

Insight into 2024 Marketing Trends for **Japanese Mobile Games**



With SocialPeta, you can spy on your competitors' ad data, and get ad data from networks, media, and advertisers around the world to inspire you. SocialPeta covers more than 70 countries/regions and over 70 well-known ad channels worldwide, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and Unity. We provide nearly 1.4 billion ad creatives, updating millions each day. Through **duration, impressions, popularity, and interactions**, we can quickly locate the active high-quality creatives which will be provided to you in real time to help with your marketing plan.

As one of the world-leading advertising and marketing platforms, SocialPeta boasts a huge database and the experience of working with thousands of game companies and providing mobile game workers with more practical methods in order to develop more popular games.

6M

APP Advertisers

1.6B

APP Ad Creatives

1.20M

Daily Updates

Website: www.socialpeta.com

Contents

CONTENTS

1

Marketing Trends of Mobile Games in Japan

Top Mobile Games by Advertising in Japan

Insights into Media Buying Trends of Mobile Games

2

Marketing Features of Mobile Games in Japan

Common points shared by top games

Localization of marketing in Japan

3

Hit Games Going Global in Japan

New Hit Games Going Global

How do old games win



01

Marketing Trends for Japanese Mobile Games

Insights into Marketing Trends of Mobile Games in the Japan

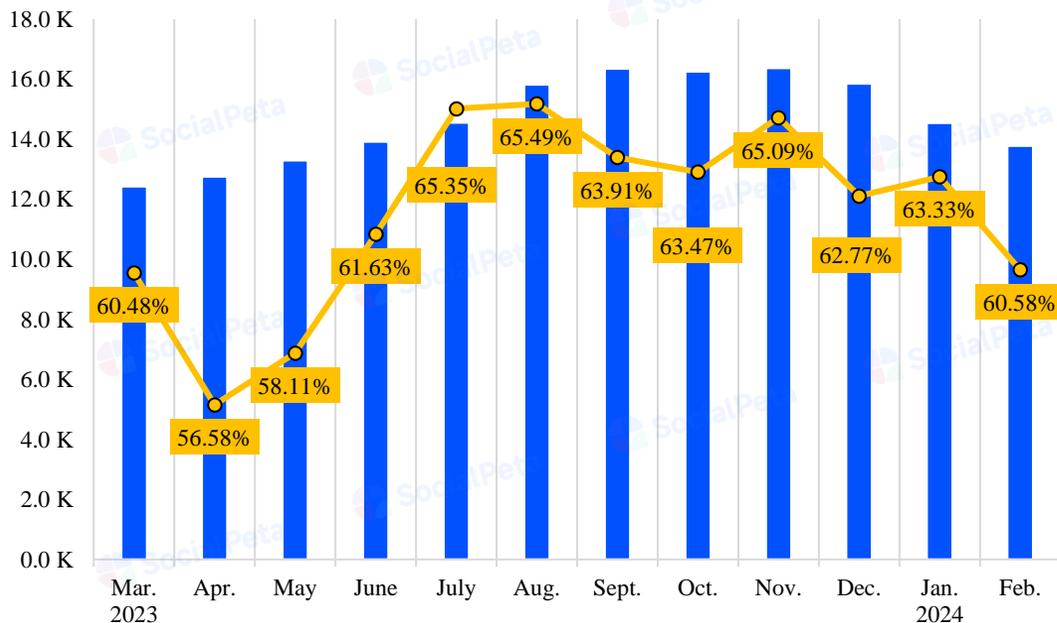
Generally, the Japanese mobile gaming market was relatively conservative in terms of marketing, as its share of advertisers with new creatives and share of new creatives were both far below the global average level.



Monthly mobile game advertisers for the last 1 year in Japan

14.6K Share of advertisers with new creatives: **62.23%**
(World's share: 72.31%)

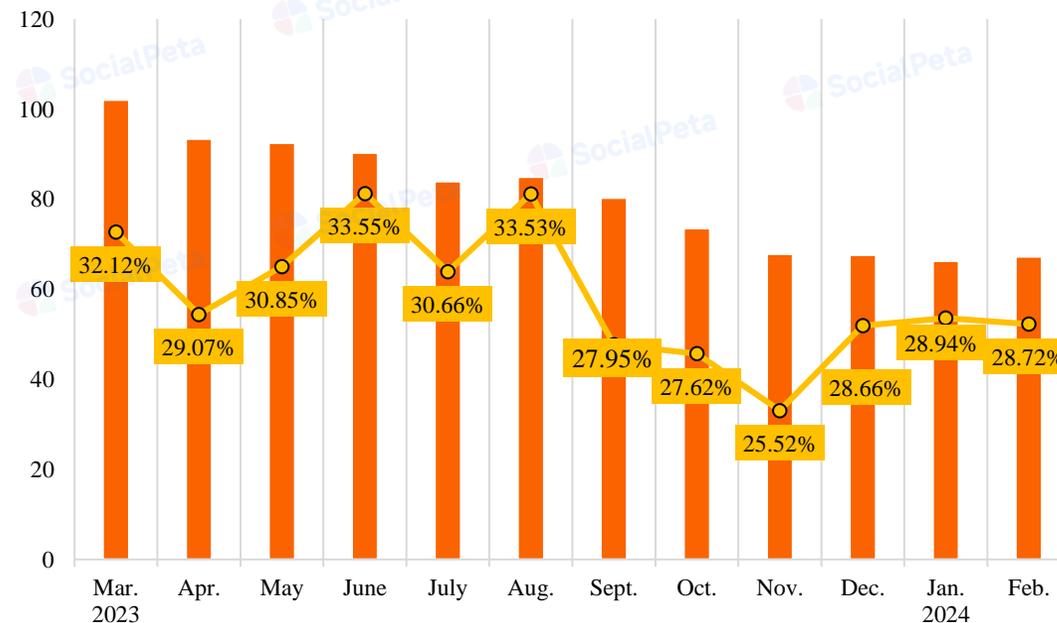
Active Advertisers Share of advertisers with new creatives



Monthly creatives per mobile game advertiser for the last 1 year in Japan

81 Share of new creatives: **29.77%**
(World's share: 59.68%)

Monthly creatives per advertiser Share of new creatives



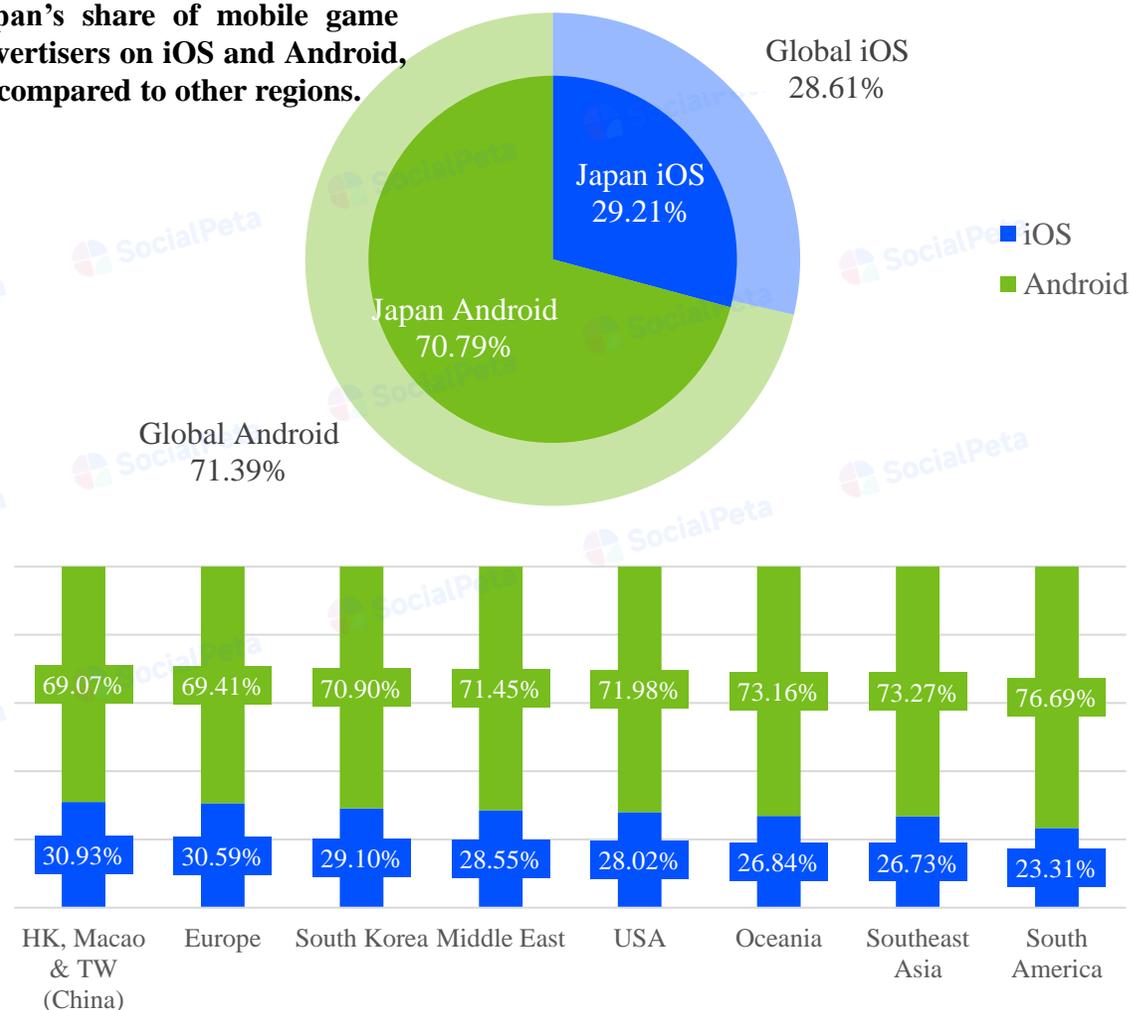


Insights into Mobile Game Advertisers in the Japanese Market

In Japan, SIM game advertisers ranked No.3, 2% higher than the corresponding global level; iOS advertisers accounted for 29.21%, a higher percentage.

Japan's share of mobile game advertisers on iOS and Android, as compared to other regions.

Genre	% of Advertisers	MoM	Compared to Global Results
Casual	32.61%	-0.44%	2.29%
Puzzle	13.40%	0.52%	0.06%
SIM	11.35%	0.30%	2.06%
Action	7.94%	-0.14%	0.35%
RPG	6.88%	0.12%	0.73%
SLG	4.85%	0.13%	0.29%
Adventure	3.58%	0.07%	-0.40%
Arcade	3.18%	-0.01%	-0.90%
Card	2.72%	-0.26%	-0.77%
Board	2.58%	-0.02%	-0.20%

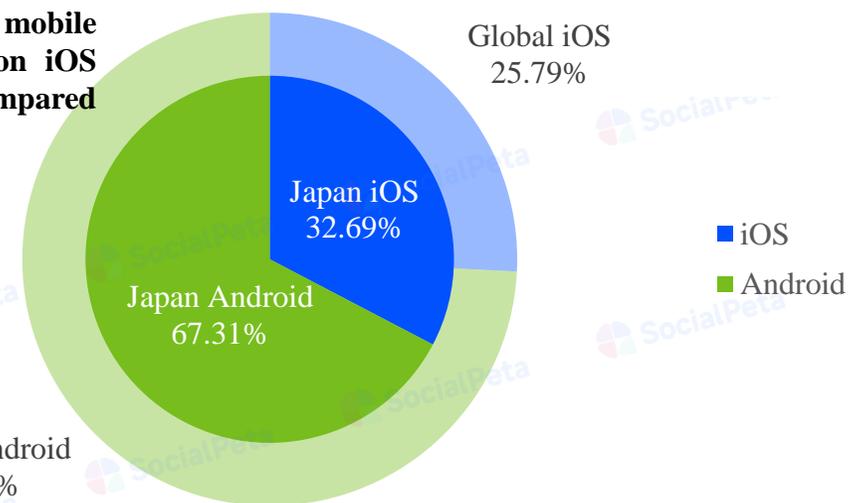




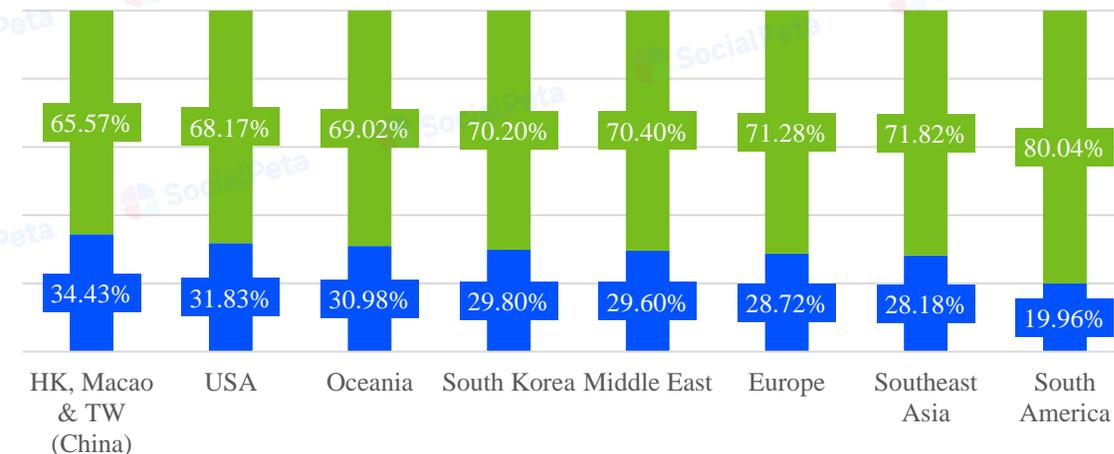
Insights into Mobile Game Ad Creatives in the Japanese Market

In Japan, puzzle game ad creatives accounted for 1.93% higher than the corresponding global average level; iOS ad creatives accounted for 32.69%, 6.90% higher than the global average level.

Japan's share of mobile game ad creatives on iOS and Android, as compared to other regions.



Genre	% of Advertisers	MoM	Compared to Global Results
Casual	33.09%	0.45%	-0.03%
Puzzle	13.77%	-0.94%	1.93%
RPG	9.42%	0.57%	-1.29%
SIM	9.42%	-0.40%	1.88%
SLG	7.12%	-0.63%	0.33%
Action	7.07%	0.65%	0.68%
Adventure	3.13%	0.55%	0.28%
Card	2.78%	-0.27%	-1.35%
Casino	2.60%	-0.79%	-2.41%
Arcade	2.57%	0.61%	-0.59%





Insights into Mobile Game Ad Creatives by Type in Japan

% of creatives by type



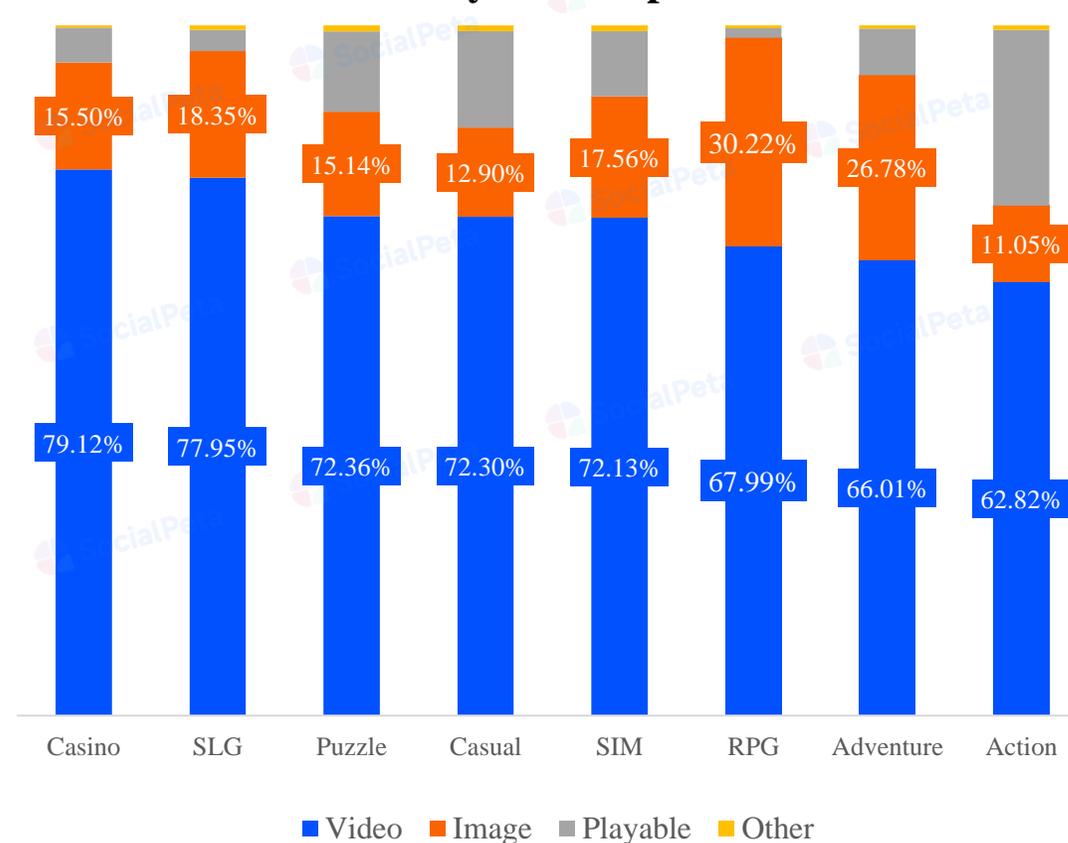
Estimated impressions per mobile game ad creative for the last half year in Japan

215.6K

In Japan, video ad creatives accounted for 69.48% of mobile games, 1.15% higher than the global average level, but representing a 10.69% MoM decline.

Among all popular mobile game genres in Japan, casino games reported the highest share of video creatives.

Share of ad creatives by game genre for the last half year in Japan





Mobile Games by Advertising in Japan | iOS TOP 30

1	マジックカード Bingchuan Network	RPG	1	ドリーミーランド 悦創時代	SIM	1	パズル&サバイバル 37Games	SLG
2	KARIZ Zlongame	RPG	2	エボニー Top Games	SLG	2	霧の大陸 FunPlus	SLG
3	おねがい社長! EWORLD	SIM	3	ホワイトアウト Century Games	SLG	3	いけー! 放置戦士 7 Pirates Games	RPG
4	キノコ伝説 4399	RPG	4	Land Arcana SpringGame	RPG	4	Block Blast! Hungry Studio	Puzzle
5	Mighty Party Panoramik Games	RPG	5	ドット勇者 Efun & More2Game	RPG	5	ゴールデンホイヤー IGS	Casino
6	聖闘士星矢レジェンドオブジャスティス Wanda Cinemas Games	RPG	6	ぽちゃガチャョ! Qingci Games	Casual	6	ロイヤルマッチ Dream Games	Puzzle
7	X-ヒーロー Bingchuan Network	RPG	7	ダダサバイバー Habby	Action	7	三国合戦ラッシュ TanWan Games	RPG
8	Braindom 2 Matchingham Games	Casual	8	ドラゴンスケープス Century Games	SIM	8	ドラゴンエア Nuverse	RPG
9	Arena Breakout Tencent	Action	9	Hero Wars Nexters	RPG	9	フローズン Century Games	SIM
10	Braindom 3 Matchingham Games	Casual	10	時計物語 SpringGame	RPG	10	Happy Match Café Kings Fortune	Puzzle



Mobile Games by Advertising in Japan | Android TOP 30

1	マジックカード Bingchuan Network	RPG	1	エボニー Top Games	SLG	1	War Robots PvP MY.GAMES	Action
2	Braindom Matchingham Games	Casual	2	Woodoku Tripledot	Puzzle	2	極道風雲 Yotta Games	SLG
3	Braindom 2 Matchingham Games	Casual	3	ドラゴンエア Nuverse	RPG	3	ドット勇者 Efun & More2Game	RPG
4	ドラゴンスケープス Century Games	SIM	4	聖闘士星矢レジェンドオブジャスティス Wanda Cinemas Games	RPG	4	Royal Cat Puzzle Remi Vision	Puzzle
5	おねがい社長! EWORLD	SIM	5	木こりの帝国 Game Veterans	SIM	5	Alice's Dream Newborn Town	Puzzle
6	KARIZ Zlongame	RPG	6	マッチングトン Magic Tavern	Puzzle	6	ステート・オブ・サバイバル FunPlus	SLG
7	1945 Air Force OneSoft	Action	7	Mighty Party Panoramik Games	RPG	7	Braindom 3 Matchingham Games	Casual
8	キノコ伝説 4399	RPG	8	Hero Wars Nexters	RPG	8	ガーデンスケイプ Playrix	Puzzle
9	ロードモバイル IGG	SLG	9	違うものをさがせ! Hippo Lab	Puzzle	9	ダダサバイバー Habby	Action
10	パズル&サバイバル 37Games	SLG	10	LINE POP2 Line	Puzzle	10	Demon God(Global) JunHai Games	RPG



02

Marketing Features of Mobile Games in Japan

Top Local Mobile Game Companies in Japan

Japan is a country with a deep gaming culture, where many companies have accomplished much in console games and animations.

- Japan had a very early start in gaming industry, and now there are many game companies of over 15 years. However, some companies that enjoy the first-mover advantage of console and other game devices would find it hard to transition their business to mobile devices.
- Japanese game publishers are often engaged in the publishing of mobile games, as well as animations and music works, as a result, many Japanese mobile games boast prominent stories, music, and art, making them stand out from other regions' games.
- And, lots of Japanese games have been running for years with distinctive gameplays. Japan's local companies are very competitive in the local game market.



Featuring IP-based mobile games
[龙珠Z Dokkan Battle], [航海王 启航]



Well-known for its sports games
[Pro Evolution Soccer] series,
[Professional Baseball Spirits A]



The biggest social media network
in Japan
[Monster Strike], XFLAG brand



A long-established game company that
owns many game franchises
[Final Fantasy Brave Exvius], [Dragon
Quest: The Adventure of Dai]



A subsidiary of Sony, and a famous
anime production company
[Fate/Grand Order], [Magia Record:
Puella Magi Madoka Magica Side Story]



Its games stand out with their art
styles and stories
[Uma Musume Pretty Derby],
[Shadowverse], [Granblue Fantasy]



An old game company established
in 1998
[Puzzle & Dragons], [Ragnarok
Online] series



One of the oldest Japanese game
companies
[Sonic] series, [Project SEKAI:
Colorful Stage! feat. Hatsune Miku]

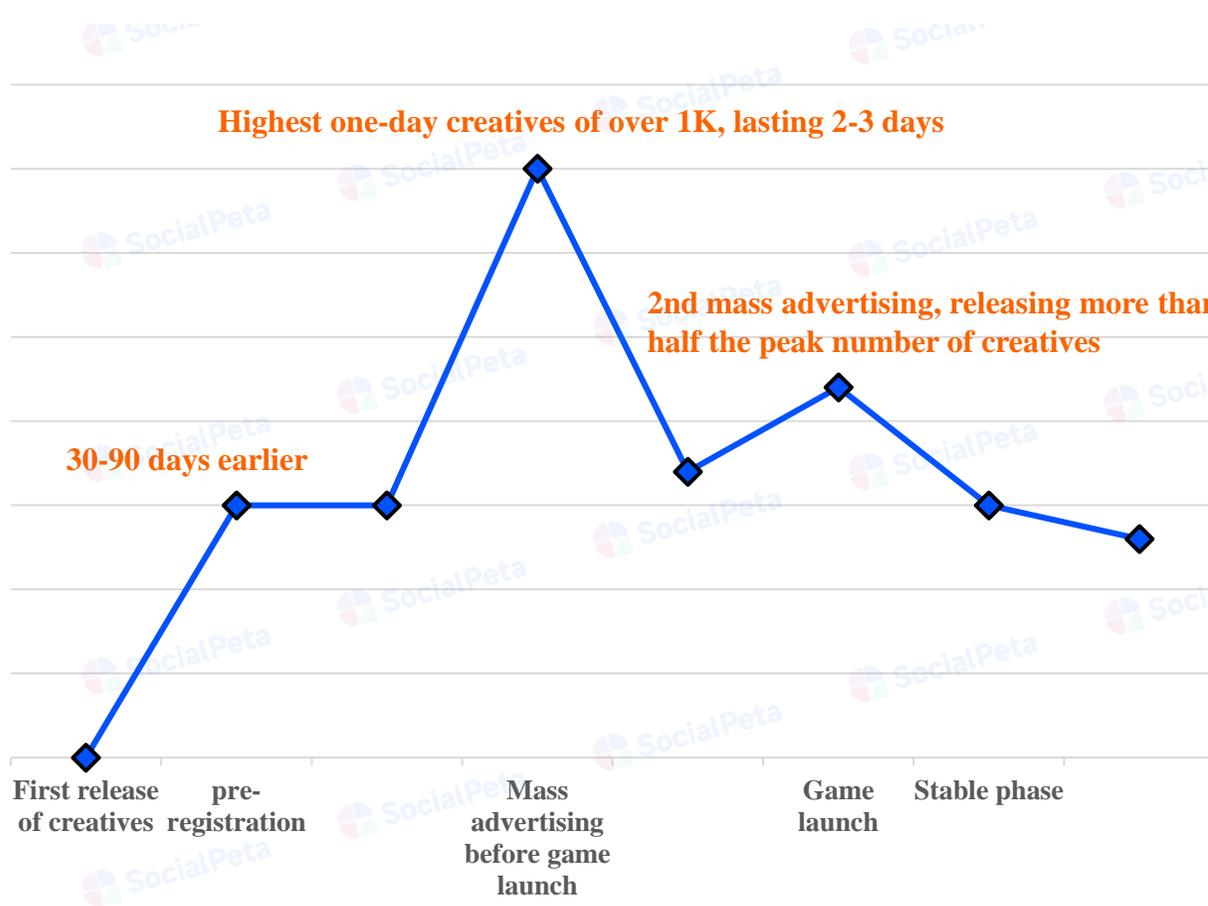


A long-established company known
for its historical SIM games
[Dynasty Warriors] series,
[Nobunaga's Ambition] series



An anime and game publisher
[Another Eden: The Cat Beyond
Time and Space], [White Cat
Project], [Heaven Burns Red]

Pre-registration - the First Step of Mobile Games Marketing in Japan



Recommended rewards for pre-registration				
10,000	50,000	100,000	200,000	500,000
In-game gold	Game resources (EXP or weapons)	Consecutive draws in ordinary pool	Limited characters	Consecutive draws in special pool

Pre-registration rewards

- In-game rewards:** tokens, limited characters...
- In-kind rewards:** PS5, phones, figurines...

Info revealed

Exclusive story pv, game endorser, popular voicers, game ost, off-line events...



Anniversary celebrations:

In the Japanese mobile gaming industry, anniversaries are very important, because they are important milestones in a game's lifetime and also the crucial time to reward loyal gamers. In the past, anniversaries were often celebrated for games, but now there are many half-anniversaries celebrated because marketing is getting more fast-paced.

Cultural influence: In the Japanese culture, it's important to remember and celebrate important events. So it has become a custom to celebrate anniversaries.

Market competition: Due to the fierce competition in the Japanese mobile game market, game developers need to hold regular events to maintain gamers' interest and loyalty.

User Expectation: Gamers have got so used to anniversary celebrations that they start to look forward to them and it's a chance for them to gain special rewards and content.

Marketing strategy: Anniversaries are a perfect chance for game operators to attract new gamers and regain old gamers.

Benefits of anniversary celebrations

- 1. Increases gamer activity:** Through limited-time events and special rewards, inactive gamers may be attracted to the game again, which will eventually increase the general activity of gamers.
- 2. Increases revenue:** Exclusive products or services may be launched during special events, which normally would bring significant revenue growth.
- 3. Improves brand loyalty:** Giving back to gamers will make gamers more satisfied and loyal to a game, which will help maintain a stable customer base in the long run.
- 4. Word-of-mouth marketing:** Peer recommendation is very important in Japan. New gamers can be brought by words spreading on social media and oral spreading
- 5. Shows a game's growth:** Anniversary celebrations are a great opportunity to show how much a game has progressed since its release. Special events and updates can be launched to attract former gamers to the game.



Brand collaboration: the most popular marketing mode for Japanese mobile games

“

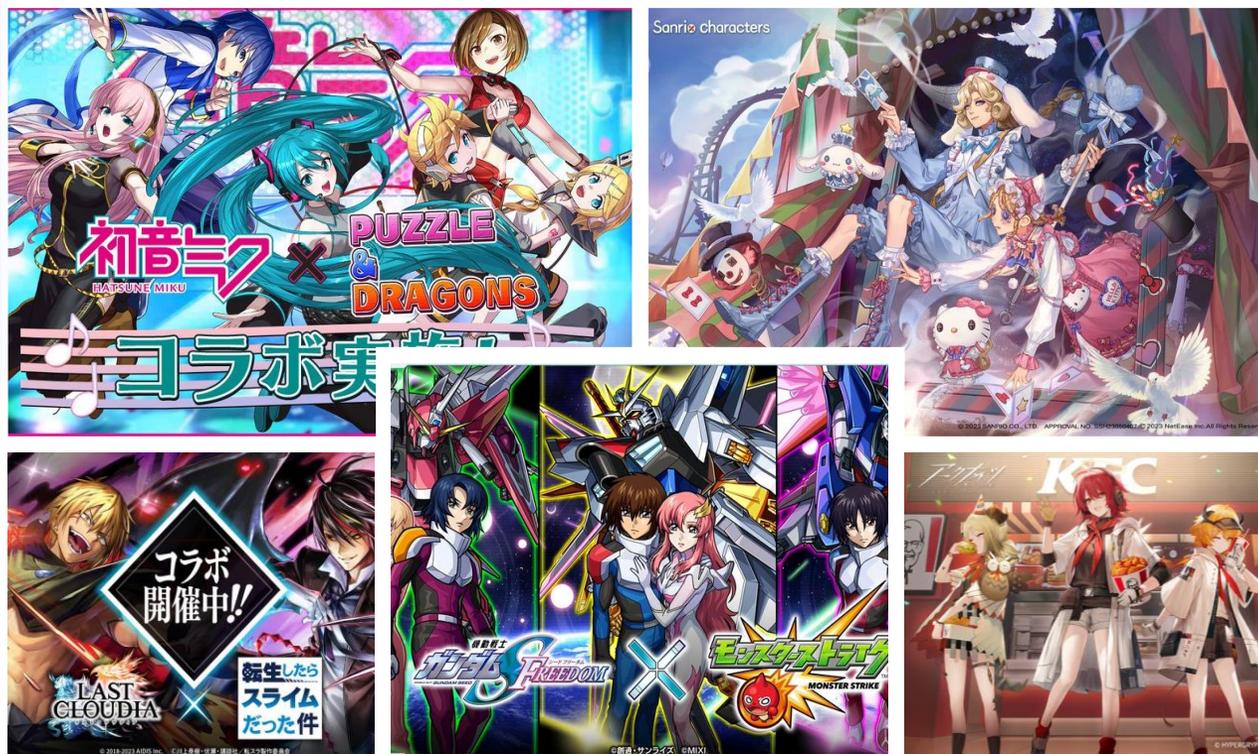
Collaborations are a popular marketing strategy for mobile games in Japan. Through a collaboration with one or more games or brands, a game can introduce the elements of those games or brands and achieve marketing effect.

The elements may include characters, stories, and theme activities. A game can collaborate with other games, and also can collaborate with animations, films, popular cultures, and other media forms. A collaboration mainly aims at attracting people's attention and arousing their interest. It will offer particular game contents and special rewards to increase gamers' gaming time and in-game spending.

Features of Japanese mobile games' collaborations:

- Improve gaming experience: They enrich games' contents and make them more interesting by introducing other games' contents and characters.
- Cross-industry cooperation: Collaborations with famous animations, films, and other famous works attract fans from other industries.
- Market expansion: Collaborations are an effective marketing method for increasing games' popularity and brand influence.
- Interaction between communities: Collaborations improve communication and interaction between gamer communities, increasing gamers' loyalty.

Some popular Japanese mobile games' collaborations for the last half year



”

Japanese Ad Creatives with Local Characteristics



A screenful of words

Words are often used in Japanese mobile game ad creatives, and they are usually large-font, badly organized, and brightly colorful.

“Over-exposure” filter

Japanese film and TV works have a strong style and therefore are very easy to recognize. The same is true with Japanese mobile games’ live-action ad creatives. Japanese videos are characterized by sense of depth and high contrast ratios, making them aesthetically appealing.



Anime-style storyboards

In Japan, many game companies even publish games that are adapted from anime, film, and TV works.

For the marketing of those mobile games, many manga and anime elements are added to their ad creatives. Plus there’ re many IP-based games in Japan, so manga storyboard creatives are more popular.



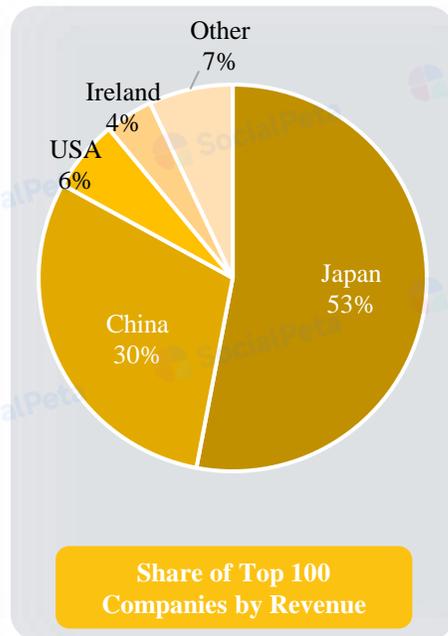
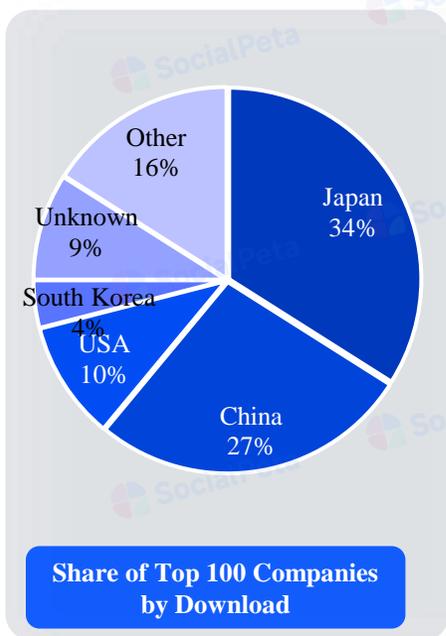


Japanese App Store Top Lists

Japanese local companies have an absolute advantage in generating revenues. Among the top 10 games by revenue, there was only one game “Genshin Impact” that wasn’t developed by Japanese game companies.

And, Chinese companies played a significant role in the Japanese mobile games market, contributing 30% of the top 100 games by revenue.

In terms of downloads, “Merge Watermelon - Fruit Crush” has become a big hit game in the Japanese mobile games market for the last half year. And three similar games made it to the Top 10 by download.



Top 10 by Download			Top 10 by Revenue		
1	呪術廻戦 ファントムパレード Sumzap	Action	1	モンスターストライク MIXI	Action
2	シンカゲーム - スイカ合成 Universal Mobile Games	Puzzle	2	プロ野球スピリッツ A KONAMI	Sports
3	東方幻想エクリプス CAVE	Action	3	パズル&ドラゴンズ GungHo Online Entertainment	Puzzle
4	Royal Match Drea	Puzzle	4	eFootball™ 2024 KONAMI	Sports
5	Monster Hunter Now Niantic	Action	5	ウマ娘 プリティーダービー Cygames	Adventure
6	スイカゲーム - ジューシーフルーツマージ 楽 しいパズル Abdul Rehman Al Oweis	Casual	6	呪術廻戦 ファントムパレード Sumzap	Action
7	レスレリアーナのアトリエ KOEI TECMO	RPG	7	ドラゴンボールZ ドッカンバトル BANDAI NAMCO	Action
8	リバース: 1999 Bluepoch	RPG	8	Fate/Grand Order Aniplex	RPG
9	Block Blast! Hungry Studio	Casual	9	Genshin Impact miHoYo	Adventure
10	スイカゲーム - ランキングチャレンジ Brilliant Games	Casual	10	ドラゴンクエストウォーク SQUARE ENIX	RPG

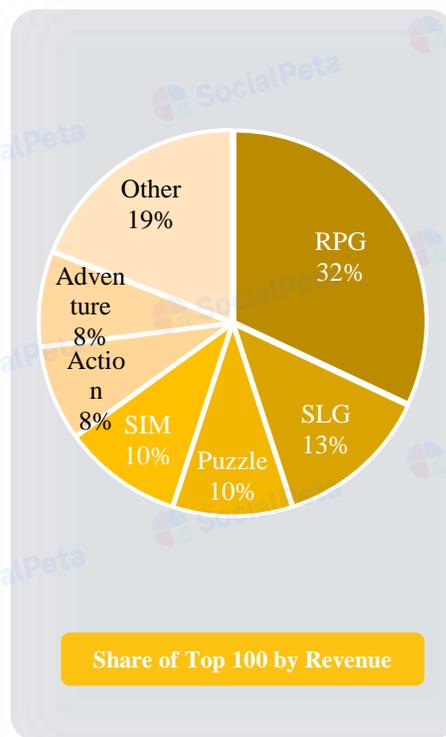
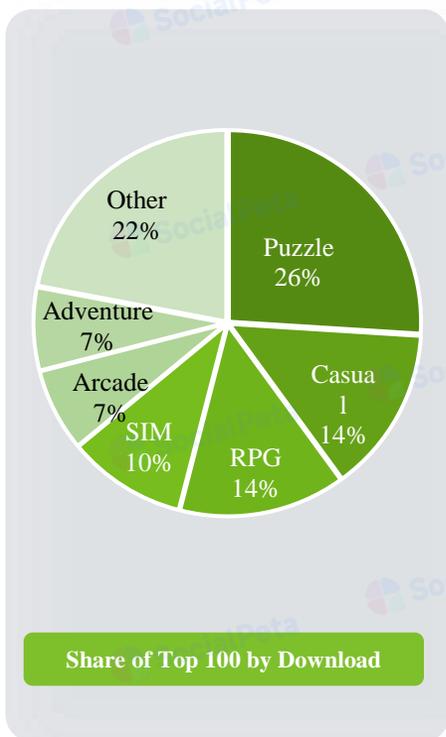
Source: SocialPeta – Advertising Intelligence - Total Ranking, the total data were the downloads and revenue from the App Store in Japan
Date Range: Sept. 2023 - Feb. 2024; Chinese game companies include companies in China’s mainland and China’s HK, Macao, and TW.

Japanese Google Play Top Lists

Unlike the dominance of Japanese companies on the top list by revenue, there are more companies from other regions on the top list by download.

RPG, SLG, and puzzle games were the highest-grossing game genres in Japan. And RPG games accounted for 32% of the top 100 games by revenue.

Puzzle games contributed the most downloads in the Japanese market, which were mainly **Match-3 + X**.



Top 10 by Download			Top 10 by Revenue		
1		呪術廻戦 ファントムパレード Sumzap RPG	1		モンスターストライク MIXI Action
2		Royal Match Dream Games Puzzle	2		ウマ娘 プリティーダービー Cygames SIM
3		スイカゲーム - Suika Game Brilliant Games Casual	3		Fate/Grand Order Aniplex RPG
4		東方幻想エクリプス CAVE Action	4		Genshin Impact miHoYo Adventure
5		レスレリアーナのアトリエ KOEI TECMO RPG	5		ドラゴンクエストウォーク SQUARE ENIX RPG
6		Monster Hunter Now Niantic Action	6		勝利の女神: NIKKE Tencent RPG
7		Fate/Grand Order Aniplex RPG	7		ブルーアーカイブ Yostar RPG
8		Block Blast! Hungry Studio Casual	8		崩壊: スターレイル miHoYo Adventure
9		シンカゲーム - スイカ合成 Universal Mobile Games Casual	9		パズル&ドラゴンズ GungHo Online Entertainment Puzzle
10		ドット勇者 Efun Company Card	10		パズル&サバイバル 37Games SLG



03

Hit Mobile Games in Japanese Market

Instant games dominated the Japanese Market

After its success in December last year and February, respectively in China's Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, 4399's instant game [キノコ伝説] entered the Japanese and South Korean markets.

キノコ伝説

Instant game going global in Japan 4399

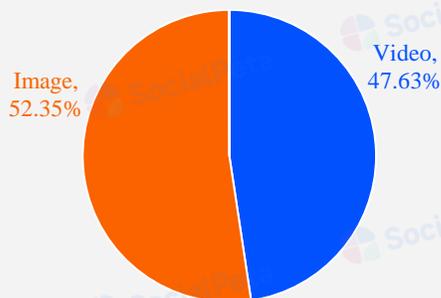


Advertising Data

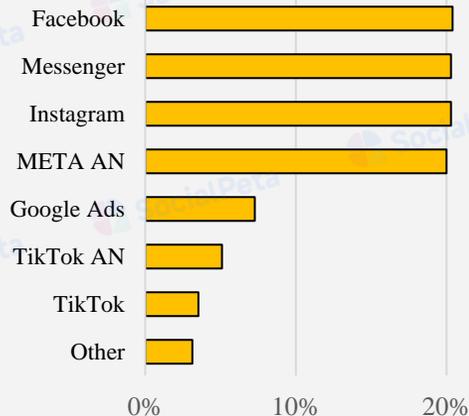
First advertising date: 18 Jan., 2024

Total deduplicated creatives: 8.3K

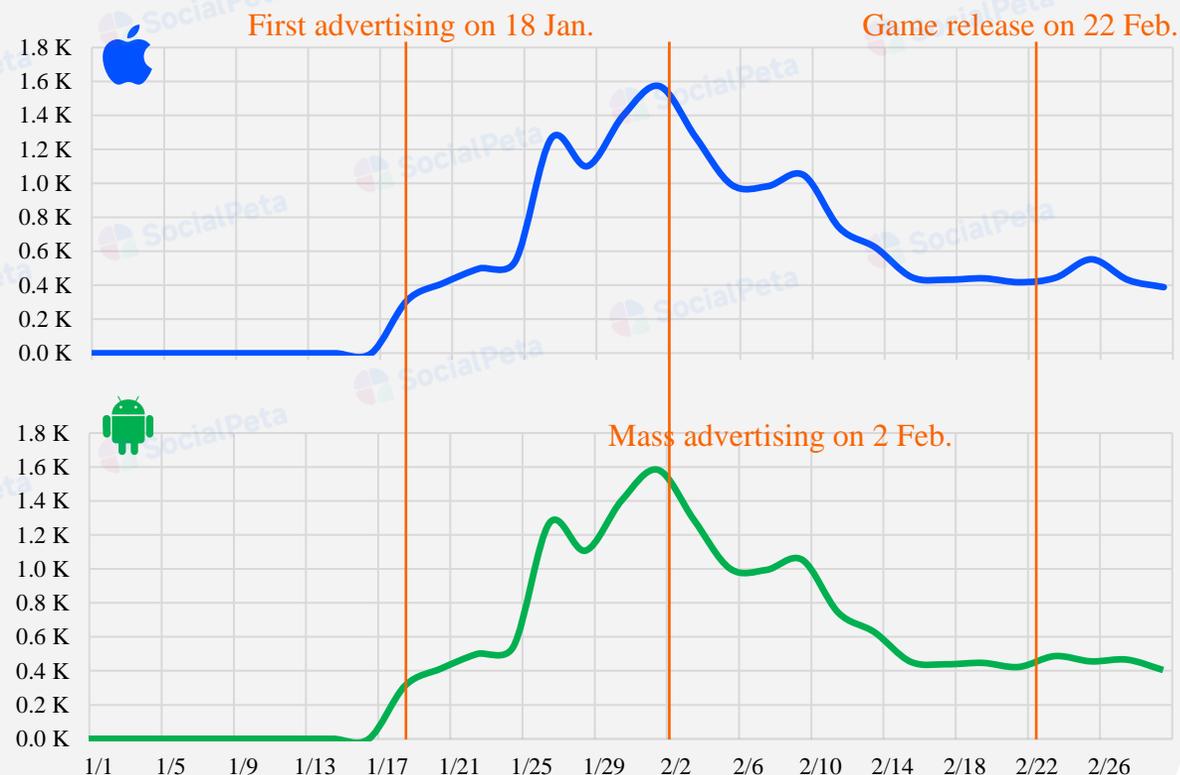
% of creatives by type



Top Advertising Platforms



The Game advertiser's creatives released for iOS and Android





[キノコ伝説] Active High-Quality Video Creatives



Advertised on:  YouTube

Estimated Impressions: 1.2M

Features: In order to attract Japanese players, the **Japanese gravure idol [Umi Shinonome]** was signed for the game's publicity. Meanwhile, it mentioned the in-kind rewards (PS5 and Switch) for preregistration. The creative precisely targets at Japanese Otaku men.

20 Feb.

Release Date

5.4K

**Estimated
Conversions**



Click to play the
complete creative



[キノコ伝説] Active Image Creatives



Nostalgic Login Interface

Gaming industry is very mature in Japan, especially Japanese RPGs which have more profound effects. Therefore, such an image creative can attract players.



Display of Upgrade Essentials

It shows how easy it is to upgrade and change classes. Please note that such a creative is very likely made with AI.



3000 Draws Rewards

Consecutive draw rewards have become a must for the advertising of many RPGs. Multiple classes indicate a rich gameplay.



How a local classic IP win over Japanese players

[圣斗士星矢：正义传说] was a success in China's Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan and also South America in 2023. Now it's returned to its homeland Japan.

聖闘士星矢レジェンドオブジャスティス

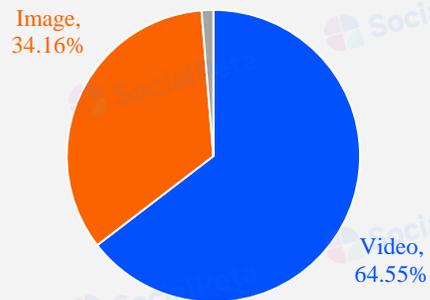
Classic IP-based RPG Wanda Cinemas Games
Advertising Data

First advertising date: 30 Nov., 2023

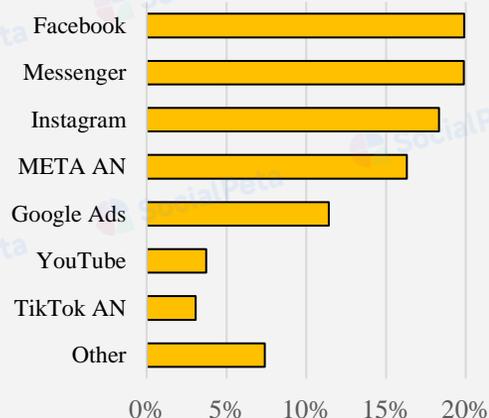
Total deduplicated creatives: 7.0K



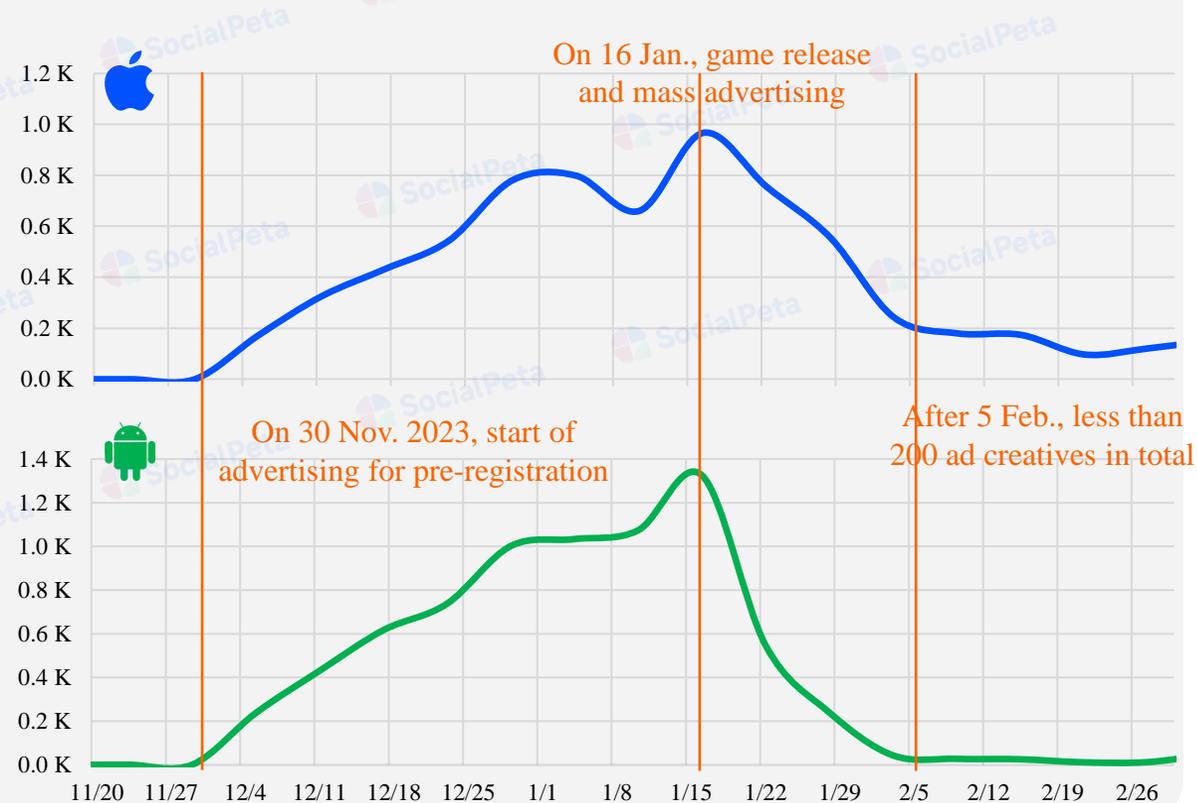
% of creatives by type



Top Advertising Platforms



The Game advertiser's creatives released for iOS and Android



[聖闘士星矢レジェンドオブジャスティス] Active HQ Video Creatives



Advertised on: **facebook**

Estimated Impressions: 346.9K

Features: The creative starts with **content from the original manga**, trying to use the manga to attract players. It's followed by in-game scenes of a battle between characters, which is more attractive to fans of the original manga.

Jan. 20

First Release Date

39 Days

Duration



Click to play the complete creative

[聖闘士星矢レジェンドオブジャスティス]Active Image Creatives



Display of Character Cards

Cards designs are very important to card RPGs, and can be used to attract more gamers.



Endorser Advertising

The Japanese comedian [Eiko Kano] was signed to advertise the game, which was a way to attract attention through celebrity effects.

★初心者おすすめキャラ			
キャラクター	レアリティ	属性	特徴
バルゴ 乙女座 シャカ	◆◆◆	◆	弱体化制御 HP吸収
ジェミニ 双子座 サガ	◆◆◆◆	◆◆	空間支配 ダメージ増加
レオ 獅子座 アイオリア	◆◆◆	◆◆	チーム強化 稲妻ダメージ増
タウラス 牡牛座 アルデバラン	◆◆◆	◆◆	全体嘲笑 目眩反撃

Guides for Beginners

Some guides may help beginners understand the game and make the game less difficult for them to play through.

How Veteran Developers Market Their Games in Japan

[おねがい社長!] has been running for over 3 years and remained on the top 10 chart of Japanese best-selling simulation games.

おねがい社長!

Business simulation EWORLD

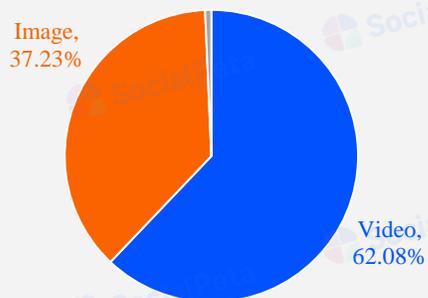
Advertising Data

First advertising date: June 2020

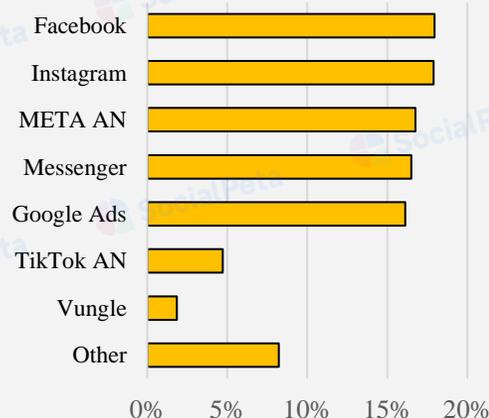
Total deduplicated creatives: 42.4K



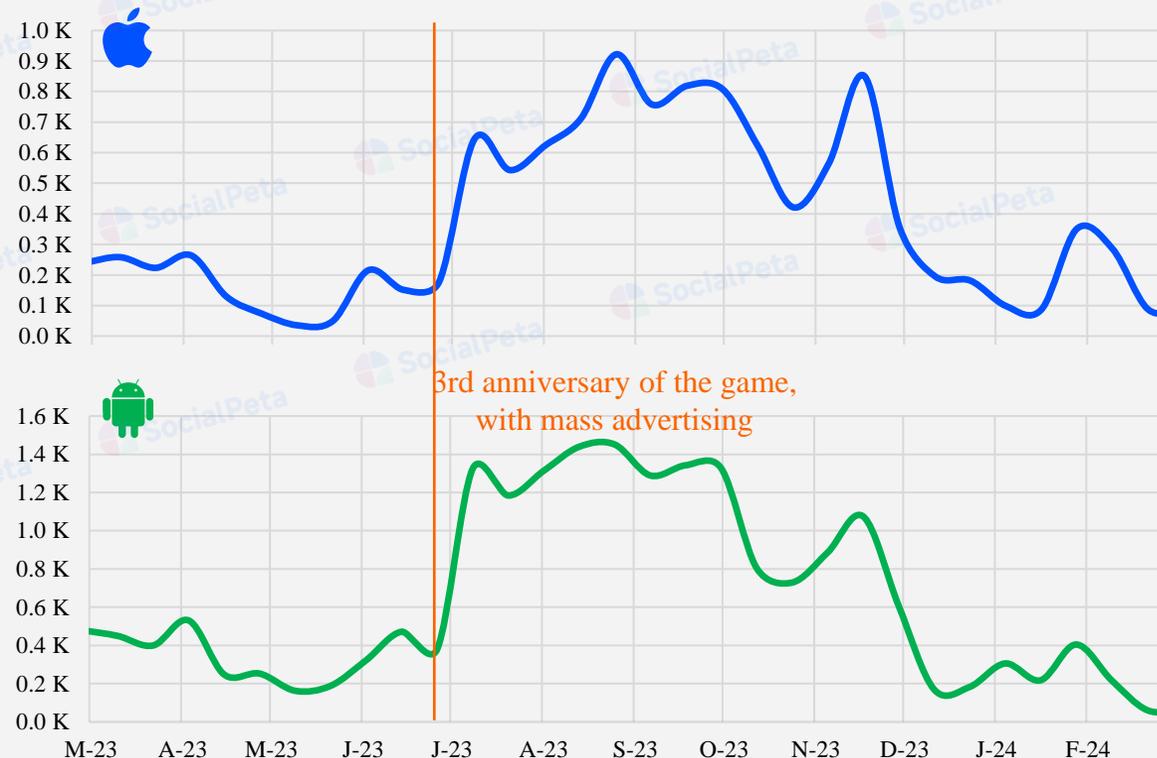
% of creatives by type



Top Advertising Platforms



The Game advertiser's creatives released for iOS and Android





[おねがい社長!] Active High-Quality Video Creatives



Advertised on:  YouTube

Estimated Impressions: 598.1K

Features: It's a mini-game creative, a common marketing strategy recently. But with a beauty model combined with the puzzle blocks, the ad creative is suspicious to be **sexy and flirting**, which attracts more attention.

25 Oct., 2023

Release Date

3.2K

Likes



Click to play
the complete
creative

[おねがい社長!] Active Image Creatives



AI Beautiful Girls

Advertisers make full use of AIGC tools in marketing, meanwhile the poster has copied Japanese magazine's style as much as possible.



Celebrity Endorsement

For its 3.5 anniversary, a female celebrity Kijima Asukahas is invited to endorse and promote the game.



Collaborations

Collaborations and endorsement can help the game quickly acquire users, but should pay attention to the overlap between partners and the game's audience.



Declaration

1. Data Sources

With the assistance of the world's biggest advertising intelligence and analysis tool, SocialPeta Data Team has provided you with insights into the mobile advertising data of global game market. We collect advertising data by sampling worldwide, covering over 70 channels and nearly 70 countries and regions worldwide, and have captured a total of over 1.4 billion advertising data, with over 1 million ad data being updated by the hour each day. Based on such huge data, we can gain insights into the advertising market trends.

2. Data Cycle and Indicators

Overall date range of the report: Jan - Dec 2023

For specific data indicators, please see the notes on each page.

3. Copyright Notice

All tests, images, and graphics contained in this report are protected by the relevant trademark and copyright laws. Some texts and data are public information and their copyrights are owned by their original creators. No organization or person shall copy or distribute, in whole or in part for any purpose, any portion of this report without approval from our company. The copyrights of all creatives mentioned in this report are owned by the respective advertisers. Any unauthorized use of this report for commercial activities is a breach of the Copyright Law of the People's Republic of China and other relevant laws and regulations as well as the relevant provisions of the International Convention.

4. Disclaimer

The industry data and market forecasts presented in this report are based on the data captured by SocialPeta Data Team and estimated by using a statistical forecasting model combined with research methods such as desk study and industry interviews. Limited by the research methods and data resources, this report can only be used as reference material. Our company shall have no liability for any data or points of view in this report. SocialPeta shall hold no responsibility for any legal consequences resulting from any action taken by any organization or individual by using or based on the above data information, and the organization or individual shall take full responsibility for any disputes or legal liabilities arising therefrom.

5. Concerned Countries and Regions (based on the distribution area of SocialPeta's products, not the actual geographical distribution)

North America: USA, Canada, Mexico, Panama

Europe: Turkey, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Romania, Sweden, Greece, Denmark, Luxembourg, Ireland, Finland

JP & ROK: Japan, South Korea

China's HK, Macao & TW: Hong Kong (China), Macao (China), Taiwan (China)

Southeast Asia: Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia

Oceania: Australia, New Zealand

South Asia: India, Pakistan

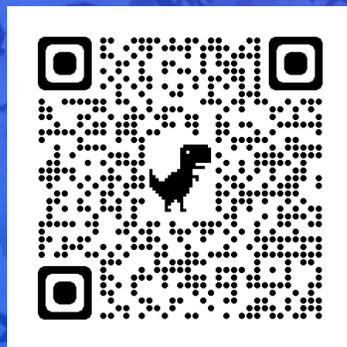
Middle East: Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Israel, Oman, Iraq, Morocco

South America: Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Paraguay

Africa: Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Algeria, Libya, Senegal, Ivory Coast

THANKS

WWW.SOCIALPETA.COM



FOLLOW US ON LINKEDIN