

# THE GAMING NEWS OF INDIA



Newsletter from the Indian Digital Gaming Society  
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## BUILDING A GLOBAL GAMING HUB: IDGS'S ROADMAP FOR INDIA

As the voice of the video gaming industry, IDGS seeks government support to enhance its growth and global competitiveness through increased support for original IP creation, skilling initiatives, and financial incentives, among others

The Indian Digital Gaming Society (IDGS) is emerging as the leading voice of India's gaming industry, representing its interests to the newly formed government.

The industry has boundless potential for growth and innovation, mirroring the trajectory of the IT revolution that swept the nation decades ago. The burgeoning ecosystem is primed to foster innovation, spur economic growth, and position India as a global leader in gaming and eSports.

The \$180 billion global industry presents India with unprecedented opportunities for content creation and value addition, contingent upon robust governance mechanisms.

Also, as India's gaming community continues to



Rajan Navani, President, IDGS and Co-Chairman CII National Media and Entertainment Committee met with Ashwini Vaishnav, Minister for Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & IT, and Dr L Murugan Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting

burgeon, it presents a plethora of career opportunities. The industry's inclusive nature welcomes talent from diverse backgrounds, promising avenues for economic empowerment and technological innovation.


There's a wealth of Indian content waiting to be showcased worldwide, provided we harness the talent pool and provide the necessary skills to make India a global leader in gaming.

The video gaming industry seeks government support to enhance its growth and global competitiveness. Key requests include clear regulatory distinctions between "Video Games" and "Real Money Games," streamlined governance under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, and avoidance of premature regulations.

The industry also calls for increased support for original IP creation, skilling initiatives, and financial incentives like tax holidays and reduced GST rates. Additionally, they seek improved market access, rationalized import duties for essential hardware, and better education frameworks to nurture talent, all aimed at positioning India as a global leader in gaming.


GLOBAL REACH

**IDGS WILL BE PRESENT AT THE FOLLOWING GLOBAL GAMING MARKETS**




**August 21-25 | 2024**  
**GERMANY**

**TOKYO GAME SHOW 2024**



**September 26-29 | 2024**  
**JAPAN**



**November 14-17 | 2024**  
**SOUTH KOREA**

# IDGS WELCOME BOOST

## for Skilling the Gaming Industry



### Rajan Navani

President, Indian Digital Gaming Society (IDGS), Co-Chairman – CII National Committee on Media & Entertainment and Chairman & Managing Director JetSynthesys (Jetline Group)

The gaming industry in India is on the cusp of a revolution, driven by innovative technologies, a growing community of enthusiasts, and, crucially, the unwavering support from our government. The 2024-25 Budget has earmarked significant resources towards the skilling and training of professionals in the gaming sector, reflecting a clear recognition of the industry's potential to contribute to economic growth and global leadership.

At the Indian Digital Gaming Society (IDGS), our mission has always been to catalyse the Indian digital gaming industry, transforming it into a powerhouse that not only fuels domestic growth but also positions India as a trustworthy global partner. Our vision is ambitious: to ensure that India rises to the forefront of the global gaming industry, contributing effectively to the economy while fostering innovation and excellence.

The recent budget allocation for the skilling is a landmark step. By focusing on skilling, the government acknowledges the need for a well-trained workforce to sustain and propel the industry forward. This support will help in creating a robust pipeline of talent, equipped with the necessary skills to navigate and excel in this dynamic field.

At IDGS, we have aligned our initiatives with this governmental vision, ensuring that we play a proactive role in fostering growth and capability building.

One of our flagship programs, GameForge, focuses on synchronizing academic curricula with industry requirements. By collaborating with top-tier educational institutions, we aim to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, preparing students for real-world challenges in the gaming industry.

Strengthening international partnerships is another key area of focus. We have signed MoUs with several prestigious organizations, such as the Korea Indie Game Society (KIGS), Korea Games Developer Association (KGDA), and others.

We believe in the power of community and recognition. Our events, like the India Gaming Show and participation in international forums such as Gamescom and the Tokyo Game Show, provide platforms for showcasing Indian talent and innovations.

Continuous interaction with senior government officials ensures that the industry's voice is heard at the highest levels. Our dedicated working groups provide policy recommendations that are crucial for creating a conducive environment for the industry's growth.

As we move forward, IDGS remains committed to its core values of 'India First', 'India Rise', and 'One Voice'. These values guide our every initiative, ensuring that the Indian gaming industry not only thrives but also becomes a beacon of innovation and excellence on the global stage.

**OUR EVENTS, LIKE THE INDIA GAMING SHOW AND PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS SUCH AS GAMESCOM AND THE TOKYO GAME SHOW, PROVIDE PLATFORMS FOR SHOWCASING INDIAN TALENT AND INNOVATIONS**

#### FOR MORE DETAILS

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# 10

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

### BY IDGS IN 2024

The Indian Digital Gaming Society (IDGS) has been at the forefront of catalyzing the growth of the digital gaming and esports industry in India. In 2024, IDGS achieved remarkable milestones that have significantly contributed to the industry's development. These achievements span across various domains, from policy advocacy and international collaboration to skilling and promoting Indian games on the global stage. Here, we highlight ten key accomplishments by IDGS in 2024, showcasing their efforts to build a sustainable future for the video games and esports industry in India.

# 1

**Voice of Video Game Industry:** IDGS has successfully established itself as the authoritative voice of the video game industry in India. Through continuous engagement with policymakers and industry leaders, IDGS has advocated for policies that support the growth and sustainability of the gaming sector.

**Bringing Momentum to Esports:** This year, IDGS has significantly boosted the esports scene in India by organizing major tournaments and fostering talent development. The increased visibility and support for esports have elevated India's presence on the global esports stage.

# 2

# 5

**Global Footprint:** IDGS has expanded its global footprint by signing multiple MoUs with international gaming associations. These partnerships have facilitated knowledge exchange, collaboration, and access to global markets, positioning India as a key player in the international gaming community.

# 4

**Policy Voice and Regulatory Changes:** Working closely with the government, IDGS has influenced critical regulatory changes that benefit the gaming industry. These efforts include advocating for fair taxation, creating clear regulations for online gaming, and ensuring a conducive business environment.

# 8

**Make in India for the World Promotion:** Promoting the "Made in India" brand, IDGS has launched campaigns to highlight Indian games on global platforms. This effort has increased the visibility of Indian games, leading to higher international recognition and sales.

**Space for Startups:** IDGS has created a supportive ecosystem for gaming startups by providing mentorship, funding opportunities, and networking events. This initiative has led to the emergence of several innovative startups that are now making waves in the industry.

# 3

**Connecting Funding and Companies:**

Through various initiatives, IDGS has successfully connected gaming companies with potential investors. This has resulted in increased funding for game development and innovation, driving the growth of the industry.

# 6

**Working with State Governments:** IDGS has collaborated with several state governments to establish Centers of Excellence and gaming hubs. These initiatives aim to nurture local talent, provide training, and create job opportunities within the gaming sector.

# 7

**Skilling and Knowledge Forums:** IDGS has prioritized skill development through programs like GameForge, which align academic training with industry needs. Additionally, IDGS has organized numerous knowledge forums like India Gaming Shows and workshops, ensuring that industry professionals are well-equipped with the latest skills and knowledge.

# 10

**9 Exhibition Showcase Opportunities Globally**

**and at IGS:** IDGS has provided opportunities for Indian game developers to showcase their work at international exhibitions like Gamescom and the Tokyo Game Show. Additionally, the India Gaming Show (IGS) has become a premier event for the Indian gaming industry, attracting global attention.

# HOW IDGS WORKING GROUPS ARE SHAPING THE INDIAN GAMING INDUSTRY

The IDGS working groups, led by industry veterans and infused with new talents, are making significant strides in shaping the future of the Indian gaming industry

*The Indian Digital Gaming Society (IDGS) is at the forefront of revolutionizing the Indian gaming industry. With its structured approach and strategic initiatives, IDGS has constituted eight working groups (WGs) that play pivotal roles in driving policy recommendations, membership drives, and various activities aimed at enhancing the industry.*

## Academia Working Group

**Chair: Basavaraj Pujar, Founder, Someshwara Software**

The Academia WG is dedicated to bridging the gap between educational institutions and the gaming industry. By creating and developing opportunities to groom the right talents and skills in the market, this group aims to increase and engage with the Indian industry through partnerships for knowledge transfer. Their efforts are focused on ensuring that the education sector is aligned with the needs of the gaming industry, thereby producing a skilled workforce ready to contribute to the sector's growth.

## Esports Working Group

**Chair: Gautam Virk, Chief Operating Officer, NODWIN Gaming**

The Esports WG is focused on improving the competitiveness of India's esports sector. They are engaging all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive strategy that includes interstate esports competitions and representation to the Sports Ministry and state government departments. Their goal is to make esports an integral part of India's sports culture, providing a platform for talented individuals and teams to showcase their skills on a national and international stage.

## Game Studio Working Group

**Chair: Harish Chengaiah, Founder, Game Director, Writer & Producer, Outlier Games**

The Game Studio WG is dedicated to creating and developing opportunities for grooming talents and skills in the market. Their objective is to empower the industry to create globally competitive products under the theme of Brand India/Create in India. By increasing engagement with global developer partnerships and promoting responsible gaming, this group is working towards making India a hub for high-quality game development.

## Membership Working Group

**Chair: Anuj Mankar, Founder, Nautilus Mobile**

The Membership WG focuses on enhancing IDGS membership by creating and developing opportunities for engagement with the Indian industry. They aim to increase membership and foster partnerships for knowledge transfer.

**THESE WORKING GROUPS ARE INSTRUMENTAL IN FOSTERING GROWTH AND INNOVATION IN THE GAMING SECTOR**

## Working Groups in Progress

### Publisher Working Group

This WG is in progress and aims to address the unique challenges faced by game publishers in India. Their focus will be on developing strategies to support publishers, facilitating market access, and creating a conducive environment for publishing high-quality games.

### Gaming Service Working Group

Also in progress, this WG will concentrate on improving gaming services across the industry. Their efforts will be directed towards enhancing the quality and accessibility of gaming services, ensuring a better experience for gamers and service providers alike.

### Gaming Investor Working Group

This WG aims to attract and manage investments in the gaming sector. By creating a favorable investment environment, they hope to drive financial growth and innovation within the industry.

### Hardware & New Technologies Working Group

This WG focuses on the adoption and integration of new technologies and hardware in the gaming industry. Their goal is to ensure that the Indian gaming sector remains at the cutting edge of technological advancements.

# GAMEFORGE

## Uniting Minds, Unleashing Skills

**This program represents a significant step forward in aligning academic institutions with the dynamic needs of the video games and esports industry to shape the future of gaming in India, ensuring that students are well-prepared to thrive in a rapidly evolving industry**

The Indian Digital Gaming Society (IDGS) has launched an innovative initiative called GAMEFORGE, a skill sync program designed to revolutionize the video games and esports industry in India. GameForge aims to bridge the gap between academia and the gaming industry, fostering a thriving community within colleges and universities by uniting minds and unleashing skills.

### Vision and Objectives

“At GameForge, our vision is to cultivate a thriving video gaming community within colleges and universities,” says Rajan Navani, President of IDGS. This vision is realized through a comprehensive program that combines esports activities with lectures from gaming veterans, professionals, and legal experts. The goal is to foster camaraderie, skill development, and a sense of belonging among students passionate about video gaming.

The initiative also aims to connect the industry with the evolving skill needs, highlighting 100 essential skills in the video and esports industry. By doing so, GAMEFORGE seeks to expand the talent pool and bridge the knowledge gap between academia and industry.

### Key Stakeholders

- GameForge is a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders, including:
- CII & IDGS Secretariat
- Academic Institutions
- IDGS Academia and Esports Working Group Members
- Esports Partners
- Partners and Sponsors
- Central and State Government – Skill and Education Departments
- Skill Ministry, Education Ministry, and Niti Aayog

### Implementation Strategy and Expected Outcomes

The GameForge program will be rolled out over a year, visiting numerous academic institutions across India. The core components include expert lectures by industry veterans covering various aspects of the gaming industry, competitive esports tournaments to engage students and promote esports, and practical workshops to develop skills in game design, development, and esports management. Additionally,

special sessions on policy matters will address policy recommendations and bridge the gap between academia and industry needs. Institutions that have already agreed to participate include Vishwakarma University (Pune), Jio Institute (Mumbai), Nettur Technical Training Foundation (Bangalore), St. Vincent Pallotti College (Nagpur), MIT (Pune), and DTU (Delhi).

### Institutional Support and Acknowledgment

Participating institutions will provide necessary infrastructure, such as classrooms, open spaces for esports activities, and auditoriums for special sessions. In return, IDGS will acknowledge their support in program reports, event backdrops, presentations, social media platforms, and “The Gaming Newsletter of India.”

**GAMEFORGE AIMS TO FOSTER A SUPPORTIVE GAMING COMMUNITY WITHIN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, PROMOTE SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ESPORTS MANAGEMENT**

# *IDGS Policy Proposals to Propel India's Gaming Industry*

Ready to facilitate the development of a supportive policy framework for this sunrise sector, IDGS has outlined a series of policy proposals that can transform India's gaming industry, making it a global leader and a significant economic contributor

Recognizing the immense potential, Karnataka became the first state in India to dedicate a policy specifically to Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC). This groundbreaking move includes incentives for financial support, infrastructure development, and skill enhancement, paving the way for a thriving AVGC industry.

## **1. CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN "VIDEO GAMES" AND "REAL MONEY GAMES"**

One of the primary challenges facing the industry is the conflation of video games with real money games under the broad term "online games." IDGS urges the government to adopt distinct categories for "Video Games" and "Real Money Games." This differentiation will prevent misinterpretations that have led to unwarranted business disruptions, such as tax raids and issues with payment gateways. Clear categorization will also help in addressing international investor concerns, making the Indian market more attractive.

## **2. CONTROLLING MISREPRESENTATION**

To promote a positive public perception of video games, IDGS recommends that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting issue a notification restricting media from using video game imagery in reports related to real money games. This step is crucial for ensuring that video games, which are purely for entertainment, are not confused with gambling activities.

## **3. APPOINTING I&B MINISTRY AS THE NODAL AGENCY**

Given that video games are a form of entertainment, IDGS suggests designating the Information & Broadcasting Ministry as the nodal agency for the sector. Establishing a dedicated AVGC-XR wing and appointing a Nodal Officer within the ministry will streamline regulatory processes and enhance operational efficiency.

## **4. AVOIDING PREMATURE REGULATIONS**

IDGS advises against imposing premature regulations on the video game industry, which is still in its nascent stage in India. Over-regulation could hinder growth, deterring international companies from entering the Indian market. The current compliance with global standards for data protection and age ratings should suffice, allowing the industry to mature before introducing India-specific regulations.

## **5. PROMOTING ORIGINAL IP CREATION & OWNERSHIP**

To foster innovation and competitiveness, IDGS recommends setting up a Catalyst Fund to support startups and MSMEs in developing original intellectual properties (IPs). Additionally, promoting IP development through awareness programs and facilitating digital IP collateralization will empower video game companies, enhancing their financial stability and encouraging investment in new IPs.

## **6. BOLSTERING SKILLING & VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

The quality of higher education in game development needs improvement. IDGS proposes two key measures: incentivizing institutes to hire Professors of Practice and conduct Train the Trainer models, and updating the MESIC Qualification Packs and NSDC's National Skills Qualification Framework with new-age skills relevant to game development.

## **7. REFORMING EDUCATION STANDARDS**

To align higher education with industry needs, IDGS suggests creating standards and benchmarking frameworks for game development courses. New courses such as Bachelor of Design in Game Design, Bachelor of Arts in Game Art, Bachelor of Technology in Game Programming, and Bachelor of Arts in Esports Management should be introduced, structured as four-year programs with multiple entry and exit routes.

## **8. ENHANCING MARKET ACCESS**

To facilitate international exposure for Indian game developers, IDGS proposes setting up financial assistance for Indian delegations and pavilions at major international gaming events. This support will help startups and MSMEs gain visibility, secure funding, and form strategic partnerships on a global scale.

## **9. RATIONALIZING IMPORT DUTIES**

Developing video games for proprietary platforms requires specialized hardware, which faces high import duties. IDGS recommends exempting development kits from import/customs duties and reducing duties on sophisticated hardware used in production and post-production labs. These measures will reduce costs and encourage the establishment of cutting-edge facilities in India.

## **10. CORPORATE TAX HOLIDAYS AND GST RATIONALIZATION**

To attract investment and promote growth, IDGS suggests moving video games from the 18% to the 12% GST bracket and offering corporate tax holidays. A 100% tax holiday for three consecutive years, followed by a 50% reduction for two more years, will provide financial relief and incentivize companies to invest in the Indian market.

# Indians Eye Success at 2025 Olympic Esports Games in Saudi Arabia

With the International Olympic Committee (IOC) set to introduce the Olympic Esports Games in 2025, Indian esports athletes are gearing up for the challenge

As Indian sports figures like Manu Bhaker shine at the Paris Olympics, esports athletes are also setting their sights on a virtual competition. The IOC has announced the Olympic Esports Games, with Saudi Arabia hosting the inaugural event in 2025. This move reflects the growing popularity of esports, with over 500 million enthusiasts worldwide, predominantly under 34 years old.

## Reading the Promising Signs

Akshaj Shenoy and his team made headlines during the debut of esports at the Asian Games in Hangzhou by finishing fifth in League of Legends. At the Hangzhou Games, China and South Korea dominated the medal tally with five and four medals respectively. Ketan Sunil Goyal, a veteran gamer from Pune, reflects on his journey from facing parental opposition to winning a bronze at the 2022 Commonwealth Games and competing in Hangzhou.

This demonstrates that despite facing obstacles like limited financial support and a late start compared to other countries, there's hope for India's burgeoning talent. To compete on a global scale, improved coaching and infrastructure are essential.

## Hopeful yet Cautious

As the IOC finalizes the events for the esports Olympics, Indian gamers are hopeful yet cautious. Games like Battlegrounds Mobile India and Valorant are popular in India but may not make it to the Olympic roster due to the IOC's stance against violent games.

Past Olympic Esports Weeks have featured virtual sports and non-violent games, leaving popular titles like Free Fire and PUBG Mobile out of the mix.

## India Needs to Grow Globally

With 1.8 million Indians participating in esports in 2023 and a rising interest,

the country is making strides but still lacks a global footprint. The EY-FICCI 2024 report highlights the rapid growth in esports participation, with numbers reaching 2.5 million. To truly excel, India must focus on talent development and infrastructure to shine on the global esports stage.

## Building a Competitive Edge

The Esports Working Group of IDGS is engaging stakeholders to create strategies that will elevate India's esports scene. This includes organizing interstate esports competitions and representing esports to both the Central and State Governments, advocating for its recognition and support as a legitimate sport.

## Addressing Challenges and Fostering Growth

One of the significant hurdles for Indian esports athletes is the lack of infrastructure and financial support. To address these challenges, the IDGS is working on multiple fronts, including partnerships with educational institutions and global esports organizations to facilitate knowledge transfer and skill development.

## Looking Ahead

The upcoming Olympic Esports Games represent a significant opportunity for Indian esports athletes to showcase their talent and bring home medals. With the dedicated efforts of the IDGS working groups and the support of the broader gaming community, India's esports future looks promising.





# Krafton Eyes India as Its Top Market

South Korea-based gaming giant Krafton Inc., the creator of *Battlegrounds Mobile India* (BGMI) and global distributor of *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds* (PUBG), has set its sights on India as its most significant market worldwide. Having already invested \$170 million in the country, the company is committing an additional \$150 million to expand its presence through partnerships, acquisitions, and a startup incubation model.

C. H. Kim, Krafton's global chief executive, revealed the company's ambitious plans during his fourth visit to India, marking his first interaction with the local press. Kim emphasized India's growing importance, stating, "India is already among the top five markets for Krafton globally. With its vast market size and the rising interest

in e-sports, India has the potential to become Krafton's largest market."

The company's investment in India surpasses its spending in any other region, reflecting its strategy to diversify beyond gaming. Krafton has already invested in Indian firms like e-sports company Nodwin Gaming, audio streaming platform Kuku FM, and content platform Pratilipi.

Krafton's financial performance underscores India's significance, with the company reporting a net revenue of \$483.2 million in the first quarter of 2024, a quarterly record. Over 60% of its revenue comes from mobile platforms, with BGMI being a key contributor from India.

Despite its success, BGMI's journey in India has been challenging. The game faced suspensions due to data localization issues but was



reinstated in May last year. Kim praised India's regulatory stance as "encouraging" but noted the need for further development, particularly in recognizing e-sports as a legitimate industry.

Sean Hyunil Sohn, Krafton's India chief executive, added that faster policy developments, such as with India's animation, visual effects, gaming, and comics (AVGC) policy, could further enhance the sector's growth and monetization potential.

# Nvidia Leads the AI Race, as Competitors Struggling to Keep Up

Nvidia has emerged as the undisputed leader in the race for artificial intelligence (AI) dominance, leaving competitors far behind. As companies like Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and Meta Platforms ramp up their capital spending, the bulk of their investment is directed towards data centers powered by Nvidia's cutting-edge AI systems. This surge in spending has cemented Nvidia's position at the forefront of the AI market.

In the June quarter, the combined capital expenditures of these tech giants reached a staggering \$58.5 billion, marking a 64% increase from the previous year—the largest jump since 2018. This trend is expected to continue throughout the year and possibly extend into the next, reflecting the growing importance of AI in their business strategies.

While Nvidia's earnings report for the quarter ending July 28 is yet to be released, analysts anticipate impressive



results driven by strong investments in AI. Data center revenue for the July quarter is projected to hit nearly \$25 billion—a figure Nvidia was generating annually just a year ago.

Despite Nvidia's success, other major tech players faced challenges. Revenue growth for Amazon, Microsoft, Google-parent Alphabet, and Meta slowed down, with some underperforming in key business divisions. Amazon's AWS cloud business was the only segment to exceed expectations, but the company's overall revenue and earnings projections for the September quarter fell short, leading to a 7% drop in after-hours trading.

Apple, which is not as deeply invested in AI as its competitors,

also experienced mixed results. While iPhone revenue saw a slight decline, the company's shares edged up modestly after-hours, reflecting the market's cautious optimism about its integration of generative AI.

Meanwhile, Intel continues to struggle in the evolving AI landscape. The company reported a 3% decline in revenue for its data center and AI segment, with earnings falling significantly below expectations. As tech giants shift their focus to Nvidia's AI systems, Intel's traditional server computing chips have become a liability, prompting the company to reduce its workforce by over 15% and suspend its dividend.

As Nvidia continues to dominate the AI market, the gap between it and other tech players widens, underscoring the unequal distribution of wealth and influence in the rapidly evolving AI sector.

# IGS PUNE 2024

## A Resounding Success

The India Gaming Show (IGS) Pune 2024, organised by CII in association with IDGS, supported by Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Invest India, StartUp India, Media & Entertainment Skill Council, MeitY Start Up Hub, spotlighted the theme “Building a Sustainable Gaming Future.” Held in Pune, the event showcased the vast potential of tier-2 and tier-3 cities in propelling India’s gaming industry forward.

The 6th edition of IGS proved a resounding success, drawing industry leaders and enthusiastic

gamers. Pune’s vibrant youth culture set the stage for a dynamic gathering, emphasizing India’s growing prominence in the global gaming sector. The inclusion of eSports highlighted the sector’s transformative impact, fostering both economic growth and talent development.

R Dinesh, the then President, Confederation of Indian Industry, said, “While the gaming business is still in its early stages, it has enormous potential. The market is expanding rapidly, providing significant prospects for both content

development and valuation. With the proper governance in place, India has a unique chance to lead in the production of high-quality games and esports, not only meeting global demands but also promoting local products on a worldwide scale.”

The show also underscored the rising participation of women in gaming, with 41% of gamers now being female, marking a significant shift towards inclusivity. As the industry evolves, IGS 2024 set the stage for a future where gaming drives economic and social progress.



Building India for Future:  
Glimpses from India  
Gaming Show 2024 in Pune



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*Where Content & Tech Converge to Shape the Future of Entertainment*

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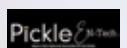
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