Computer games outgrow the stereotypes

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UQ Business School academic Frank Alpert believes the stereotypical image of computer gamers is a long way wide of the mark.

"When they think about computer games or entertainment software, many people picture a teenage boy hunched over a console game and shooting, slashing, or punching whatever he meets on screen," Associate Professor Alpert said.

"In reality the entertainment software industry is quite diverse demographically.

"The average age of players is now thirtyish and some estimates suggest up to 43 per cent may be women.

"And the games are not all violent – according to the Entertainment Software Rating Board, only 17 per cent of all games sold in 2004 were classified 'mature'."

Dr Alpert said the best selling game franchise of all time was The Sims, a game that contained no violence at all.

"Most people are also unaware of just how big the industry is. A PricewaterhouseCoopers forecast in 2005 suggests worldwide sales of US$55 billion in 2008," he said.

"To put that into perspective, opening-week sales of Microsoft's Halo 2 Xbox game in 2004 exceeded box office takings for Shrek 2, the biggest

film of the year."

Dr Alpert said Queensland was well placed to capture some of the economic benefits with several game design companies located in the state.

Recently published in the *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, Dr Alpert's paper is the first overview of the entertainment software industry from a marketing perspective.

Source: University of Queensland