investgame InvestGame 2024 Gaming Deals Report

Executive summary

2024 recap and 2025 predictions

2024 Summary

- M&A activity shifted from opportunistic, short-term "arbitrage" deals to more strategic, long-term, and objective-driven transactions, with deal-making activity remaining above pre-COVID levels.
- Amid a stricter environment, many strategic players streamlined pipelines, announced layoffs and offloaded non-core assets while doubling down on core businesses (e.g., Embracer Group, MTG, Take-Two, Aristocrat).
- M&A activity spanned all segments, with the work-for-hire sector taking center stage, highlighted by the \$2.8B Keywords buyout and the sale of 16 other WFH studios.
- In an investor-friendly climate, private equity firms seized the opportunity to acquire companies (e.g., Keywords, Jagex, Private Division) and provide growth capital (e.g., Aonic, Saber).
- Many VCs shifted their focus from funding game development studios to investing in platform and tech startups, while corporate venture funds accelerated their investments in gaming studios.
- IPO activity remained low (e.g., Shift Up, Winking Studios) as most companies delayed going public amid macro uncertainty.

2025 Outlook

- We anticipate sustained M&A momentum to match or slightly exceed 2024 levels, driven by several factors:
 - Lower interest rates, stronger public markets, and significant cash reserves are expected to fuel more acquisitions by public strategics.
 - PE firms dedicating more attention to gaming opportunities and easing borrowing costs will likely result in more buyouts, PE-backed acquisitions, and PE-led investments.
- VCs will deploy more funds into platform and tech startups, leaving corporate and strategic venture arms to step up investments in game developers.
- Although high-profile gaming teams will still command strong valuations, such deals are expected to be less frequent. Renewed enthusiasm for crypto and rising interest in AI-driven solutions will create fresh investment opportunities in web3 and tech-centric ventures.
- A more favorable market environment could reopen the IPO window, with some private companies pursuing the public route. At the same time, public companies may increasingly rely on PIPEs to finance future growth.



Recent content updates on investgame.net Our latest platform news & updates



InvestGame x \$GDEV: 7 must-read analyses

In Jul'24, we announced a collaboration with \$GDEV to produce a series of in-depth analyses on key gaming investment trends and strategic growth opportunities.

Since then, we've published 7 deep and insightful research papers, which can be found on our new website section!



Library of industry reports and 140+ gaming funds list

We've uploaded dozens of new PDFs to our Reports section, a go-to source for industry insights on market and public companies.

Type a keyword into the search bar and let our engine do the rest!

This year, we launched the <u>List of 140</u>
<u>Industry-Focused Funds</u>, a regularly updated tool to help you find relevant investors.

Unlock exclusive insights with our premium Excel dataset for \$25 tier <u>Patreon</u> supporters:

- 4 tables a month with all the industry deals
- Exclusive data sets for our quarterly reports
- Data sets for InvestGame x \$GDEV features
- M&A Sell-Side Advisory League Table.
- An <u>expanded list of 100 investors</u> with data on the funds' origin, specialization, LinkedIn, and emails.

Enhance your research and gain a competitive edge for investor pitches and stakeholder presentations!

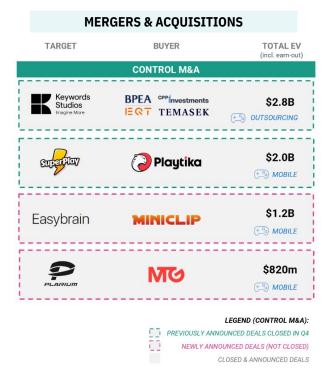




Most notable deals last quarter

Select transactions from Q4'24

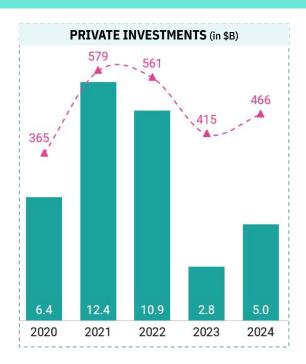


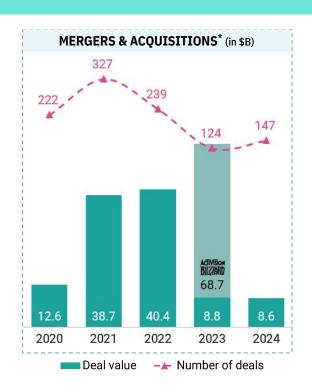


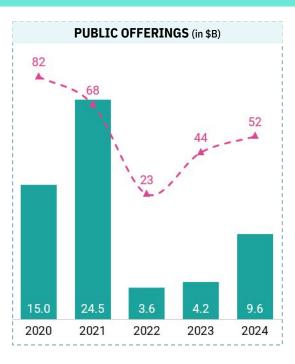


Enhanced deal-making activity strengthens across all fronts

Closed deals reflect notable YoY improvements



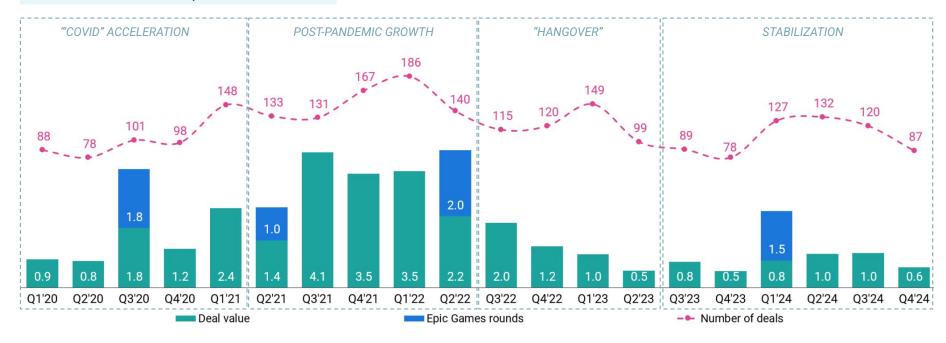






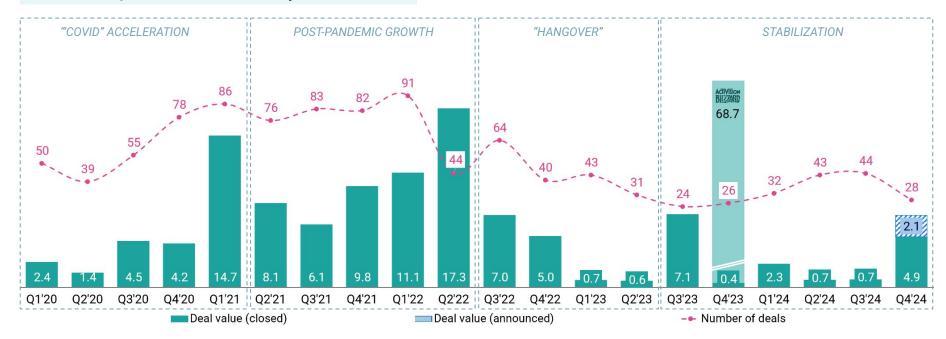
Despite a seasonal dip, Q4'24 investment activity delivered YoY boost +22% funding and +12% rounds (vs. Q4'23)

PRIVATE INVESTMENTS: Corporate, VC & PE (in \$B)



Rising M&A tide of large-cap completed deals and fresh announcements Marking one of the strongest quarters in two years

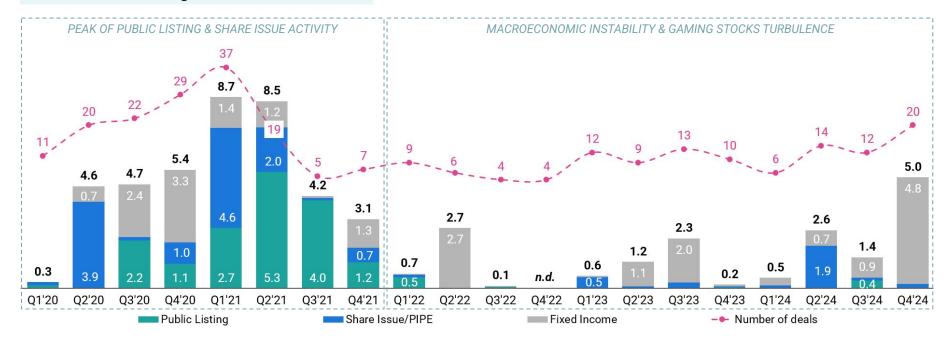
MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS: Control & Minority (in \$B)



Public offerings remain volatile but are gradually picking up

Consistent three-quarter recovery trend

PUBLIC OFFERINGS: Listings, PIPEs & Fixed Income (in \$B)



Most notable M&A deals in 2024

Select M&A deals of the year

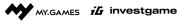
TOP-10 M&A DEALS OF 2024

Rank	Date	Target	Acquirer	Segment	Upfront EV	Total EV (incl. earn-out)	Upfront EV/Revenue	Upfront EV/EBITDA
#1	Oct-24	Keywords Studios Imagine More	BPEA CPP Investments TEMASEK	Outsourcing	\$2.8B	\$2.8B	3.3x	15.9x
#2	Nov-24 ¹	Easybrain	MINICLIP	Mobile	\$1.2B	\$1.2B	3.8x	9.3x
#3	Feb-24	M JAGEX	CVC PARTNERS HAVELI	PC&Console	~\$1.1B	~\$1.1B	-	-
#4	Nov-24	Entrappoly	Playtika	Mobile	\$700m	\$2.0B	2.6x	negative
#5	Nov-24 ¹	PLARIUM	MO	Mobile	\$620m	\$820m	1.0x	4.5x
#6	Jun-24	gearbox	TAKE TWO INTERACTIVE	PC&Console	\$460m	\$460m	2.9x	n/m
#7	Jul-24	≈ Landvault	REALLITY	Tech	\$450m	\$450m	-	-
#8	Mar-24	SABER	BEACON INTERACTIVE	PC&Console	\$247m	\$341m	1.6x	8.7x
#9	Mar-24	data.ai	Sensor Tower	Tech	n/d	n/d	-	-
#10	Dec-24	Chartboost	Josp Me	Tech	n/d	n/d	-	-

Unlock exclusive datasets for M&A deals with our premium subscription for Patreon supporters.







Most notable investments in 2024

Top-10 select fundraisings by gaming studios and platform & tech companies

TOP-10 GAMING STUDIOS FUNDRAISINGS

Rank	Date	Company	Lead investor	Segment	Deal value
rtanit	Dute		Zodu III Vootoi	oegment	Dout value
#1	Feb-24	EPIC	WALT DISNEP	Multiplatform	\$1.5B
#2	Dec-24	AONIC	ACTIVE OWNERSHIP METRIC CAPITAL PARTNERS	Multiplatform	\$157m
#3	Jan-24	BUILD A ROCKET BOY	REDBIRD	PC&Console	\$110m
#4	Sep-24	SABER	ALEPH	PC&Console	n/d
#5	Aug-24	HYBE	/\\/\) MAKERS	Mobile	\$80m
#6	Jul-24	VOLLEY	Lightspeed	Multiplatform	\$58m
#7	May-24	SPY KE	MOONACTIVE	Mobile	\$50m
#8	Oct-24	AZRA GAMES	□ PAN₹ERA	Mobile (web3)	\$43m
#9	Jan-24	MOUNTAINTOP	ANTHOS (A)	PC&Console	\$30m
#10	Mar-24	CONTINA.	BLIZZARD AVALANCE ECOSYSTEM PUND CoinFund	PC&Console (web3)	\$30m

TOP-10 PLATFORM & TECH FUNDRAISINGS

Rank	Date	Company	Lead investor	Segment	Deal value
#1	Jul-24	REALITY	MULTI-FAMILY OFFICE	AI tech	\$350m
#2	Apr-24	ZENTRY	BINANCE LABS	Web3	\$140m
#3	Мау-24	₽ Suno	Lightspeed	AI tech	\$125m
#4	Jul-24 ¹	DIDPLANET	LIN GROUP	Web3	\$115m ¹
#5	Jun-24	Pika	SPARK CAPITAL	AI tech	\$80m
#6	Jul-24	CORE	WARGAMING.NET	Tech	\$60m
#7	Dec-24 ²	+ Decart	SEQUOIA ME	AI tech	\$53m ²
#8	Apr-24	SPEMETA	alóz	Web3	\$50m
#9	Jun-24	TRUE» GAMERS	CEO OF FALAK INVESTMENT	Esports	\$45m
#10	Jan-24	KID	al6z ► Lightspeed	Tech	\$45m

Gaming Content Deals

Deals with Targets represented by video game publishers and/or developers

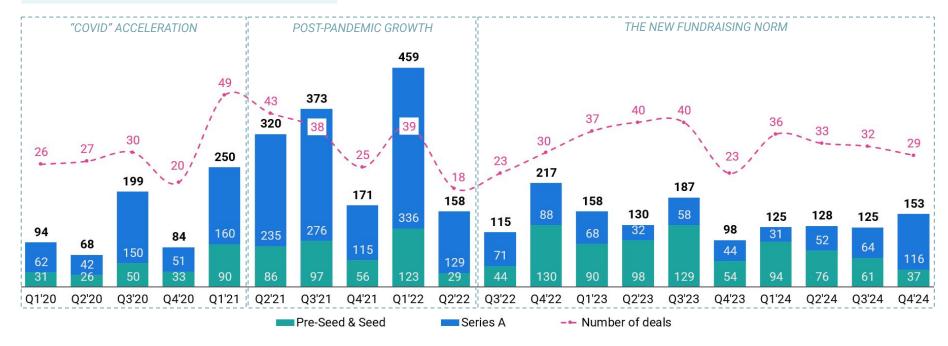




Downward pressure on Early-stage VC financing for gaming studios

Persistent decrease in closed rounds since early 2024



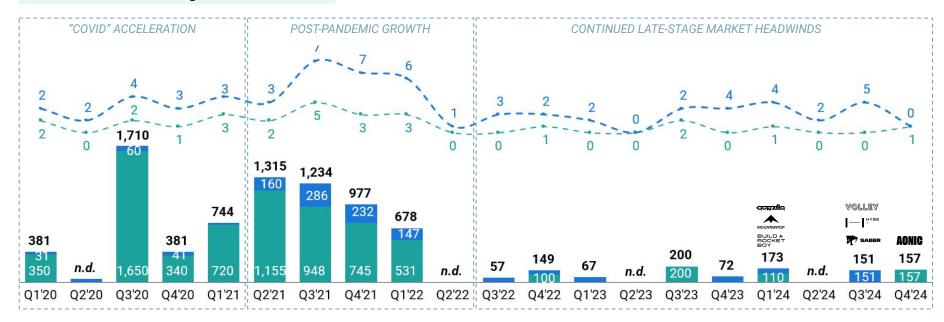




Late-stage VC/PE funding sees improvement yet remains volatile

Modest YoY growth: 43% more capital raised and 30% more rounds closed (vs. 2023)

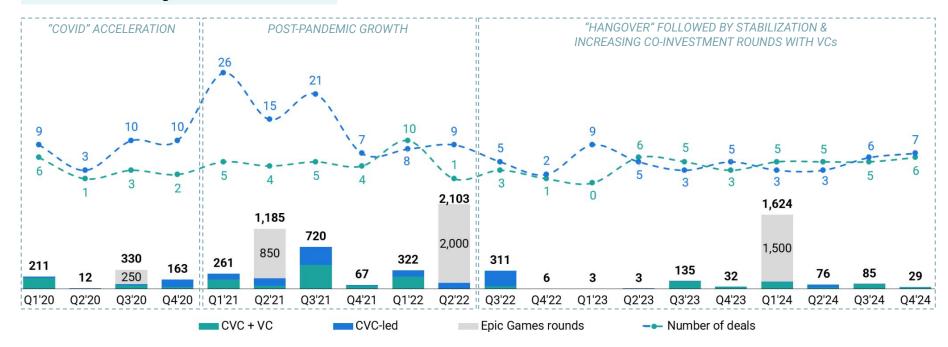
LATE-STAGE VC & PE: Gaming studios (in \$M)



CVC activity is picking up amid VCs investment focus shift

CVC funds now lead more solo rounds and progressively co-investing with VCs

CORPORATE VC: Gaming studios (in \$M)



Most active Pre-seed & Seed VC funds in 2024

Investments in Gaming studios and Platform&Tech startups (excl. web3, esports)

VC FUNDS: Ranked by number of deals*

Rank	Fund Name	# of deals (total)	# of deals (lead)	Notable I	nvestments
#1	G BITKRAFT	19	16	Jabali	STOKE
#2	alóz Games	19	6	ENCHANNED	ALTERA
#3-4	THE GAMES FUND	8	6	Q	DRAMA
#3-4	GAME VENTURES	8	6	ANTIHERO Nama 1770 Nama	CHAMO GAMES
#5	PixCapital	7	2	onibi	WORLD
#6	VENTURES	7	1	Talofa	JAR
#7-8	Transcend.	5	5	JAR	MIDSUMMER
#7-8	Lvp.	5	5	LNÄ WORLD	BITPART.AI
#9	LATUN	5	1	grand	'PINE
#10	TIRTA	4	1	MIDSUMMER	a:\ Artificial Agency

VC FUNDS: Ranked by value of deals* (in \$M)

Rank	Fund Name	\$ Value (total)	\$ Value (lead)	Notable Ir	ovestments
#1	alóz Games	\$81m	\$22m	UNCHAINED	∧ ALTERA
#2	O BITKRAFT	\$63m	\$53m	Jabali	STOKE
#3	TIRTA	\$32m	\$5m	MIDSUMMER	a·\ Artificial Agency
#4	Transcend.	\$23m	\$23m	JAR	MIDSUMMER
#5	VENTURES	\$29m	-	Talöfa	JAR
#6	THE GAMES FUND	\$21m	\$15m	Ð	DRIANIA
#7	GRIFFIN GAMING PARTNERS	\$24m	\$10m	*	SHRAPNEL
#8	AY	\$14m	\$7m	L9A	SOCIAL FIRST
#9-10	Lvp.	\$11m	\$11m	NA WORLD	BITPART.AI
#9-10	Accel	\$11m	\$11m	cařtwheel	+SLAY

Most active Series A VC funds in 2024

Investments in Gaming studios and Platform&Tech startups (excl. web3, esports)

VC FUNDS: Ranked by number of deals*

Rank	Fund Name	# of deals (total)	# of deals (lead)	Notable In	vestments
#1	GEM Capital	8	6	ESCHATOLOGY ENTERTAINMENT	(2) REVER
#2	• BITKRAFT	9	2	appcharge	and the
#3-4	alóz Games	4	2	(RID	SERIESAI
#3-4	Övgames	4	2	WHALO	BANDITOS
#5	HE HIRO CAPITAL	3	2	FRVR	FFRAMEPLAY
#6	MAKERS	3	1	EIT ODD	WHALO
#7-8	⊾Lightspeed	2	2	(RID	TOIIBIT
#7-8	GRIFFIN GAMING PARTNERS	2	2	EIT 000	coherence
#9-10	AY	3	0	appcharge	P cypher
#9-10	, KONVOY	3	0	RID	pokpok

VC FUNDS: Ranked by value of deals* (in \$M)

Rank	Fund Name	\$ Value (total)	\$ Value (lead)	Notable Inv	estments
#1	• BITKRAFT	\$130m	\$5m	appcharge	and the
#2	alóz Games	\$99m	\$60m	RID	SERIESAI
#3	⊾Lightspeed	\$69m	\$69m	RID	TOIIBIT
#4	* KONVOY	\$61m	175	RID	pokpok
#5	TIRTA	\$60m	-	KID	REPER
#6	MAKERS	\$47m	\$9m	EIT	WHALO
#7	GEM Capital	\$37m	\$11m	ESCHATOLOGY ENTERTAINMENT	REVER
#8	AY	\$41m	12	appcharge	Pcypher
#9	LATUN	\$30m	-	gran	nd
#10	THE GAMES FUND	\$26m		ESCHATOLOGY ENTERTAINMENT	REPER

Most active Late-stage VC funds in 2024

Investments in Gaming studios and Platform&Tech startups (excl. web3, esports)

VC FUNDS: Ranked by number of deals*

Rank	Fund Name	# of deals (total)	# of deals (lead)	Notable Inv	estments
#1	L ightspeed	4	2	♣ Suno	VOLLEY
#2-3	/\\/\ MAKERS \\/\/\ FUND	2	1	HYBE	Pika
#2-3	• BITKRAFT	2	1	VOLLEY	RADIANARC
#4-5	alóz Games	1	1	LUI	MA AI
#4-5	Lumîkai	1	1	MAYHEM	,

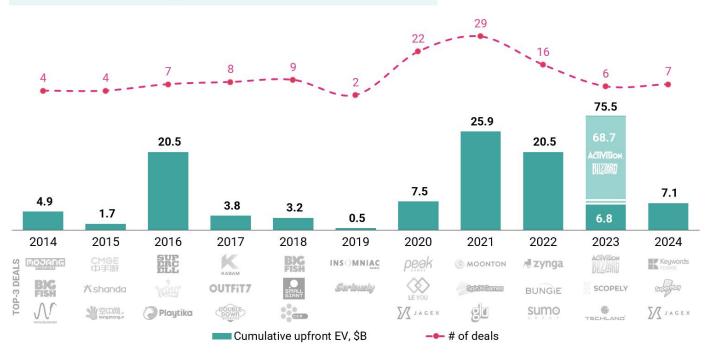
VC FUNDS: Ranked by value of deals* (in \$M)

Rank	Fund Name	\$ Value (total)	\$ Value (lead)	Notable Inv	vestments
#1	L ightspeed	\$313m	\$183m	♣ Suno	VOLLEY
#2	MAKERS	\$160m	\$80m	—— HABE	Pika
#3	galaxy	\$110m	-	BUILD	
#4	G BITKRAFT	\$67m	\$9m	VOLLEY	RADIANARO
#5	alóz Games	\$43m	\$43m	LUI	MA AI

Decade in gaming M&A

Returning to normal level of activity

CLOSED M&A DEALS WITH \$95M+ UPFRONT ENTERPRISE VALUE







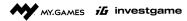
Sell-side gaming M&A advisors league table

Top 5 financial advisors for gaming companies in 2024

LEADING SELL-SIDE FINANCIAL ADVISORS 2024

Rank	Sell-side financial advisor	Number of deals	Cumulative upfront EV	Recent notable transactions		
#1	Aream & Co.	5	+\$3.3B	Easybrain JAGEX SUPERFLOY SABER KONGREGATE		
#2	Deutsche Bank	1	\$2.8B	Keywords STUDIOS		
#3	Morgan Stanley	1	~\$1.1B	∑∕ JAGEX		
#4	RAINE	1	\$0.7B	Superitory		
#5	UBS	1	\$0.6B	PLARIUM		
8	Access the full list of 68 M&A deals advised on by sell-side advisors during 2020-2024 subscribe to InvestGame Patreon					





Gaming vs. Platform&Tech

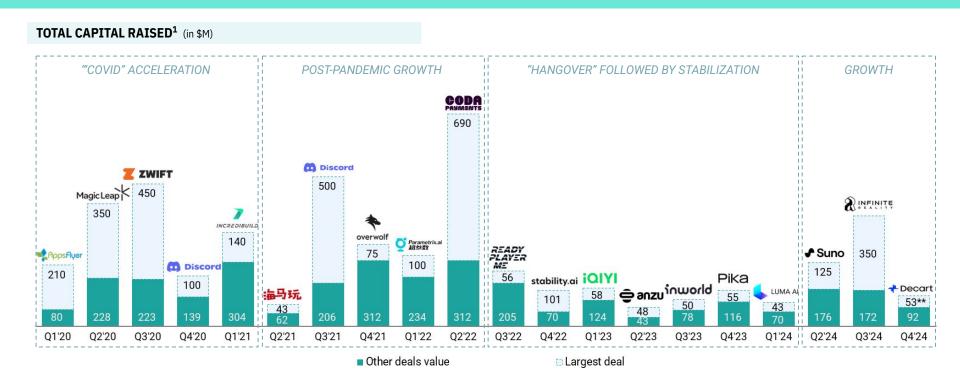
Rounds with a disclosed deal value above \$1m, excl. startups involved in web3, esports, and cash-related activities





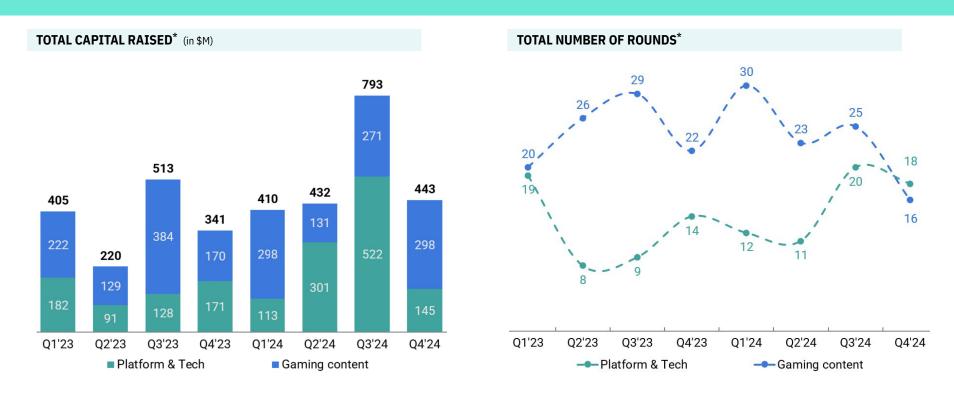
Platform & Tech investments nearly doubled in 2024

VCs significantly boosted their interest in platform & tech startups



"Picks & Shovels" overcome investments in gaming content

Gaming VC funds are shifting their focus toward platform & tech investments



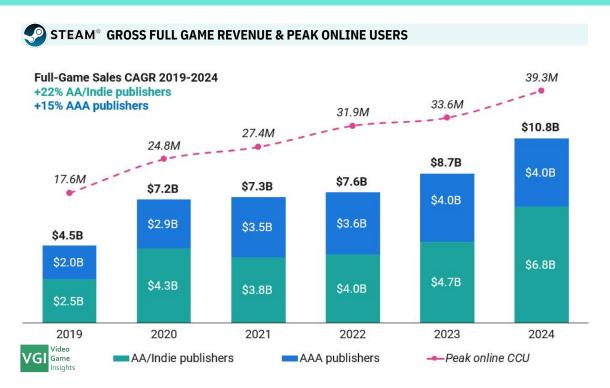
Gaming Market Update

Market insights from our partners





Steam continues to beat all-time high records, with AA/indie teams being the primary revenue driver



TOP NEW RELEASES BY FULL-GAME SALES 04'24



20-Nov-24 2.4m units \$114m sales



06-Dec-24 4.1m units \$99m sales



10-Oct-24 1.1m units \$60m sales



31-Oct-24 1m units \$48m sales

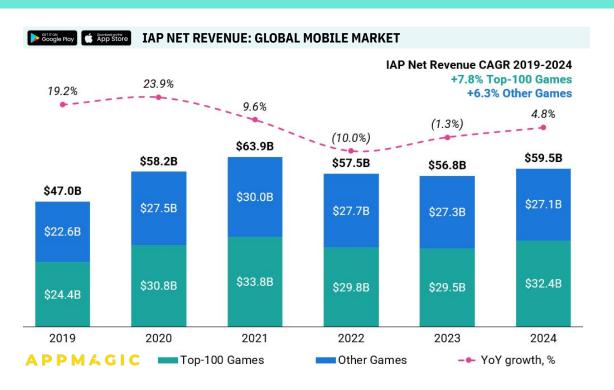


11-Oct-24 0.7m units \$40m sales



12-Nov-24 0.7m units \$31m sales

The mobile market has stabilized, with Asian developers serving as the primary source of new top releases



TOP NEW RELEASES BY IAP NET REVENUE IN 2024



Dungeon &



Action RPG 19-May-24 7m installs \$797m Revenue Dashboard



Action RPG 17-May-24 15m installs \$144m Revenue Dashboard



CCG 30-Oct-24 46m installs \$267m Revenue Dashboard





4X Strategy 10-Jun-24 2m installs \$129m Revenue Dashboard





Action RPG 19-Jun-24 18m installs \$183m Revenue Dashboard





Simulation 15-May-24 2m installs \$117m Revenue Dashboard





Note: (*) Net revenue from in-app purchases across mobile games genres; Source: AppMagic

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Game development financing



Game Design & Biz Dev Expertise



UA Powerhouse with Deep Expertise



Inhouse BI & Predictive Analytics Tools



Case Studies and Know-hows



Benefits and Special Terms from AWS, AppsFlyer, Unity, etc.

PC/Console Publishing

"Our recent partnership with Windup Games, the creative force behind the critically acclaimed "Unravel," for the global publishing of their flagship title "Hela," represents a significant milestone, uniting two teams that are passionate about delivering engaging

and authentic gaming experiences", says Eugenio Vitale.

HELA offers a heartwarming narrative set in an openworld adventure inspired by Scandinavian folklore, an coop experience designed to captivate players with its enchanting atmosphere and creative sandbox. The announcement trailer, which debuted at Gamescom 2024, has garnered excitement and positive feedback, highlighting the game's unique charm.

More: https://knightspeak.com



E. Vitale, VP of Publishing, Knights Peak



Platform: PC and Consoles Genre: Sandbox adventure

Mobile Publishing

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Methodology & Glossary

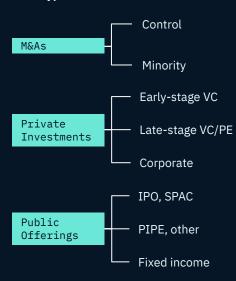
InvestGame tracks closed transactions (unless otherwise noted) in the Video Games industry, with target companies having core business operations related to the Video Games market. We do not track pure gambling, betting, and non-gaming blockchain/web3 companies.

The private data contained in this report is based on information from sources believed to be reliable, but we can't guarantee accuracy and completeness. Sources include public media, our business partners, and market insights.

The information, opinions, estimates, and forecasts contained herein are as of the date hereof and are subject to change. We seek to update our research as appropriate.

Our historical datasets undergo ongoing revisions to integrate newly gathered data and updates from our partners.

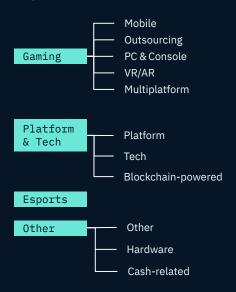
Deal Types Overview



Deal Type Terms Glossary

- Control M&As mergers and acquisitions resulting in the change of control (50%+ ownership)
- Minority M&As sale of a minority stake in the business
- Early-stage VC pre-Seed, Seed, and Series A rounds with a lead VC fund
- Late-stage VC Series B, Series C, and later-lettered venture and PE rounds
- Corporate Investments investments with a lead investor being a strategic/CVCs
- IPOs the process of a company going public, including IPOs, SPACs, and direct listings
- PIPE, other private investment in public equity, direct share issue, and other transactions with publicly traded stock
- Fixed income debt-related instrument with fixed payments and interest payments

Target's Sector Overview



VC Ratings Calculation

Typically, funds do not publicly disclose their individual participation in financing rounds. Therefore, we do not track the exact investment amounts by each fund; instead, we consider the entire round size in our ranking calculations. Our priority lies in the total number and value of the deals a fund participates in while also emphasizing the value and count of deals where the fund takes a leading role.





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