

'World of Warcraft' loses 2 million players

29th July, 2013



"World of Warcraft" (WoW), one of the world's favourite online games, has reported big losses in its subscriber base. Over 600,000 players have left the game in the past

three months. The exodus has seen almost two million subscriptions ended in 2013. At the start of the year, Activision Blizzard, owners of the game, boasted a healthy 9.6 million subscribers. That figure is now 7.7 million. Despite the huge decline, it is still easily the world's most popular massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG). Analysts are saying the drop is due to fierce competition from hugely popular multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) games like "League of Legends," which has 12 million active daily players.

Despite the downturn in the fortunes of WoW, Activision is pushing ahead to provide the company with greater independence. Bobby Kotick, CEO of Activision Blizzard, is spearheading an \$8.2 billion buyout to be the majority shareholder once again. He wants to buy 429 million of the company's shares back from French telecoms and entertainment giant Vivendi. The French company currently holds a 61 per cent controlling stake in Activision, which would fall to just 12 per cent if the acquisition is successful. Mr Kotick, who has been Activision CEO since 1991, is a strong believer in the future of online subscriptions. He oversaw the success of WoW and another Activision smash hit, "Call Of Duty".

Sources: Sky News / IB Times / Financial Times

Writing

Gaming (online or offline) is a waste of time. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

online games / big losses / subscribers / exodus / boasted / huge decline / role-playing / downturn / independence / shareholder / entertainment giant / acquisition / success

True / False

- A popular game has lost 2 million players in the past three months. T / F
- Earlier this year, the game had over 10 million subscribers. T / F
- The game is still the world's most popular game of its kind. T / F
- A multiplayer online battle arena game has 12 million daily players. T / F
- The company that made World of Warcraft wants to buy more shares. T / F
- The company wants to spend \$429 million on a buyout. T / F
- The World of Warcraft CEO has held that position for over 20 years. T / F
- The CEO is pessimistic about the future of online subscriptions. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. online | a. enormous |
| 2. base | b. managed |
| 3. exodus | c. circumstances |
| 4. huge | d. foundation |
| 5. fierce | e. share |
| 6. fortunes | f. cutthroat |
| 7. spearheading | g. Internet |
| 8. stake | h. purchase |
| 9. acquisition | i. mass departure |
| 10. oversaw | j. leading |

Discussion – Student A

- How addictive are games? Is this a problem?
- Is playing online games better than playing runaround games / sport?
- How can companies make games better?
- Are online games a good way of making friends?
- What do you think games will be like in 50 years' time?
- Which game character would you like to be?
- How do you feel when you play online games?
- What questions would you like to ask Activision CEO Bobby Kotick?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. big losses in its | a. 9.6 million subscribers |
| 2. boasted a healthy | b. giant |
| 3. it is still easily the | c. (MOBA) games |
| 4. the drop is due to | d. in the fortunes |
| 5. multiplayer online battle arena | e. ahead |
| 6. Despite the downturn | f. world's most popular |
| 7. pushing | g. subscriber base |
| 8. spearheading an | h. is successful |
| 9. telecoms and entertainment | i. fierce competition |
| 10. if the acquisition | j. \$8.2billion buyout |

Discussion – Student B

- How important are online games in your life?
- What is the attraction of playing computer games?
- Which are better – single-player or multi-player games?
- What do you know about "World of Warcraft"?
- What's your favourite game, and why?
- What was the first game you played, and what do you think of it now?
- Do you spend too long playing games?
- Is online gaming good for you?

Spelling

- big losses in its erurbbiscs base
- the sxudoe
- tadseob a healthy 9.6 million
- svmseiayl multiplayer online role-playing game
- the drop is due to eicrfe competition
- uylehg popular
- Despite the downturn in the soefutnr of WoW.
- greater ecneepndndei
- apinahesedrg an \$8.2billion buyout
- a 61 per cent nogllircotn stake in Activision
- if the antcsioqiiu is successful
- a strong veiblere in the future of online

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. i	4. a	5. f
6. c	7. j	8. e	9. h	10. b

Role Play

Role A – Online games

You think online games are best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their games. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): card games, quiz games or runaround games.

Role B – Card games

You think card games are best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their games. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): online games, quiz games or runaround games.

Role C – Quiz games

You think quiz games are best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their games. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): card games, online games or runaround games.

Role D – Runaround games

You think runaround games are best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their games. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): card games, quiz games or online games.

Speaking - Games

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| • online games | • arcade / casino games |
| • board games | • quiz games |
| • card games | • learning games |
| • playground games | • runaround games |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	a
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.