

AnalyticsIQ

# SOCIAL GAMERS

## AN ANALYTICSIQ REPORT

START

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# Introduction

Gaming is an increasingly social activity. Approximately 63% of adult gamers play with other people, and technologies such as game servers, matchmaking algorithms, virtual reality, and alternate reality are making it progressively easier to meet and play with strangers worldwide (Pollack & Pierre-Louis, 2019). However, less attention has been paid to the social opportunities gaming provides outside of gaming environments (such as eSports tournaments or romantic connections).

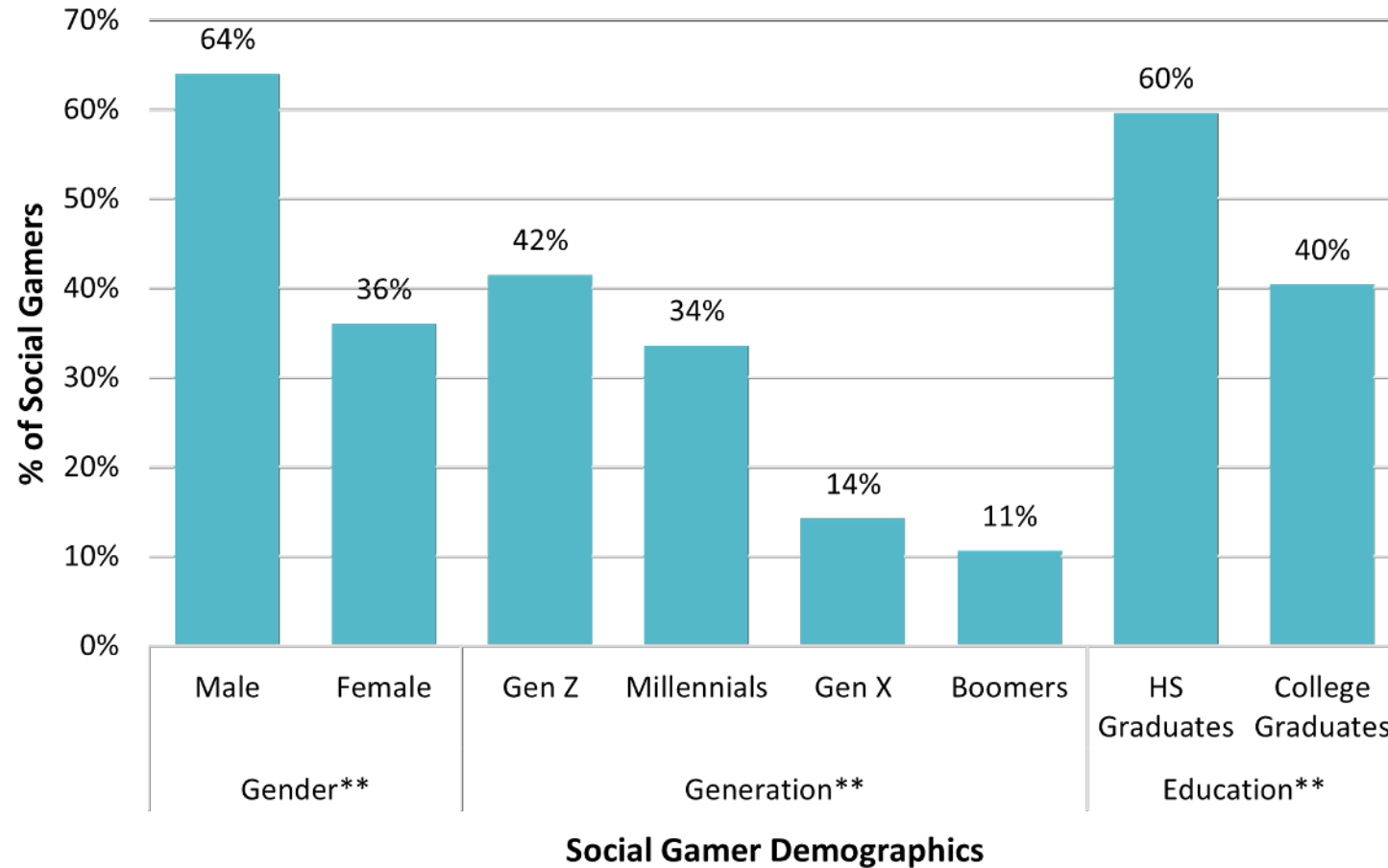
**Social gaming** (i.e., the tendency to meet someone in real life after first meeting them through videogame interactions) is a growing behavioral trend within the broader gaming universe. A recent study conducted by the Cognitive Sciences Department at AnalyticsIQ queried video gamers across the U.S. on their gaming behavior (on and off-screen) and found that social gamers seek out social opportunities within videogames and then parlay those on-screen connections into real-life interactions. The data that follows offers unique insights into the sub-culture of social gamers.

Reference: Pollack, S., & Pierre-Louis, S. (2019, December 10). Video games are transforming how we communicate with each other - and they could fix a range of other global issues too. World Economic Forum. Retrieved January 10, 2023, from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/12/video-games-culture-impact-on-society/>



# Who are social gamers?

Males, younger generations, and gamers with a high school education are significantly more likely than other groups to meet other gamers in person (i.e., social gamers)

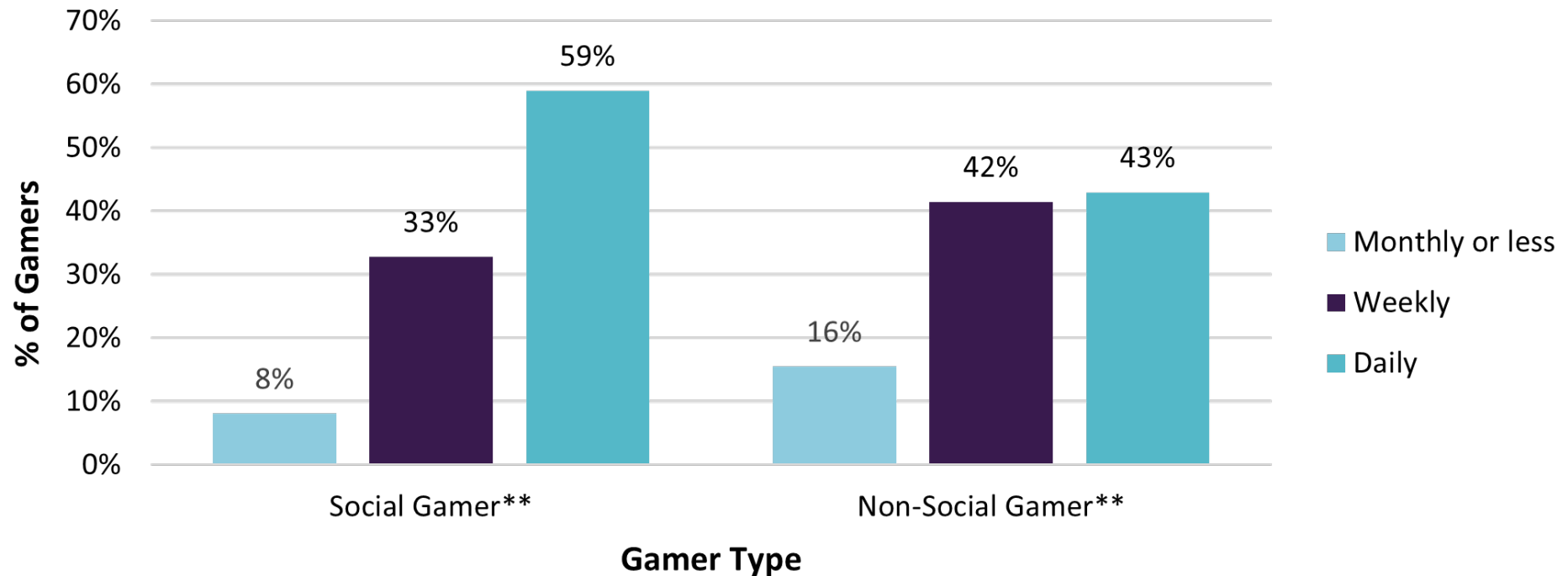


Graph 1. Approximately 9% of all survey respondents reported meeting other gamers in real life after first interacting with them in a videogame setting ("social gamers"). The Social Gaming subgroup was made up of significantly more men than women, significantly more Gen Z and Millennials than older generations; and significantly less college graduates than high school graduates. There were no differences across racial groups.

- \* = significance level of  $p < .05$
- \*\* = significance level of  $p < .001$

# Game Play Frequency Among Social & Non-Social Gamers

Social gamers are significantly more likely than non-social gamers to play videogames on a daily basis.



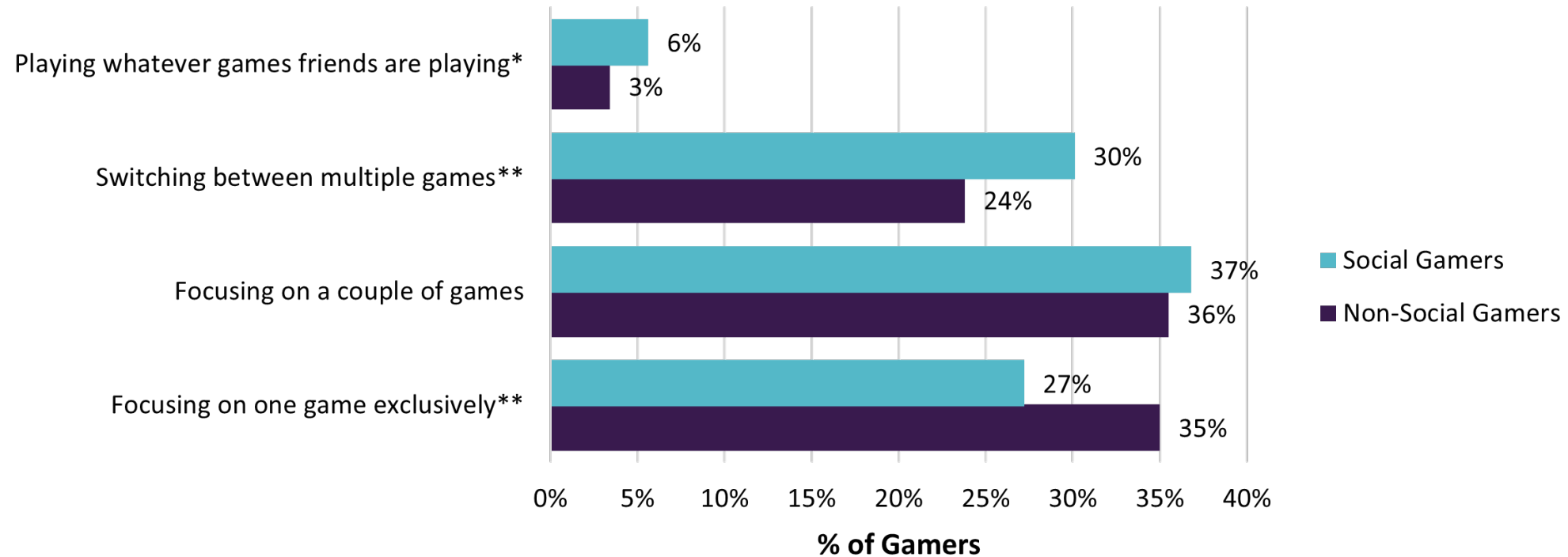
Graph 2. Survey respondents were asked how frequently they played videogames. Nearly 60% of social gamers reported daily game play, compared to only 43% of non-social gamers, suggesting that the social aspects of gaming are important to the daily lives of social gamers. Only 8% of social gamers reported playing videogames once or month or less, compared to 16% of non-social gamers.

\* = significance level of  $p < .05$

\*\* = significance level of  $p < .001$

# Gaming Style Among Social & Non-Social Gamers

Social gamers engage in "game mingling", whereas non-social gamers prefer "game exclusivity"



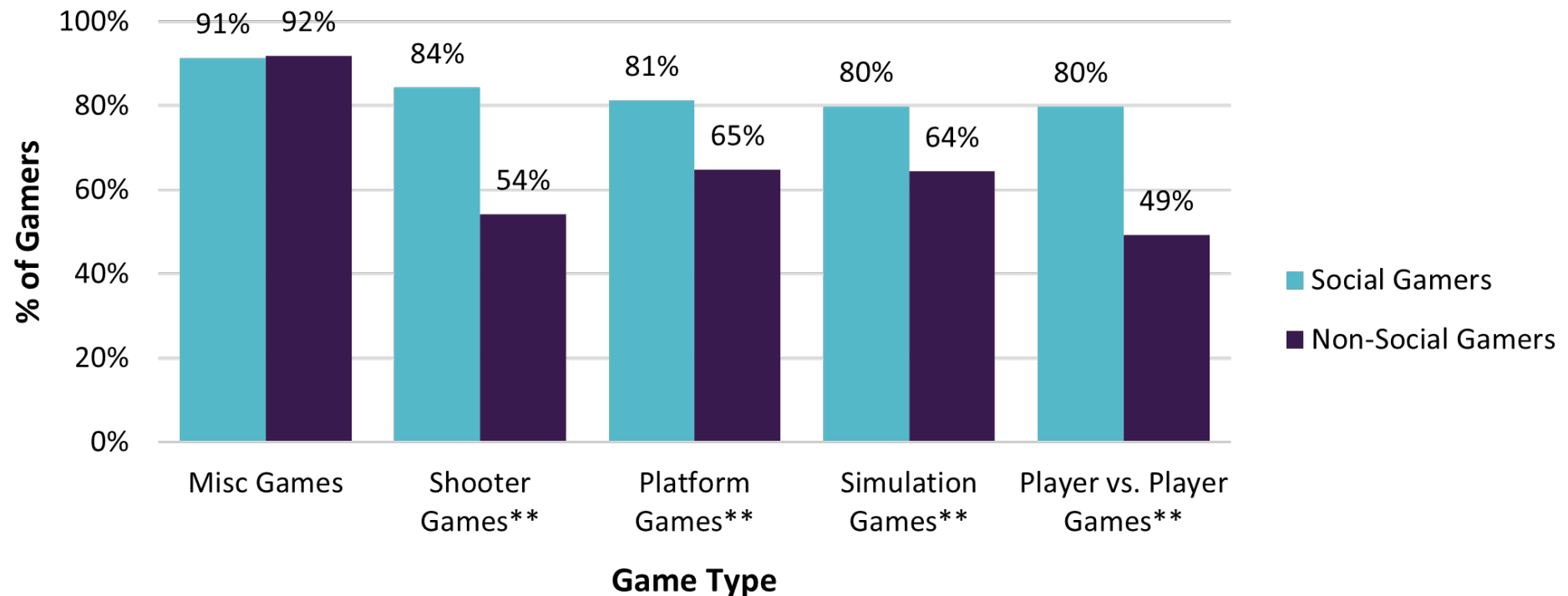
Graph 3. Survey respondents were asked to describe their gaming style based on the number of videogames they play at a time and with whom they play. Social gamers were significantly more likely than non-social gamers to switch between games or play whatever friends were playing, suggesting a behavioral nuance of this sub-culture which we term "gaming mingling". In contrast, non-social gamers tended to focus on only one or two games at a time (which we call "game exclusivity").

\* = significance level of  $p < .05$

\*\* = significance level of  $p < .001$

# Game Type Preferences Among Social & Non-Social Gamers

All gamers prefer miscellaneous games (e.g., chess), but social gamers prefer interactive types of games more than non-social gamers.



Graph 4. Survey respondents were asked to rank order their favorite types of videogames. Although a majority of all gamers (social and non) reported playing miscellaneous games equally, the other most popular games for social gamers tended to be more interactive in nature, such as shooter games with player-versus-player elements.

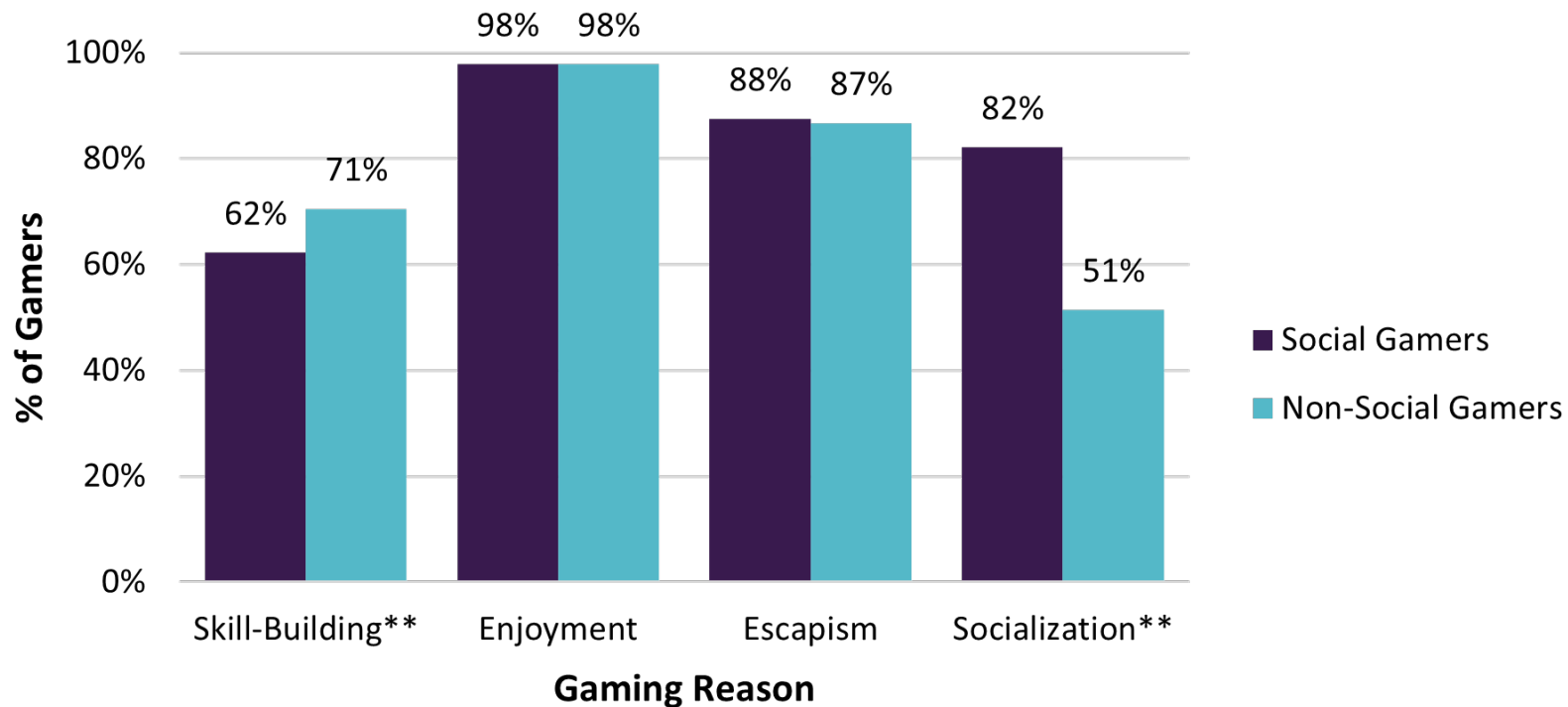
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# Reasons For Game Play Among Social & Non-Social Gamers

Social gamers primarily play videogames for external reasons, whereas non-social gamers are more internally motivated.



*Graph 5.* Survey respondents were asked to rank their reasons for playing videogames. Although everyone indicated playing games for enjoyment and escapism, significantly more social gamers reported playing games for (external) social reasons, such as socializing with friends or competing online. In contrast, non-social gamers said they played games for (internal) personal reasons, such skill building and improving their reflexes.

\* = significance level of  $p < .05$

• \*\* = significance level of  $p < .001$

## Conclusions

- The demographic profiles of social and non-social gamers are distinct; social gamers tend to be younger, male, and high school educated (Graph 1).
- Their gaming profiles are also distinct. Social gamers are more likely to play multiple games at a time (“game mingling”) and play on a daily basis, whereas non-social gamers play less frequently and prefer to focus on one game at a time (“game exclusivity”) (Graphs 2 & 3).
- Although almost all of social and non-social gamers (>90%) play miscellaneous games (e.g., poker, chess), social gamers have a greater preference for interactive games (e.g., shooter, PvP) than non-social gamers (Graph 4).
- Unsurprisingly, social gamers cite social reasons for playing videogames (e.g., socializing with friends, competing online) more often than non-social gamers who prefer to play videogames to build individual skills, such as faster reflexes (Graph 5).

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