DE-CIX Survey:
What keeps gamers from cloud gaming and how to make it more attractive

From August 25, Gamescom opens its exclusively digital exhibition halls for the second year in a row and, for three days, pulses will race in "The Heart of Gaming". In addition to numerous premieres and insights into the world of video games, there is a further question this time: What's the score with cloud gaming? Developments to date show that cloud gaming providers are seeking changes to make their services more attractive. For example, Microsoft now directly integrates xCloud into the Xbox app for Windows, which means gamers no longer have to take a detour via the browser.

The cloud gaming division at Google is going a few steps further: Although the in-house Stadia developer studio was closed earlier this year, Google is not dropping the project. The plans for Stadia include Google focusing on Stadia Makers to attract more (indie) developers – in place of AAA titles and ports. A new royalties concept, through which developers will receive 85 percent of revenues from game sales starting in October, is expected to contribute to this. In addition, 70 percent of the revenue generated by Stadia Pro is also expected to go to developers who make their titles available on the platform each month. Rumor has it that Google's game streaming service will even be opened up to developers as a white-label platform.

As optimistic as these measures sound, **Dr. Thomas King, Chief Technology Officer at DE-CIX**, the operator of the world's leading Internet Exchange in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, knows that cloud gaming still raises yet-to-be answered questions and concerns among many gamers. "When it comes to online gaming, we have a front row seat at DE-CIX – as the operator of the world's largest interconnection ecosystem. Over the past year, we have seen a sharp rise in gaming activity and, by implication, in enthusiasm for video games in Germany and around the world. Still, the general perception of cloud gaming – streaming a game from a server – seems to be more reserved than conventional online games.

"We wanted to find out more and asked gamers in an online survey* what reasons they think speak against a cloud gaming service. The majority of respondents who play several times a

week (34.6%) to daily (37.4%) say they are **not familiar enough with the system and how it works**. This is reflected, among other things, in the fact that some of the respondents assume that they have **to own suitable hardware for cloud gaming** (11.3% / 9.1%). However, cloud gaming doesn't have any great hardware requirements – even prominent big-budget titles like Assassin's Creed Valhalla and Borderlands 3 can be streamed on a cell phone or tablet. Another significant proportion say they **don't really find the offering attractive** (22.9% / 28.6%) or **don't trust the technology** (21.4% / 23%). 25.1 percent of respondents who play several times a week and 18.7 percent who play almost daily cite a **slow Internet connection** as a reason for not looking further into cloud gaming.

"So what can we do to clear up the lack of clarity and the uncertainties relating to game streaming? Functionalities and mistrust can be addressed through transparent and informative communication, and the games on offer are, after all, a matter of taste. To ensure that the cloud gaming experience is not impaired by connectivity problems and excessive latency, all those involved must, as part of the ongoing network infrastructure expansion, place greater emphasis on decentralized data centers close to users and thus increasingly rely on edge computing. This helps avoid lags and frustration, and allows gamers to enjoy the latest games without having to keep upgrading to new hardware."

*Methodology

Online survey conducted by CIVEY on behalf of DE-CIX
Survey period: 22.06 - 04.07.2021

Question: From your point of view, what are the reasons against using a cloud gaming service where you can play via a stream on another server?
- Participants (total): 1,007
- Statistical error: 5.3%

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