

US online videogame play on the rise: NPD Group

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Online gaming for consoles and portable devices "enjoyed a statistically significant" increase from 19 percent of the overall [videogame market](#) early last year to 25 percent in early 2009, NPD concluded.

"Online gaming is enjoyed by a diverse group of players," said NPD analyst Anita Frazier.

"The sheer variety of content and ease of access makes online gaming attractive to a much larger demographic than what we typically see in retail."

Approximately 22 percent of online gamers are aged 13 to 17 this year as opposed to that age bracket making up 17 percent of the group in 2008, according to NPD.

The allure of online [videogames](#) has evidently faded for older players, with adults revealing they are playing less.

Microsoft's [Xbox 360](#) models were the most popular videogame consoles for online gaming, being used by half of the more than 20,000 consumer panel members NPD surveyed for the report.

Nintendo's [Wii](#) consoles were second choices, used by 29 percent of online gamers, while Sony [PlayStation 3](#) consoles ranked third in popularity.

"This is a testament to the strength of Xbox 360, both overall, and particularly in the online gaming sphere," NPD said in the report.

The number of online players who bought at least one videogame designed for play on consoles has risen a little bit since last year in a possible sign that the industry is "recession resistant," according to NPD.

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