

AD QUALITY MATTERS:

PLAYER SENTIMENTS ON IN-GAME ADS

LEVERAGING AD INSIGHTS TO RETAIN PLAYERS

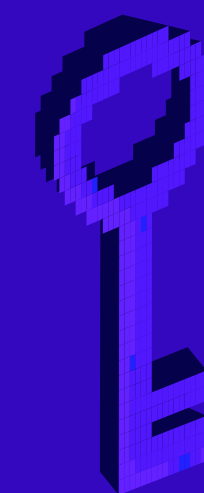
The “Ad Experience Equation”

Players are constantly engaging with ads in mobile games, but what makes an ad experience feel seamless rather than intrusive? Our deep dive into player sentiments reveals that the ad experience can be a game-changer – literally. This report unpacks player feedback, spotlighting ad experiences that impact engagement and revenue. Here’s what players are saying, and what game developers need to know to transform ads from an annoyance into a strategic advantage.

Methodology

This research survey, conducted in October 2024, gathered responses from a nationally representative sample of over 600 U.S. participants aged 18 and older. The findings provide a current snapshot of player engagement and attitudes toward in-game ads among American gamers. Quantitative data was collected via an online survey to explore:

- Player sentiment
- Perceptions of ad quality
- Factors contributing to player churn



Player-Centric Ads:

- Drive Player Loyalty
- Grow Ad Revenue
- Boost In-Game Spend

Key Findings

Insights from Player Feedback:

84% uninstall games due to negative ad experiences

91% frequently experience unskippable ads, with over half facing them regularly

93% abandon games because of deceptive 'X' buttons

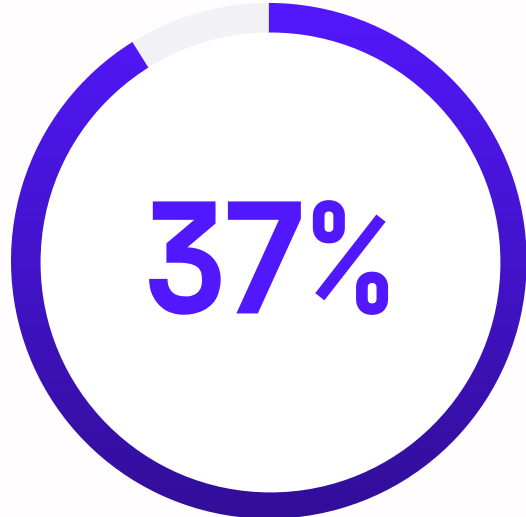
61% warn others against downloading games due to poor ad experiences

58% quit the game immediately due to disruptive ads

34% abandon games when ads cause crashes or freezes

Ad Quality's Impact on the Player Experience

What players say:



37%

have left a negative review due to ad quality issues



41%

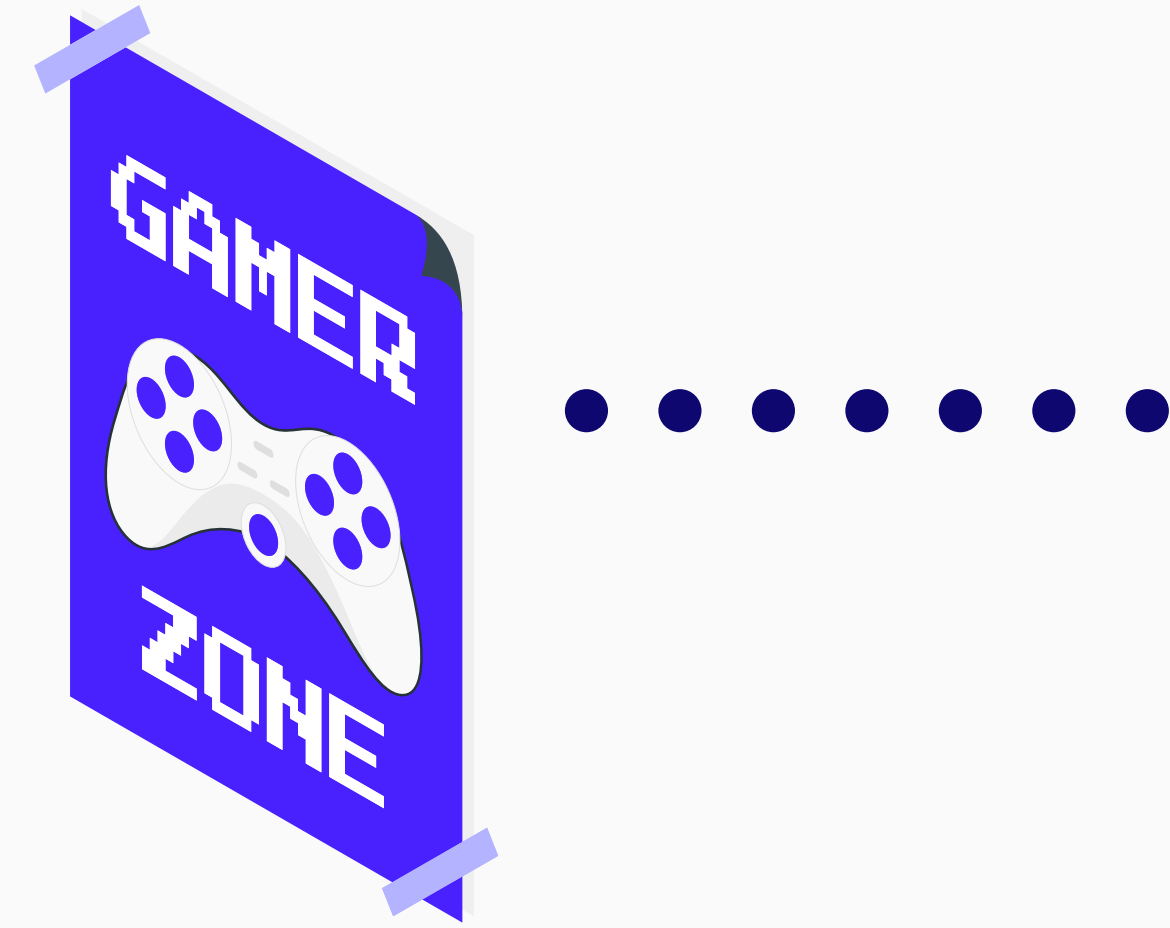
say frustrating ads ruin their game experience



84%

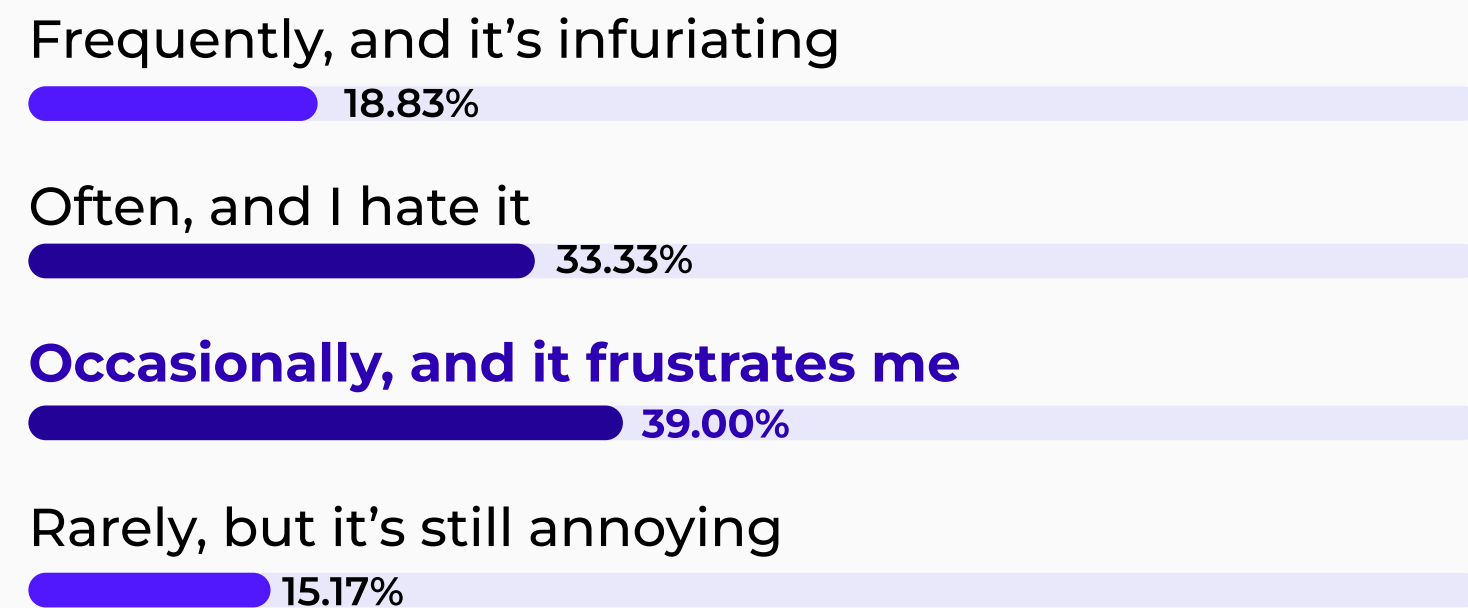
have uninstalled a game due to annoying or disruptive ads

The Triple Threat: Intrusive, Disruptive & Deceptive Ads

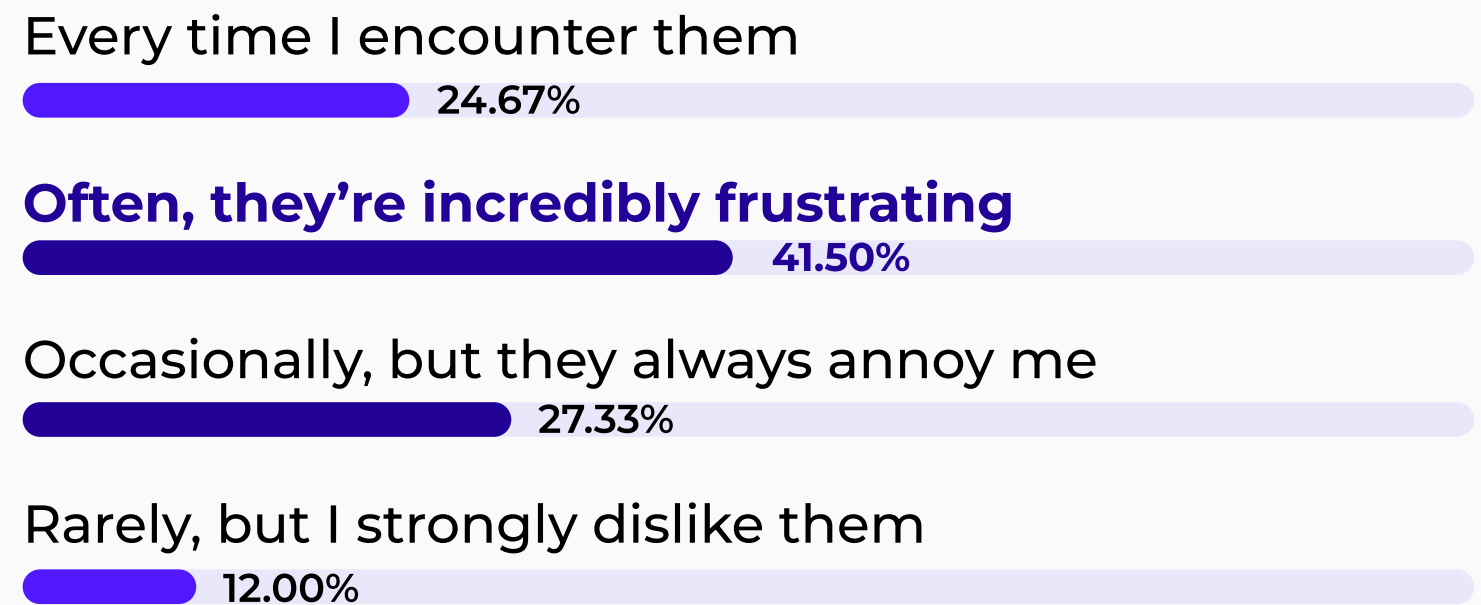


When ads are hard to close or have misleading “X” buttons, players feel trapped, leading to accidental clicks and growing frustration. To improve the player experience, app developers should prioritize eliminating deceptive elements, set automatic closures after a specified time, and ensure that "close" buttons are clearly visible and functional.

How often do you encounter ads that you can't close or exit?

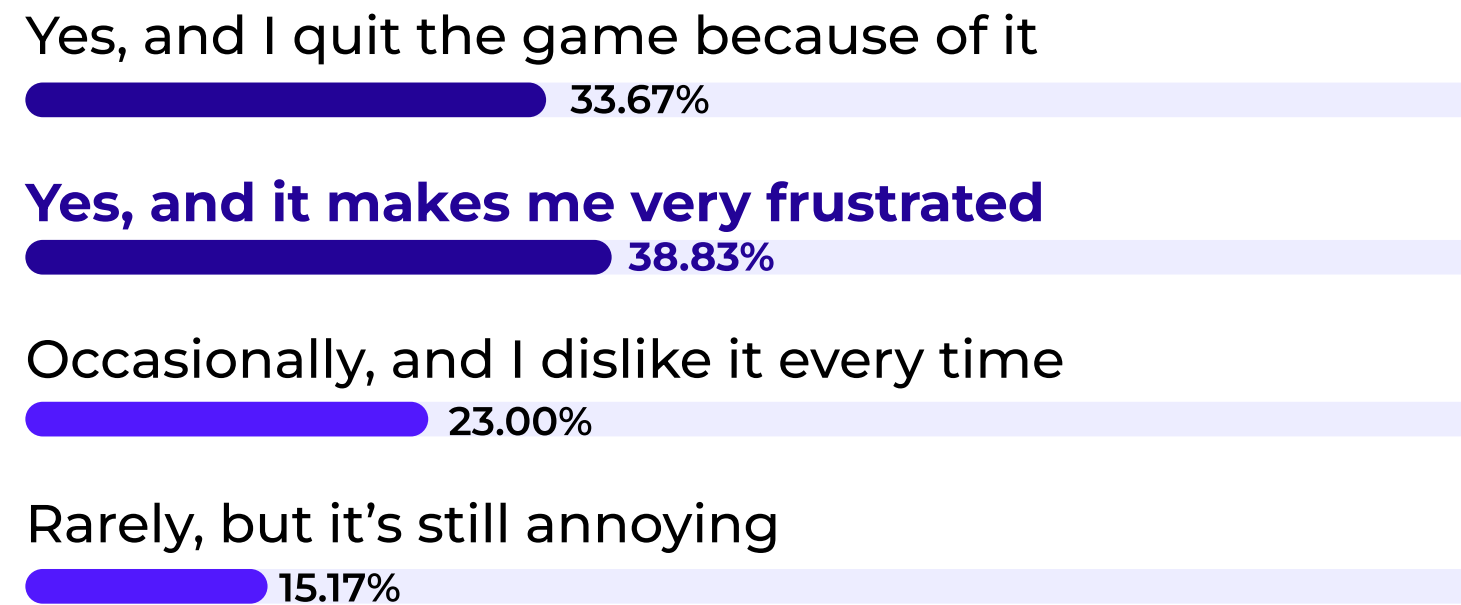


How often do you leave games that use fake 'X' buttons or other deceptive ad closure methods?

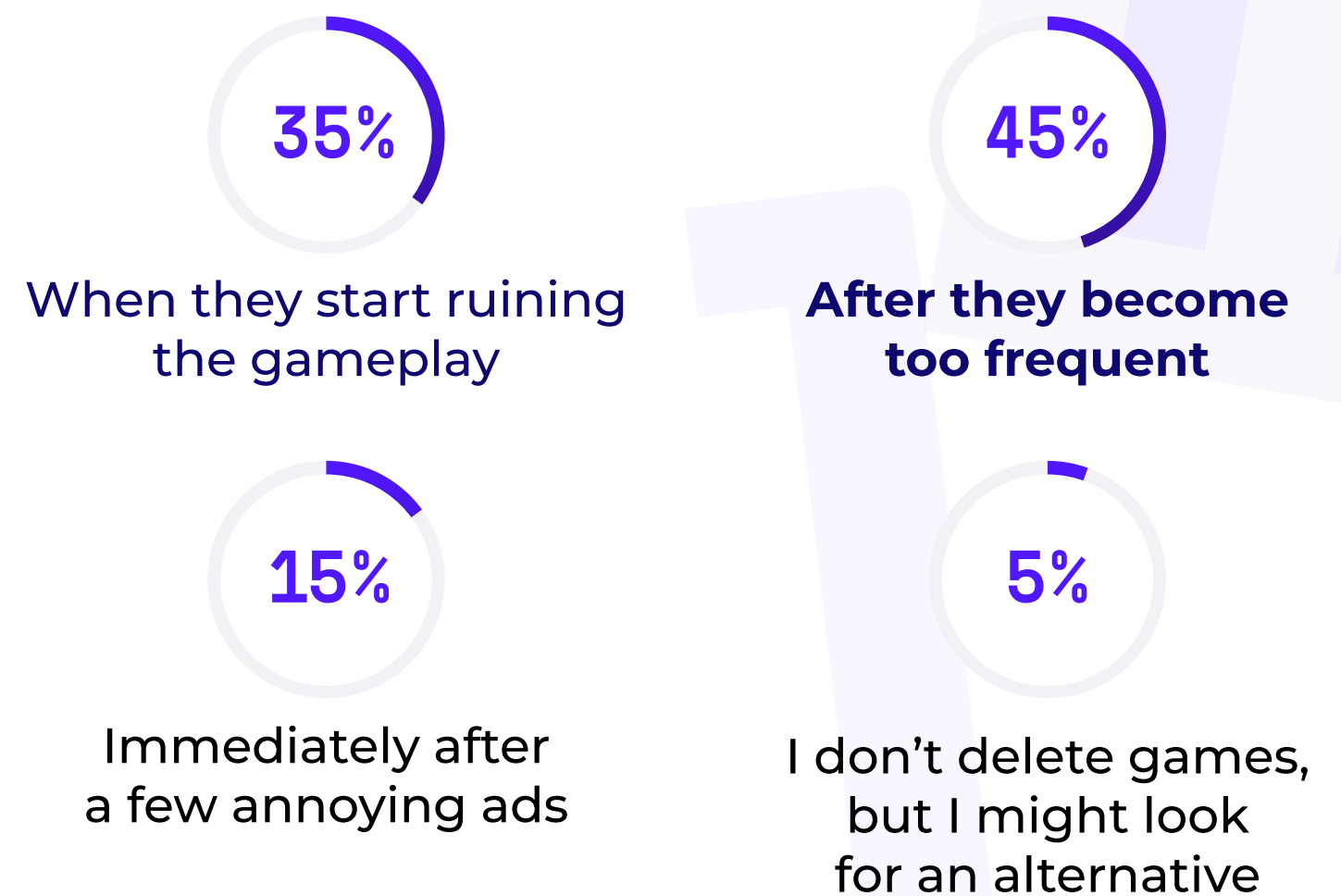


Players have little patience for disruptive ads, with frequent crashes or freezes prompting many to quit or feel intense frustration. This behavior signals how intrusive ads can erode trust and retention. When interstitial ads become too frequent, players are even more likely to abandon the game, highlighting the need for player-centric ad experiences.

Have you ever seen ads that seem to freeze or crash your game?



At what point do you consider deleting a game due to the frequency of interstitial ads?



The Force Behind Player Churn

To create a smoother player experience, app developers should prioritize blocking frustrating ads like tricky “X” buttons, ad-related crashes, and unskippable interstitials. Beyond ad network filters, a real-time ad quality tool can enforce player-centric ad quality guidelines across all demand sources.

Have often do frustrating ad experiences cause you to exit out of the game or delete the app?



13%

Every time it happens



42%

Often, it ruins the experience



45%

Occasionally, if the ads are too frequent



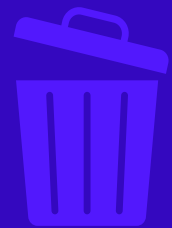
9%

Rarely, but I still dislike those ads

Is Ad Quality Fueling Player Uninstalls?

Frequent negative ad experiences often drive players to uninstall, impacting retention and lifetime value (LTV). By integrating real-time protection instead of relying solely on ad networks, app developers can gain better control over ad quality and boost monetization.

Have you ever uninstalled a game because of intrusive/disruptive/annoying ads?



84% of players uninstall games after encountering disruptive ads.

Gamers Discourage Downloads Due to Bad Ads

61% of players would discourage others from downloading a game due to a bad ad experience.

How likely are you to warn others against downloading a game due to its poor ad experience?

Very likely, I do it often



Likely, I tell friends to avoid such games



Somewhat likely, but I still dislike the ads



Unlikely, but I still dislike those ads

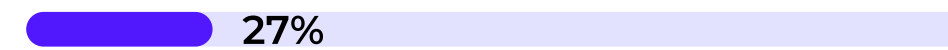


Have you ever used social media or online discussions/forums to complain about ads in a game?

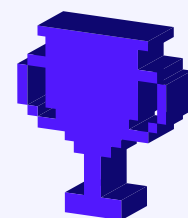
Yes, I have complained about ads



No, but I've considered it because of the ads



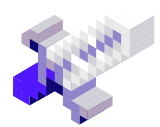
No, but the ads still frustrate me



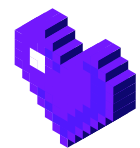
With players actively discouraging downloads, developers must understand that ad quality impacts not just player retention but also new player acquisition. Word-of-mouth recommendations are powerful, and a commitment to better ad experiences could enhance a game's reputation within player communities.

What Players Want from In-Game Ads

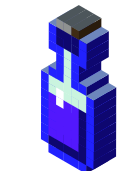
Understanding the frustrations that push players away is key to keeping them engaged.



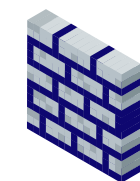
Clear and Easy Ad Closures: Players want ads they can easily close, without deceptive buttons or hidden exits. Transparent and straightforward ad design builds trust and reduces frustration.



Less Intrusive Ad Formats: Players prefer skippable, well-timed ads that don't interrupt gameplay too often. Reducing ad frequency or placing ads at natural breaks can enhance the gaming experience.



Relevant and Non-Misleading Content: Players want ads that are truthful and aligned with the game's tone. Misleading or deceptive ads erode trust and can push players away.

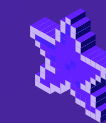


Non-Disruptive Ad Formats: Ads that don't cause game crashes, freezes, or excessive lag are highly valued. Players want ads that don't interfere with the smooth functioning of the game.

Player-centric ad experiences lead to better engagement and drive revenue



Better Player Retention



Higher In-Game Spending



Boosted Ad Revenue

About AppHarbr

AppHarbr is dedicated to safeguarding the in-app user experience by ensuring mobile users encounter only high-quality, engaging ads. We empower app developers and game studios to maximize ad revenue without sacrificing quality, creating a profitable ecosystem free from harmful and low-quality ads. AppHarbr is the trusted industry solution for eliminating malicious, unwanted, and disruptive ads, protecting in-app audiences and enhancing the in-app ad experience.

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