

DIGITAL ADDICTION

Shaidorov D.I.

*Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics
Minsk, Republic of Belarus*

Ukraine N.G. – Senior lecturer

The article raises the issues of people's addiction to online and offline computer games. Information is provided on how the developers of these games build them so that people get enslaved by technologies. The main factors that can increase the likelihood of dependence on a particular game are considered. Psychological tricks that are aimed at increasing addiction are reviewed in this publication. The data on the economic component of the development and the development of computer games are presented. The connection between the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing demand for computer games is described.

Today, in the era of digital technologies, social networks, online entertainment, and online and offline games have begun to gain huge popularity. They are played by hundreds of millions of people around the world, and at first glance, it is unclear what makes online and offline games so popular these days. They bring people unique emotions and vivid impressions. But people rarely think about how, by whom, and for what purpose these games are made.

Among other things, both online and offline games bring you joy. A game that you like, can draw your attention for more than a day, a month, or even a year. The easiest ones to get addicted to are MMORPG games. They combine many psychological tricks to keep the user on the server for as long as possible. Usually in such games, players can choose a character and what they look like. In addition, users can join clans, which will only multiply the effect of getting used to the game. Our brain doesn't distinguish between "actual" and "in-game" reality and rewards both equally. The primary distinction is that, unlike in real life, in-game worlds frequently manage to reward us without putting us through too many difficulties. As a result, they boost our happiness while reducing the time and effort required to achieve it. And, because our brains are wired to look for methods to save energy while still achieving good outcomes, this is a very addicting combination.

Like any other addiction, video game addiction is usually a very complicated issue. First of all, video games are meant to be addictive. Although game developers are constantly searching for options and hacks to make their products to be more interesting and give people more time to play them as well as provide them with the emotions and feelings that cannot be reached in real life. This is especially actual for game designers and developers the business of whom is based on in-game subscriptions and purchases.

However, game designers must still determine how players will meet their needs within the game. And, when they have done it, they must consider how they will fit into the larger picture of their game monetization strategy. As a result, with free-to-play becoming a common way to commercialize games, game developers are increasingly purchasing in-game things that are intrinsic to the gameplay and the enjoyment it provides.

Games that attract players are very often made to be difficult enough to challenge, but players need to get small achievements and continue playing. So, the design of the video game is similar to that of a gambling casino, allowing players to win small "wins" and continue playing.

There is an opinion that some factors increase the risk of becoming addicted to a computer game. Here are some of them:

Overcoming your opponent

Many MMORPGs are made in a way that makes the game competitive. It came from our ancestors, when you win, you get rewarded in your brain. Evolution considered this factor to be extremely useful for humans so that we still get rewarded once we beat someone. MMORPGs would meet our social requirements by allowing us to communicate with other players within the game, form friendships and alliances, and ultimately become a part of something larger than ourselves. They'd also allow us to satisfy our esteem requirements by allowing us to achieve specific levels of status and talk about ourselves in the in-game community. The deeper and more satisfying the gaming experience becomes as more demands are involved.

Setting and beating a high score

It happens when you achieve something that nobody has ever done before. Trying to beat a high score can engage players to play the game for literally months straight.

Roleplaying

This game feature allows the player to be anyone they could think of. Players are involved in the process of creating, customizing, and developing their characters. Hence, the chances of a player being emotionally connected with the character are very high. And the longer they play, the harder it gets to stop playing.

Relationship

This is primarily related to online games because there you can spend time playing and having fun with your friends or build relationships with other players. Some people find online games a place where they can be themselves and be accepted by the community. This usually concerns the people who were abandoned in the real life.

Apart from this, such psychological trick as reward schedules is used by game developers. Level progress and the new abilities that stand alongside it are part of the overall reward schedule for video games. To make the shatter more delicious, game designers have rewards that are independent of progress. Most obvious are gold or in-world currencies that you can build to buy items, but there are also additional quests, secret game items, and many other types of rewards that players can get without progressing through the game.

MMORPGs take this one step further by introducing achievements that are completely independent of the levels and skills required to complete the game. These achievements are usually badges or honorifics awarded when a player spends a considerable amount of time on a repetitive task, such as killing a round number of enemies of one type. So, they don't promote the game, but let players play to show off while playing with a sense of accomplishment and purpose.

But this was only about the mental part of the problem. Many gamers like the games they play so much that they are ready to donate their own or their parents' money. Usually, they hand over no more than twenty dollars at a time, but on some occasions, this sum can be unbelievably huge.

Previously, when you bought a game, it meant that you bought a game. Neither DLC (downloadable content) nor paid upgrades were available at that time. But everything has changed since then. Nowadays games are made to keep you playing, but not buying the sequel.

There is a game called ENTROPIA. Its developers, Swedish software company MindArk, decided to choose a micropayment business model, where players buy in-game currency that is at a fixed exchange with US dollar: 1 PED (Project Entropia Dollar) for 0.1 USD.

The real rash economy means that you can return your in-game currency (10 Project Entropia Dollars = 1 US \$) to your real-world currency by making a withdrawal to your bank account. Project Entropia includes a unique economic system that allows users to exchange real-world money for PED (Project Entropia Dollars) for use in the virtual world and return it to real-world currencies.

With that said, I want to tell you about the biggest in-game purchases of all time. All of them were made in this game. In the game, the Crystal Palace, a virtual space station, was sold for \$330,000. Money is everything in Entropia, and if you have enough money, you can even have your planet. Planet Calypso was purchased for a stunning \$6,000,000 by another firm named SEE virtual worlds. Little does anyone know what the future holds, but for now, Planet Calypso appears to be the costliest digital object ever sold.

So, the video game market has started to grow exponentially, especially, when COVID-19 outbreak. Global digital gaming expenditure on in-game content and paid downloads grew by 21 percent in 2020, reflecting the expansion of digital revenues. Physical video game sales have been on the decline in recent years, and high street closures and the avoidance of physical retail locations have encouraged digital and e-commerce gaming sales even more. The majority of recent income for nearly all big gaming businesses came from digital content. Despite having a strong performing gaming hardware segment, CD Projekt, the developer of Cyberpunk 2077, claimed 91 percent digital revenue for the recent year.

Addiction to electronic devices and video games has become a severe concern in recent years. It must be resolved as soon as possible to prevent future bad consequences. Parents play a crucial role in assisting youngsters in diverting their focus away from online entertainment and toward a more pleasant and harmless way of having fun. The most beneficial method is to assist youngsters in discovering and developing their abilities and interests. There are many instances where parents misunderstand their children's skills and ask them to participate in an activity without first conversing with them. This is a problem that must be avoided since it may cause youngsters to have difficulties recognizing their abilities. Finally, gadgets assist us in a variety of ways throughout our lives.

However, if we use it for longer than the appropriate amount of time, we are hooked to it. This technology has captivated people of all ages, from children to teens to adults. To avoid becoming addicted to devices, we must spend more time with our families and children. This will help to break your and your children's addiction to gadgets. Next, develop an interest in other activities, such as reading, art, gardening, athletics, and so on, to keep us occupied and prevent us from succumbing to Gadget Addiction. Aside from that, we should organize a day out with our buddies. Aside from that, rather than speaking with our friends or cousins on Whatsapp or other messaging applications, we could arrange a day out with them. This has a

58-я научная конференция аспирантов, магистрантов и студентов БГУИР, 2022 г

positive consequence as well; we are more open and able to converse with others, which helps us become more self-sufficient.

References:

1. Video Game Addiction Articles – [Electronic resource]. – What Makes a Video Game Addictive? – Access mode: <https://www.video-game-addiction.org/what-makes-games-addictive.html> – Date of access: 01.04.2022.
2. Video Game Addiction Articles – [Electronic resource]. – The Most Addictive Video Games. – Access mode: <https://www.video-game-addiction.org/most-addictive-video-games.html> – Date of access: 02.04.2022.
3. ESTNN – [Electronic resource]. – 10 Of The Most Expensive Items In Video Games Ever – Access mode: <https://estnn.com/10-of-the-most-expensive-items-in-video-games-ever/> – Date of access: 05.04.2022.
4. Video Game Addiction Support – [Electronic resource]. – Are Video Games Designed To Be Addictive – Access mode: <https://gamequitters.com/are-video-games-addictive/> – Date of access: 06.04.2022.
5. Video Game Addiction Articles – [Electronic resource]. – Why Won't My Child Stop Playing Video Games? – Access mode: <https://www.video-game-addiction.org/note2.html> – Date of access: 01.04.2022.
6. A Complete User Experience Solution for Mobile and PC Games – [Electronic resource]. – Understanding Gamer Psychology: Why Do People Play Games? – Access mode: <https://www.sekg.net/gamer-psychology-people-play-games/> – Date of access: 08.09.2022.