

INOVA GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



FROM SAND DUNES TO GAME CONSOLES: INSIDE THE METEORIC RISE OF UAE'S GAMING SCENE

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MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM

We're thrilled to share some exciting insights from our latest exploration into the UAE's gaming scene. Picture this: the UAE has gone from sand dunes to game consoles in a blink! It's been quite the journey, with over three-quarters of the online population jumping into gaming.

Can you believe it? And it's not just a pastime – it's a big deal, with the market hitting a whopping \$0.4 billion by 2021! What's even more impressive? The diversity in gaming tastes! From in-game items to virtual goods, there's something for everyone. And let's not forget about the rise of video game streams – it's as popular as gameplay itself!

Looking ahead, the UAE's gaming future is looking bright. With smartphones becoming everyone's go-to, government support for startups, and the esports scene heating up, there's no stopping this train. Plus, with all the cool tech like AR, VR, and cloud gaming, the future's looking even more epic!

So, here's to the UAE's gaming journey – fueled by innovation, investment, and an awesome gaming community. Can't wait to see what's next!

**TEAM INOVA GLOBAL
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THE RISE OF GAMING AND ESPORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) stands as one of the world's leading gaming and esports markets, predicted to experience exponential growth due to its highly-engaged gaming audience. In 2027, the gaming revenue in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is forecasted to reach almost 6 billion U.S dollars, up from about 1.9 billion U.S dollars in 2023. The number of gamers in the region is forecasted to reach nearly 80 million gamers by 2027.

The region's increasing smartphone penetration and online gaming adoption are key drivers of market expansion, with opportunities further amplified by Mixed Reality-based apps and games.

Saudi Arabia, Iran, UAE, and Egypt boast larger gaming populations compared to countries like France, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark within the MENA region. Between 2015 and 2021, the gaming industry in MENA

attracted \$391.74 million in investment across 170 deals. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the UAE are at the forefront of the gaming audience in the region, generating \$1.76 billion in revenue in 2021. Players from the Middle East and Africa represent 15% of the global gaming population, totaling 434 billion, trailing only behind the Asia-Pacific region.

"MENA gaming poised for exponential growth, driven by UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt's dynamic markets."

In 2019, the number of players from the MENA region surpassed those from North America, with predictions indicating that MENA and Turkey will soon outnumber Europe in terms of players. The region had 65.32 million gamers in 2021, projected to rise to 85.76 million by 2025. Mobile and tablet games dominate the market, comprising 58%, followed by console games at 20%, and traditional PC games at 3%. Governments in Saudi Arabia and the UAE have implemented policies to promote game localization, support local game development, establish new studios, offices for international game companies, and host major esports tournaments.

The gaming industry thrives in the United Arab Emirates, with growing interest and investment in developing local talent and games. Average spending per gamer in the UAE is around USD 115 per year. The proliferation of smartphones and online gaming drives market growth, with AR-based apps and games presenting further opportunities.

Saudi Arabia is investing heavily in theme parks and entertainment spaces, hosting events like a charity e-sports competition with a USD 10 million prize fund to combat COVID-19. With 70% of the population under 30 years old and approximately 20 million gamers, the market is poised for growth.

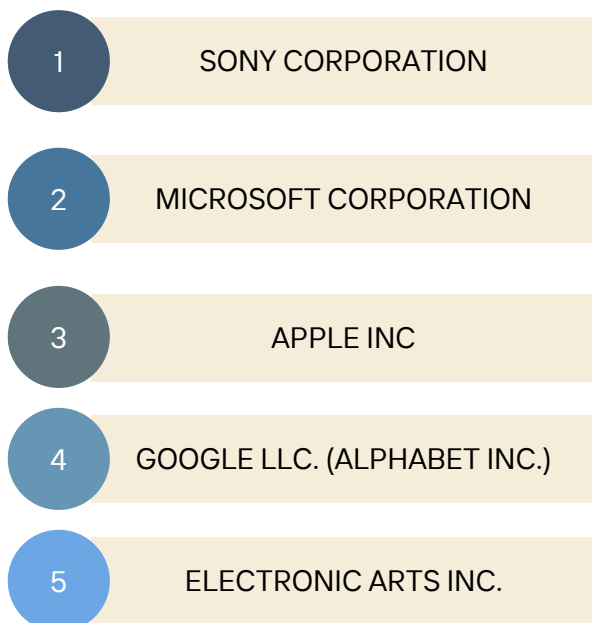
The Middle Eastern gaming market is characterized by moderate fragmentation, featuring numerous global and regional players. Key players include Sony Corporation, Microsoft Corporation, Apple Inc., Google LLC (Alphabet Inc.), and Electronic Arts Inc. These entities are employing strategies such as partnerships

and acquisitions to enrich their product portfolios and secure enduring competitive advantages.

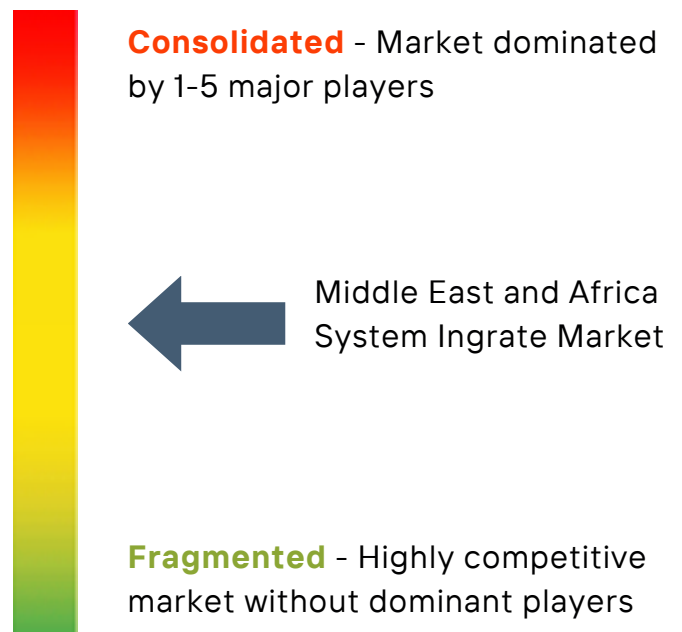
In May 2023, Apple unveiled plans to introduce 20 new titles on Apple Arcade, its gaming subscription service boasting over 200 engaging games. New additions include titles like "WHAT THE CAR?", "TMNT Splintered Fate," "Disney SpellStruck," and "Cityscapes: Sim Builder," alongside popular App Store games such as "Temple Run+," "Playdead's LIMBO+," and "PPKP+."

August 2022 saw Saudi Arabia granting regulatory approval for Microsoft's acquisition of Activision Blizzard, a video game company, for USD 68.7 billion. This strategic move highlights the country's commitment to fostering growth in the gaming sector. Additionally, in April 2023, Wemade, a South Korean gaming company renowned for its blockchain gaming platform WEMIX PLAY, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Saudi Ministry of Investment (MISA).

Middle East Gaming Market Leaders



Market Concentration

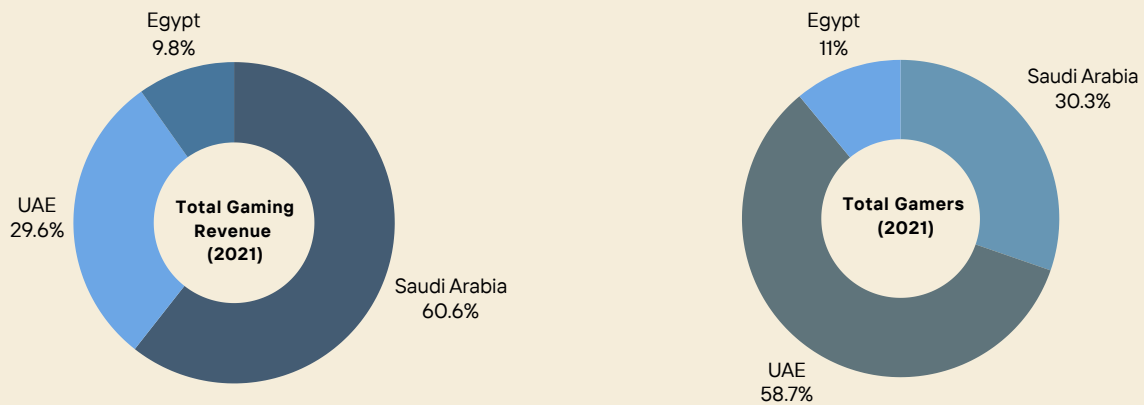


This partnership aims to catalyze the development and expansion of Saudi Arabia's gaming and blockchain sectors.

Furthermore, in May 2022, Gamerji, a prominent esports platform from India, extended its presence into the Middle

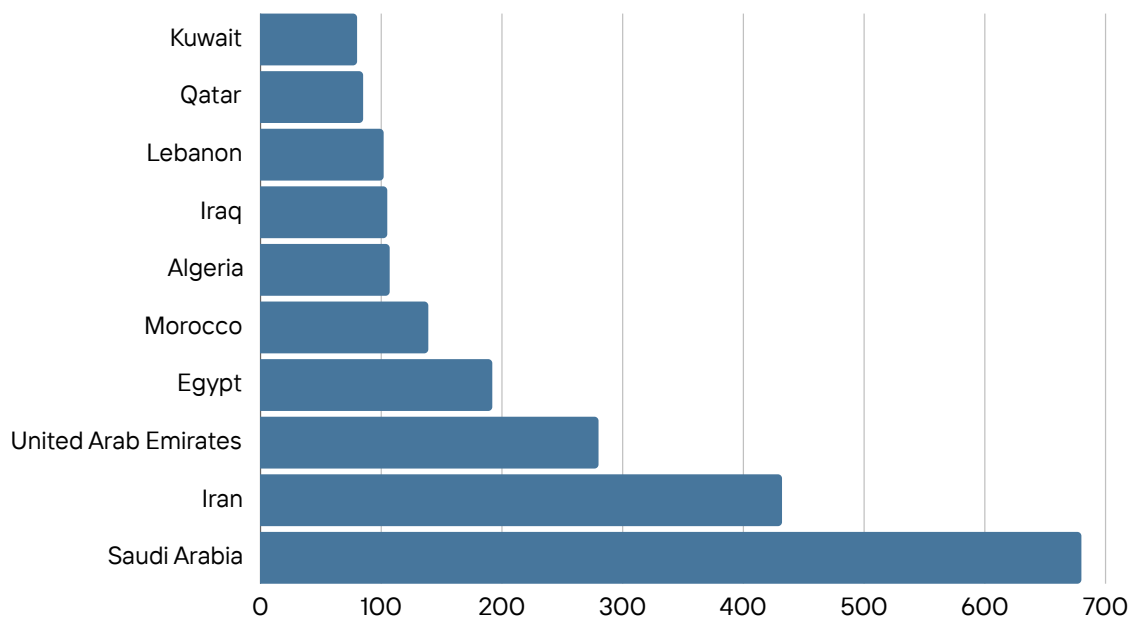
East, initially launching in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. With plans for further expansion across additional MENA countries within the subsequent three months, Gamerji's entry underscores the region's burgeoning interest and potential in the esports landscape.

Analysis of the top 3 MENA gaming markets



Source: Niko Partners, Statista and the National

Leading gaming markets in the MENA region as of January 2021, by revenue (in million U.S. dollars)



Source: Statista

GAMING INDUSTRY THRIVING: GROWTH ENVIRONMENT IN UAE

With over three-quarters of the UAE's online population actively engaged in gaming, the industry thrives within the country, fueled by increasing interest and investments in nurturing local talent and game development. As of 2019, the UAE ranked 35th globally in gaming revenue and an impressive 5th for gaming influencers. In 2021, the UAE's gaming market reached a valuation of \$0.4 billion, with 73% of its 10 million-strong population identified as gamers, 41% of whom are considered paid gamers. The gaming industry generated a substantial \$344 million in revenue in 2020, with mobile games contributing \$200 million and PC/console games adding \$143 million to the total.

A staggering 91% of paying gamers in the UAE invested in in-game items or virtual goods within a six-month period, spending an average of \$115 per year per gamer. Mobile gaming enjoys particular popularity, with 70% of women and 74% of men actively playing mobile games, while 49% of women and 64% of men indulge in console gaming. The UAE's

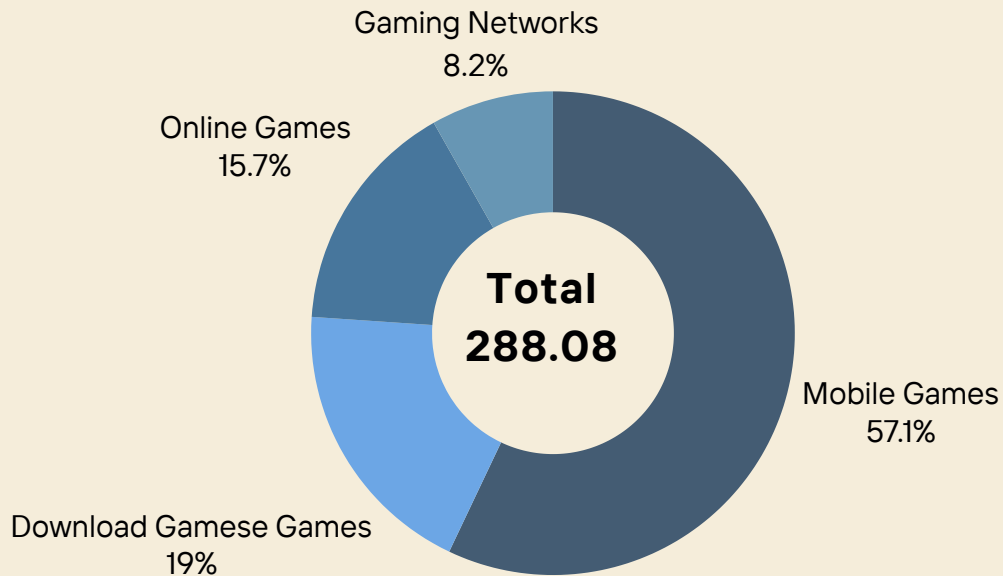
high mobile and internet penetration has attracted significant Chinese investments into its gaming market, with Tencent solidifying its presence by signing a memorandum of understanding with Dubai Internet City to establish its regional headquarters.

“UAE's gaming market valued at \$0.4 billion in 2021, with 73% of the population as gamers.

The consumption of video game streams has become as popular as gameplay itself, with platforms like YouTube Gaming, Twitch, and Facebook Gaming enjoying varying levels of popularity. In 2020, 68% of the UAE's online population engaged with game-related video content, with 23% showing interest in esports and 10% identifying as esports enthusiasts. Puzzle games dominate the mobile genre, while racing and sports titles lead on PC and



Game Market Revenue in the UAE



Source: allcorrectgames.com

console platforms. Games like Candy Crush Saga, FIFA, and Call of Duty are among the most commonly played in the UAE.

The UAE's online gaming market has experienced significant growth, driven by factors such as smartphone adoption, government support for startups, and the rise of esports tournaments and events. With increasing disposable income, accessible internet, and government investments in gaming infrastructure, the market is poised for further expansion.



"Mobile gaming popular among both genders, with significant investments from Chinese companies".

Looking ahead, the UAE's online gaming market is expected to witness substantial growth in the coming years, fueled by the adoption of cloud-based technologies, IoT

integration, and increasing per capita income. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated growth, with lockdowns leading to heightened interest in online leisure activities. With advancements in AI, 5G infrastructure, and a young working population eager to spend on gaming, the market's momentum is set to continue.

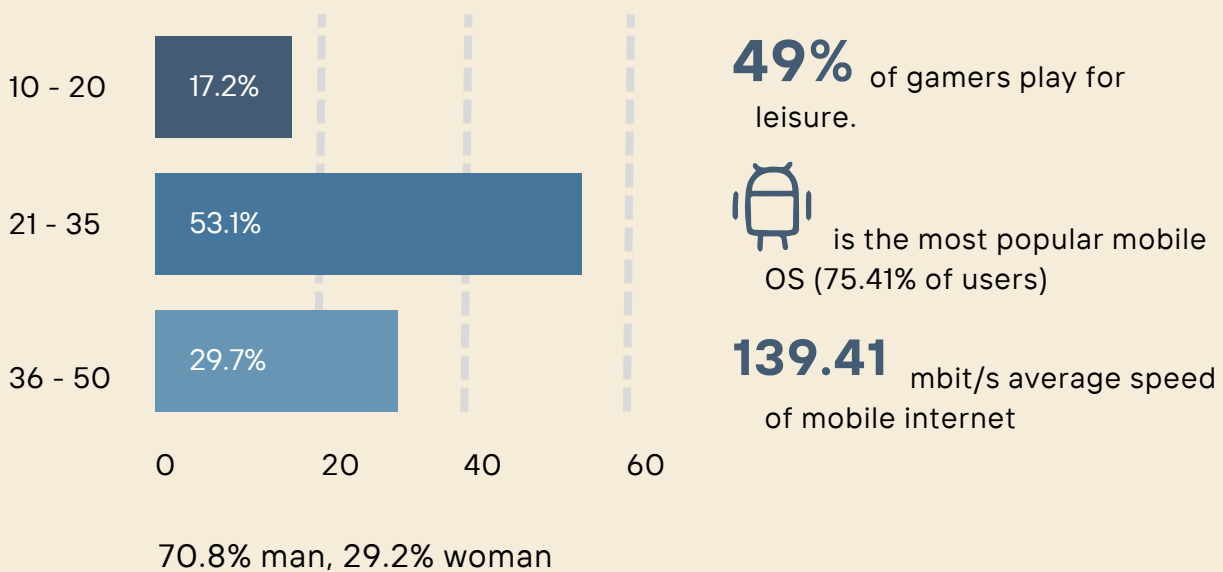
Moreover, the UAE's demographics paint a vivid picture of its gaming landscape. According to Statista, in 2022, the UAE boasted more adult gamers than any other country, with 91% of surveyed residents between the ages of 18 and 64 confirming they play games at least occasionally. The esports scene also thrives, with men comprising 76.9% of esports gamers, and the 25–34 age group leading the charge in esports engagement. This vibrant gaming culture, combined with technological advancements and favorable market conditions, positions the UAE as a key player in the global gaming industry, with ample opportunities for growth and innovation on the horizon.

Opportunities for International SMEs and Exporters


- 
Developing Immersive Gaming Experiences: With the popularity of strategy and puzzle games and the rising interest in eSports and AR/VR technology, there's a demand for companies to create next-level gaming experiences that captivate players.
- 
Targeting Specific Age Groups: Given the significant presence of young adults aged 18-34 in the mobile gaming market, companies can tailor their games and marketing strategies to appeal to this demographic, tapping into their preferences and interests.

Gamers in the UAE

Age and gender distribution



49% of gamers play for leisure.

 is the most popular mobile OS (75.41% of users)

139.41 mbit/s average speed of mobile internet

Source: allcorrectgames.com

- 
Promoting Gender-Inclusive Gaming: With almost equal participation from both genders in gaming, there's an opportunity for companies to create games and platforms that cater to diverse audiences, promoting inclusivity and diversity within the gaming community.
- 
Exploring Strategic Partnerships: Collaborating with local gaming communities, influencers, and esports organizations can provide companies with valuable insights and access to a dedicated fan base, facilitating market penetration and brand awareness in Dubai's gaming scene.

THE BOOMING MOBILE GAMING MARKET IN THE UAE

The UAE has established itself as a burgeoning center for gaming, particularly in the realm of mobile gaming. With a staggering 76% of gamers in the Emirates favoring smartphones or tablets, the region boasts a substantial mobile gaming community. This trend is further underscored by the fact that half of the UAE's online population invests in gaming, making UAE gamers some of the world's most prolific spenders in the gaming arena. Interestingly, around 39% of gamers in the market allocate their spending to mobile games, outpacing spending on consoles and PCs. This inclination towards mobile gaming is indicative of a unique trend in the UAE, where many gamers are willing to invest in their mobile gaming experiences, in contrast to more mature gaming markets in Western Europe.

Despite the popularity of mobile gaming, desktops and laptops still maintain a significant presence among gamers, with 55% of gamers favoring these platforms. Additionally, 43% opt for gaming consoles, reflecting a diverse gaming landscape within the UAE. Daily gaming sessions among mobile gamers typically range between 20 to

40 minutes, highlighting the prevalence of short but frequent gaming engagements. This surge in demand for mobile games can be attributed to various technological advancements, including augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), cloud gaming, and the widespread adoption of 5G connectivity.

“39% of gamers in the UAE allocate their spending to mobile games, surpassing spending on consoles and PCs”.

According to data from the global web index, a substantial 69.1% of UAE adults partake in mobile gaming, with nearly equal participation rates between UAE women (66.5%) and men (69.8%). Among the plethora of mobile gaming genres, action, adventure, sports, and racing emerge as the most commonly played categories.

Popular mobile games in the UAE mirror global gaming trends, with titles like eFootball PES 2021, Subway Surfers, PUBG, and Fortnite captivating the interests of gamers. This alignment with global gaming preferences underscores the UAE's integration into the broader gaming community while retaining its unique gaming culture and preferences.





43%

of gamers in the UAE opt for gaming consoles, showcasing a diverse gaming landscape.

69.1%

of UAE adults participate in mobile gaming, with nearly equal participation rates between men and women.

20 to 40 mins.

Daily gaming sessions among mobile gamers typically emphasize short but frequent engagements.

39%

of gamers in the UAE allocate their spending to mobile games, surpassing spending on consoles and PCs.

UAE'S ESPORTS PHENOMENON: A GROWING MARKET

The esports gaming market in the UAE is on the brink of a transformative journey, poised for rapid expansion in the coming years. Spearheaded by strategic collaborations such as the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Mubadala Investment Company and Abu Dhabi Gaming (AD Gaming), the nation is laying the groundwork for a vibrant gaming and esports ecosystem. This landmark agreement aims to attract global talent while nurturing local expertise, with a focus on fostering innovation in fields such as virtual reality, coding, and game development.

Furthermore, the unveiling of plans for the Middle East's inaugural esports stadium by the Dubai Media Office and TECOM Group signals a significant milestone in the region's esports journey. This state-of-the-art facility is set to become a beacon of esports excellence, providing a world-class venue for tournaments, events, and community engagement. With its cutting-edge infrastructure and visionary design, the stadium is poised to elevate the UAE's status as a global hub for esports enthusiasts and professionals alike.

Amidst this backdrop of innovation and ambition, Dubai has emerged as a focal point for the region's gaming industry, driven by its dynamic business environment and forward-thinking policies. The establishment of the DMCC Gaming Centre, a dedicated hub for gaming companies, underscores Dubai's commitment to nurturing homegrown talent and attracting international investment. This state-of-the-art facility provides a collaborative space for industry stakeholders to network, innovate, and explore new

opportunities in the ever-evolving world of gaming.

The recent success of the Dubai Esports and Games Festival further cements the city's position as a leading destination for gaming enthusiasts and professionals. Drawing over 26,000 visitors and 75,000 gamers from around the world, the festival showcased Dubai's vibrant gaming culture and its growing influence on the global stage. From exhilarating tournaments to insightful panel discussions, the event offered a glimpse into the future of esports and gaming in the region. Looking ahead, Dubai's investment in gaming infrastructure and events is poised to yield substantial economic dividends, with projections estimating the MENA gaming market to exceed \$5 billion by next year. With international gaming giants like Tencent and Riot Games setting up regional headquarters in the city, Dubai is well-positioned to lead the way in shaping the future of esports gaming in the Middle East and beyond.

As Dubai continues to host major gaming events and attract industry players from around the world, its reputation as a global gaming hub is set to soar to new heights. With its vibrant ecosystem, supportive infrastructure, and unwavering commitment to innovation, Dubai offers a compelling destination for gaming enthusiasts, professionals, and investors looking to be part of the next chapter in esports history.

STATISTICS

- **UAE's esports market set for rapid growth, with projections soaring.**
- **MoU between Mubadala and AD Gaming drives innovation and talent.**
- **Dubai to host Middle East's first esports stadium.**
- **Dubai Esports Festival attracts 26,000+ visitors and 75,000+ gamers worldwide.**
- **Dubai's gaming investment forecasted to surpass \$5 billion.**

IMMERSIVE GAMING: EXPLORING THE AR & VR MARKET IN THE UAE

The UAE's gaming market is experiencing a rapid evolution driven by the integration of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) technologies. Projections suggest that by 2030, AR and VR will inject a staggering \$4.1 billion (AED 15.05 billion) into the UAE economy, catalyzing a 1% increase in the country's GDP and creating approximately 42,000 new jobs.

The advent of mobile gaming apps and the declining costs of AR and VR headsets have played pivotal roles in the remarkable growth of the UAE's AR and VR market share. In a bid to foster interest in AR and VR across all demographics, the UAE has launched VR Park, the world's largest virtual and augmented reality theme park, situated in Dubai. This immersive park offers visitors an unparalleled array of experiences, showcasing the transformative potential of AR and VR technologies in entertainment and beyond.

In 2024, the UAE's VR Headsets market revenue amounted to US\$19.4 million, with an expected annual growth rate of 8.07% (CAGR 2024-2028). Comparatively, China leads the global market, generating US\$3,169.0 million in 2024. Per capita, each individual in the UAE contributes US\$2.02 to the total revenue. Looking ahead, the volume in the UAE's VR Headsets market is projected to reach 65.07 thousand units by 2028, with a 7.8% volume growth expected in 2025.

The surge in demand for VR headsets in the UAE reflects the technology's increasing popularity among the nation's tech-savvy

populace. Factors such as the burgeoning gaming industry, rising online game penetration, foreign direct investment (FDI) in retail and commercial sectors, and the growing adoption of AR and VR technology in various industries, particularly for research and development applications, are driving the growth of the UAE's augmented and virtual reality market.

As Dubai continues to host major gaming events and attract industry players from around the world, its reputation as a global gaming hub is set to soar to new heights. With its vibrant ecosystem, supportive infrastructure, and unwavering commitment to innovation, Dubai offers a compelling destination for gaming enthusiasts, professionals, and investors looking to be part of the next chapter in esports history.

Projections indicate that the UAE augmented, and virtual reality market will grow at a remarkable CAGR of over 55% during 2017-2023. The market witnessed exponential growth of 112% during 2015-2016, propelled by the introduction of mobile apps and declining headset prices. The commercial sector, including media, construction, and hospitality industries, is expected to drive further market growth, along with increasing usage of AR and VR headsets for advertisements.

In the UAE, head-mounted displays dominate, especially in gaming and education, while entertainment holds the highest revenue share. Commercial and automotive sectors are expected to grow rapidly. Dubai leads in market revenues, driven by its commercial sector. Overall, the UAE's AR & VR market offers significant growth potential, fueled by tech advancements and increasing demand for immersive experiences.

Stakeholders can leverage comprehensive analysis to capitalize on evolving market dynamics.



MARKET GROWTH

The UAE's AR/VR market experienced remarkable growth at a CAGR of over **55% during 2017-2023**, driven by factors such as the introduction of mobile apps and declining headset prices.

PROJECTED GROWTH

AR and VR technologies in the UAE are forecasted to inject **\$4.1 billion (AED 15.05 billion)** into the economy by 2030, driving a 1% increase in GDP and creating 42,000 new jobs.

MARKET REVENUE

In 2024, UAE's VR headsets market revenue reached **US\$19.4 million**, with a projected growth rate of **8.07%** annually (CAGR 2024-2028).

PROJECTED GROWTH

The surge in demand for VR headsets is driven by factors like the booming gaming industry, increasing online game penetration, and foreign direct investment in retail and commercial sectors.

CLOUD GAMING'S ASCENDANCY: UAE'S THRIVING MARKET LANDSCAPE

The UAE is rapidly advancing in cloud gaming, with significant numbers to support its growth trajectory. In 2019, Etisalat, the Emirati-based multinational telecommunications services provider, introduced the UAE's first cloud gaming service on its eLife set-top box. This innovative platform allows gamers to access and play the latest games without the need for a separate game console, catering to a broad audience of gaming enthusiasts. The move reflects a strategic effort to introduce non-gamers to the gaming world and support the UAE in its digital transformation journey.

Moreover, the international gaming service Playkey.me became available in the Middle East, including the UAE. This cloud gaming service enables players worldwide to enjoy the newest video games on low-spec PCs and laptops, enhancing accessibility and inclusivity within the gaming community.

As the UAE continues to embrace cloud

gaming, it is poised for significant growth in the sector. With projections estimating the global cloud gaming market to reach \$7.24 billion by 2027, the UAE's initiatives in this space are well-aligned with broader industry trends. Additionally, the region's robust infrastructure and high digital penetration rates position it as a key player in the cloud gaming landscape.

Leveraging cloud technology for immersive gaming experiences, the UAE attracts new gamers while advancing its digital agenda, solidifying its status as a tech and innovation hub.

By leveraging cloud technology to deliver immersive gaming experiences, the UAE is not only catering to the needs of existing gamers but also expanding its reach to new audiences. With innovative solutions like cloud gaming, the UAE is driving forward its digital agenda and cementing its status as a leading hub for technology and innovation in the region.



ACCELERATING GAMING: UAE'S STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR INDUSTRY EXPANSION

Innovative strategies are driving the growth of gaming in the UAE, spearheaded by key initiatives aimed at transforming the region into a global gaming hub.

Abu Dhabi Gaming (AD Gaming) leads the charge, championing talent development, game development, and esports to propel the region's gaming industry forward. With a focus on innovation and knowledge, AD Gaming nurtures the next generation of game developers and players, fostering a supportive ecosystem for businesses and fans alike.

Collaborative efforts between Mubadala Investment Company and AD Gaming are set to build a robust gaming and esports ecosystem in Abu Dhabi and the UAE. This partnership aims to attract global talent, advance education in virtual reality, coding, and game design, while creating employment opportunities and supporting industry events.

A "train-the-trainer" development program led by Unity Technologies, in partnership with educational institutions like Abu Dhabi University and NYU Abu Dhabi, equips professors with skills in AI, virtual reality, and game development. AD Gaming facilitates student-industry partnerships to provide valuable industry experience.

The Yas Creative Hub, hosted by Twofour54, emerges as a purpose-built center for media, entertainment, and gaming, attracting

diverse content creators and offering state-of-the-art facilities. The hub's connected campus and partnerships with leading entities like CNN and Unity Technologies promise to elevate creative endeavors.

Plans for the Middle East's first esports stadium, announced by Dubai Media Office and TECOM Group, aim to position Dubai as a global hub for gaming events, attracting millions of gamers and enthusiasts worldwide. Additionally, initiatives like GAME_ON, a series of video game development workshops, and the development of blockchain gaming in partnership with Attarius Network, underscore the UAE's commitment to fostering innovation and growth in the gaming industry.

These initiatives collectively signify the UAE's dedication to embracing emerging technologies and creating a vibrant gaming ecosystem that nurtures talent, fosters innovation, and positions the region as a leading player in the global gaming landscape.

Stakeholders can leverage comprehensive analysis to capitalize on evolving market dynamics.



Fueling Growth: UAE's Gaming Ecosystem Surges with Innovation and Investment"

The gaming ecosystem in the UAE is experiencing exponential growth, driven by a myriad of factors and supported by various initiatives and attractions

Ubisoft Abu Dhabi, established in 2011, boasts a team of over 60 mobile game developers who have created successful titles like CSI: Hidden Crime, enjoyed by over 30 million players globally.

Tencent Games, recognized as the top gaming development company in 2021, reported a staggering overall revenue of \$8,299 million, solidifying its position as a global gaming giant. With its MENA regional headquarters based in Dubai, Tencent Games contributes significantly to the region's gaming landscape.

IN5, a startup incubator launched in 2013, has supported hundreds of entrepreneurs who have collectively raised over AED 465 million in funding. Gaming is among the key sectors considered by IN5, highlighting its commitment to fostering innovation in the gaming industry.

Microsoft's GrowthX Accelerator program, in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Investment Office, aims to connect startups with the best of Microsoft's resources to facilitate their growth. Over the 12-week program, 15 startups from the Middle East & Africa region will have the opportunity to showcase their concepts to venture capitalists and Microsoft's regional enterprise customers.

GEMS Education and Lenovo's collaboration

has resulted in the launch of an esports program aimed at accelerating opportunities for students in gaming. The initiative includes the establishment of Lenovo's Legion Gaming Zone at Gems Modern Academy in Dubai, providing students with state-of-the-art gaming facilities.

Alt Gaming Lounge, located in Dubai Investment Park, offers a unique gaming experience with multiple PlayStation and PC gaming setups. This gaming venue serves as a hub for gamers to connect and enjoy various board games, contributing to the nurturing of gaming enthusiasts in the UAE.



Zero Latency Abu Dhabi, managed by Qwerty LLC, offers an immersive virtual reality experience in a 225-square-meter facility. As the global leader in VR entertainment, Zero Latency provides players with thrilling experiences like shooting zombies and traversing space and time, further enriching the gaming landscape in the UAE.

These numbers and facts underscore the significant growth and development of the gaming ecosystem in the UAE, positioning the country as a prominent player in the global gaming industry.

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY WITHIN THE UAE



Market Potential: With over three-quarters of the UAE's online population actively engaged in gaming, there is a significant market potential for international businesses and startups to tap into. The UAE boasts a growing gaming market with substantial revenue and a large population of gamers, providing ample opportunities for businesses to enter and expand.



Investment and Collaboration: The UAE government has shown a commitment to nurturing the gaming industry through investments and strategic collaborations. International businesses and startups can explore opportunities for partnerships with local entities, government agencies, and gaming companies to leverage resources, expertise, and infrastructure.



Talent Development: The UAE is investing in talent development programs and initiatives to foster the growth of the gaming industry. International businesses and startups can participate in these programs to recruit and develop local talent, contributing to the expansion of the gaming ecosystem in the region.



Infrastructure Support: The UAE's gaming infrastructure is evolving rapidly, with initiatives like esports stadiums and gaming hubs being established. International businesses and startups can benefit from the state-of-the-art facilities and supportive ecosystem to launch new ventures, host events, and expand their operations.



Technology Integration: The UAE is embracing advanced technologies such as AR, VR, cloud gaming, and 5G connectivity to enhance the gaming experience. International businesses and startups specializing in these technologies can find opportunities to collaborate with local partners and integrate their solutions into the UAE's gaming ecosystem.



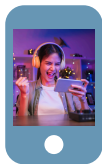
Education and Training: Educational institutions and programs in the UAE are focusing on gaming-related fields such as virtual reality, coding, and game development. International businesses and startups can contribute to these initiatives by providing training, resources, and mentorship to students and aspiring game developers.



Incubators and Accelerators: Incubators and accelerators like IN5 and Microsoft's GrowthX Accelerator program provide support and resources to startups in the gaming industry. International businesses can leverage these platforms to access funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities to accelerate their growth in the UAE market.

TAILORING SUCCESS: KEY PRODUCT CATEGORIES FOR BUSINESSES ENTERING UAE'S GAMING SCENE

Businesses and startups looking to enter the UAE's gaming market can consider bringing in a range of products and services tailored to meet the needs and preferences of the local gaming community:



Mobile Games: Given the popularity of mobile gaming in the UAE, businesses can develop and publish mobile games targeting diverse genres such as action, adventure, sports, and racing. Games with engaging storylines, immersive gameplay, and multiplayer features are likely to resonate well with UAE gamers.



Console and PC Games: Despite the dominance of mobile gaming, there is still a significant market for console and PC games in the UAE. Businesses can distribute popular titles and franchises across various platforms, including PlayStation, Xbox, and PC gaming platforms like Steam and Epic Games Store.



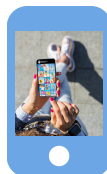
Gaming Hardware: There is a demand for gaming hardware and accessories among UAE gamers, including gaming consoles, gaming PCs, gaming peripherals (e.g., keyboards, mice, controllers), gaming monitors, and virtual reality headsets. International businesses can import and distribute high-quality gaming hardware to cater to this market segment.



Cloud Gaming Services: With the growing interest in cloud gaming, Businesses can introduce cloud gaming services in the UAE, allowing gamers to stream and play high-quality games on-demand without the need for expensive gaming hardware. Partnering with local telecommunications providers or launching standalone platforms can facilitate the delivery of cloud gaming services.



Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) Experiences: AR and VR technologies are gaining traction in the UAE, presenting opportunities for businesses to develop and distribute immersive gaming experiences. International businesses can create AR and VR games, applications, and experiences that offer unique and engaging gameplay for UAE gamers.



Gaming Content and Media: There is a demand for gaming-related content and media among UAE gamers, including video game streams, tutorials, reviews, and esports coverage. International businesses can launch gaming-focused media platforms, YouTube channels, and streaming services to cater to this audience and capitalize on the growing interest in gaming content.



Esports Solutions: Esports is rapidly growing in the UAE, creating opportunities for businesses to provide esports solutions such as tournament organization platforms, streaming services, esports training programs, and merchandise. International businesses can collaborate with local esports organizations and gaming communities to deliver tailored solutions for the burgeoning esports scene.

IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the UAE's gaming landscape stands as a testament to its rapid evolution into a global gaming powerhouse. With over three-quarters of its online population actively engaged in gaming, the industry thrives within the country, buoyed by increasing interest and investments in nurturing local talent and game development. As of 2019, the UAE ranked 35th globally in gaming revenue and an impressive 5th for gaming influencers. By 2021, the UAE's gaming market had reached a valuation of \$0.4 billion, with a staggering 73% of its 10 million-strong population identified as gamers, 41% of whom are considered paid gamers. This burgeoning industry generated a substantial \$344 million in revenue in 2020 alone, with mobile games contributing \$200 million and PC/console games adding \$143 million to the total.

The UAE's gaming landscape is characterized by diverse gaming preferences and significant consumer spending on in-game items and virtual goods, reflecting a vibrant and engaged gaming community. Moreover, the consumption of video game streams has become as popular as gameplay itself, with platforms like YouTube Gaming, Twitch, and Facebook Gaming enjoying varying levels of popularity.

Looking ahead, the UAE's gaming market is poised for further expansion, driven by factors such as smartphone adoption, government support for startups, and the rise of esports tournaments and

events. With increasing disposable income, accessible internet, and government investments in gaming infrastructure, the market's momentum is set to continue. Additionally, advancements in AI, 5G infrastructure, and a young working population eager to spend on gaming further bolster the industry's growth prospects.

Furthermore, the UAE's demographics paint a vivid picture of its gaming landscape, with a high proportion of adult gamers and a thriving esports scene. The country's integration of augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies, along with its embrace of cloud gaming, underscores its commitment to innovation and technological advancement in the gaming sector.

Key initiatives aimed at fostering talent development, game development, and esports further solidify the UAE's position as a global gaming hub. From established gaming studios like Ubisoft Abu Dhabi to strategic collaborations with industry giants like Tencent Games, the UAE's gaming ecosystem continues to attract investment and talent from around the world.

In summary, the UAE's meteoric rise in the gaming industry, from sand dunes to game consoles, showcases its remarkable journey fueled by innovation, investment, and a thriving gaming community. With a strategic vision for the future and a commitment to fostering growth and innovation, the UAE is poised to remain at the forefront of the global gaming landscape for years to come.

RESOURCES

- ✔ ["Future of Trade' Report on Gaming and Esports", DMCC](#)
- ✔ ["Investing in Gaming in the UAE", United Arab Emirates Ministry of Economy](#)
- ✔ ["Leading gaming markets in the Middle East and North Africa ", 2021, Statista](#)
- ✔ ["Leading gaming markets in the Middle East and North Africa ", 2022, NBusiness](#)
- ✔ ["The Gaming Market in the UAE", 2023, Allcorrect Games Studio](#)



THANK YOU!



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