

Gaming is to Gen Alpha what Social is to Gen Z

New tech & new people will reshape the sector

Streaming will be the unifying technology that allows everybody to access all the gaming content they want, on any screen they want, whenever they want. As a result, its accessibility will only grow. At the same time, seeking out a career within the gaming industry will become more commonplace as Gen Alpha enters the workforce - gaming is something they've been familiar with since before they could watch TV so it's second nature.

AR & VR will usher in hyper-realism

Gen Alpha will seek out games that offer meaningful, personalised experiences with deeper emotional engagement. This will be fuelled by the rise of increasingly widespread and affordable VR and AR technology. The combination of both will create hyper-realistic, interactive environments that blur the lines between the physical and digital worlds. VR will offer fully immersive game worlds, while AR will increasingly transform real-world spaces - like parks, streets, and homes - into dynamic gaming environments.

Gaming will be fully integrated into Gen Alpha's daily lives by 2030, much like social media is for Gen Z today. Technological innovations, new business models and changing player preferences will reshape the industry and advancements in streaming will enable immediate and universal access to content. In 2025, there is no such thing as a typical gamer and gaming will only continue to become more appealing and accessible to broader audiences as we approach 2030.

When it comes to ad spend, [IAB UK's Futurescape Barometer](#) forecasts that the gaming sector will see a +7% average annual growth rate between 2024 and 2030. For more from the IAB UK Futurescape Barometer, [log in to download the graphs](#).

How to future-proof for 2030

- 1 Reconsider what gaming can do. Advertisers should consider gaming as a viable alternative media channel to linear TV, providing scalable and broad audiences and high attention and impactful brand advertising
- 2 Invest in advanced AI. Gaming media owners will need to invest in advanced AI and data analytics to improve content experiences and navigate privacy and brand safety
- 3 Get in the retail mindset. Gen Alpha will expect fully shoppable formats and ad placements within gaming, so advertisers and brands need to ensure diversification of offerings
- 4 Adapt to emerging platforms and formats. As cross-platform solutions for seamless ad integration are developed, advertisers will need to adopt a test and learn approach



I think there's maybe the perception that gaming is merely a channel, when in reality it might best be viewed as both a 'channel of channels' and a force of culture. Inside gaming, brands can redeploy their video, OOH, audio and even IAB standard display banners. Outside of gaming titles themselves, you can also treat it like sport or entertainment because there is a whole periphery of opportunity sitting adjacent.

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