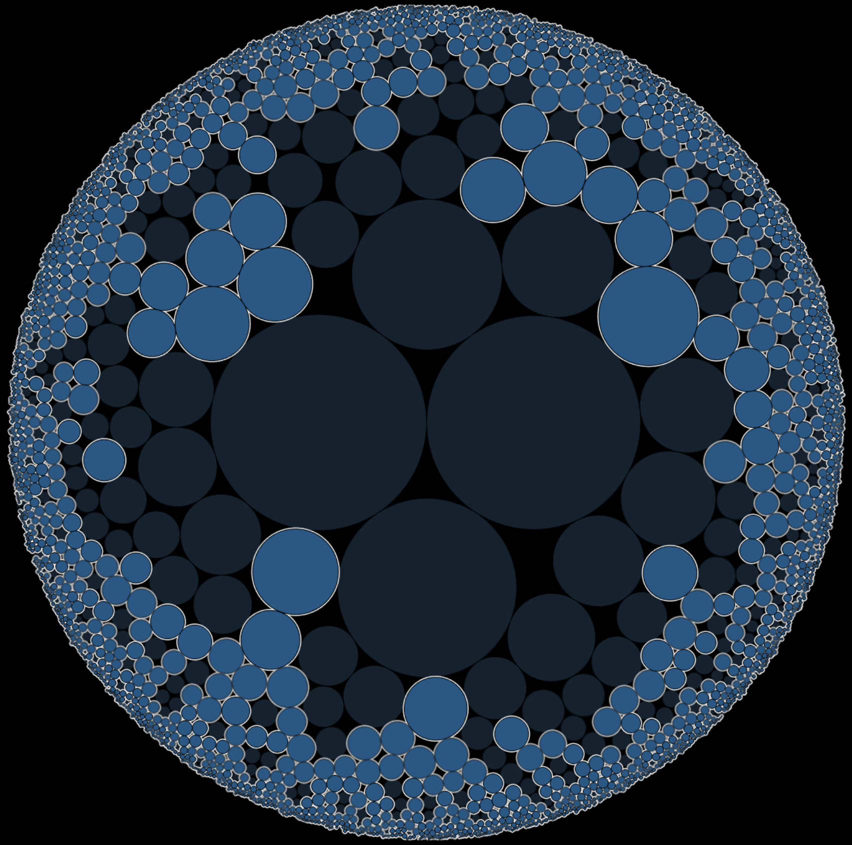
Live Service Games

Games continuously updated with content, items, events, modes etc.



Static Games

Traditional releases with no/infrequent post-launch updates



Live Service games generally capture around 60% of the gaming market

The absolute biggest games in the industry are Live Service, with the top 5 capturing 25% of the entire gaming market

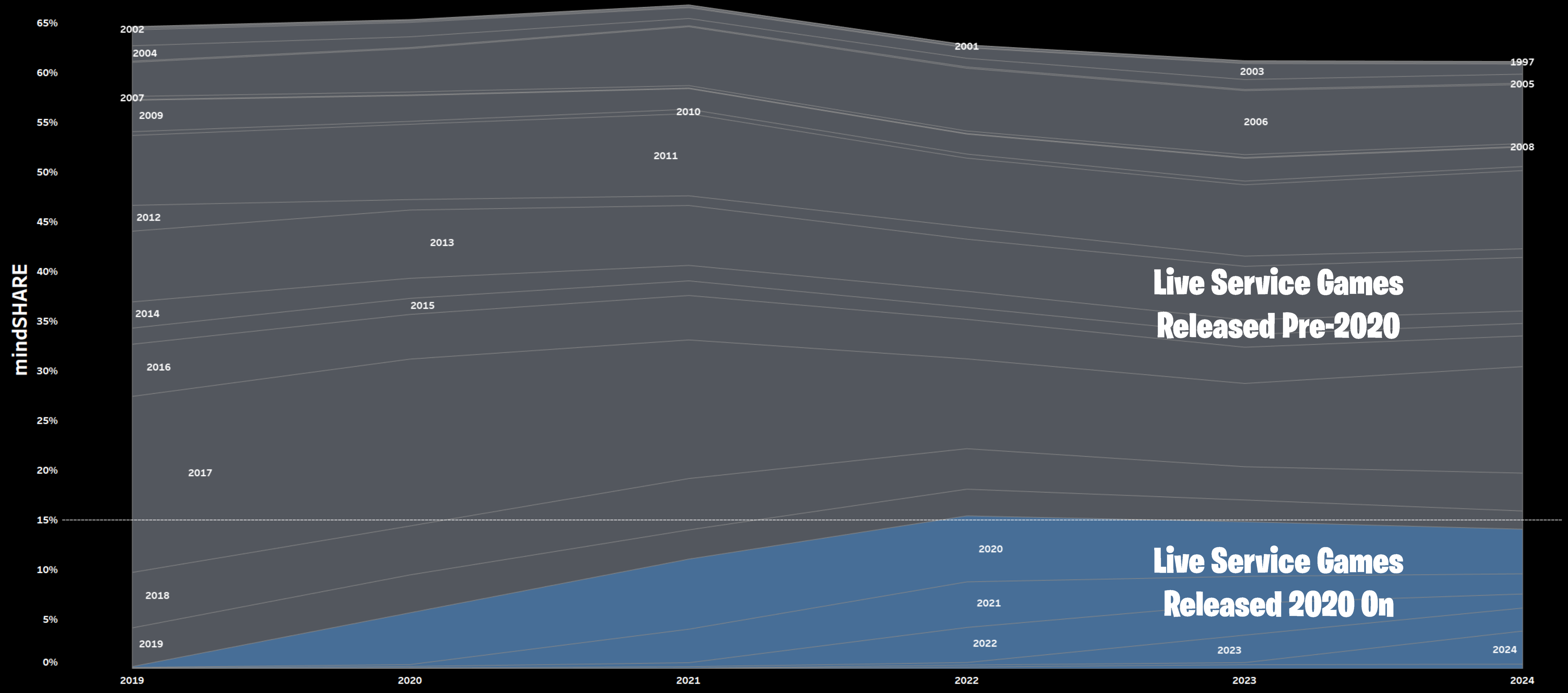
Static releases, often single-player, see short bursts of interest with thousands of releases only ever reaching the smallest rings of engagement

By count, Live Service games make up around 10% of all active games whereas Static games make up around 90% of all active games

Sources: Weekly mindSHARE among console, PC, and cross-platform games (no mobile exclusives), 12/29/2024, via mindGAME Data

Live Service Trend

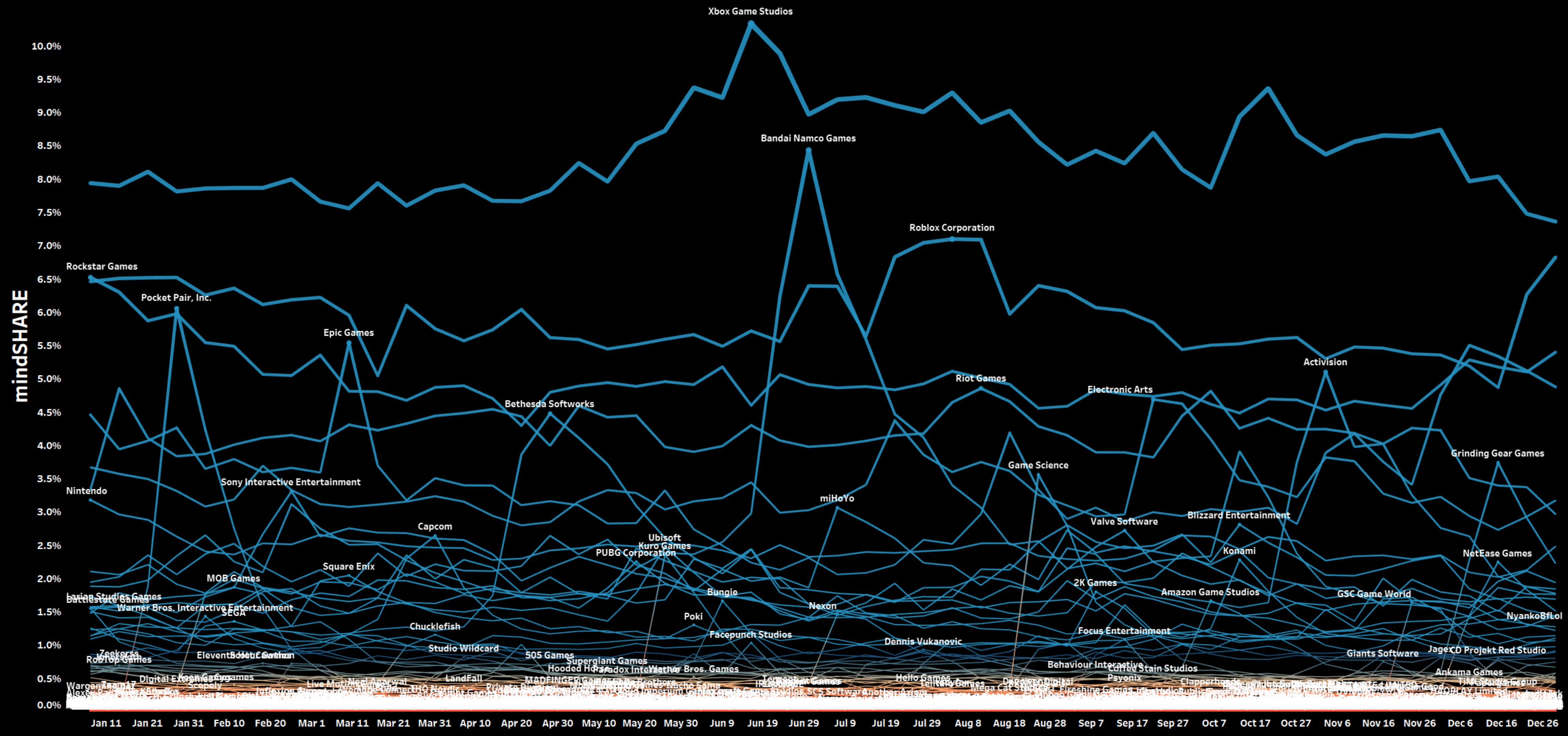
Live Service games peaked in market share (vs Static games) in 2021, retracting slightly in each following year. Any newly launched live service game must compete against hundreds of long-standing live service games, with 2022 marking a saturation point where the market had little room for new live service games. With many major pre-2019 live service games holding strong into 2025, new live service games will continue to struggle to materially alter the landscape.



Sources: Weekly trended mindSHARE of all Live Service games released within indicated year, 1/1/2019-12/29/2024, via mindGAME Data

Publisher mindSHARE

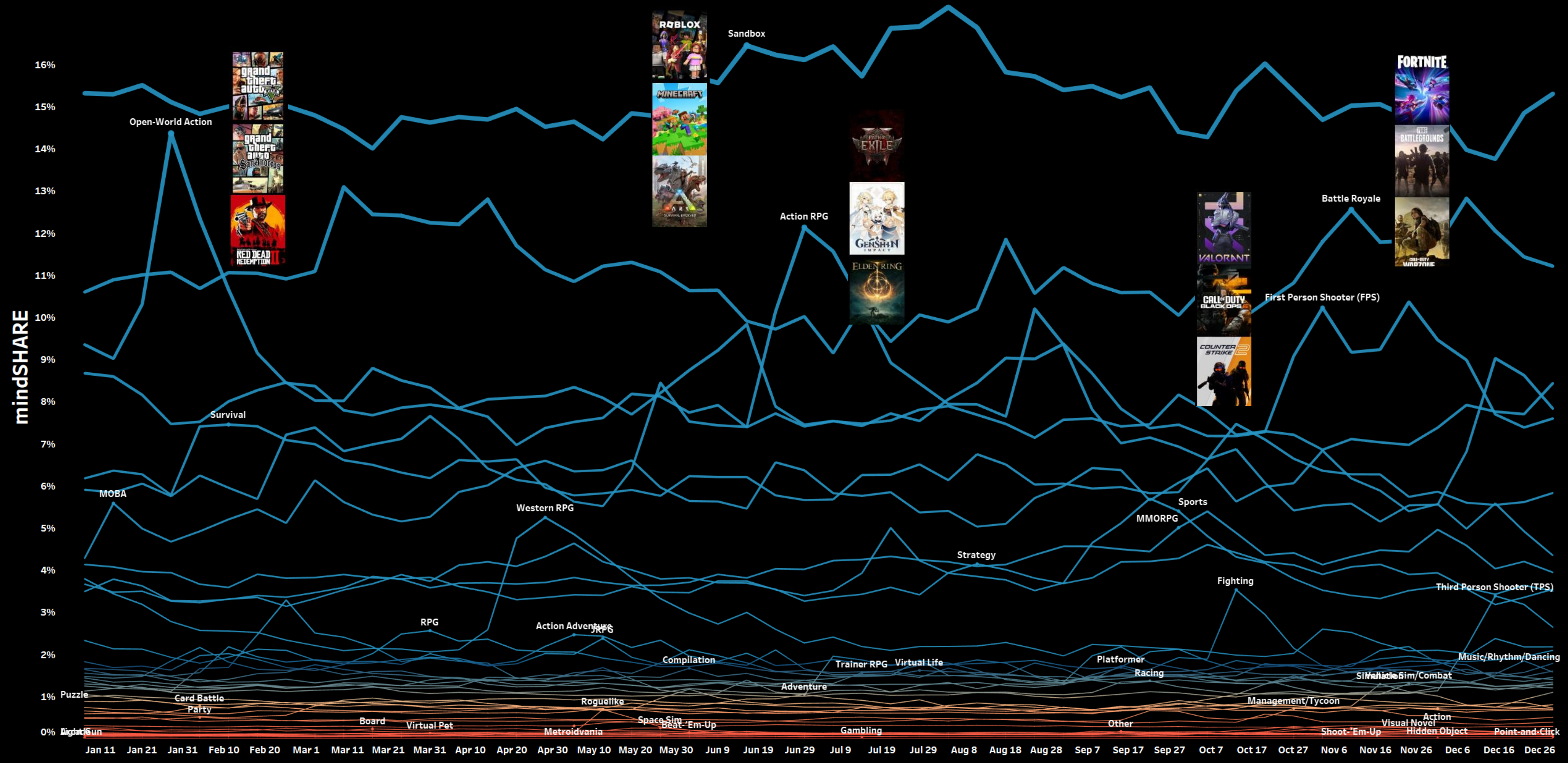
Xbox Game Studios sat atop mindSHARE in 2024, driven by the enduring success of Minecraft and major acquisitions. Roblox, Rockstar, Epic, Riot, and EA maintained consistently strong showings, fueled by successful live service games. Many publishers had standout moments tied to major releases, including Bandai Namco, Pocket Pair, Game Science, and Grinding Gear Games, highlighting a competitive market where strategic moves and standout titles drive both sustained engagement and periodic surges.



Sources: Weekly trended mindSHARE of Publisher portfolio, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024, via mindGAME Data

Genre mindSHARE

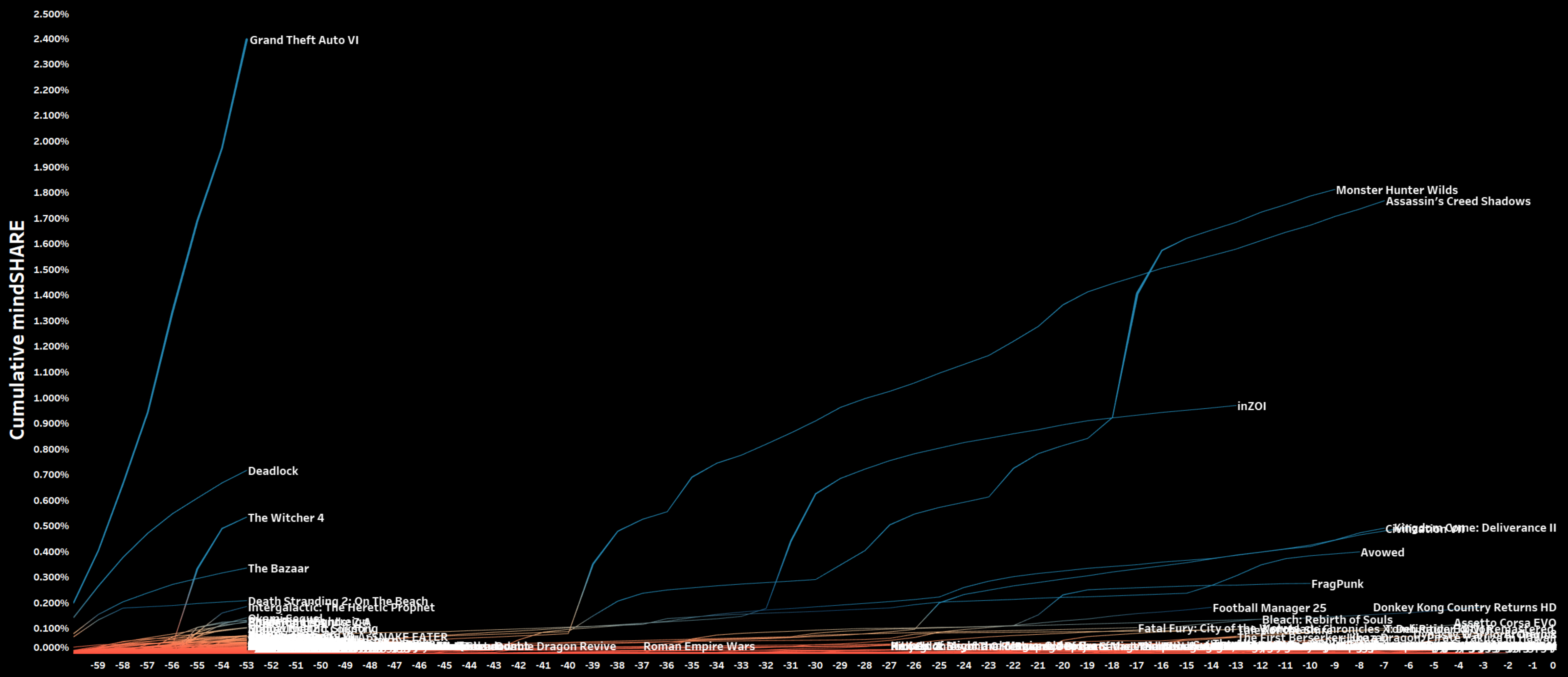
Sandbox and Open-World Action games like Minecraft, Roblox, and Grand Theft Auto V are huge drivers of the industry, maintaining high levels of engagement throughout the year. Action RPGs like Elden Ring and Genshin Impact consistently attract attention, while live service titles in the Battle Royale and FPS genres show staying power, particularly with content updates and competitive events.



Sources: Weekly trended mindSHARE of games in genre, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024, via mindGAME Data

2025 and Beyond

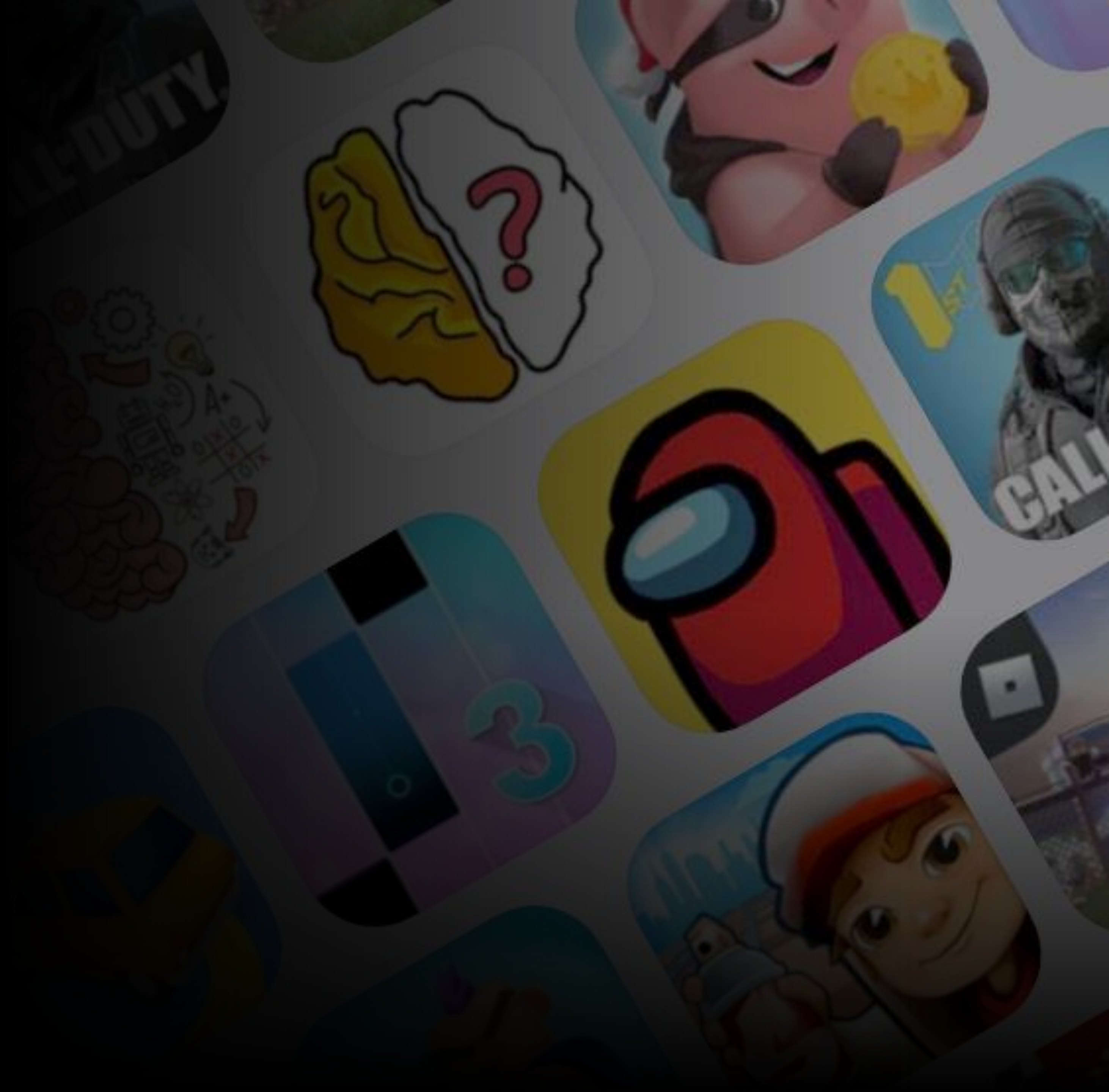
Early 2025 brings a dynamic mix of highly anticipated titles, including blockbusters Monster Hunter Wilds and Assassin's Creed Shadows, alongside medieval RPG Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, fantasy-driven Avowed, and innovative simulator InZOI while later 2025 and beyond will see industry-defining titles like Grand Theft Auto VI, The Witcher 4, and Death Stranding 2 reshape expectations for storytelling and open-world gaming.



Sources: Current weekly pre-launch cumulative mindSHARE of all upcoming unreleased games, via mindGAME Data

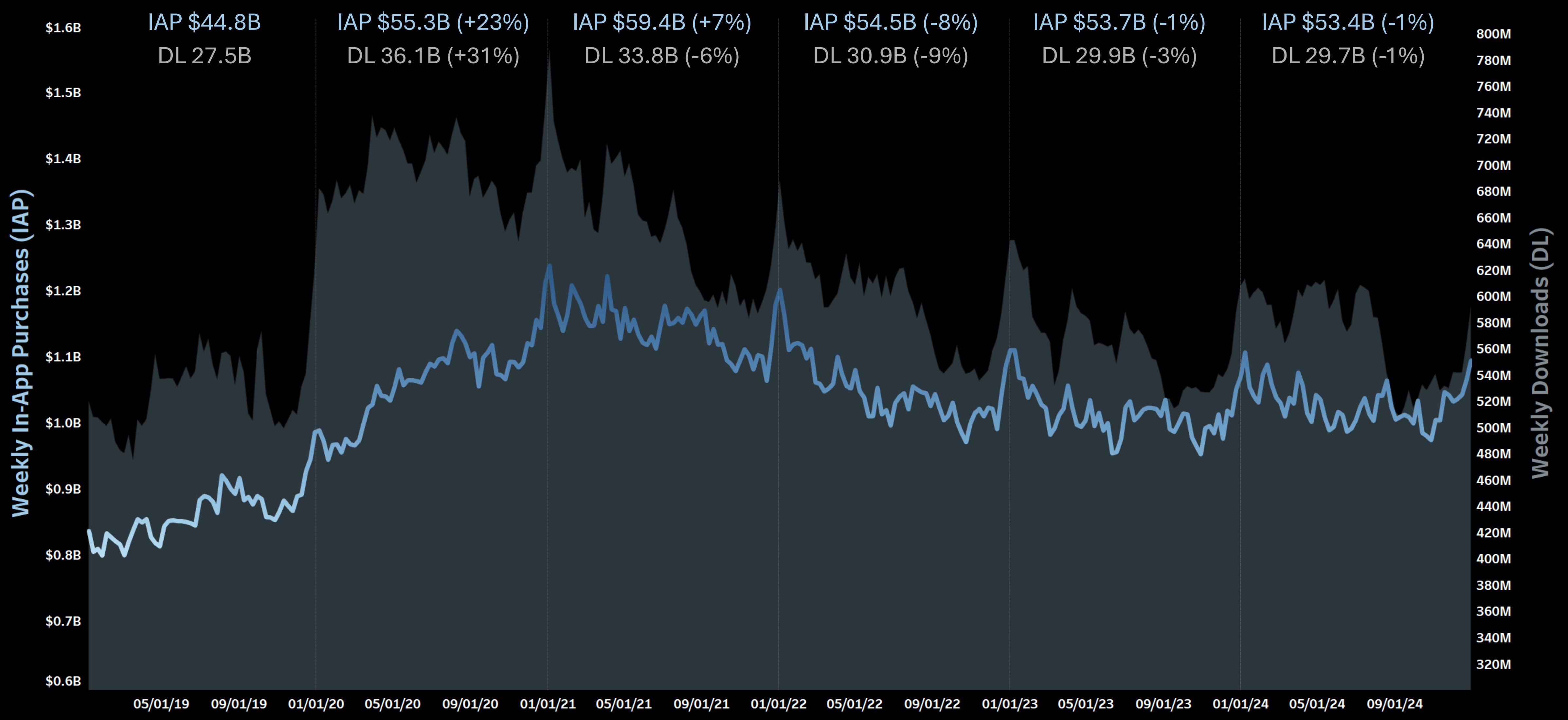
Mobile Games

A Review of Trends and Leaders in Mobile Games



Mobile Game In-App Purchases (IAP) & Downloads (DL)

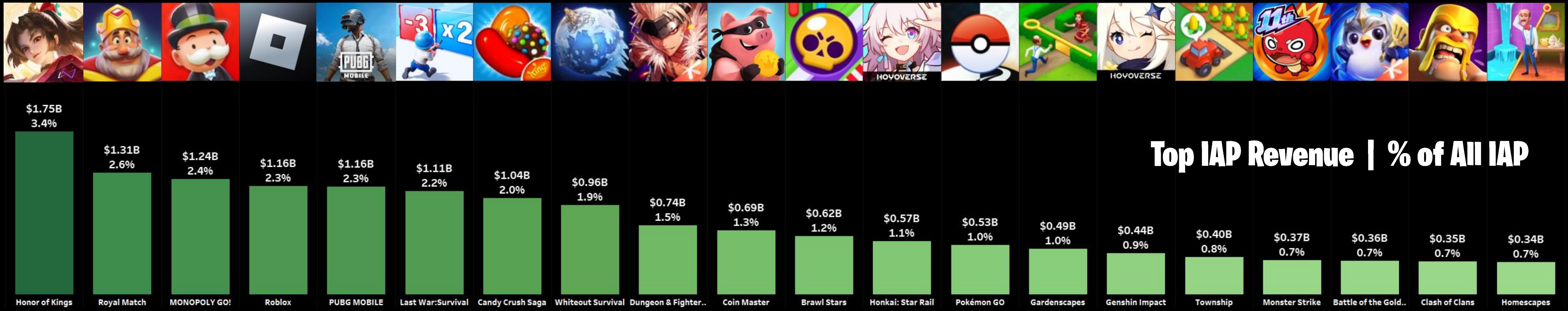
Mobile game in-app purchases and downloads have decreased and stabilized post-pandemic, signaling a mature market where future growth will likely come from optimizing engagement, innovative marketing and monetization strategies, and regional expansion

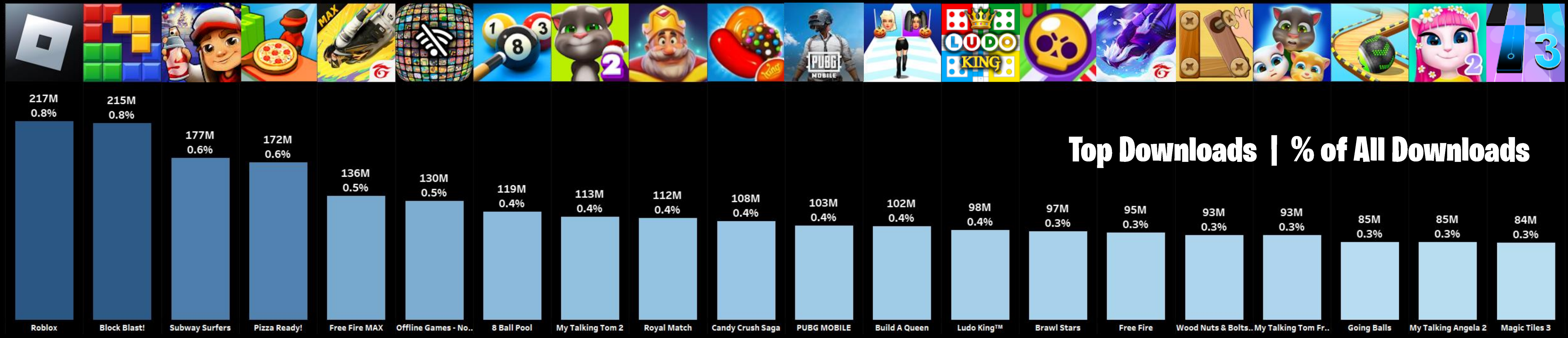


Sources: Global weekly Mobile In-App Purchases (IAP) among top 1,000 grossing games per week at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps; Global weekly Mobile Downloads among top 1,000 downloaded games per week at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps; includes estimates for games outside of top 1,000 weekly games

Top Mobile Games 2024 - IAP Revenue and Downloads

Familiar mobile games continue to capture a sizable proportion of total revenue with downloads still dominated by Roblox and longstanding casual/arcade games

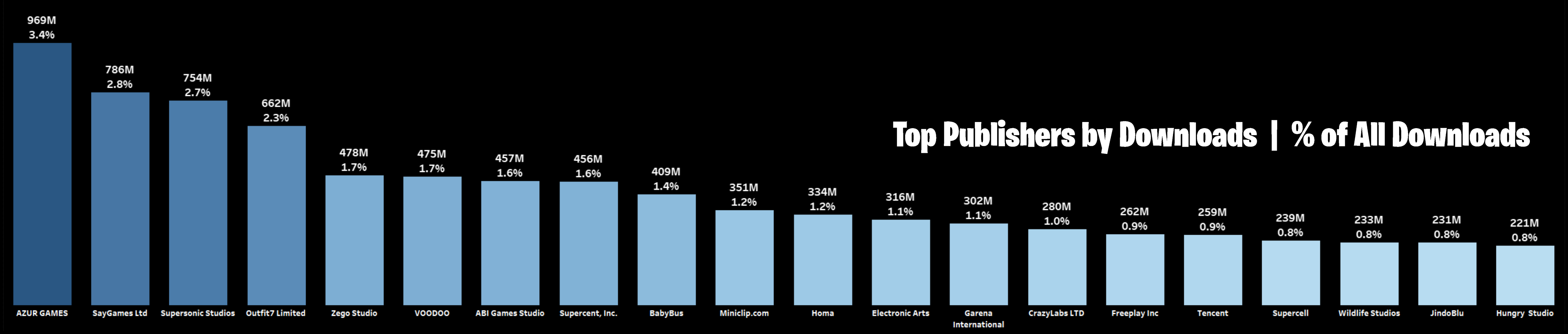




Sources: Total global Mobile In-App Purchases (IAP), 1/1/2024-12/29/2024 at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps; Total global Mobile Downloads, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024 at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps

Top Mobile Publishers 2024 - IAP Revenue and Downloads

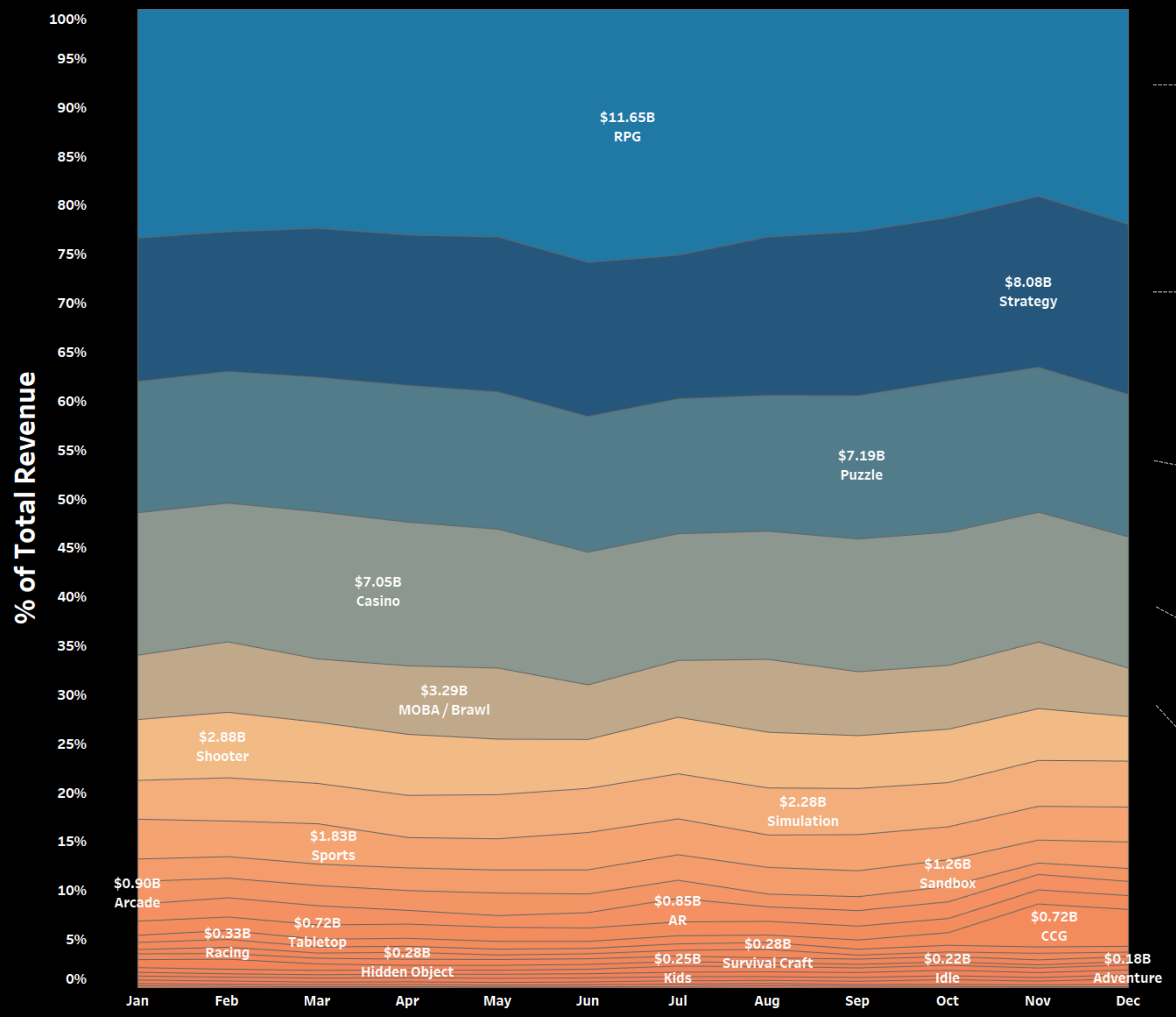
Tencent continues to dominate mobile gaming revenue, capturing 11% of global in-app purchases in 2024, showcasing the immense power of its portfolio. Meanwhile, publishers like Playrix, NetEase, and King maintain significant shares, with their strong monetization strategies. On the download side, companies like AZUR Games and SayGames excel in engaging broader audiences, highlighting the diverse approaches to achieving success in the mobile gaming space.



Sources: Total global Mobile In-App Purchases (IAP), 1/1/2024-12/29/2024, Publisher portfolio at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps; Total global Mobile Downloads, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024, Publisher portfolio at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps

Mobile IAP Revenue by Genre - 2024

RPGs lead the mobile in-app purchase market with $11B in revenue, reflecting their enduring appeal and monetization potential, bolstered by standout titles like Dungeon & Fighter: Origins and Honkai: Star Rail. Strategy, Puzzle, and Casino games also drive substantial revenue, highlighting the continued strength of diverse game experiences in engaging mobile audiences.

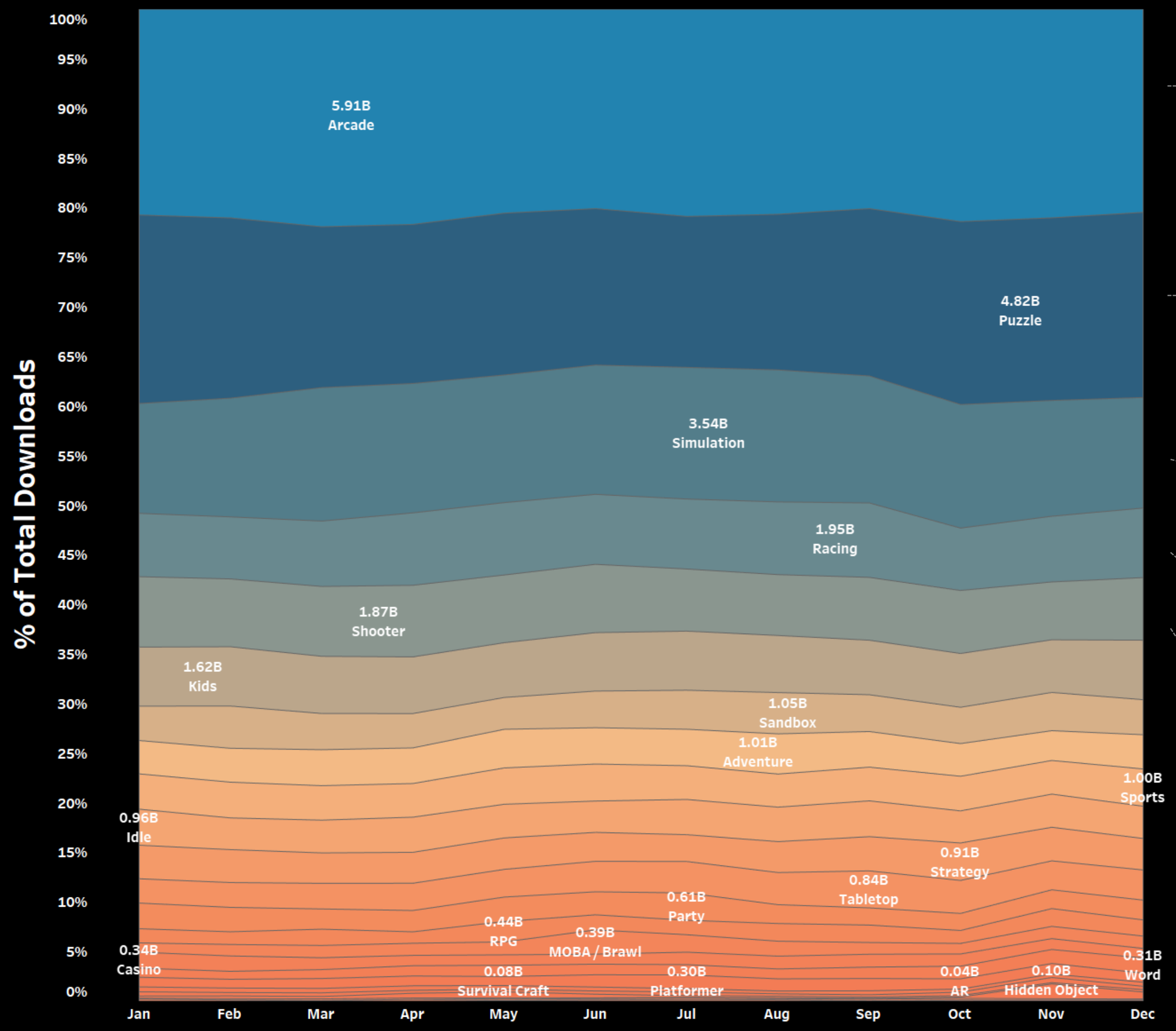


Dungeon & Fighter: Origins	$740,775,000
Honkai: Star Rail	$571,147,000
Genshin Impact	$443,812,000
Last War: Survival	$1,108,385,000
Whiteout Survival	$962,462,000
Battle of the Golden Spatula	$363,576,000
Royal Match	$1,306,527,000
Candy Crush Saga	$1,035,506,000
Gardenscapes	$492,711,000
MONOPOLY GO!	$1,235,634,000
Coin Master	$685,813,000
Bingo Blitz - Bingo Games	$225,264,000
Honor of Kings	$1,749,166,000
Brawl Stars	$624,053,000
League of Legends: Wild Rift	$265,747,000

Sources: Total global Mobile In-App Purchases (IAP), rounded to the nearest thousand, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024 at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps using mindGAME Data's mobile genre taxonomy

Mobile Downloads by Genre - 2024

Mobile downloads in 2024 were driven heavily by casual-style games, with genres like Arcade, Puzzle, and Simulation leading the charts thanks to accessible and quick gameplay experiences exemplified by hits like Subway Surfers and Block Blast!. However, this trend is not universal, as more immersive genres like Shooters, Sandbox, and Sports also carve out a significant share.



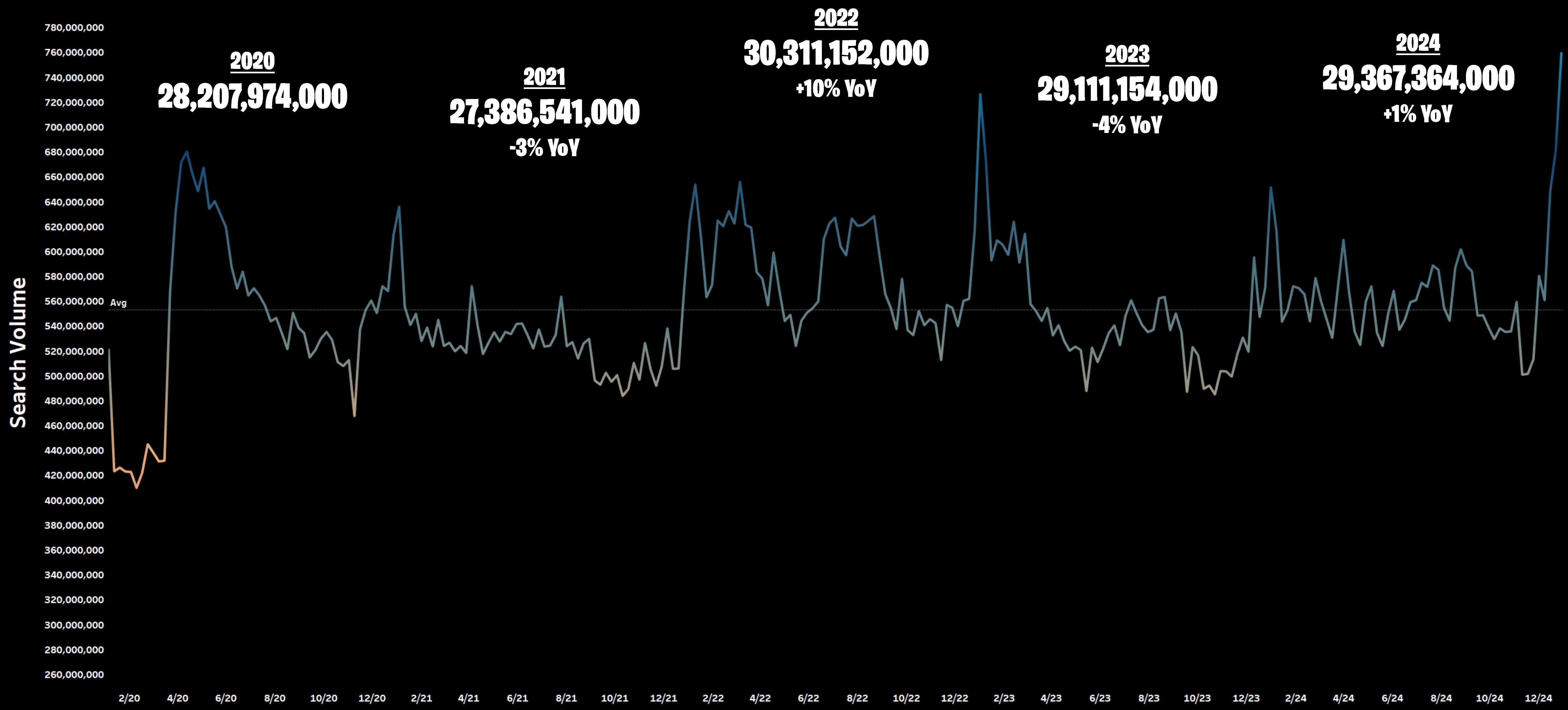
Sources: Total global Mobile Downloads, rounded to the nearest thousand, 1/1/2024-12/29/2024 at https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/apps using mindGAME Data's mobile genre taxonomy

Google

Tracking Video Game Search Trends

Search Volume

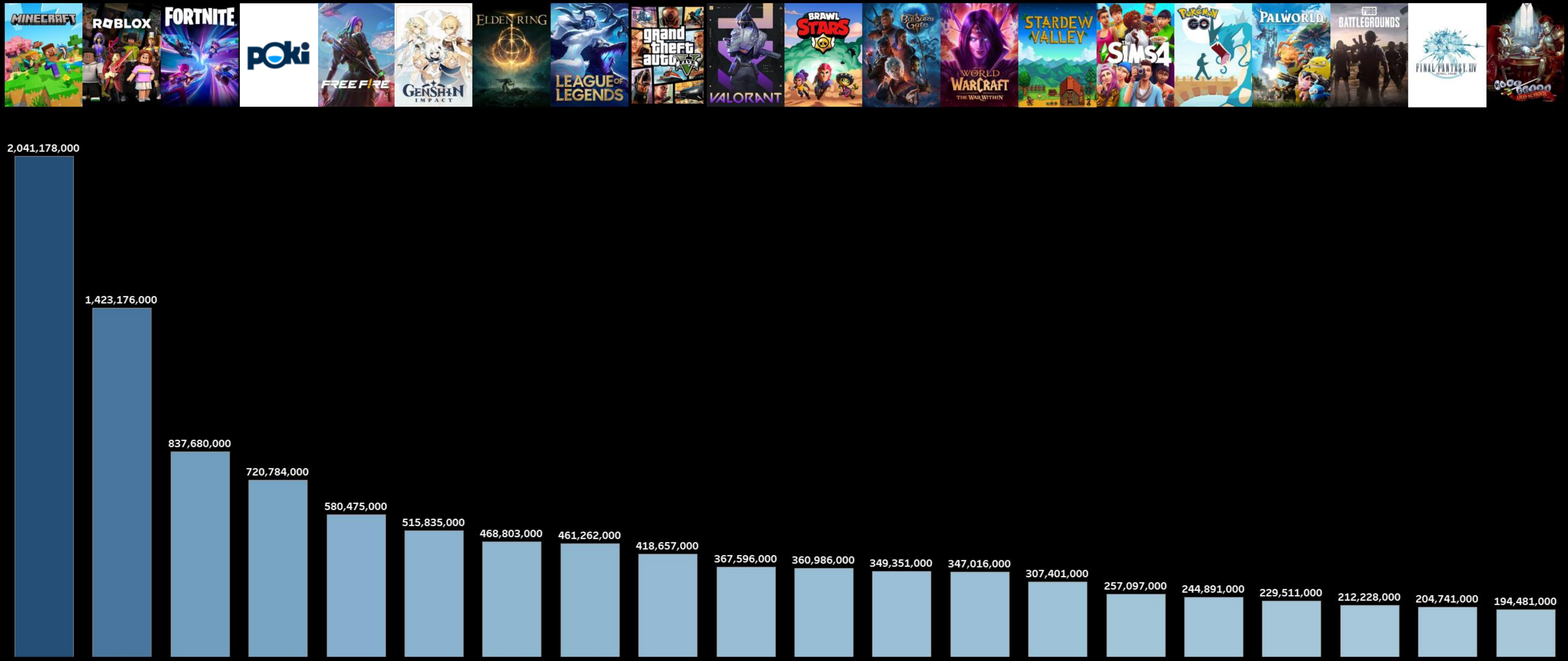
The total search volume for all video games has remained relatively stable over the past four years, but like other industry metrics, it suggests gaming may be hitting a ceiling. After a pandemic-driven increase, search interest has normalized, including a modest 1% increase in 2024, signaling a mature market.



Sources: Global Google search volume across all tracked games by week, rounded to nearest thousand, 1/1/2020 –12/29/2024

Most Searched Games - 2024

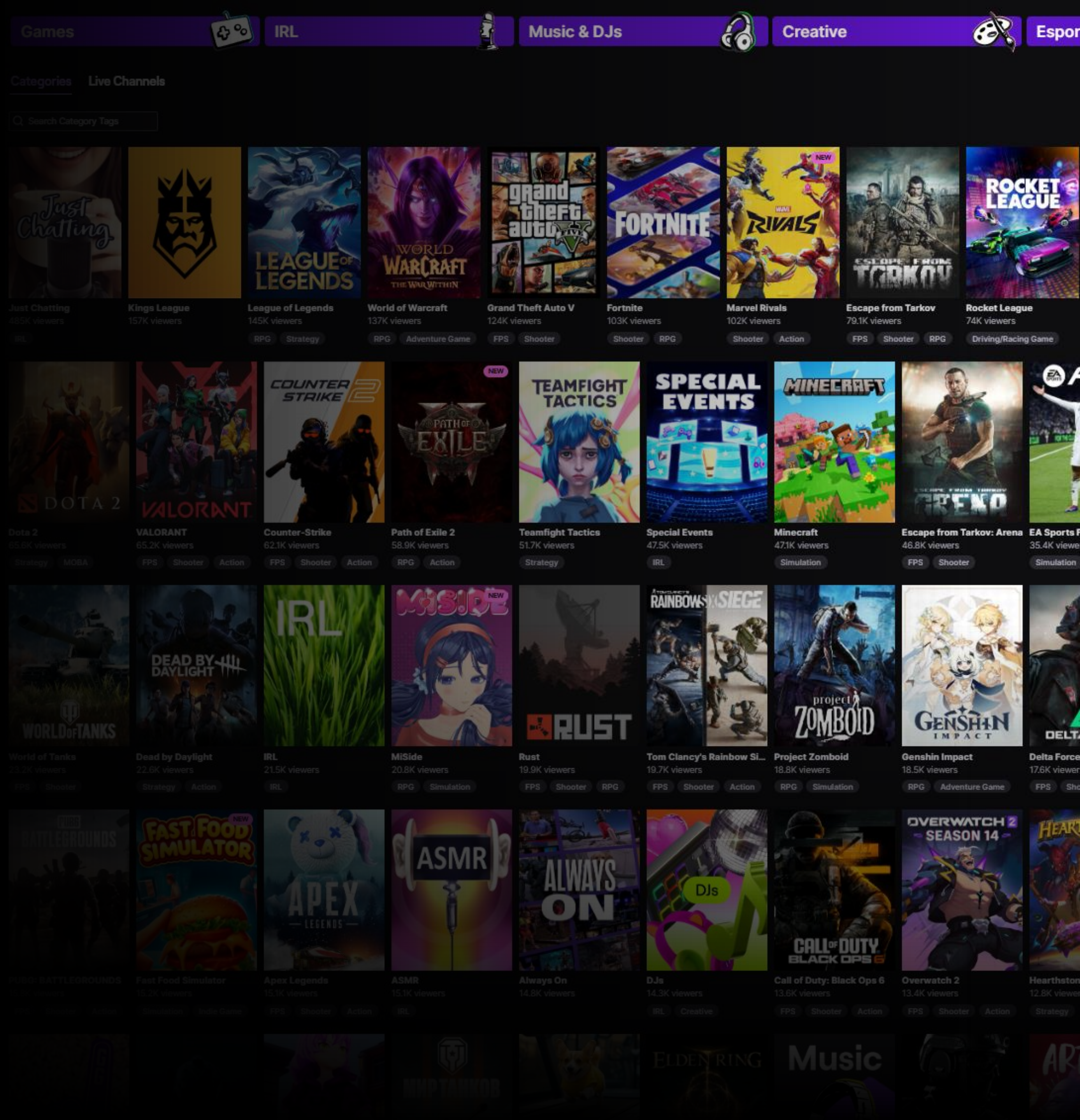
Search interest in 2024 continued to highlight the dominance of evergreen titles like Minecraft, Roblox, and Fortnite, which lead the charts by a significant margin.
Only one new title, Palworld, was able to break the top 20 most searched games.



Sources: Global Google search volume across all tracked games, sum of volume, rounded to nearest thousand, 1/1/2024 –12/29/2024

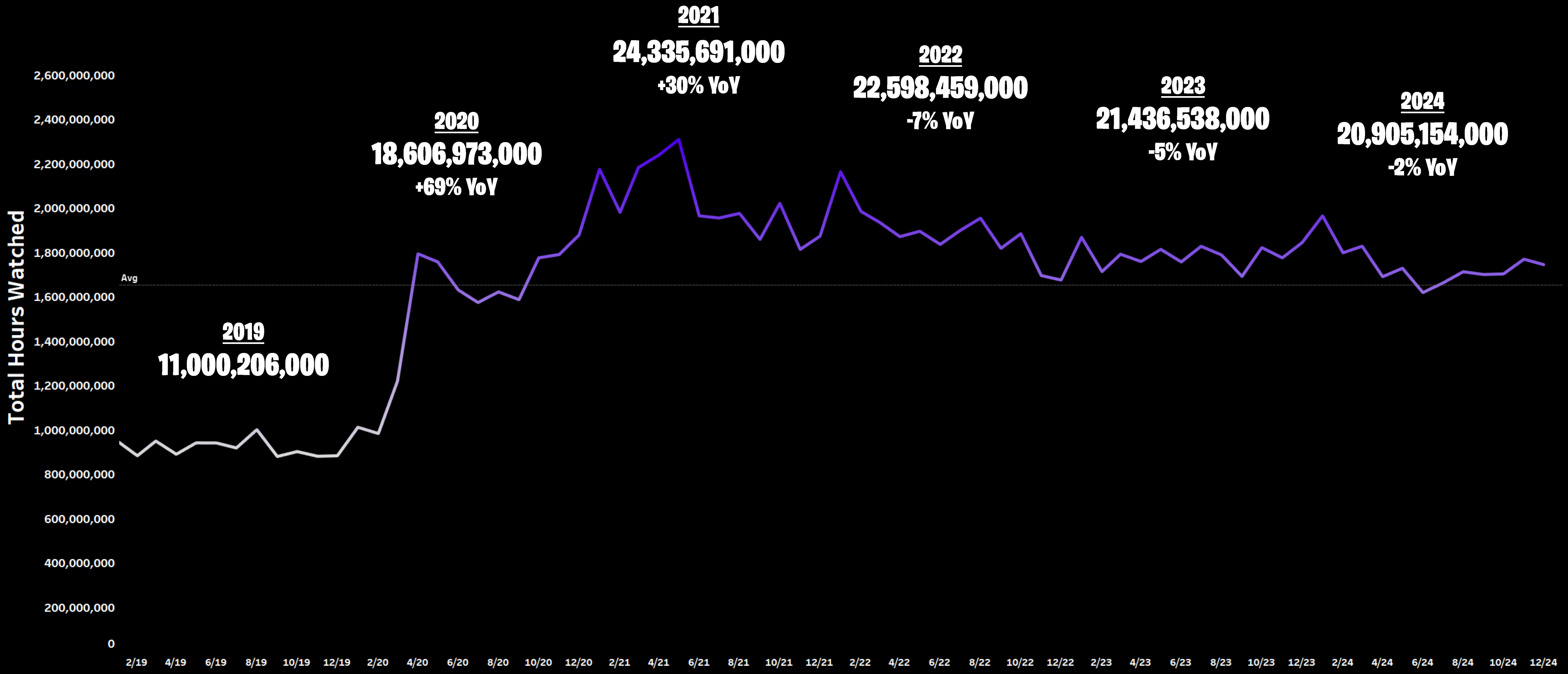
twitch

Viewer Trends, Top Games, and Top Genres



Twitch - Total Hours Watched

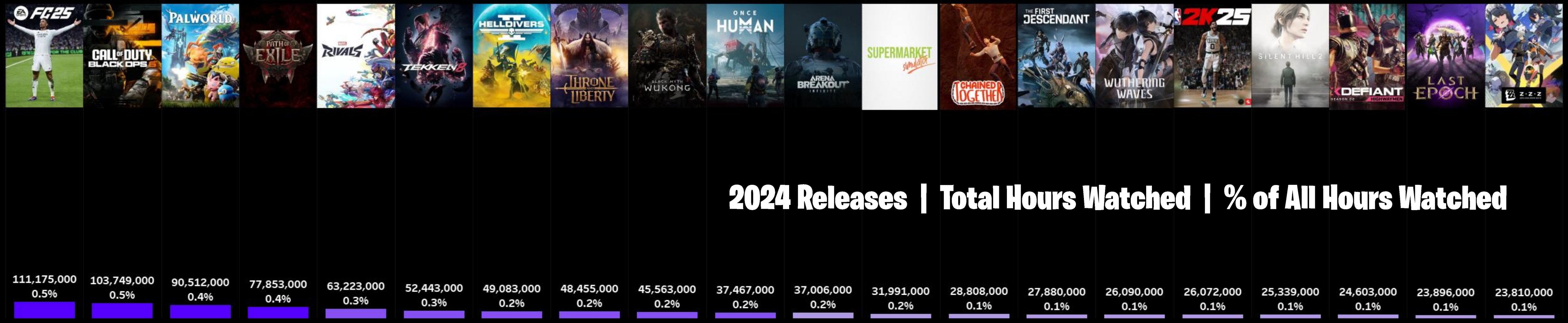
Twitch more than doubled hours watched during the pandemic, hitting its peak in mid-2021. While viewer hours have slightly declined each year, engagement remains strong and well above pre-pandemic levels, showing the platform's staying power with its audience.



Sources: Twitch total hours watched by week, rounded to nearest thousand, 1/1/2019 –12/29/2024, mindGAME Data's Twitch tracker via Twitch API; pre-2024 historical data via Sully Gnome at https://sullygnome.com/

Twitch - Top Games 2024

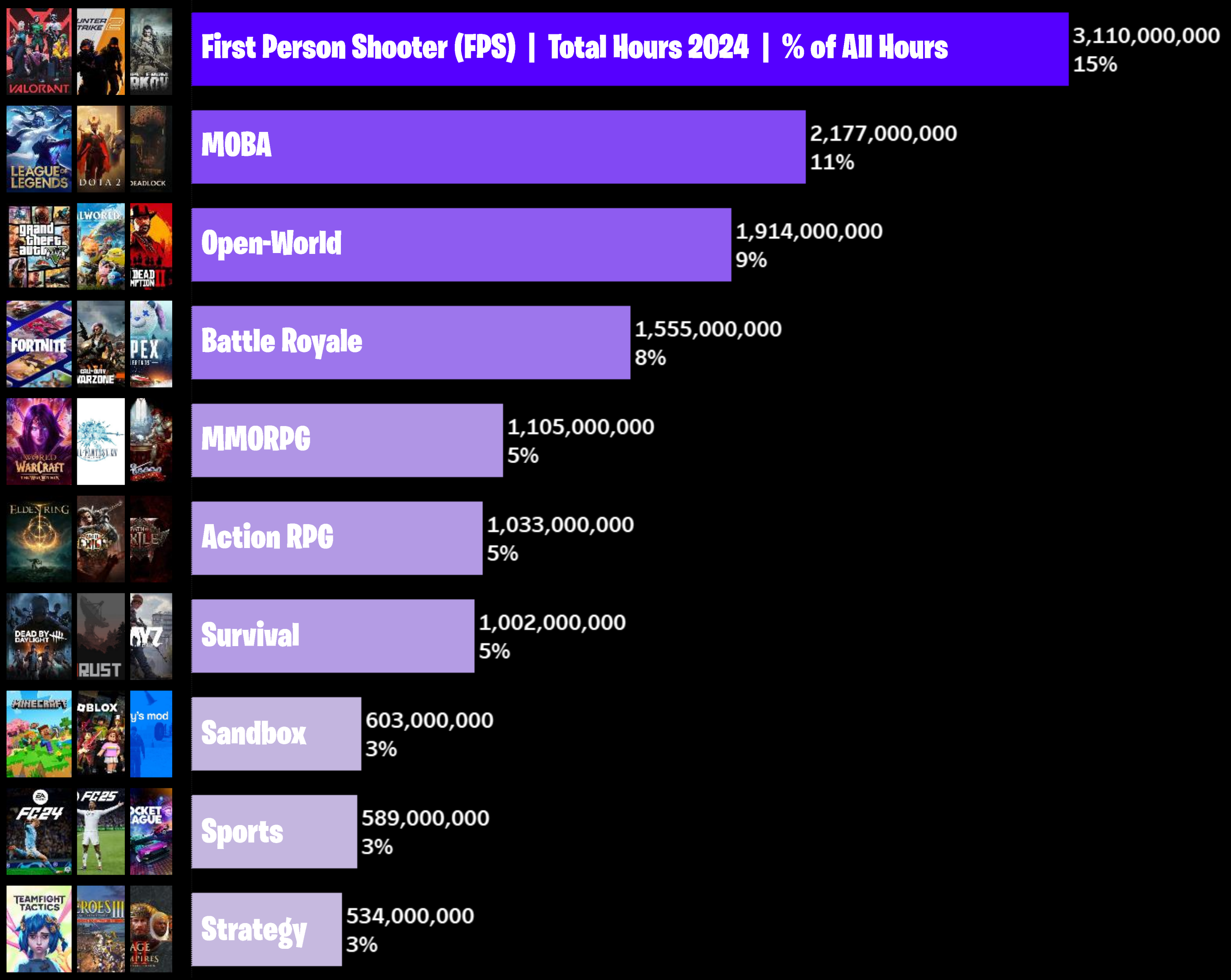
Almost half of all minutes watched on Twitch were captured by the top 20 games, none of which released in 2024

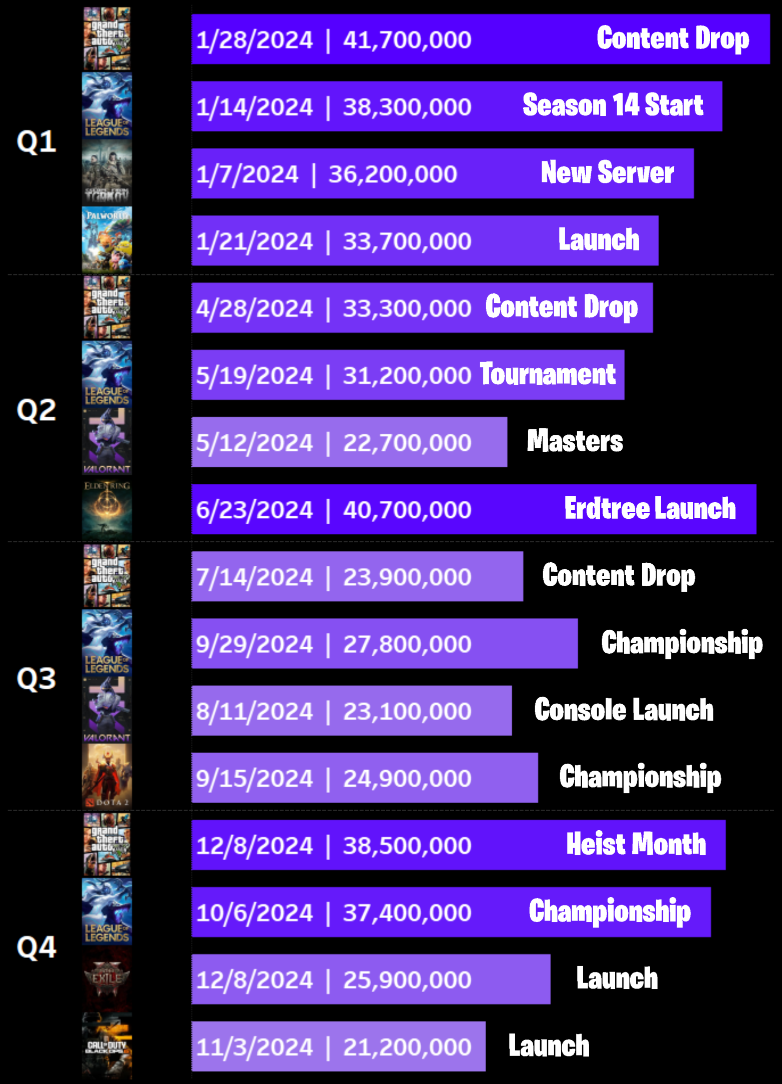


Sources: Twitch total hours watched, rounded to nearest thousand, 1/1/2024 –12/29/2024, mindGAME Data's Twitch tracker via Twitch API

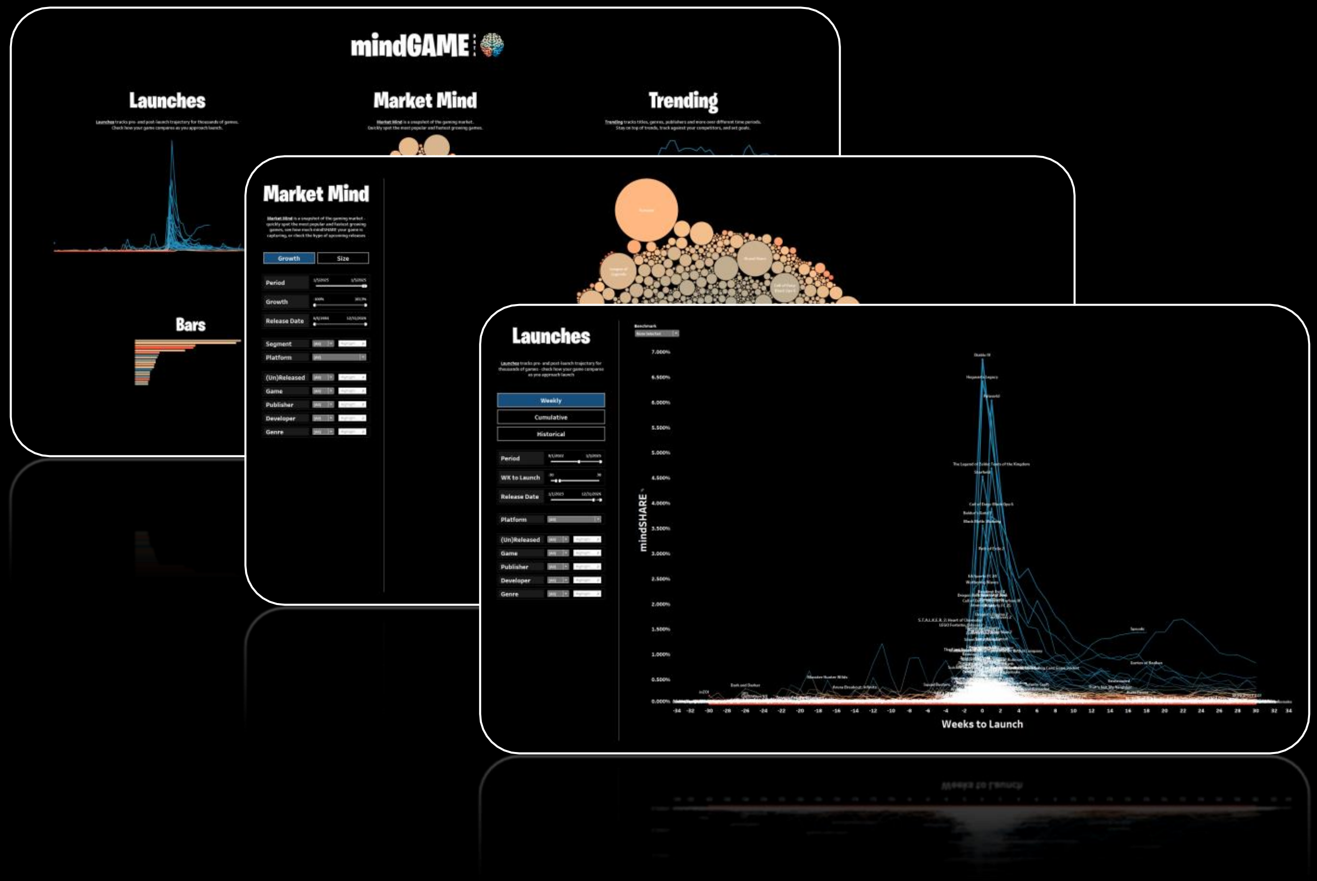
Twitch - Most Popular Genres and Top Weeks

The top 5 genres on Twitch account for nearly half of all hours watched; the biggest moments are driven by a mix of tournaments, launches and content drops





Thank You!



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Check out our methodology and a free data set at mindgamedata.com