

## Indian game studios betting big on homegrown titles

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Game studios in India, long relegated to outsourcing and support roles, are now packing a punch with original intellectual properties (IPs) rooted in local themes. A growing willingness among players to pay for culturally resonant games, coupled with studios' ability to deliver locally relevant content, is pushing companies to bet big on homegrown titles.

Take the case of Pune-based SuperGaming's Indus Battle Royale. Since its launch last year, the game has clocked eight million installs with three million monthly active users. The IP is set to go global with about 15 million pre-listed users outside India alone.

"As a studio, the only way to earn money was servicing my customers worldwide. Now,

there's an opportunity to cater to a local taste since the majority of people are wanting to pay for it. In the next two to three years, servicing a large local market in India will become a dominant theme," said Roby John, co-founder and chief executive officer (CEO), SuperGaming, a Pune-based gaming studio.

Having worked with global clients to develop titles, studios in India now see an opportunity to tap into India's vast local market, armed with a sharper sense of its cultural pulse and player preferences.

"The game industry perceived Indian developers as reliable co-development partners. Indian studios are rarely given the opportunity, the foundational financial support and the belief that they can build large AAA, sustainable and live

service games as a lead studio," said Justin Farren, chief creative officer, LightFury Games, a Bengaluru-based developer.

AAA titles are games with high budget, resources and production quality that continue to iterate over the life cycle of the game.

The local focus comes at a time when mobile gaming commands 90 per cent of the market, with the industry

expected to grow from \$3.8 billion in 2024-25 (FY25) to \$9.2 billion by FY29, according to a report by Primus Partners.

### IP development

A recent survey by AFK Gaming shows that seven out of 10 industry stakeholders and company leaders believe that local themes, languages, and culturally resonant content may determine the success of Indian games in 2025.

John from SuperGaming explains that the studio's game Indus Battle Royale is a shooter category game based on a local theme with Indian characters such as Pokhran named after India's nuclear test site, the Taj Mahal as a robot, a

Rajasthani puppet doll, among others. He explains that shooter game as a category does well in India.

"What if the Indus Valley Civilisation didn't really die, and what if it was so advanced that it flowed to a distant galaxy, and we are now discovering it in the year 2500? This is really the story of our game," he explained.

Farren from LightFury is building an IP around cricket called 'E-cricket', which is being developed as a live service cricket game involving cricketing themes with specific bowling styles, defensive configurations, and tactical decision making.

To make this feel real, the creative team is touring Mumbai

to map the public grounds such as Oval Maidan and Shivaji Park, and how gully cricket is played in Mumbai.

"We want to visit these places because it is the essence of the sport... We go to local neighbourhood pitches and gullies and talk to the kids playing," Farren said.

Soundtrack will be different in this cricket game. "Our game will have a very global perspective on music. Multiple nations participate in cricket on a global scale and we should be pulling music from, for example, up and coming Indian, Caribbean, Sri Lankan artists, among others," he explained.

Gaming companies in India have raised \$20.2 million in equity funding in 2025.

This is a 38 per cent drop from \$32.5 million raised till June 2024, according to data from market intelligence platform Tracxn.



ILLUSTRATION:  
BINAY SINHA

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