

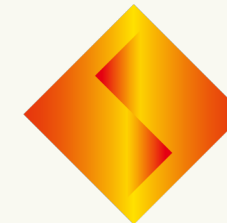
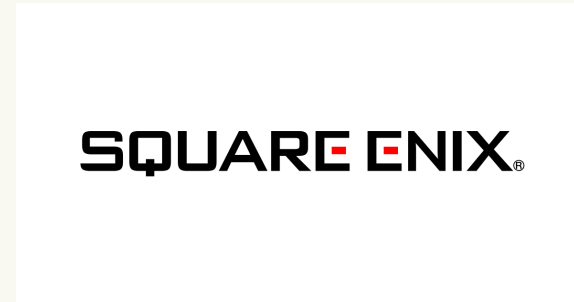
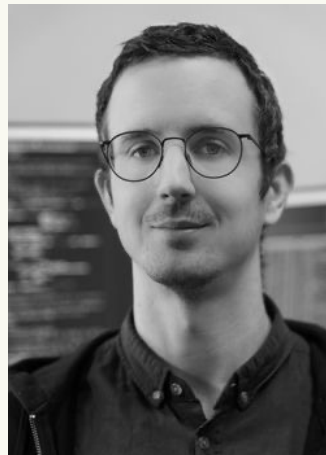


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Video Games and Science in a World with Gaming Addiction

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#GDC23



Sony
Interactive
Entertainment



Overview

What is gaming addiction?

Why do research on it?

How did we do it?

So what did we learn?

Part 1: What is gaming addiction ?

What?

American Psychiatric Association

World Health Organization

Scientific Literature

APA

“Internet Gaming Disorder”

Condition for future study (2013)

Nine indicators based on gambling

Significant distress a key feature

WHO

“Gaming Disorder”

Recognized condition (2022)

Three elements based on
‘consensus’ of experts

Games attributed as cause of ill
health requiring medical treatment

Science

Active debate among scholars

High quantity, low quality evidence

Games as cause or symptom?

Divorced from mental health and well-being research

Part 2: Why pursue industry-academic collaborations?

Why?

Academic motivation

Industry motivation

Health and policy motivation

Stakeholder alignment

Why?

Academic

Understanding impact of human play

Quantity vs. quality of research

Data specific nature of games

Reactive to proactive science

Why?

Industry

Emerging regulatory frameworks

Duty of care and liability

Countering impact of low-quality research

Why?

Health & Policy

Protecting health and wellbeing

Promoting creative industries

Digital regulatory landscape

Do something about games

Why?

Alignment

Evidence based policy is the ideal

Predicable rules of the road

Learning about our world

Promoting player health

Why?

Alignment

Independent research

Rigorous research

Credible research

Part 3: How did we do it?

How?

Pilot Study (2020)

Publisher Study (2021 – 2022)

Platform Study (2021 – today)

Pilot Study

Development

Findings

Implications

Development

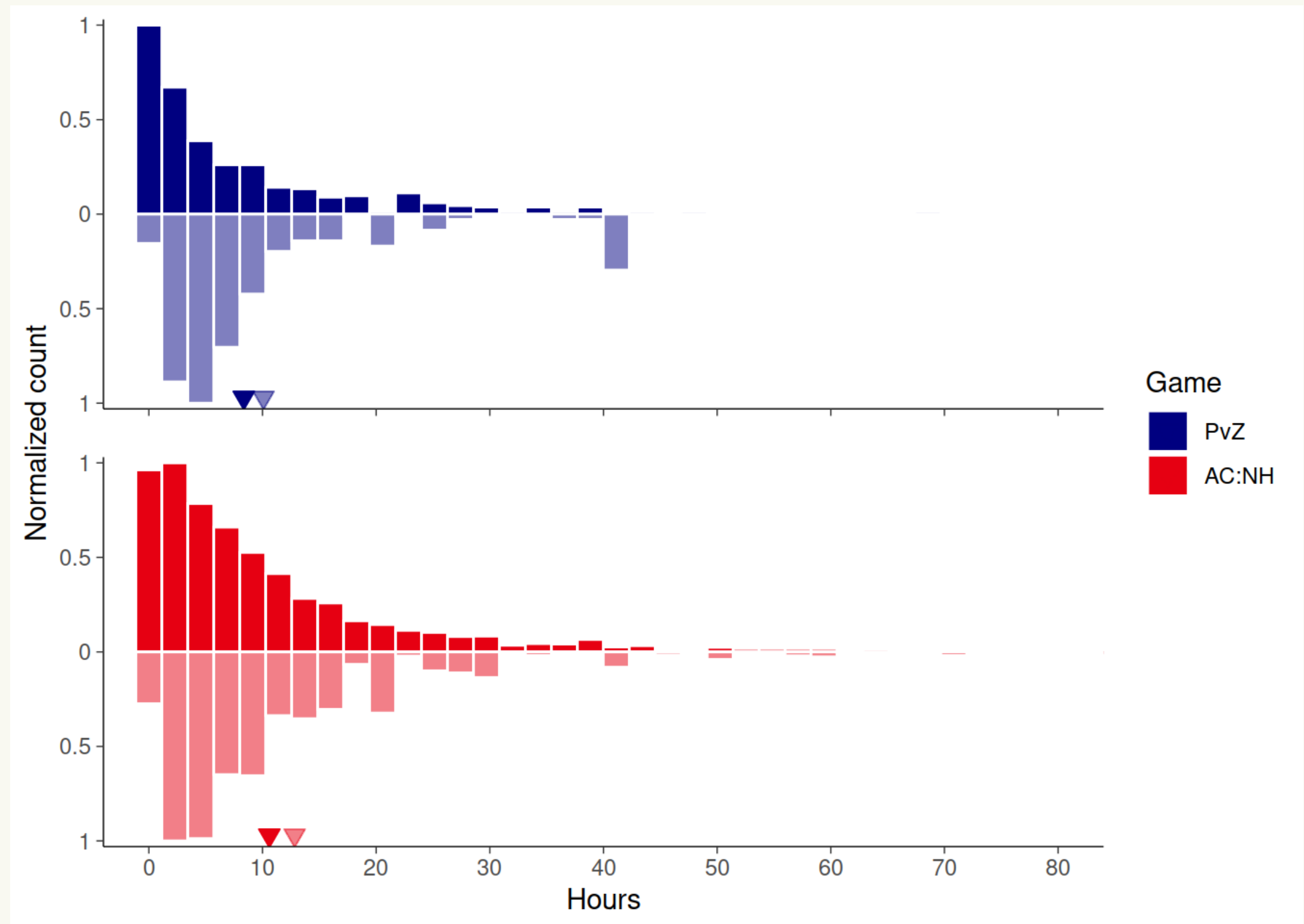
ESA Board sign off

OII team self-finances

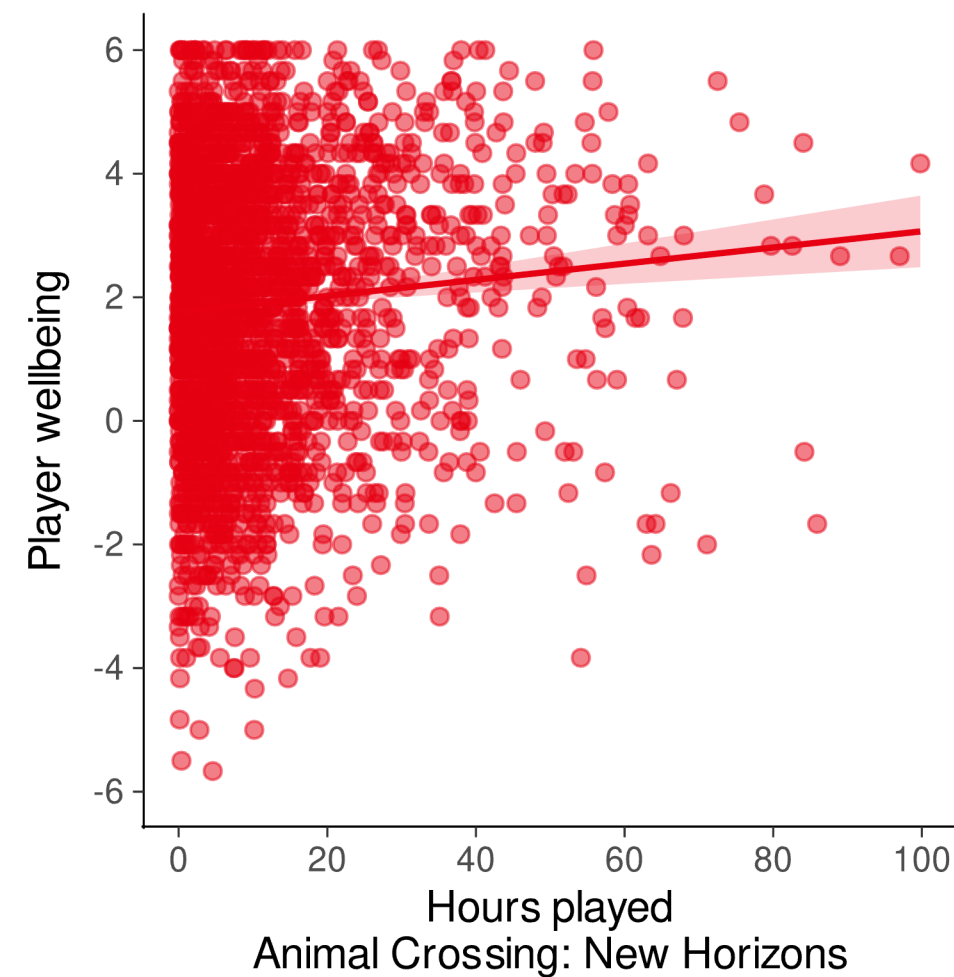
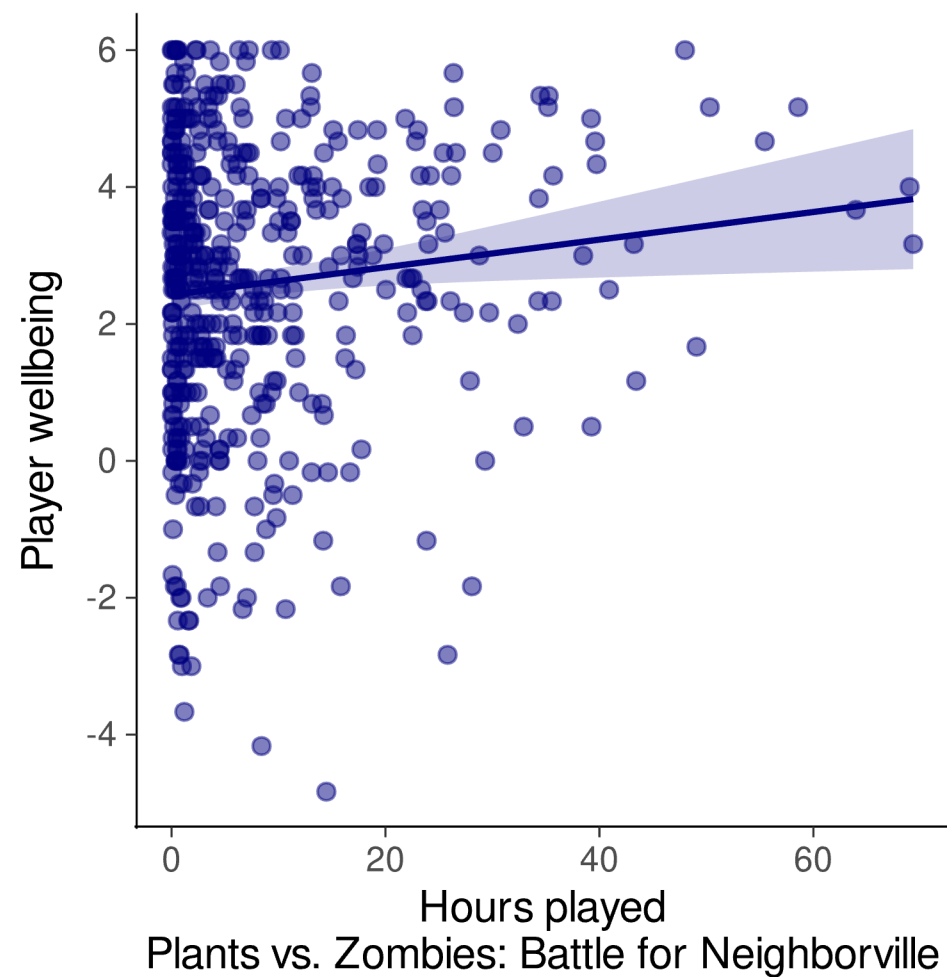
EA and Nintendo engage

Simple proof of concept

Findings



Findings



Implications

Independent, rigorous, credible
research well-received

Clear challenges to understanding
all games vs. two games

Platform-level research agenda set
February 2021

Platform- level research agenda

Participants recruited by Oxford team

Data donation using APIs, tokens, gamertags

Data encompassing who, what, when of play across platforms

~~Platform~~ Publisher Study

Development

Findings

Implications

Development

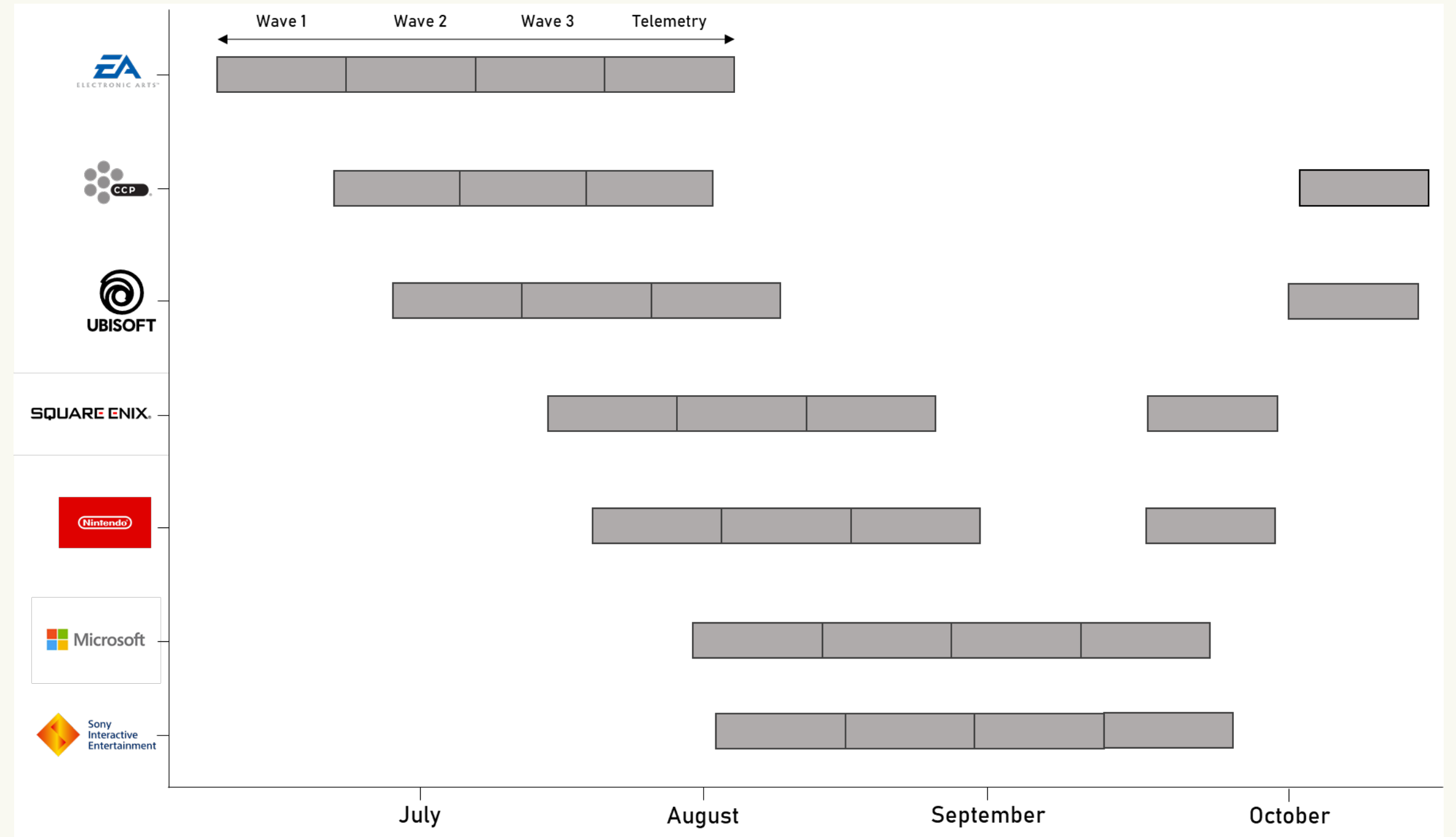
Impasse for two platforms in March 2021

Scaled back 'publisher study'

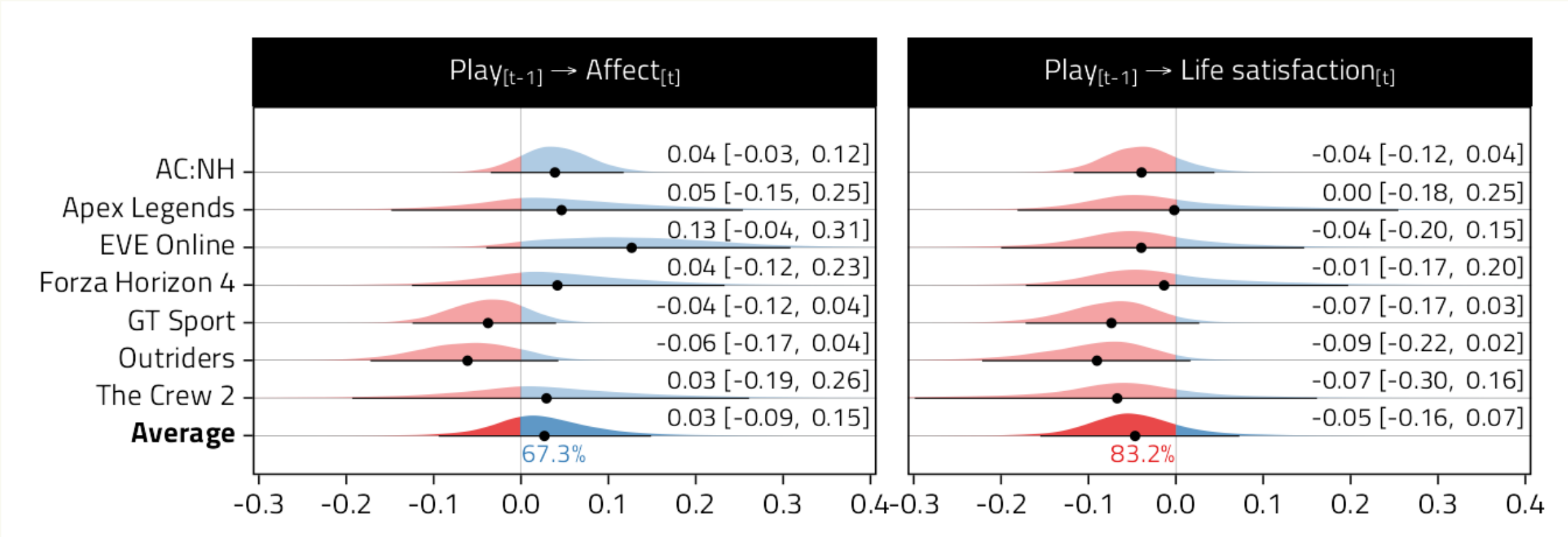
Six ESA and one UKIE publishers engage

Coordinating with 7 publishers instead of 3 platforms

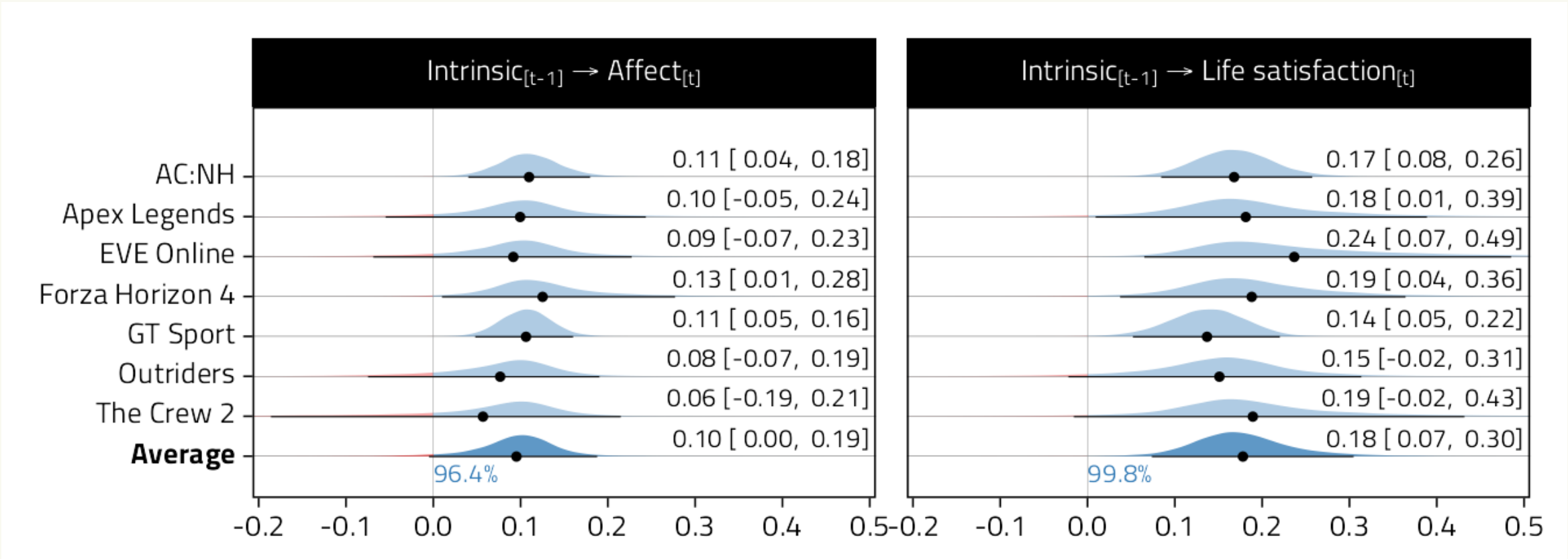
Development



Findings



Findings



Implications

Quality vs. quality of play

Familiarized platforms with research

Difficult to coordinate and publish

Unscored value of platform study

Platform Study

Development

New Challenges

Overcoming Impasses

Development

Participants recruited by Oxford team

Data donation using APIs and tokens, gamertags

Data encompassing who, what, when of play across platforms

Development

Clock reset to February 2021

New teams and stakeholders

Requests and challenges

Challenges

Discomfort around 3P publishers

3P Permissions secured

Sample data analyzed

Overcoming Impasses

Lack of progress (Oct 21 to July 22)

Soft deadline (July 2022)

Firm hard deadline (Feb 2023)

Nintendo and Xbox on board!

Next steps

Research project starting in May and will run for 24 months

Recruiting large samples of players and linking them with their gaming data

Multiple sources of data including Steam, Discord, and others

Part 4: So what are the implications?

So What?

Academic value proposition

Cost of slow move to research

Opportunities for action

So What?

Value
proposition

Lower comparative engagement

Return on investment

Opportunity cost

Potential high future value

So What?

Industry Costs

Gaming Disorder in ICD-11

\$520 million FTC settlement

USA and Canadian Class actions

Chinese and Japanese ordinances

USA, EU, and UK research and
harms frameworks

Industry Costs

Year	# Gaming Published Disorder Studies	# Published Rigorous, Credible, and Studies using Games Industry Data
2013	6	--
2014	52	--
2015	74	--
2016	133	--
2017	143	--
2018	248	--
2019	258	--
2020	327	1
2021	385	0
2022	401	1

So What?

Opportunities

Bringing more 3P publishers on board with platform work

Agile sector can compete on quality for emerging regulations

Forthcoming Video Games Research Framework

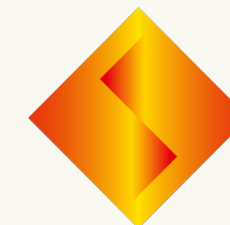
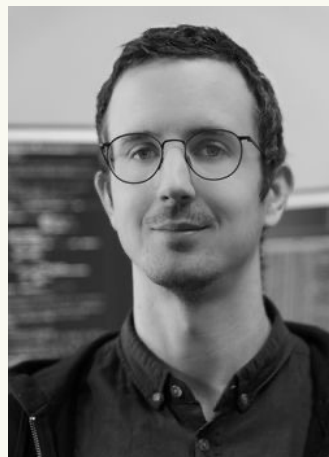
Closing

Go big on independent, rigorous,
and credible research **now**

Real chance to avoid the
crosshairs on social media firms

Find the “business value” of doing
this **before** value finds you

THANK YOU



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