

## Mobile Gaming: Inc Impact of COVID-19 - UK - October 2020

Report Price: £1995.00 | \$2693.85 | €2245.17

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“Game streaming is gaining prominence on mobile devices and Android’s support for Google Stadia and Xbox Game Pass could provide a key motivator for people to switch away from the iPhone, with Apple currently refusing to allow the services to operate on iOS as it stands.”  
– **Zach Emmanuel, Consumer Technology Analyst,**  
**9 October, 2020**

This report looks at the following areas:

- The short-, medium- and long-term impact of COVID-19 on mobile gaming including changes in usage and spending habits.
- Which type of games consumers play and how genres can suggest what kind of gamer the person is.
- Whether people have used a game streaming service over the last year and which platform it was.
- The interest in gaming accessories for mobile devices and dedicated gaming smartphones/tablets, amid the growing market of mobile gaming within esports.

Some 35% of mobile gamers would buy an accessory to improve gaming on their device and 34% would be interested in buying a dedicated gaming smartphone or tablet. This represents a group of serious gamers who want the best possible gaming experience on their mobile device and are willing to pay to get it. The growing popularity of esports and increasing use of smartphones by esports gamers presents opportunities for manufacturers to forge direct links with players and teams for the design and promotion of their devices to mobile gamers.

Habits during the COVID-19 lockdown helped boost the popularity of the already growing mobile gaming industry. With consumers trying to stay entertained at home, 39% of mobile gamers have played more since the pandemic. The impact of the lockdown was not as significant as with dedicated gaming consoles, though, with mobile gamers still showing some reluctance towards purchasing in-game content and paying to download games.

One major problem that iOS users in particular face is the lack of game streaming for the foreseeable future. With Apple wanting to review each individual game instead of Google Stadia or Xbox Game Pass as a whole, Microsoft says it cannot bring the platform to Apple devices as it stands. This presents a significant advantage for Android manufacturers to convince consumers to switch away from the iPhone, particularly Generation Z and Millennials who are the most interested in game streaming.

Some 31% of mobile gamers use or would use gaming apps which feature video calling, like Bunch or Houseparty. The next stage for these apps should be the ability to record the gameplay and player reactions and share it to social media. This is likely to grow the audience for these apps as social-media viewers will be more inclined to download the app having seen friends and family enjoying it.

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