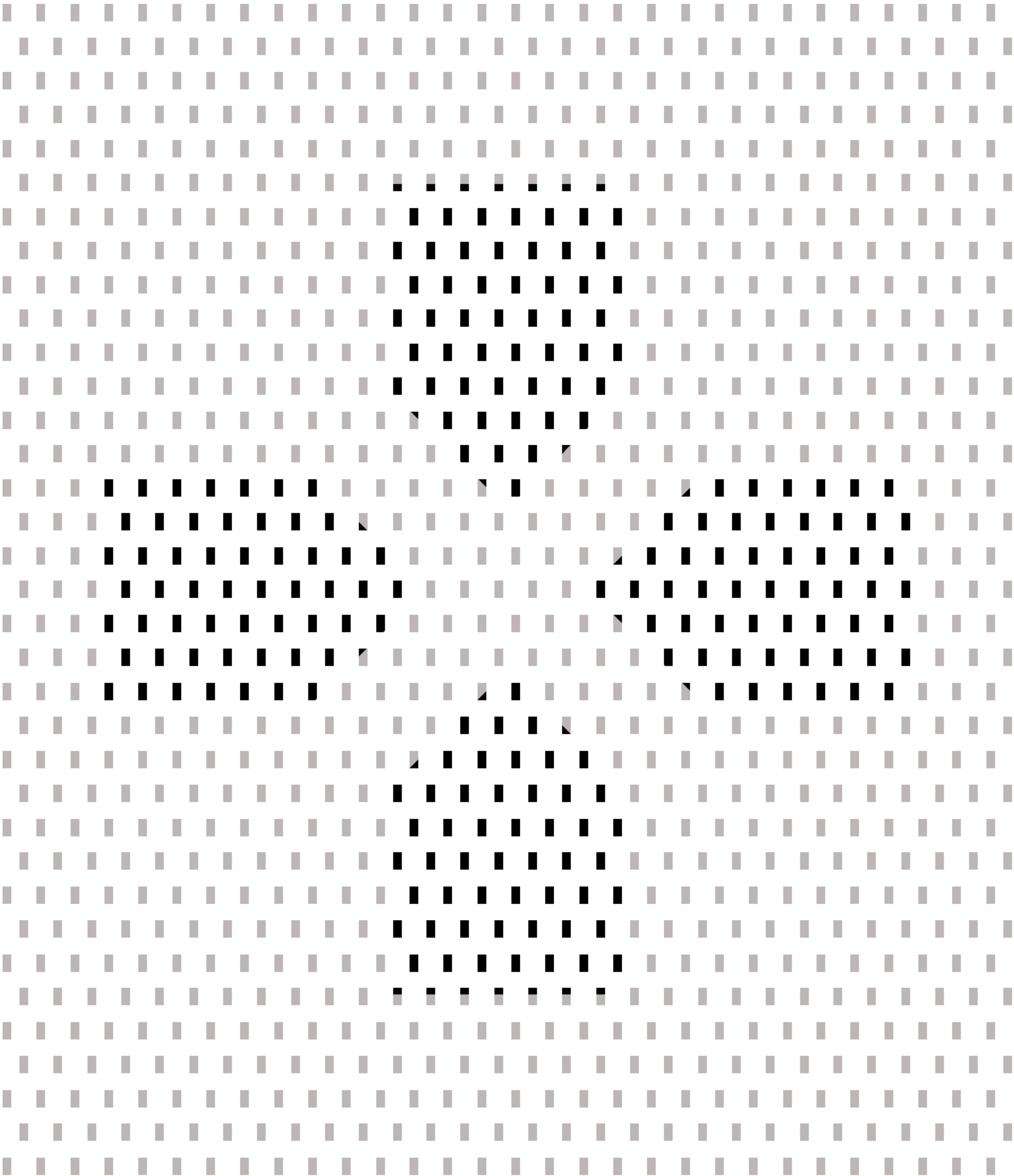


UGC Impact Study 2025



Abstract

The research conducted by GameDiscoverCo and commissioned by mod.io for this **UGC Impact Report 2025**, confirms the trends observed with the **initial research from 2024**.

On average, games with official UGC support (User Generated Content) or mods outperformed games not offering this functionality. **On PC, games with UGC support had an 8% revenue advantage after a year of being live, and 31% after 5 years.** This is likely tied to better retention, as they showed 75% better CCU (Concurrent Users) after 2 years of being live, and 115% after 5 years.

These trends are observed across other platforms. **On consoles, GameDiscoverCo noted that games with UGC support on PlayStation with UGC had 16% better performance after one year, while Xbox games had a 24% performance boost.** On VR, using data from the Meta Quest Store, GameDiscoverCo estimated that titles with UGC had 30% more growth (as a median) in the last year than games without UGC.

Additionally, using data from Steam on PC, this research reveals that **games with UGC support had a much better DLC (Downloadable Content) commercial performance, with their median revenue per DLC being 105% higher than other games.**



"We've enjoyed going even deeper into the UGC data in this latest report with mod.io, and we're struck by the fact that **games with UGC often have depth of content and breadth of overall player interest** which helps them outperform, long-term."

 **GAME DISCOVER CO**

SIMON CARLESS
FOUNDER, GAMEDISCOVERCO



"We witness the community impact and engagement generated by UGC support via our work with partners all year long, yet it's impressive to see the **level of commercial impact highlighted by GameDiscoverCo's research.** From our experience, we suspected we'd see good numbers when taking cross-platform support into account, and we're glad the research confirms it."

 **mod.io**

SCOTT REISMANIS
CEO & FOUNDER, MOD.IO

UGC Impact for PC Games

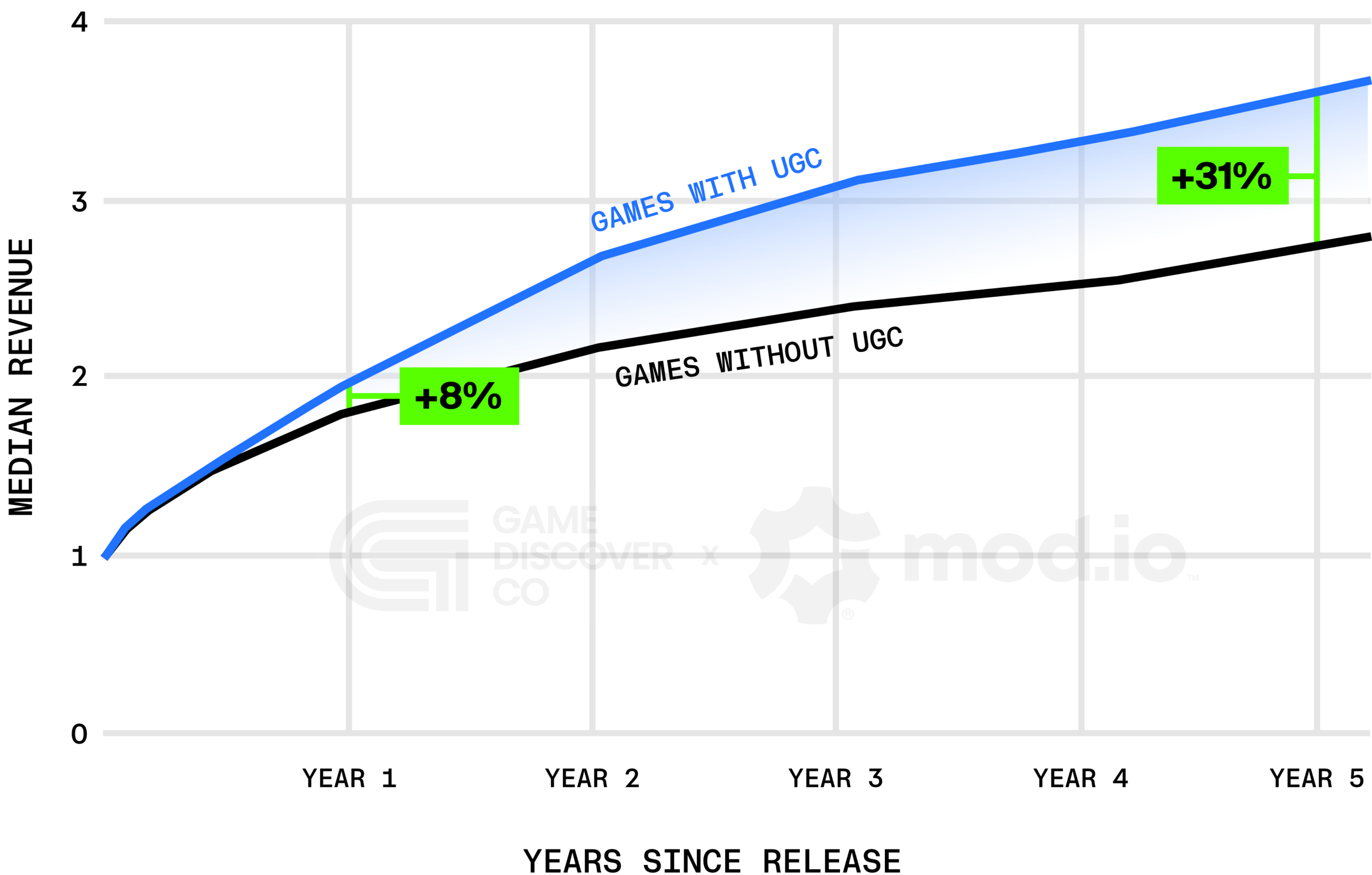
PC Data

GameDiscoverCo took into account games released on Steam with at least \$1 million revenue generated in their first month. Around 1200 games meet that criteria, of which ~18% have an official UGC solution.

The study defines a game as meeting this criteria if its developers have deployed or officially endorsed a UGC solution allowing for the sharing of content, and easy access in-game. Contrary to last year’s research which centered on Steam Workshop, the updated research now also includes games using middleware solutions like [mod.io](#), or CurseForge; as well as proprietary solutions developed by the publisher or studio such Bethesda Game Studios Creations, Paradox Mods or Frontier Workshop for example.

\$ Commercial Impact

Comparing games by using a normalized median, GameDiscoverCo observed that games with official UGC support showed a commercial advantage over other games across the board. This observation was true from the year following release, with the gap increasing over years of the game being live.



A year after release, games with UGC support showed an **8% revenue advantage** over others, a difference that **increased to 31% after 5 years**. These numbers are stronger than in the findings of the original **2024 research**, likely because the new data set includes more titles with official UGC support solutions which don't rely on Steam Workshop.

While correlation and causality are impossible to fully establish, i.e. are games adding UGC support because of their success, or are they successful because of it? It overall suggests a positive and lasting impact of UGC support on commercial performance for these titles.

The previous research work done by GameDiscoverCo had highlighted that while this impact varied slightly depending on game genres, and when UGC support was implemented, the positive impact was observed for all games across the data set.

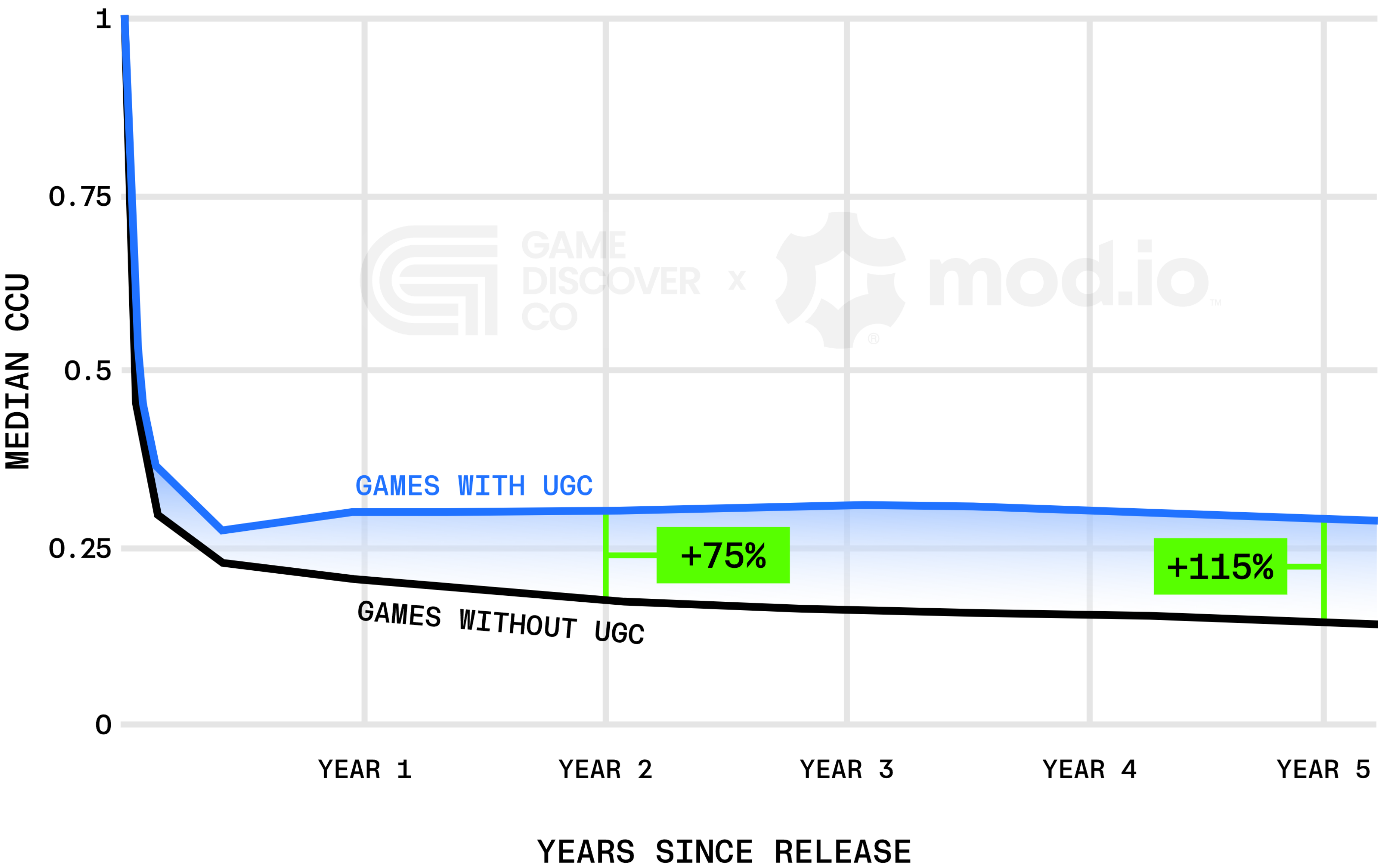
Impact on Retention

The main factor explaining this long term impact on commercial performance is the known impact of UGC support on players' retention. **Games getting more content via UGC tend to be played more, and longer.**



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FOUNDER, GAMEDISCOVERCO

"We're struck by the fact that games with UGC often have **depth of content and breadth of overall player interest** which helps them outperform, long-term."





MICHAEL DOUSE
DIRECTOR OF PUBLISHING,
LARIAN STUDIOS

"After implementing official mod support in 2024 for Baldur's Gate 3, we saw an increase of 20% DAU across all platforms."

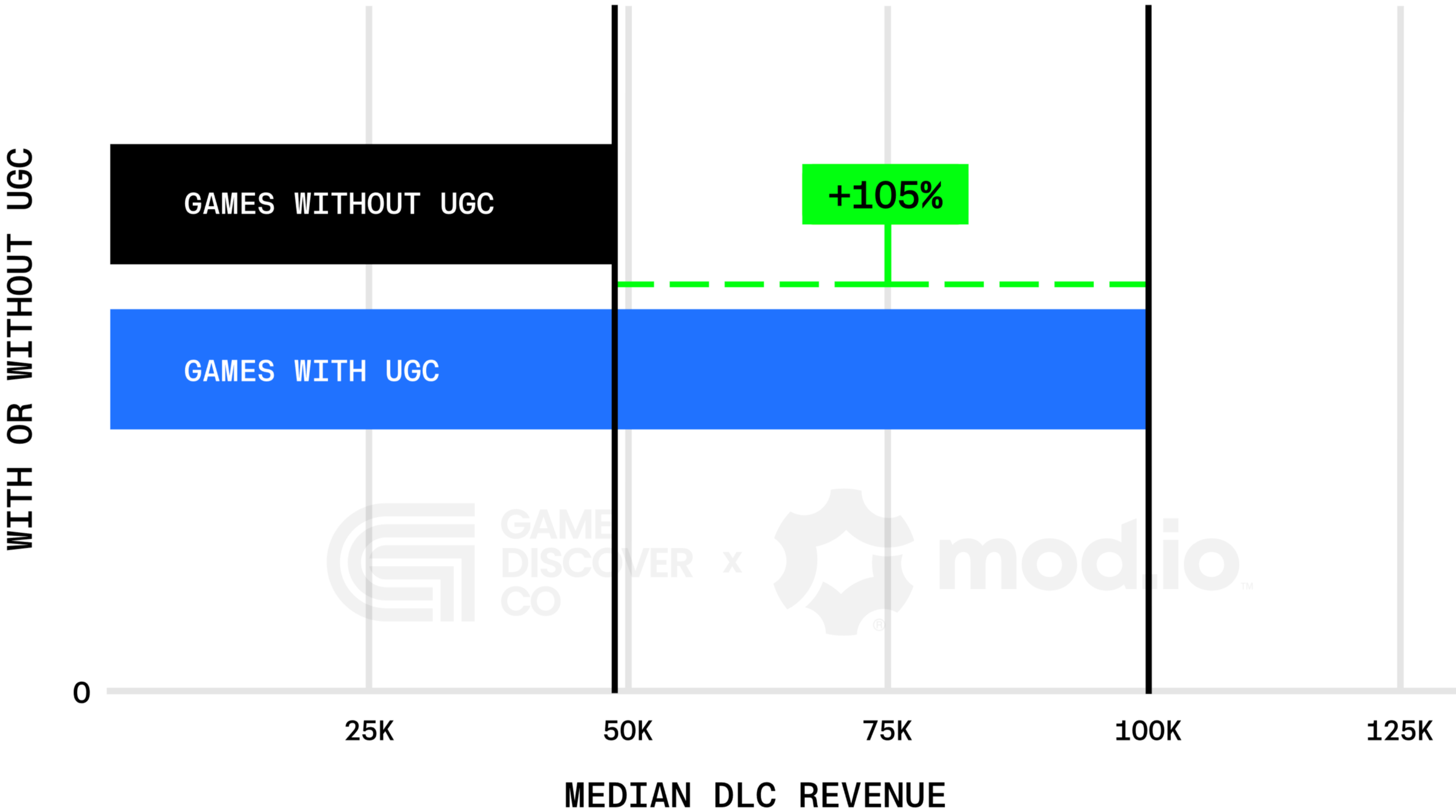
GameDiscoverCo's research confirms and reinforces this point. Comparing CCU (Concurrent Users) numbers from Steam, it shows games with UGC support displaying **75% better** numbers after 2 years of being live compared to others. A gap that widens to a **+115% difference after 5 years**.

There was an impactful example as recently as last year with the release of [Baldur's Gate 3 official modding support](#). Larian Studios was able to observe an immediate and lasting impact on their player numbers following the release of the functionality.

Impact on DLC Performance

The question of potential cannibalization in terms of content consumption between content produced by content & mod creators, and official content released by the game developer, is often a concern for studios exploring how UGC support could impact their business model.

Using the same data set on PC, GameDiscoverCo compared DLC performance by looking at the total revenue from DLC for games with UGC support compared to others.



Games with UGC official support showed both a higher DLC revenue overall, a higher number of DLC released on average, and most importantly higher median revenue per DLC. On that specific figure, they performed **105% better than other games**.

This is a clear case against the concerns of cannibalization between UGC and DLC; something that had already been highlighted in some examples, including [mod.io's case study on Snowrunner](#).



"It turns out that no matter how many free mods there were, there was still growing interest from players in buying official content. Our players using mods proved 2.4 times more likely to buy official DLC."

 **EVGENIY SOROKIN**
SENIOR PRODUCER, SABER INTERACTIVE

UGC Impact for Consoles & VR

Consoles Data

For games on consoles, GameDiscoverCo looked at titles with more than 100k copies sold in their first month, both on PlayStation and Xbox consoles. Roughly 1000 games meet these criteria on both consoles, **with 2% having UGC support on PlayStation and 3% on Xbox**.

GameDiscoverCo’s had enough data to interpret for the first year of a game going live on consoles. However, their data sample for consoles is more limited than on PC, so they don’t trust that their sample size is enough beyond that point to be representative of real-world data.

Commercial Impact for Console Games

Games with UGC support on consoles showed an even stronger performance advantage than on PC. We suspect this is largely explained by **the novelty of this functionality in the console landscape**, where third-party unofficial solutions are nonexistent.

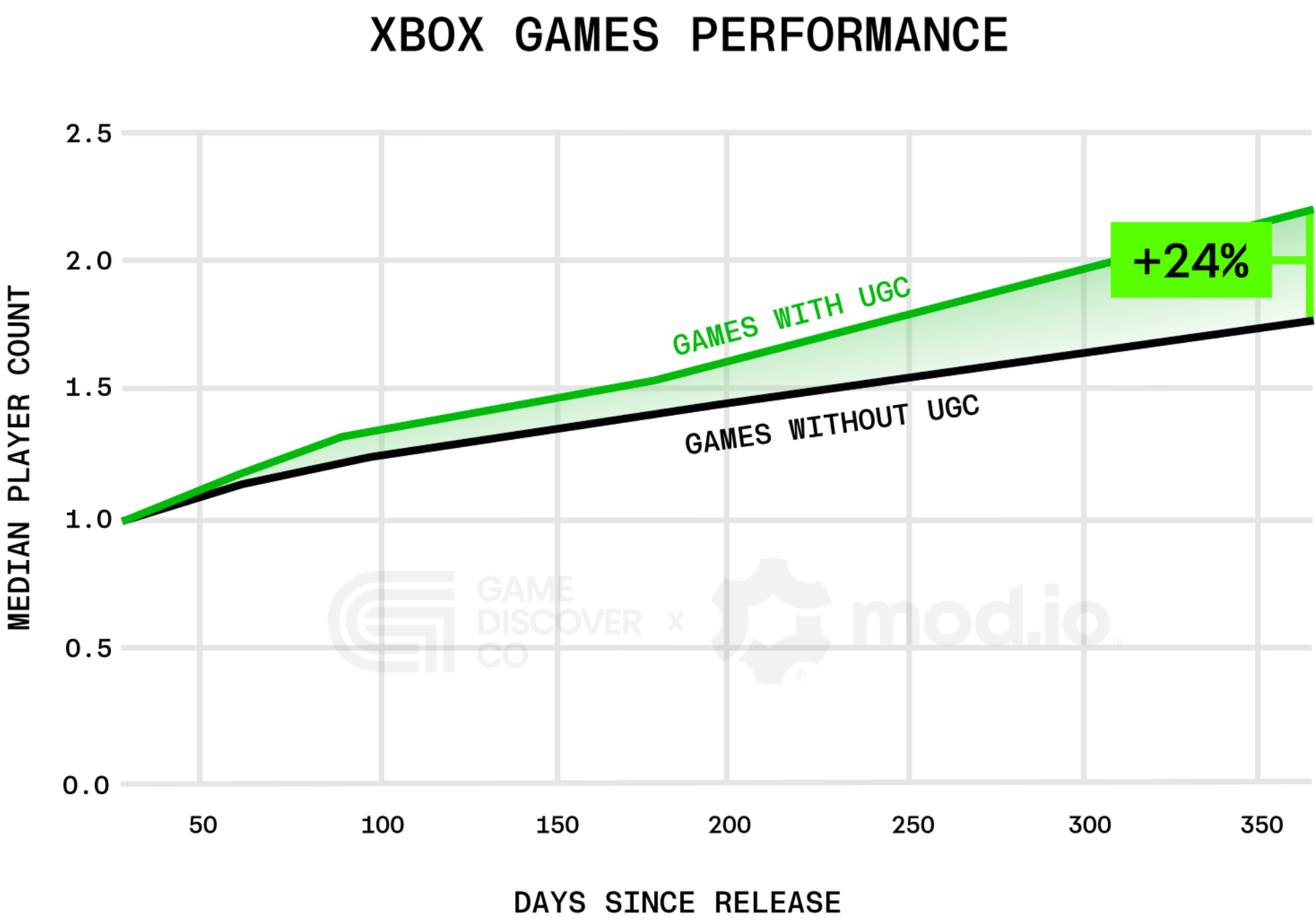
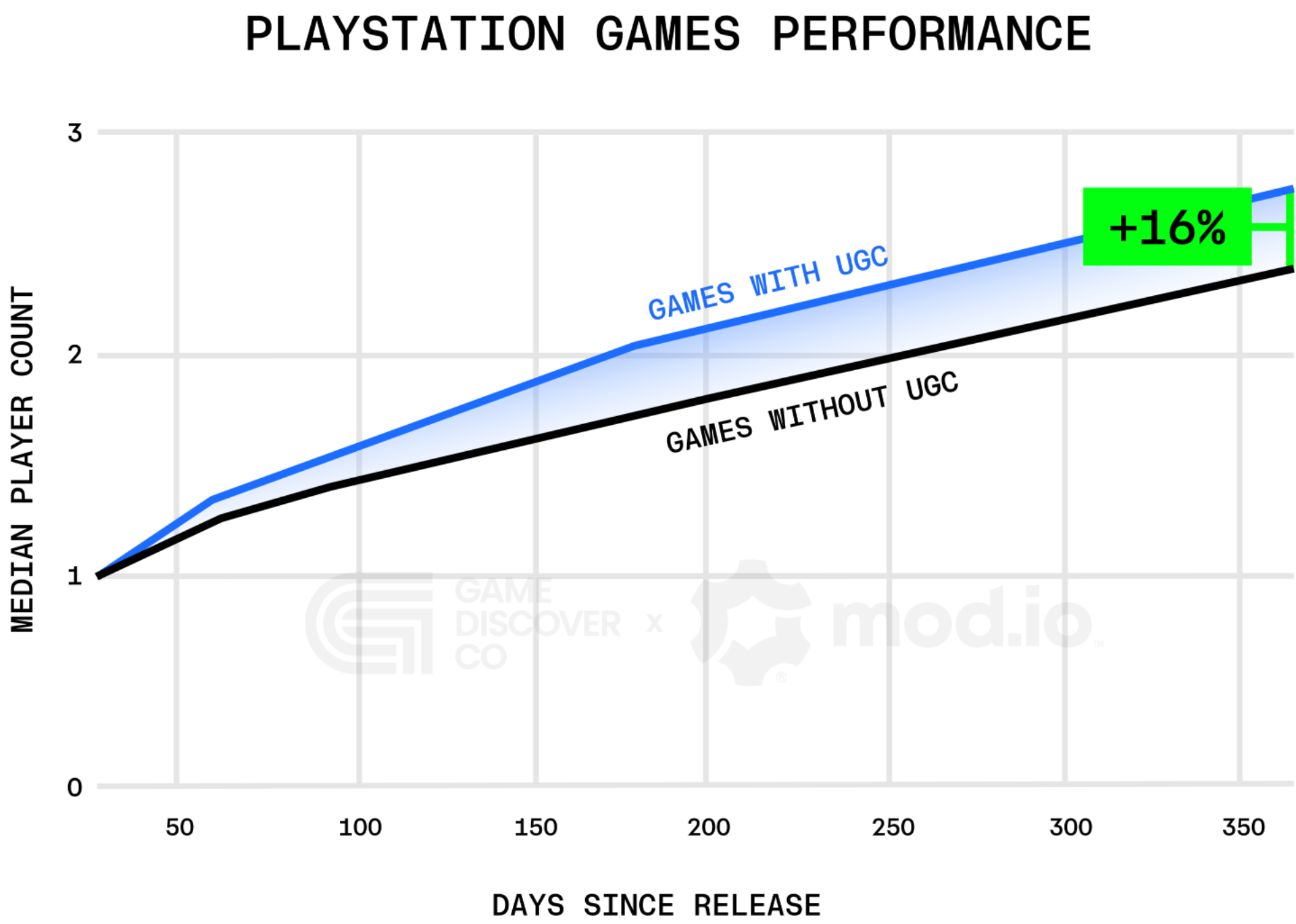
Only a few titles have established cross-platform UGC support, and it generates a lot of positive engagement from console players.

GameDiscoverCo’s data showed that games with UGC support on PlayStation consoles had **16% better performance** after a year than others.

For games on Xbox consoles, this advantage was as high as **24%**. This is more than twice the commercial impact observed for games on PC.

GameDiscover could also observe an even more drastic performance boost in later years, but considers it not representative of real-world data due to their limited sample size.

It was decided to exclude it from this report conservatively.



Data and Impact for VR Games

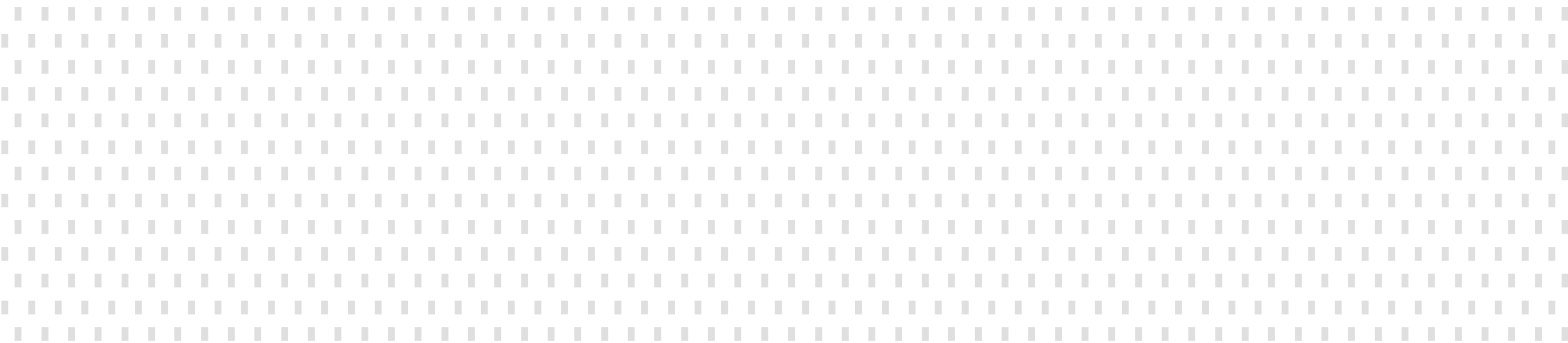


SIMON CARLESS
FOUNDER, GAMEDISCOVERCO

"Checking games with more than 1,000 player ratings, we estimate that **titles with UGC had 30% more growth in the last year** than games without UGC."

For VR games, GameDiscoverCo looked at games with over a thousand player ratings on the Meta Quest Store, comparing those with official UGC solutions to those without.

The data set was too limited to get a detailed year-on-year comparison, but from their study, GameDiscoverCo estimated that VR games with UGC support **had 30% more growth (as a median) over the past year** than those without.



🕒 2024 study

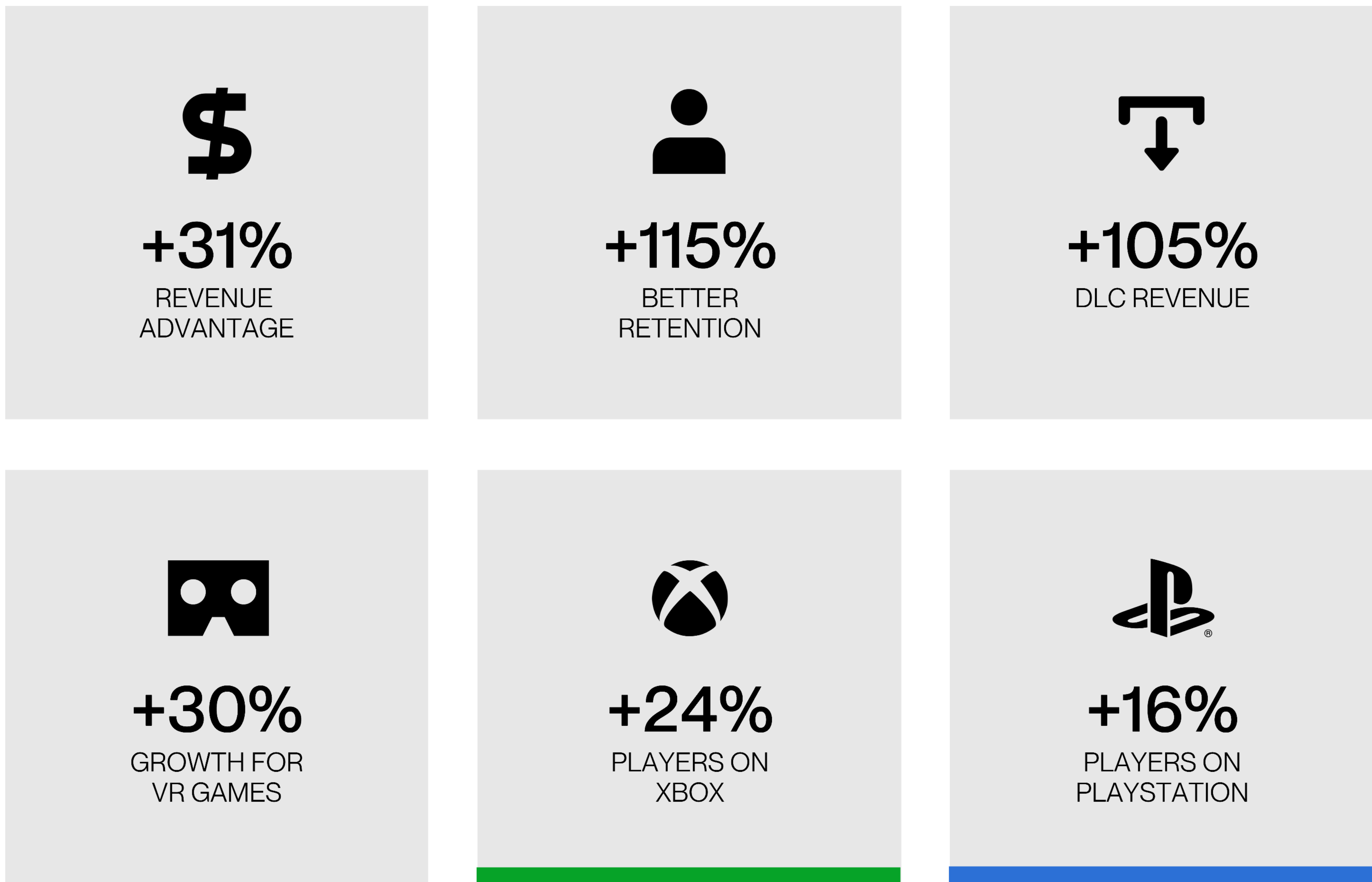
This study, conducted by [GameDiscoverCo](#) and commissioned by [mod.io](#) is a continuation of an original study conducted in 2024. The results of the UGC Impact Study 2024 can be found in the dedicated articles:

- [Does UGC power sale & retention for games?](#) on GameDiscoverCo
- [Commercial Impact of UGC](#) on mod.io's blog

The original study used a slightly more restrictive dataset; it took into account games on Steam **with at least \$1 million revenue generated** in their first month, and with **at least 10,000 lifetime reviews**. And it only considered games using Steam Workshop as having an official UGC solution.

In terms of key insights, the 2024 UGC Impact research showed a **7% commercial advantage** for games with UGC support after one year, and **23% after 5 years**; as well as a **64% advantage in retention after 2 years**, and **90% after 5 years**.

Games with UGC, up to:



 developers@mod.io



 <https://gamediscover.co>