

The Game Changer

How brands can grow revenue and deepen engagement with H5 Games

KANTAR Google

Foreword

It's a well-known fact that **attention and engagement are ever more important in today's digital world**. As a publisher, there is a tool that can help you simultaneously drive deeper engagement, increase time on site, and provide new ways to monetize. That tool? The humble H5 game.

H5 games are usually bite-sized games created using HTML5 web technology. These games, created by game publishers, can be easily integrated with minimal coding onto your websites and apps to increase engagement. One of the most successful examples of a H5 game on a non-gaming site is Wordle, a viral puzzle game that [increased digital subscription to the New York Times](#), as well as meaningful user engagement. Other popular examples of H5 games include Jewel Block and Bubble Shooter.

Globally, the H5 games market is projected to reach [US\\$3.09 billion by 2028](#), and there is a significant opportunity for non-gaming publishers (like news sites, social media platforms, retailers and more) to claim a piece of the H5 game pie. Brands across a wide range of industries are incorporating different types of H5 games as a way to deepen engagement with their audience.

There is a significant opportunity to be realized. The only question is: **how?**

Google and Kantar partnered to explore gaming behavior in three international markets - the USA, India and Brazil. The results paint a detailed picture of H5 gamers, as well as the current and emerging market opportunities of note.

The people who play H5 games are diverse in age, gender, location, and motivation. They're made up of those who value H5 games as a no-strings-attached pastime for small moments in their lives, as well as people who take gaming seriously. In fact, 68% of H5 gamers play games within non-gaming sites or apps



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The research uncovered **positive correlations between H5 games on non-gaming sites and improved perceptions, increased intention to spend and additional time spent on site.**

With this report, we aim to provide non-gaming publishers with new ways to capture new audiences, while creating incremental on-site revenue opportunities for years to come.

Game on!

Nitin Gajria

Managing Director, APAC Sellside Monetization, Google



Markets covered



India



Brazil



USA

This research deep dives into 3 types of gamers

'H5 Gamers' surveyed in this report are those who have played HTML5 form of online games in June 2023. HTML5 games mentioned in this report refer to games which do not require downloading but can be played within a gaming website, or within a non-gaming website/app.

Serious gamers

H5 gamers that also play other games (e.g. apps and console) and spend more than 7 hours a week playing games

Light gamers

H5 gamers that also play other games (e.g. apps and console) and spend less than 7 hours a week playing games

Pure gamers

Play H5 games only

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Insight 1:

**H5 games add value and
increase positive sentiment**

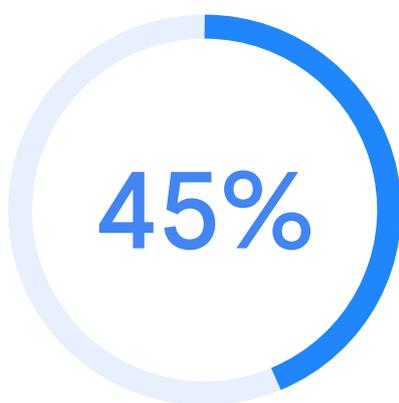
Many non-gaming publishers probably don't see their audiences as gamers - which makes sense, given that their audiences come to those platforms to do other things like read the news, shop, or browse their feed. But many people who don't consider themselves to be gamers still enjoy games, and the research shows that H5 games can open the door for a more positive browsing experience.



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To explore this a little deeper, we conducted an A/B test to measure changes in engagement levels on a non-gaming website, with and without H5 games. Respondents were split into 3 groups - a control group that wasn't exposed to the game, an exposed group that was tasked to play the game, and a natural group that was able to freely explore the site.

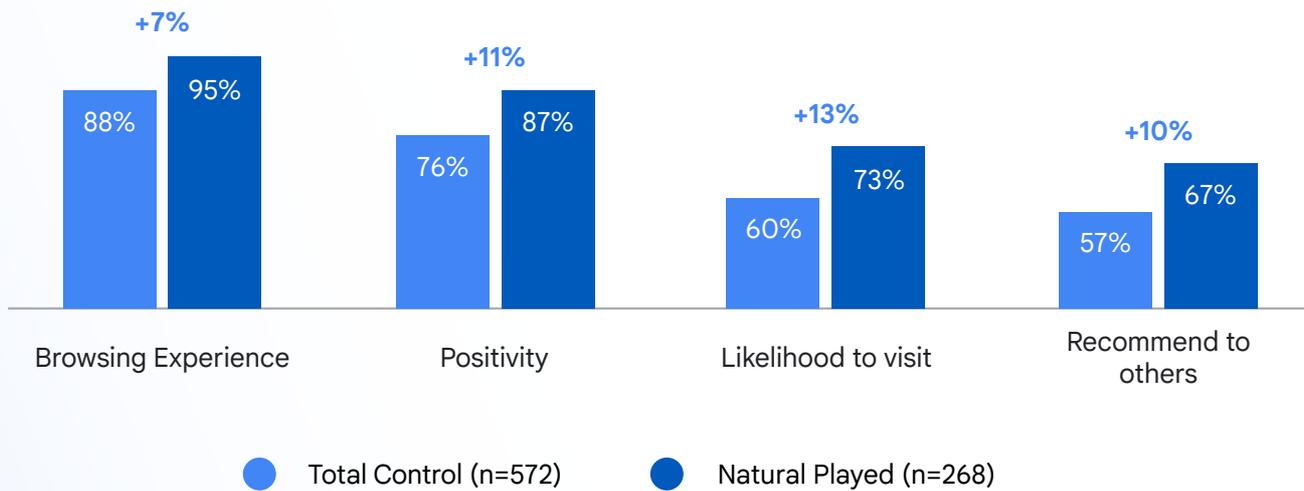
Of the natural group, 45% of the audience chose to play the H5 game - a significant number. It shows that H5 games can be a great engagement tool when seamlessly integrated as part of a user's site experience.



of the natural group chose to play the H5 games on our non-gaming website

Of those that played with the H5 games, there were significant boosts in satisfaction with the browsing experience, their likelihood of revisiting the site, and their likelihood of recommending to others.

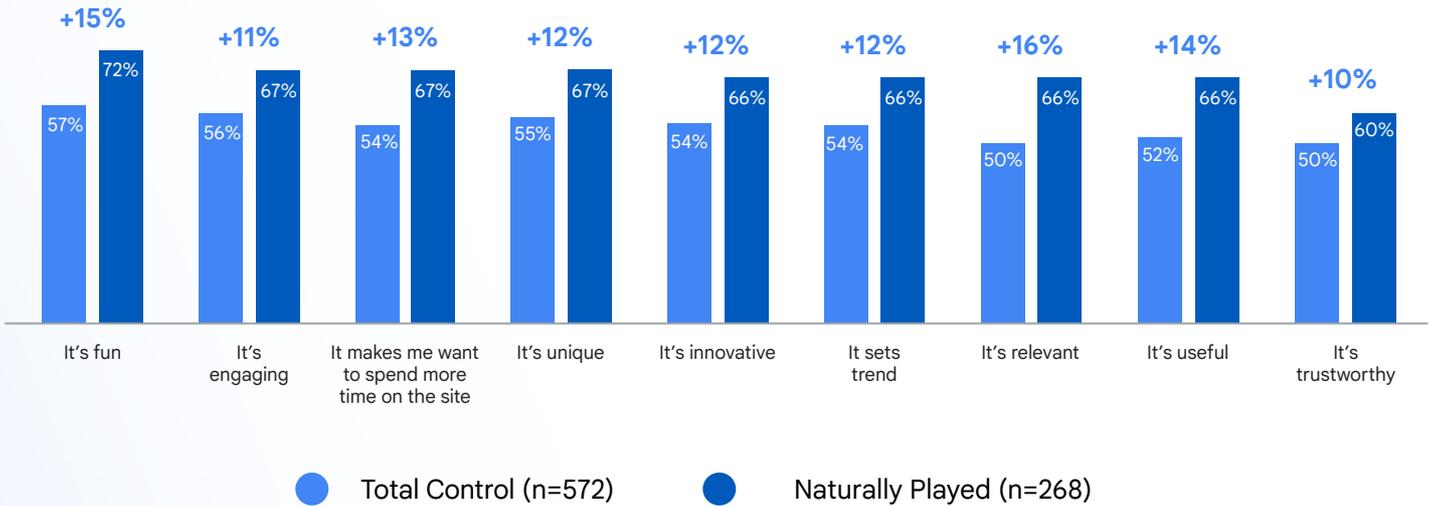
Website Experience - Control vs Exposed (Naturally Played)



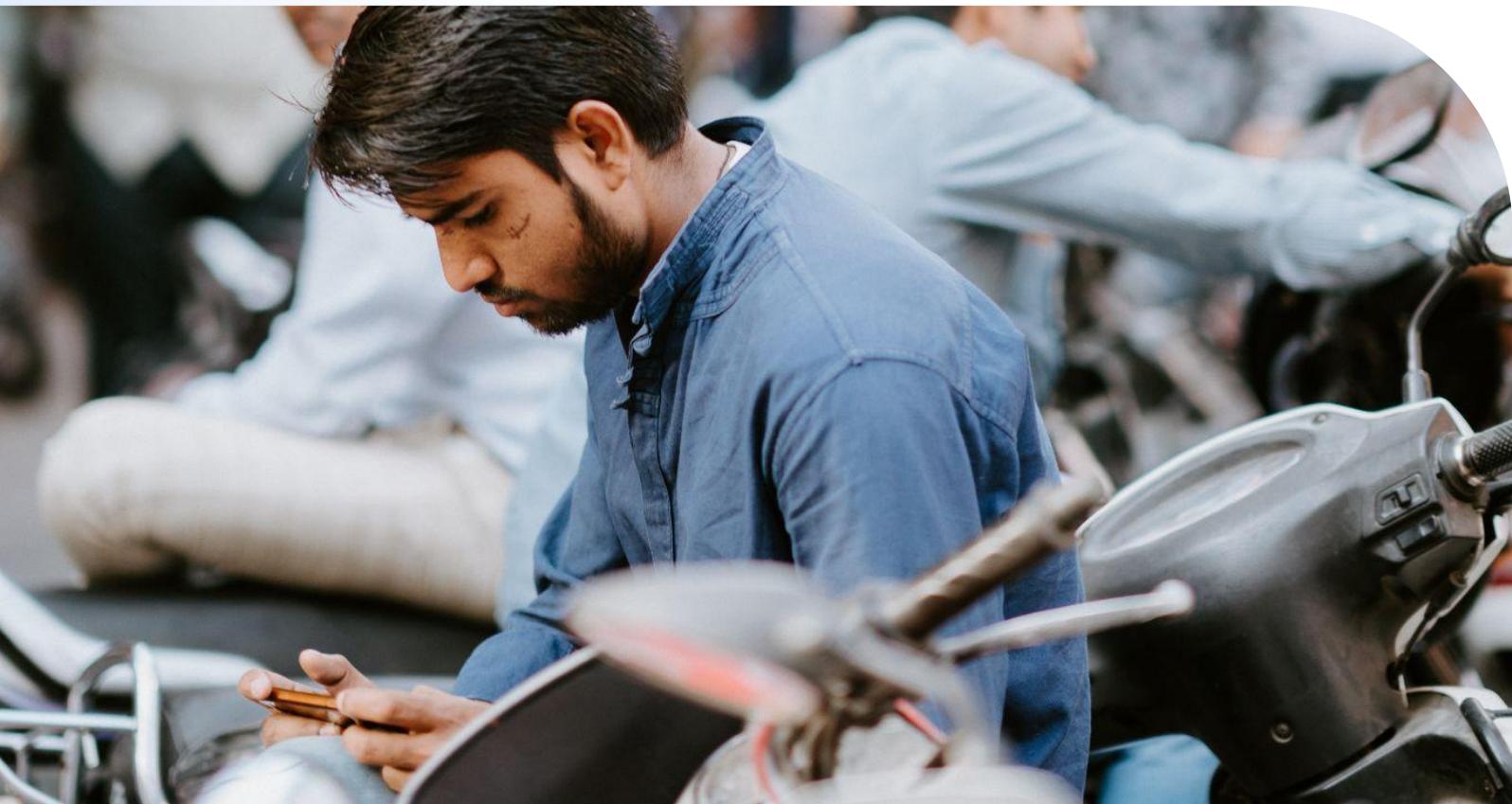
They also had a more positive view of the site overall, with uplifts in key **perception metrics** - such as finding the site more engaging, trustworthy, and innovative after they had played an H5 game.

Visitors who stopped to play the H5 game while browsing the site perceived the site as more fun, and worthy of their time, than those who had not been exposed to a game prior. **A majority (63%) also agreed it made them want to spend more time on the site**, highlighting the positive impact H5 games can have at creating a better browsing experience. Across all perception metrics, an uplift was observed for users who played the games, vs those who did not.

Website Experience - Control vs Exposed (Naturally Played)



It follows that increased time on site and increased engagement with content opens up a range of new monetization opportunities for non-gaming publishers, both through greater reach on existing ad inventory, and the expansion to new in-game inventory.





How you can level up: Consider how H5 games can add value for your users

It's important to remember that H5 games attract all sorts of people who enjoy and appreciate games. When considered through this lens, it's easy to understand how H5 games can drive positive perception and increased visitor retention.

Be thoughtful on how integrating H5 games into your sites can add value to the overall user experience.

This value could come through the gamification of wider site rewards (such as vouchers or additional content); or it could simply be as a short, casual moment of fun between completing the other tasks in their day.

Partner with third-party game content providers to create bespoke games, or integrate existing H5 games to your site.

To integrate H5 games on your non-gaming site and maximize its benefits, you don't have to be an expert game developer. You can do this by collaborating with third-party game content providers and publish games with minimal coding, streamlining implementation.

- **Integrate existing H5 games onto your platforms:** Choose from a wide catalog of games from game content providers, and easily integrate them as part of your site or game center
- **Create customized games:** Work with third-party content providers to design games that are tailored to enhance the in-app experience, such as opportunities to win coins or play seasonal games.

Non-gaming publishers can also work with [Google Certified Publishing Partners](#) to set up and optimize H5 games on your site. These partners can help you monetize game content using Google's [H5 Games Ads](#) and generate new revenue streams.



Insight 2:

**H5 games drive engagement,
and inspire action**

H5 games are an effective, fun, and safe way to increase site engagement - **but beyond perception, they also drive action on a site or app.** The research showed that playing H5 games inspires users to take more meaningful action - including non-game related action - as a result of their engagement with H5 games.

Site visitors who played H5 games are likely to spend more time on site. In fact, 63% of H5 gamers say they are likely to spend more time on a non-gaming app or website if it contains an H5 game.



63%

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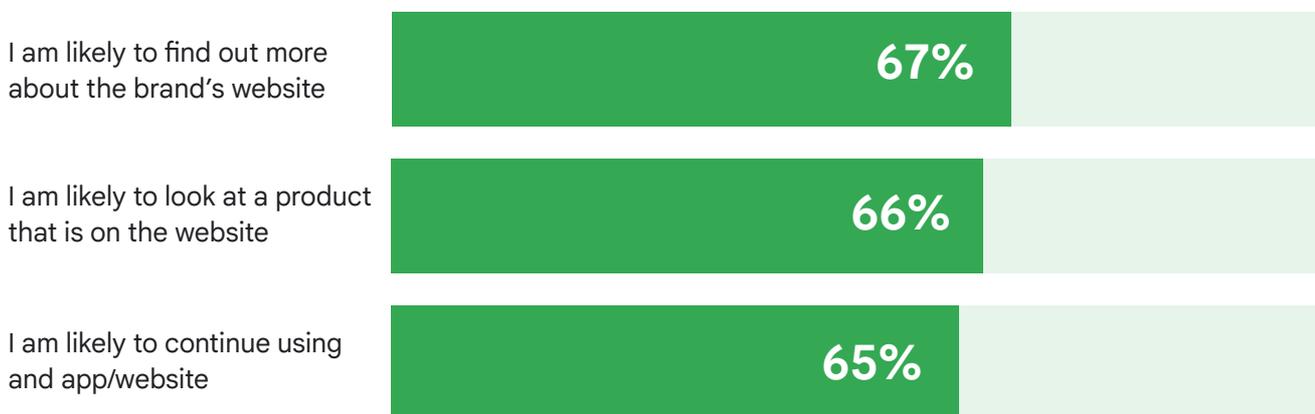
Source: Kantar H5 Gaming Context Lab 2023;
Market: India, US and Brazil
Base: A/B testing respondents; Stop & play n=875



But while metrics like time on site and number of pages viewed are important indicators of intent, they do not directly influence the bottom line. Luckily, **H5 games also have an impact on more tangible outcomes for brands, by positively influencing the consumer journey.**

H5 games deepen user curiosity about a brand's offerings. 67% of users are more likely to want to go on and find out more about the brand's website, 66% are more inclined to look at a product on the brand's website, and 65% will continue using an app or website - increasing opportunity for action later down the line.

Attitudes to non-gaming apps/website with H5 games



57% of users indicate that they are likely to spend more on an app or website that uses H5 games. This shows that the engagement lift driven by H5 games can be a strong contributor to key business goals like revenue and profit, even before more advanced monetization strategies like in-game ads are considered.



is likely to spend more on an app/website



How you can level up: Consider the paths you want users to take

The ability of H5 games to inspire curiosity, drive longer time on site, and even increase purchase intent is a great opportunity for publishers. This means H5 games should be considered within the wider user experience of the site, as well as considered as their own distinct user journeys.

Be clear on what business objective game content will achieve.

Whether it's purchase, conversion, registration, or anything else; games can be a crucial part of the customer journey when used wisely - but having a clear strategy is essential.

Consider game placement within the wider site experience.

Ensure that H5 games are prominent, but other engaging site content is clearly visible close by so that when users finish playing, taking the step to continue exploring the site is intuitive.

Provide opportunities for action in-game.

H5 games themselves are a self-contained user experience, so consider how a product offer or engaging content can be served to users within the game - either between levels, or after they've solved a puzzle, for example.



Insight 3:

Grow revenue through a thoughtful ad strategy

In addition to the benefits H5 games bring through driving higher engagement and continued visits to sites and apps, they create an important monetization stream for non-gaming publishers. **In-game ad placements are a great way to increase ad space within a site or app, without unbalancing the user experience overall.**

Formats like interstitials (full-screen ads that display at natural transition points such as between levels) and rewarded ads (which reward players with game-related bonuses like extra lives or power-ups) are highly effective, without negatively impacting the player experience.



of our exposed audience mentioned that onsite ads had no negative impact on their overall gaming experience.

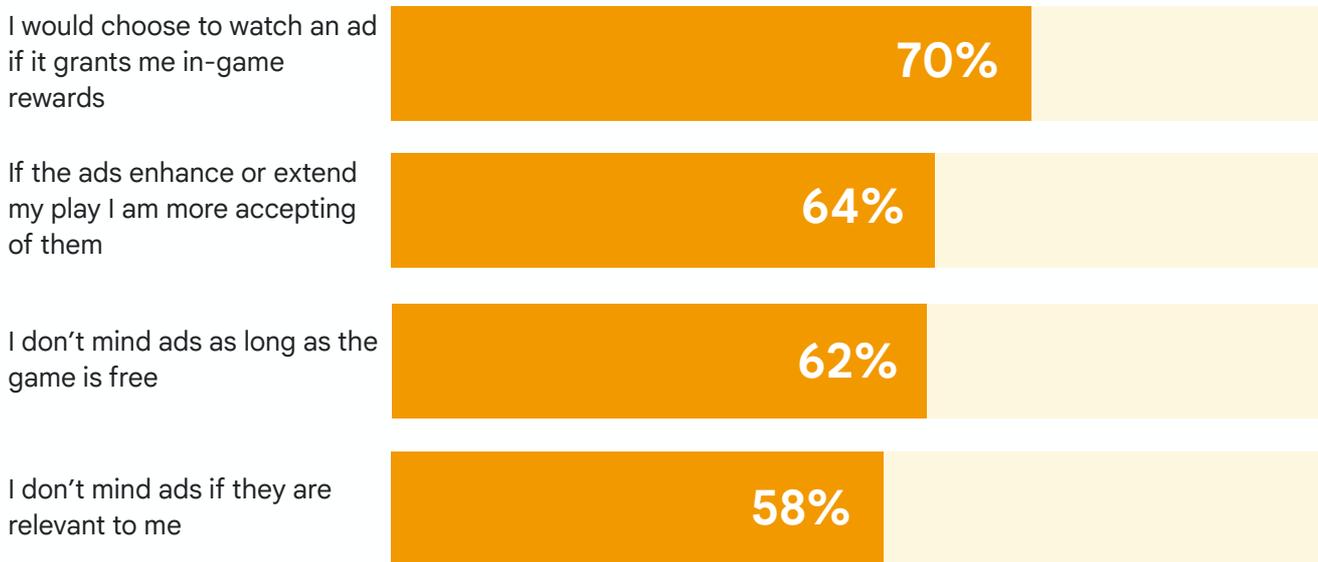
Source: Kantar H5 Gaming Context Lab 2023;
Market: India, US and Brazil
Base: A/B testing respondents; Exposed audience n=1103



A majority of gamers don't mind spending time watching ads as long as they can enjoy the game for free, while acceptance of ads increases if they have a positive impact on gameplay - 70% will click an ad if it grants them rewards.

Attitudes towards ads when playing H5 games

(T2B - Somewhat agree + Strongly agree)



Drawing on the positive attitudes people have towards in-game ads, publishers can effectively use H5 games as an additional surface to monetize without creating fatigue on their main platform.

But - as with all advertising - relevance is key, and gamers are very much open to engaging with ads that show them something relevant. 62% will click an ad that features products or services they're interested in.

Actions taken relating to H5 gaming ads

(T2B - Somewhat likely + Very likely)

i will click on an ad if it features games, product or services i'm interested in

62%

Because people have a positive attitude towards ads in games, in-game ads can be used as additional surface publishers can monetize without creating fatigue on your main platform.

Source: Google-Kantar H5 Gaming (Jun'23);
Market: India, US and Brazil
Question: D3. How likely or unlikely are you to take the following actions regarding ads when playing H5 games?
Base: NETT H5 gamers n=3151





How you can level up: Relevance, timing & appropriate placement will score you bonus points

A thoughtful ad strategy is a great way for publishers to build a new revenue stream while deepening engagement with content. It's important to consider how this can be implemented in a way that add value to the overall site or app experience.

Non-gaming publishers looking to monetize through ads should **observe a few best practices based on the most common behavioral preferences of all H5 gamers.**

- Choose a high quality ads network that can provide relevant ads content
- Ads should not pop up during gameplay except for points that do not interrupt the flow (such as after losing a life)
- Rewarded ads are highly valued, but the reward should match the point in the game (such as granting a new life after they've just lost one)

Conclusion

The H5 game industry presents strong growth potential for non-gaming publishers in 2023 and beyond. The research shows that interactions with H5 games broadens and deepens many aspects of their overall gaming activities and attitudes.

With a balanced approach to advertising, as well as prioritizing player trust and safety, non-game publishers can unlock new audience segments while monetizing more effectively. And remember those three insights and implications.

1. **H5 games add value and increase positive sentiment.** Consider what the value drivers could be for your audience, from a brief moment of relaxation to on-site rewards.
2. **H5 games drive engagement and inspire action.** Be strategic about the content and offers you include in and around games so taking action is easy.
3. **Grow revenue through a thoughtful ad strategy.** Provide a considered in-game ad experience that benefits players while minimizing game disruption, keeping them engaged throughout.

Finally, publishers should always remember that H5 Games can be developed in collaboration with game content providers, or even acquired in certain circumstances. Doing this can have a range of benefits including fewer in-house developer skills, reduced costs, and providing access to a broader range of expertise than might otherwise be possible.



H5 Report Methodology

Markets covered



India



Brazil



USA

Qualitative Exploration

A mixed methodology was used, this involved a UX pre-task to understand users' discovery engagement in H5 games, followed by 1-on-1 online in-depth interviews. The fieldwork took place in India, the USA, and Brazil, with 6 participants in each country. The interviews were conducted in May 2023.

Quantitative Survey

A survey was conducted to understand the gaming behavior of H5 gamers, with 1050 participants in each market. The participants were aged 16+, with a 50/50 split on gender. They all played H5 games in the past month and used a smartphone, desktop, laptop, or tablet as their primary gaming device.

The survey asked questions about the participants' gaming habits, such as how often they play H5 games, what types of games they play, and how they find new H5 games. The survey also asked about the participants' motivations for playing H5 games and their challenges and frustrations with H5 gaming.

UX A/B Testing

This was conducted in June 2023, to measure the changes in engagement levels for brand websites where a H5 game is present and compared among natural exposed group, force exposed group and control group. All group of respondents will respond to a 7-10 mins online survey to measure a series of web engagement metrics.

The experiment was conducted in India, the USA, and Brazil, with 600 participants in each market. The testing brand website is designed to be compatible for both desktop and mobile, iOS and Android.

The participants were aged 18+, with a 50/50 split on gender. They were all online gamers who played games more than 30 minutes per week. The participants were divided into three groups: serious gamers, light gamers, and pure H5 gamers.