Innovation and video games: Game over or press X to continue?

Video games have shaped the childhoods of countless individuals for almost three generations. Whether it was making Pac-Man eat points, liberating the princess with Mario and Luigi, or playing with your favorite football team on FIFA. Let's take a look back at fifty years of history to understand how gaming reflects the innovation of our society.

Temps de lecture : minute

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The history of video games : a reflection of technological innovations

The history of video games is closely linked to the development of the computer. In the 1950s, inventive tinkerers developed simple computer games with the aim, not of entertaining, but of demonstrating how the new technologies worked. "Tennis for Two", developed in 1958, is considered the first computer game programmed for entertainment purposes. It was soon forgotten and was replaced by the mass-market game "Pong", released in 1972.

The 1980s saw the birth of many legendary games: Pac-Man (1980), Mario Bros (1983), Tetris (1984) and SimCity (1989). On the other hand, the market was flooded with countless new consoles and home computers that were cheaper and more efficient. Despite the bankruptcy of many video game companies, the arrival of the Game Boy and the innovation of

adventures and graphics revitalised the market.

Video games entered a new dimension, as, in the 1990s, graphics moved into three dimensions. Players can now move in three directions instead of two. Such worlds look more realistic and offer more complex possibilities. The scenarios became more and more elaborate: in Age of Empires (1997), entire civilisations had to be developed; in Tomb Raider (1996), players searched for historical objects with Lara Croft.

With the spectacular growth in the use of the Internet in the 2000s, video games are going online. For the first time, games such as World of Warcraft (2004) are played primarily on the Internet. It is also possible to create your own virtual world, known as a "sandbox". Numerous bestsellers appear, such as The Sims (2000), Super Mario Galaxy (2007) or Minecraft (2010).

In 2010, the video game industry was worth billions, and its revenues exceeded those of the film and music industries. A huge number of companies are developing games for all types of platforms: computers, consoles, tablets, mobile phones. It is now possible to play anywhere, anytime, and at any age. Games such as Red Dead Redemption II (2019) not only keep the player entertained for hours, thanks to the elaborate dialogues and storyline, but also play out differently depending on the player's choices, and can therefore be played repeatedly. Another phenomenon of this decade is the "Let's Play" videos. Players record themselves playing, comment on the game, and give advice, and then upload the video to YouTube, where it is viewed millions of times.

So many evolutions already transformed video games, and we can wonder, what will video games look like tomorrow? Already today a new phenomenon is emerging: web3 gaming.

The new evolution : web3 gaming

Gaming has been a driving force behind technical improvements for decades. It's no wonder that "Web3 Gaming" is a big issue with the introduction of Web3. But what exactly is "Web3 Gaming"? Is it the new El Dorado?

Web3 games are distinct from conventional games in that they give players the opportunity to earn cryptocurrencies and non-fungible tokens (NFTs), which are supported by blockchain technology. The distinction between the virtual and physical worlds is muddled, since players can own their acquired items and exchange them on online markets for either virtual or actual money. In place of one central authority within a game, this democratises all facets of gaming and places the power in the hands of the player.

The use of blockchain technology in gaming allows for greater independence for players and less reliance on centralised entities, resulting in a more diverse gaming environment. Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) enable digital ownership and the rarity of in-game products, opening up a new source of income for game developers and creating value for players. The incorporation of Web3 technology into the gaming industry provides new opportunities for immersive and participatory gaming and the development of new monetisation models and virtual economies. Gods Unchained, Cross The Ages, and The Sandbox are just a few of the more than 2,000 games that have already been released and created by web3 development companies.

Play TO earn VS play AND earn : what is the difference?

Usually, games provide incentives or rewards for playing, however, these

benefits are not always monetary. Instead, players can get virtual goods, in-game money, or other in-game prizes that they can utilise to advance in the game or improve their overall gaming experience. For example, in the game Fortnite, players can earn in-game currency called "V-Bucks" by completing challenges, levelling up, and participating in events. These V-Bucks can be used to purchase skins, emotes, and other cosmetic items that enhance the player's in-game experience, but do not have any monetary value outside of the game. While players cannot earn actual money through Fortnite, the ability to earn and use V-Bucks within the game provides an incentive for players to continue playing and engaging with the game.

So what does "Play to Earn" and "Play and Earn" mean? Both terms are used in the gaming industry and refer to earning rewards or income by playing games. However, there is a difference between the two.

Games that allow users to earn real money or cryptocurrencies by playing are referred to as "Play TO Earn" games. These games use non-fungible tokens (NFTs) for in-game transactions and are based on blockchain technology. By accomplishing particular activities, hitting predetermined milestones, or offering their in-game assets for sale to other players, gamers can receive incentives. One example of a play-to-earn game is Axie Infinity, a blockchain-based game that allows players to earn a cryptocurrency called "Small Love Potion" (SLP) by breeding, battling, and trading digital creatures called Axies. Players can earn SLP by completing various tasks within the game, and then trade it on cryptocurrency exchanges for other cryptocurrencies or fiat currency.

On the other hand, there are games that integrate conventional gameplay mechanics with blockchain technology to create an innovative gaming experience. Indeed, you can earn money only if you're interested; it's not required. These games are known as "play AND earn." Cross The Ages was one of its pioneers and enabled both traditional web2 players and

web3 enthusiasts to share a common universe and a passion for the game. Cross The Ages has chosen to position itself at the forefront of innovation by optionally combining NFT with traditional gaming.

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