

Cloud gaming successes from coronavirus lockdown

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Cloud gaming, by nature, is also enough to turn heads: It expands the audience for premium games beyond the current console and PC audience by making them accessible anywhere, at any time, and on any device. That huge addressable market is creating a lucrative and growing opportunity for companies gearing up to enter the space, providing a long runway for growth.

With free time in hand, people are playing on-demand games on their smartphones or consoles due to which cloud gaming is witnessing a considerable demand among serious gamers, casual gamers, as well as social gamers. Amidst the COVID-19 lockdown, the global cloud gaming market is witnessing a rapid increase in user engagement. Bangladesh is one of the countries witnessing a significant demand for cloud or on-demand gaming during this pandemic. Games such as Houseparty and Psych have emerged as some of the most-played games during the quarantine period. The boost in user engagement has reached a level where the users are experiencing lags in the gaming interface of Also, the majority of the population has turned toward video games to pass the time during the lockdown. Verizon Communications has

witnessed a surprising boost of 75% in usage during March 2020.

The rapid surge in cloud computing combined with the expanding population of professional gamers has led the market to great heights in recent years. Moreover, high government investments in this field as well as related technologies, elevated adoption of smartphones coupled with the rising penetration of high-speed Internet can also boost the market demand in the region during the conjectured timeframe.

Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality

Video game developers are increasingly adopting VR and AR technologies to enhance players' gaming experiences. VR includes a computer-generated simulated environment, usually with auditory and visual feedback. AR provides an interactive experience by integrating computer-generated information with real-life objects. According to the VRDC VR/AR Innovation report published in 2017, 78% of AR, VR and mixed reality

developers were focusing on developing games integrated with these technologies. For instance, Half-Life: Alyx is a brand-new game in the Half-Life universe designed exclusively for PC virtual reality systems. In March 2020, around 43,000 users played Valve's Half-Life: Alyx on Steam in one day. The game was listed in the top 25 games on Steam with the most concurrent players. Major companies developing games with AR and VR technologies include Niantic, Owlchemy Labs, Unity Technologies, and Ubisoft.

Google's Stadia

Launching while consumers worldwide are under quarantine will likely boost Stadia's user acquisition, as consumers under stay-at-home orders are hungry for entertainment. For example, gaming traffic on Verizon's network was 115% higher in April; and Netflix usage increased an estimated 54-75% in some regions. So, as consumers self-isolate worldwide, this creates the perfect storm for Stadia to attract new users, particularly as its Pro tier

will be free for users to try in the coming two months. To entice new sign-ups, Stadia announced it would also give away two months of its Pro tiered service, which includes free access to a rotating selection of games and offers 4K-quality streaming, but was previously limited to those who bought the Google Stadia Premiere Edition.

Esports

One of the greatest benefits of esports is that it can be played without physical co-location of participants. To satisfy the increasing demand for contest, professional teams and athletes are turning to simulation esports. Highlights include F1 drivers using rFactor 2 and F1 2019 to host online races, the NBA Phoenix Suns and Dallas Mavericks replacing a cancelled game with a match on NBA 2K20, and Spanish football stars Borja Iglesias and Sergio Reguilón playing a show match in FIFA20. Taking that into account, the most anticipated esports events are generally live events. We have seen several large-scale esports events being either canceled, postponed, or held without audiences. Naturally, with the quarantine leading more people to spend time at home, they have more time to watch online content. Viewership on Twitch and YouTube Gaming is up at least 10% over the last week, though Twitch contains more than just gaming or esports content.

