

## KARNATAKA SPARKS NEW VIGOUR

The first in a series of gaming conclaves by IDGS has set the stage for a dynamic transformation in India's gaming sector

**IDGS GAMING CONCLAVE BENGALURU SPECIAL**

The recent gaming conference held in Bangalore by IDGS, with the theme "Defining the Frontiers - The future of Gaming in India and Gaming for Good," served as the launch pad for an ambitious six-city tour that will take place over the course of the next nine months and provide a significant boost to the Indian gaming industry. The conclave gathered prominent industry speakers, government officials, and gaming enthusiasts to deliberate of the roadmap for the sector's expansion.

"In the next two to three years, you will find an eSports Park in Karnataka where one building will be dedicated to all the startups working on eSports," said Sanjeev Gupta, CEO, Karnataka Digital Economy Mission.

Mangalore and Udupi are poised to become the next



Rajan Navani, president- IDGS, and CEO JetSynthesys, Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, CEO, of Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM) and Vishal Dhupar, MD, NVIDIA, at the inaugural session, Gaming Conclave, Bengaluru. Organized by IDGS, the Gaming Conclave was supported by the Confederation of Indian Industry, Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM), and K-TECH

focal points for the gaming ecosystem, startups, IP creation, and product development. "Already, 20 startups are functioning in Mangalore. We call upon gaming startups to tap into the vast potential of Karnataka," Gupta said.

"Karnataka can take a lead in creating eSports arenas,

where thousands of people can come together to watch gamers play. IDGS will collaborate with the Karnataka government to create such an infrastructure and work on a vision paper for eSports in Karnataka," said Rajan Navani, President of IDGS, and CEO of JetSynthesys Pvt Ltd.

The government of

**ADVANTAGE KARNATAKA**

**20,000**

Startups in Karnataka

**48**

Unicorns in Karnataka

**\$65bn**

Investments raised by Karnataka startups

Karnataka is offering gaming entrepreneurs resources such as technology tools, funding opportunities, incubation centers, and accelerator programs dedicated to eSports. Additionally, a comprehensive eSports vision report will be created to assess the current state on eSports in Karnataka and forecast its growth over the next decade.

## IDGS TO COLLABORATE WITH GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA ON GAMING

Rajan Navani, President- IDGS, and CEO JetSynthesys met Mr. Priyank M Kharge, the Minister for Information Technology and Biotechnology (IT & BT) for Karnataka and delved into the exciting possibilities of forging a partnership between the IDGS-Gaming Society and the Government of Karnataka. The discussion revolved around the importance of boosting skill development initiatives and nurturing gaming startups, recognizing their pivotal role in propelling India's gaming industry beyond the \$4 billion milestone by 2025



# Karnataka Creating Value by Fostering Innovation & Collaboration



## Rajan Navani

President IDGS &  
CEO of JetSynthesys

IDGS, the premier national body driving the growth of India's gaming industry, recently held a gaming conclave in Bengaluru, the heart of India's gaming hub. This event brought together over 250 delegates, industry leaders, game developers, and enthusiasts to discuss and explore the immense potential of the gaming industry in India.

The Gaming Conclave acted as a catalyst, providing a platform for networking and collaborations among stakeholders, including government officials, industry experts, budding entrepreneurs, and investors. The goal was to propel the Indian gaming industry towards global recognition and economic opportunity, particularly in the emerging world of eSports.

Sanjeev Gupta, CEO of Karnataka Digital Economy Mission, expressed his enthusiasm for the growth of the eSports arena and the conclave series. We are here to nurture an industry that is critical in the lives of many young people and can convert passion into economic opportunity, not only for India but also for the global arena. We will take this conclave series to six important cities in the country over the next nine months to engage in conversations that build a strong foundation for the gaming industry's future.

With the Karnataka government's visionary approach and IDGS' commitment to collaboration, the gaming community in Karnataka can look forward to a future brimming with opportunities and achievements. As the

gaming enthusiasts from all walks of life converge to shape the future of gaming in India, the landscape promises to be innovative, inclusive, and impactful.

IDGS is focused on building IPs from India for the world, leveraging Indian talent and showcasing the country's potential as a value creator. The organization recognizes the significance of eSports, where gamers' aspirations

transform into those of athletes and professionals, and is committed to strengthening stakeholders and creating a conducive environment for the gaming sector to flourish.

Furthermore, IDGS plays a crucial role in advocacy and promoting the right skills and entrepreneurship in the gaming sector. The organization fosters

collaboration between industry and government and actively creates awareness about responsible gaming practices.

Regarding the GST implications for the eSports industry, the government has officially recognized eSports, which does not involve wagering or betting of any kind, making it exempt from the new GST regulations.

As the gaming industry in Karnataka and India at large continues to evolve, IDGS remains dedicated to driving innovation, collaboration, and responsible gaming practices. The conclave series, along with the government's support and industry partnerships, promises a bright future for gaming in India, with Karnataka playing a pivotal role as a value creator for the world.

**THE IDGS GAMING CONCLAVE'S OBJECTIVE IN BANGALORE WAS TO ADVANCE THE INDIAN GAMING SECTOR TOWARDS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND GLOBAL PROMINENCE, PARTICULARLY IN THE NEWLY GROWING FIELD OF ESPORTS.**

### FOR MORE DETAILS

#### INDIAN DIGITAL GAMING SOCIETY

Plot No. 249-F, Sector 18,  
Udyog Vihar, Phase IV Gurugram  
122015, Haryana, INDIA

#### IDGS Contact

**Madhurima Maniyara**  
madhurima.maniyara@cii.in  
+91 976 400 1342

#### India Gaming Show Contact

**Neelam Bhagat**  
neelam.bhagat@cii.in  
+91 124 4014060-65  
+91 9891722264



# KARNATAKA READY TO NURTURE GAMING

Karnataka already being home to a significant number of unicorns, including gaming companies, the state is set to play a pivotal role in India's journey towards a trillion-dollar digital economy

Sanjeev Gupta, the CEO of the Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM), has declared Karnataka's dedication to nurturing the gaming and AVGC industry in the state. As part of the mission's ambitious plans, Gupta unveiled the upcoming establishment of Karnataka's first eSports Arena, designed to support the burgeoning eSports community and provide a platform for gaming enthusiasts.

"We welcome the gaming and startup industry into the State of Karnataka. We are committed to unleashing the potential of the gaming sector here," Gupta said in his address at the IDGS Gaming Conclave in Bengaluru.

He emphasized the need to focus on IP creation, recognizing its significance in empowering the growth of the gaming industry. The CEO also highlighted



**Sanjeev Gupta**  
*Chief Executive Officer  
Karnataka Digital Economy  
Mission  
Government of Karnataka*

the vital role of startups in Karnataka's digital economy landscape. Out of the

105 unicorns in India, an impressive 48 have emerged from Karnataka, collectively raising \$65 billion. This thriving startup ecosystem positions Karnataka as a crucial player in India's aspirations for a trillion-dollar digital economy.

Gupta revealed that efforts are being made to extend the digital economy beyond Bengaluru. The mission aims to create emerging tech clusters in Mysuru, Mangaluru, and Hubballi – Dharwad – Belgaum regions, driving economic growth and job opportunities in these areas.

The announcement of the eSports Arena and KDEM's continued support for the gaming and AVGC sector have sparked excitement among entrepreneurs and professionals in the industry.

## KARNATAKA THE MECCA OF INNOVATION

In the world of gaming and content creation, Karnataka, particularly its capital city Bangalore, shines as a beacon of innovation and boundless opportunities

Vishal Dhupar, Member Executive Council of IDGS and Managing Director of South Asia NVIDIA India Pvt Ltd, believes that Bangalore, the vibrant capital of Karnataka, is a city that thrives on innovation and is a hotbed for entrepreneurial wisdom. With its robust educational institutes and a secure social infrastructure, Bangalore offers an ideal environment for driving impactful change.

Dhupar emphasizes that the gaming industry, coupled with the content market, presents a staggering \$280 billion opportunity in India. He encourages entrepreneurs and creative minds to seize this potential and develop immersive gaming experiences that resonate with global audiences. Moreover, he highlights the prospect of commentary and storytelling around gaming events, similar to how Harsha Bhogle narrates cricket matches, as a



**Vishal Dhupar**  
*Member Executive Council,  
IDGS and MD, South Asia  
NVIDIA India Pvt Ltd*

lucrative avenue for content creators.

With a clear mission and determination, Dhupar asserts that Karnataka, and India as a whole, provide an unparalleled launching pad for transformative products with a truly global appeal

### STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO BECOMING AN IDGS MEMBER:

- Obtain and duly fill the Membership Form available on the IDGS website.
- Provide the latest Annual Report and Balance Sheet of your company.
- Submit the audited accounts details of your organization.
- Furnish a list of key management personnel associated with your company.
- Present a comprehensive and detailed company profile highlighting your gaming industry expertise and contributions.

By completing these steps, you can gain access to a vibrant community of gaming professionals and opportunities for growth and collaboration.

# *Karnataka: Unleashing the Power of Digital Economy*

## **PIONEERING CHANGE**

Recognizing the immense potential, Karnataka became the first state in India to dedicate a policy specifically to Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC). This groundbreaking move includes incentives for financial support, infrastructure development, and skill enhancement, paving the way for a thriving AVGC industry.

## **GAMING STARTUP HUB**

Karnataka has established itself as a hub for gaming startups, with a robust policy framework and a supportive environment. The success of the AVGC policy can be witnessed in the state being home to three AVGC unicorns out of a total of five in the country. Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM) plays a pivotal role in supporting and nurturing startups, especially in the gaming sector, fostering their growth and innovation.

## **CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

With a state-of-the-art 30,000 sq ft Centre of Excellence (CoE) for AVGC at Whitefield, Bengaluru, Karnataka continues to lead the animation, gaming, VFX, and comics industries. This CoE serves as a cutting-edge facility for training, research, and development, nurturing talent and pushing the boundaries of creativity in the AVGC space.

**48 out  
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unicorns in India  
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**\$280  
billion**

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India

**20**  
Gaming  
Startups  
have made  
Mangalore  
their home

**\$65  
billion**

contribution of  
Karnataka in the  
Indian startup  
landscape

Bangalore, the global Information and Communication Technology (ICT) center and capital of Karnataka, has been at the forefront of India's AVGC sector growth. As the state expands its horizons beyond Bengaluru, Mangalore and Udupi are emerging as new game development centers with a strong focus on Intellectual Property (IP) creation and product development.

### **A THRIVING ECOSYSTEM**

Karnataka's vibrant ecosystem, boasting numerous R&D centers, top-notch institutes, and a large number of engineering colleges, positions the state as a powerhouse in the digital economy. This rich ecosystem has enabled Karnataka to emerge as a global virtual production hub for films, TV, Animation, Gaming, and VFX.

### **A GLOBAL VIRTUAL PRODUCTION HUB**

Bangalore, often referred to as India's Silicon Valley, has channeled the creative energy of the nation's youth and projected India's creativity on the global stage. As a result, it has evolved into a global virtual production hub for the AVGC industries, attracting global collaborations and showcasing India's creative prowess.

### **UPCOMING ESPORTS ARENA**

Karnataka's plans to establish the state's first eSports Arena signify its commitment to the gaming industry. This upcoming arena is set to create Intellectual Property (IP) and contribute significantly to the growth of the gaming sector, providing enthusiasts with a world-class gaming experience.

### **BEYOND BENGALURU- EMERGING CLUSTERS**

While Bengaluru remains the nucleus of the AVGC industry in Karnataka, the state is actively expanding its footprint beyond the capital city. Mangalore and Udupi are being developed as new gaming clusters, offering a conducive environment for companies to set up and flourish. These emerging clusters aim to attract talent, encourage innovation, and diversify the AVGC landscape across Karnataka.

### **AVGC UNICORNS AND FUNDING**

Karnataka boasts a remarkable achievement in the AVGC sector, with the state being home to three out of the five AVGC unicorns in India. Moreover, out of the total \$4 billion raised for AVGC in the country, an impressive 50 percent has been raised in Karnataka. This strong presence of unicorns and significant funding indicates the state's dominance in the AVGC space.

### **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

Karnataka's prominence in the digital economy can be attributed to its extensive network of academic institutions and training centers. The state houses the largest number of R&D centers, industrial training institutes, software technology parks, and ranks as the third-largest in terms of engineering colleges in India. This academic excellence and focus on skill development contribute significantly to the talent pool driving the AVGC industry's success.

### **GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES FROM INDIA:**

Karnataka's prowess in the digital economy extends beyond domestic borders. With a clear mission and determination, startups and companies based in Karnataka can tap into the vast global opportunities in the AVGC space. By leveraging the state's resources, creativity, and technology expertise, Karnataka positions itself as a key player in the global AVGC arena, showcasing India's potential on the world stage.

### **CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA'S CREATIVE ECONOMY:**

Karnataka has emerged as a major driving force behind India's creative economy. With Bangalore, the state's capital, acting as the country's global ICT center, Karnataka has become a prominent hub for films, TV, animation, gaming, and VFX, projecting India's creativity on the international stage.

### **ABUNDANT TALENT AVAILABILITY:**

Karnataka offers a vast pool of talented individuals, making it an ideal destination for the AVGC industry. The state ensures a steady supply of skilled professionals in animation, gaming, VFX, and related fields. Karnataka's reputation as a technology and innovation hub attracts creative minds from across the country, further enhancing the talent availability. This abundance of skilled workforce fosters innovation, drives growth, and positions Karnataka as a leading player in India's AVGC sector.



# GAMING CONCLAVE SNAPSHOTS

The IDGS Gaming Conclave provided a networking platform for industry professionals, academia, game developers, publishers, investors, and gaming enthusiasts, fostering collaborations and partnerships that will drive the growth of the gaming industry in India. It demonstrated and deliberated on ways to capitalise on India's enormous potential in the gaming sector and catapult it to worldwide recognition.









# IP vs. Commodity: Choosing the Right Path for Gaming Startups

The choice between IP and commodity products is a pivotal one for gaming startups, shaping their trajectory, funding strategy, and long-term success

At the gaming conclave, industry experts engaged in a lively discussion on the critical decision faced by gaming startups: Is their business an IP-driven endeavor or a commodity-based product? Delving deeper, they highlighted the distinction between the two approaches. Games like Ludo, for instance, are relatively easy to develop as commodity products, but the challenge lies in gaining widespread distribution. On the other hand, IP-focused ventures may take longer to establish, but they offer defensibility and a distinct brand identity that sets them apart from competitors.

The discussion sparked a debate among founders, investors, and industry veterans, with valuable insights being shared

from various perspectives. Some argued that the market for commodity products might be more saturated, making it difficult to stand out from the crowd. In contrast, others stressed that successful commodity-based games require relentless focus on distribution and marketing strategies, where timing and execution play pivotal roles.

Founders were urged to assess their product's uniqueness and strategic advantages to determine the most suitable path for their venture. While IP-driven games may require more time and resources for development, they often offer long-term defensibility and a loyal fan base. On the other hand, entrepreneurs building commodity products must

focus on rapid growth and scalability to outpace competition in a crowded marketplace.

The experts also emphasized the importance of aligning the chosen path with the team's expertise and passion. Passionate teams with innovative ideas might find it more rewarding to pursue IP-driven ventures, where they can create unique experiences and build a strong brand identity. Conversely, teams equipped with strong distribution and marketing capabilities might thrive in the competitive landscape of commodity games, where reaching a massive audience is the key to success.

## Managing Investor Expectations: Time vs. Control

The PBD Guest of Honour is confident that India would support South Africa in its development efforts owing to their shared aspirations

In an engaging session that captivated the audience, seasoned entrepreneurs and industry experts openly shared their experiences and insights on effectively managing investor expectations in the gaming sector. The focal point of the discussion revolved around two essential aspects that investors closely evaluate when investing in a gaming startup: time and control. Speakers emphasized the significance of timing in the investment process. Revenue-driven ventures

**REVENUE-DRIVEN VENTURES THAT HAVE ALREADY GAINED MARKET TRACTION MAY CHOOSE TO DELAY SEEKING FUNDING UNTIL THEY HAVE DEMONSTRATED CONSISTENT REVENUE STREAMS AND A PROVEN BUSINESS MODEL.**

that have already gained market traction may choose to delay seeking funding until they have demonstrated consistent revenue streams and a proven business model. This approach not only boosts the startup's valuation but also mitigates the risks associated with early-stage investments. By showcasing a track record of success, founders gain leverage in negotiations and secure funding on more favourable terms.

However, for early-stage gaming startups, timely financing is often crucial for product development, marketing, and expansion. In such cases, founders must carefully assess their funding needs and seek investment at the right juncture. Striking the balance between timing and financial readiness is paramount to avoid raising funds prematurely or waiting too long, which might lead to missed opportunities.



# The Recipe to Raise Money for Gaming Startups

Seasoned founders and investors gathered to share valuable insights into securing funding for entertainment-focused startups. They emphasized that for pre-revenue gaming ventures, showcasing a clear-cut business case can be challenging. Hence, it becomes essential to seek believers who are passionate about the idea and the team behind it. Identifying investors who resonate with the vision and potential impact of the gaming product can expedite the fundraising process. While utility-based businesses can often target institutional funding, entertainment startups find greater success when connecting with individual investors who understand and appreciate the transformative power of gaming experiences.

## The Role of Employees in Gaming Ventures

Esteemed panelists put the spotlight on the unsung heroes of gaming startups: the employees. They passionately emphasized that employees are, in fact, the primary investors in any gaming venture. Their time, dedication, and unique skills constitute the most valuable resources in the knowledge-driven gaming industry. Founders were urged to prioritize their team's well-being, fostering a positive work environment that promotes creativity and innovation. Acknowledging the significance of employees as true stakeholders can result in increased productivity, a stronger sense of ownership, and ultimately, a thriving and successful gaming company.

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## IDGS GAMING CONCLAVE SERIES

DATE	CITY
24th Aug 2023	Delhi
29th Sep 2023	Hyderabad
27th Oct 2023	Chennai
27th Nov 2023	Kolkata
19th Jan 2024	Mumbai

# Gaming Innovation Galore

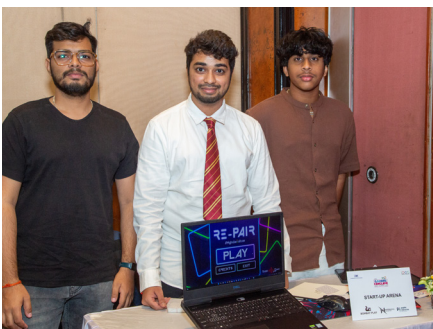
In a remarkable display of cutting-edge technology and creativity, 20 plus gaming startups from Karnataka recently gathered to showcase their latest designs and advancements at the IDGS Gaming Conclave in Bengaluru. The Start-Up Area at the event became a magnet for attendees, offering a glimpse into the future of gaming with immersive experiences that featured virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies. As the gaming industry continues to evolve, these startups are at the forefront, revolutionizing the way we play and interact with digital entertainment.



## Attention Startups

Become an IDGS Member today

Mail: [madhurima.maniyara@cii.in](mailto:madhurima.maniyara@cii.in)





# INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



If you want to start building a game to test, start raising funds from VCs, that I'm doing something in Generative AI, is the easiest opportunity for an entrepreneur to handle at this point, which will make sense.

**Anuj Tandon,**  
CEO Gaming, JetSynthesis



With 5G, the ability to stream high-quality Unreal Engine-based graphics and interact with interactive environments, as well as employ newer technologies, such as cloud-based anchors for geospatial use cases, is becoming appealing.

**Sameer Pitalwalla,**  
Head of Gaming, APAC Google Cloud



Gaming has always been at the forefront of a lot of technology changes happening. It determines how breakthroughs tend to happen and how those technologies evolve and use cases are developed.

**Girish Menon,**  
Chief Strategy Officer, JetSynthesis



We have been effectively using AI to improve the gaming experience -- both for the gamers and the game developers -- for many years. I think in the next six to eight months, we will see how Gen AI actually is transforming the gaming experience.

**Pawan Awasthi,**  
Head Consumer  
Marketing NVIDIA South Asia



Games are more than just a way to pass the time or entertain yourself. Games have an effect on the brain's neural architecture. Playing computer games improves cognitive skills, and gaming improves decision-making and problem-solving abilities.

**Dr. Bibhudutta Baral,**  
Discipline Lead, Digital Game Design,  
National Institute of Design



The IDGS Bangalore conclave was very insightful and a great networking opportunity, incredible speakers and many fun games to test. It was a really great experience and many work opportunities opened up as a result.

**Sahil Sen,**  
Product Marketing Management  
Consultant, Arth House



The Karnataka Government runs a phenomenal ELEVATE program. The programme allows you to be the main entrepreneur of the business.

**Mayur Bhimjiyani,**  
Co-Founder  
Hypernova



More upcoming game studios are embracing native formats such as In-game asset branding (Virtual OOH) and Native Product Integration, seizing new opportunities to monetize through content.

**Sumit Batheja,**  
Co-Founder & Executive Director  
GameStack



You need to build soft skills when you play some games. I learnt to speed-read because of playing games (the prompts on the screens would not stay for more than two to three seconds).

**Siddharth Ravishankar,**  
Chief Gaming Officer  
Galaxy Racer





Confederation of Indian Industry



INDIAN DIGITAL GAMING SOCIETY

# GAMING CONCLAVE

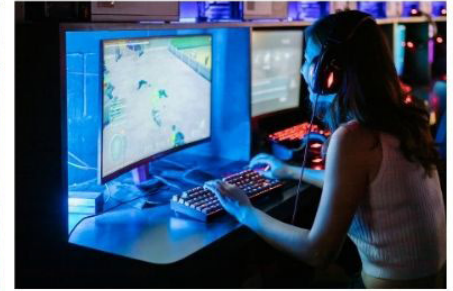
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## BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE GAMING FUTURE

24 AUG 2023

1030 - 1800 HRS

LE MERIDIEN (SOVEREIGN HALL), NEW DELHI



### Key Topics

Transformation of Indian Gaming Industry - Policy & Regulatory  
Growth Potential of India's Video Game Industry  
India's Esports Potential to Reach Olympics  
India Opportunity & Investments

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E: [madhurima.maniyara@cii.in](mailto:madhurima.maniyara@cii.in)

M: +91 9764001342