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[Market for Casual Games on the Rise](#)

Wii leads casual charge

A new report focusing on gaming habits among "casual gamers" has surfaced, from a newly launched firm named Interpret. Using its syndicated Gameasure service, which has been designed to track a variety of metrics for videogames across multiple gaming platforms, such as user demographics, reach and frequency, and duration of play, Interpret can report that, during 2007, [casual games](#) reached over 145 million people aged 12-65. Of that figure, over 71 million play casual games for one or more hours per week. It's worth noting that the research has only targeted North American players, but the company says it will soon expand its efforts to other markets too. The time spent per week playing casual games increased by 28 percent, from 4.0 hours to 5.1 hours in the last quarter of 2007. The company says that time spent with casual games already surpasses magazines, newspapers, and other activities on the Internet. Michael Dowling, CEO of Interpret, stated: "Casual gamers are highly motivated when it comes to finding information on products they're interested in. The ability to engage them in a relevant media vehicle, where they spend an average of four hours a week, can enforce a brand message or further their knowledge of brands. Active casual gamers are 22 percent more likely than the general population to seek out information about new products, but are also 36 percent more likely to switch brands just for the sake of change. These characteristics make them a potential envoy for launching brands, and open to switching away to a competitive brand." It is very interesting that 58% of casual gamers also played another game on a console or PC, a game they defined as non-casual. So, there's a clearly more and more blurry line between the hardcore gamer and the casual gamer. "With the advent of the [Wii](#) and the explosion of high quality online casual games, the whole definition of gaming is changing," said Dowling. "The market is bifurcated, with the Wii now the vanguard of mass market video gaming and the Xbox 360 and PS3 still mainly catering to 'hardcore' gamers who choose technology and features over simple, fun gameplay experiences. Meanwhile, the PC, thought to be in decline, still has a lot of life left in it as a gaming platform." More details regarding the study and its findings are available on the [Interpret website](#).