Game Market Copilot

FESTIVAL RESULTS / PRE-OPEN TO CLOSE

Steam Next Fest October 2026: What Separated the 7,447 Entrants

Tracking Steam followers and demo reviews across all 7,447 entrants, examining how pre-open scale, publisher backing, demo timing, and playtime at review aligned with Next Fest outcomes.

Game Market Copilot
Compiled Oct 28, 2026

Background: ArcheAge Chronicles / Frostrail / just volleyball / Character House -Desktop Companion- (Most Played #5 to #8, Steam store pages)

KEY FINDINGS

Three core findings

01 Next Fest gains scale with the followers built before the open

pp. 6-7
p. 12

Next Fest gains (median +5 Steam followers) had a 0.70 rank correlation with pre-open followers (+4 under 100, +37 for 100 to 999, +222 for 1,000 to 9,999). Of the 225 titles with 1,000+ pre-open followers and an earlier reading, 71% had already passed 1,000 by Aug or Sep.

02 No publisher gap at the same scale; top gainers had newer demos

pp. 10-11
p. 18

Publisher-backed titles made up 40% of the Most Played Top 50 (3.0x the 13% field share), yet among the 332 titles starting at 1,000+ followers, the publisher-backed share was 45% in the Top 50 vs 40% outside it. Within every starting band, 75 to 78% of top-decile gainers launched their demo within a month of the open or during the festival (vs 46 to 52% for others).

03 Social gains stayed small, and negative reviews came at shorter playtime

pp. 8-9
pp. 23-24

Median gains during the festival were +1 on X, +2 on Discord, and 0 on YouTube. 26% of the 7,355 demos received reviews, and 88% of reviews were positive. Not-recommended reviews came at a median 31 minutes of playtime (vs 72 for recommended); across 2,503 summarized demos, the top complaint was bugs and crashes (15%).

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,447 Steam Next Fest Oct 2026 entrants (Oct 20 to Oct 27 JST)

SCOPE AND MEASURES

Titles and measures covered

Entrants (listed on the Steam Next Fest event page at least once)

7,447 titles

Measure	Covered	Window and definition (JST)
Steam followers	**7,341**	Last reading before open → last before close
Demo reviews	**7,355**	Reviews posted during the festival window
X followers	**1,950**	55 min before open → 35 min after close
Most Played Top 50	**50**	Steam's post-festival list by players
Trending row	**7,447** titles	Event page shelf, 29 checks during festival
Pre-open records	**7,341**	Steam news, store links, languages, past games

Primer	**What Steam followers measure**	p. 4
Ch. 1	**Festival reality (followers & social)**	p. 6
Ch. 2	**Publishers vs. pre-open scale**	p. 10
Ch. 3	**The top 16 before the open**	p. 14
Ch. 4	**Titles that grew during the festival**	p. 16
Ch. 5	**Demo reviews & playtime**	p. 20
Closing	**What to check before your next fest**	p. 26

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,447 entrants (full methodology on p. 27)

PRIMER / STEAM FOLLOWERS

What followers measure

Follower count is the number of users following a game on Steam. The Follow button sits next to Add to your wishlist on the store page.



Highlighted boxes show the Wishlist and Follow buttons (logged-in view).

	Follow	Wishlist
Notifications	Developer events and announcements	Launch and 20%+ discount alerts
Visibility	Public Steam group member count	Private (visible only to the developer)

> Most articles focus on wishlists, but because wishlist counts are private, outside comparisons rely on noisy estimates or small self-reported samples. **Public follower counts let us compare every entrant on the same basis, without estimates.**

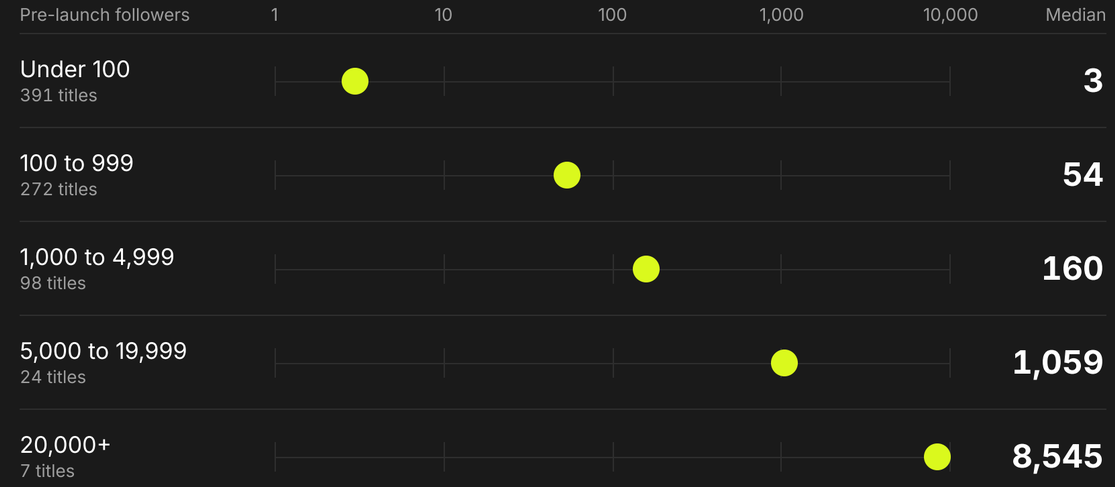
Source: Steamworks docs (Followers, Wishlists) / Store screenshot: Hela: of Mice & Magic

PRIMER / JUNE 2026 NEXT FEST

Why follower counts matter

Among June 2026 Next Fest entrants, titles with more pre-launch followers also collected more Steam buyer reviews 30 days after launch (from our report Steam Next Fest June 2026: Release Outcomes).

Median buyer reviews 30 days post-launch, by pre-launch follower band



Horizontal axis is logarithmic (each tick is 10x).

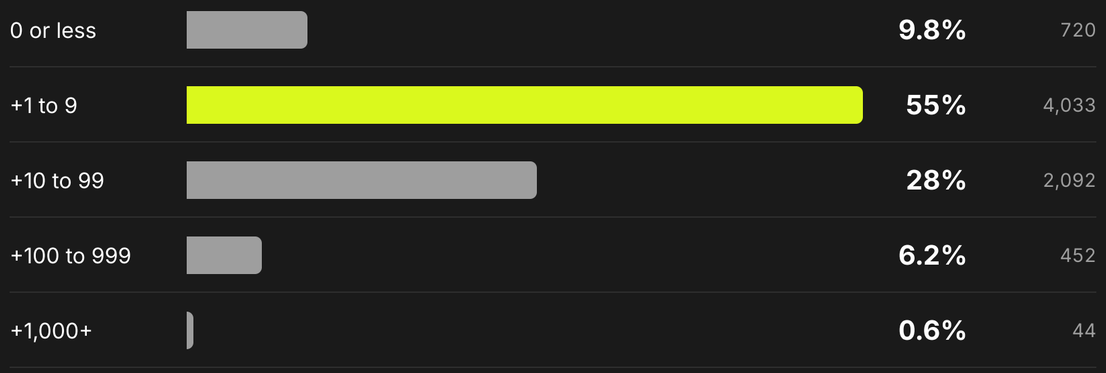
Next, we examine how Steam follower counts moved before and during the October festival.

Source: Game Market Copilot, Steam Next Fest June 2026: Release Outcomes / 792 launched titles (Steam buyer reviews)

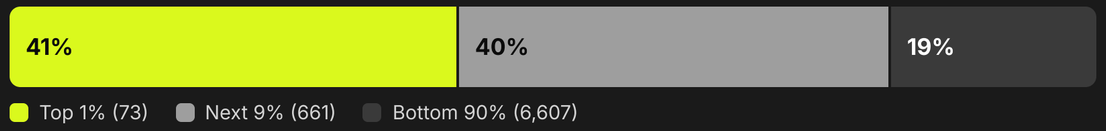
CHAPTER 1 FESTIVAL REALITY / STEAM FOLLOWERS, 7,341 TITLES

Distribution of Next Fest follower gains

From pre-open to pre-close, the median title gained **+5 Steam followers**. 55% gained +1 to 9 followers, 9.8% saw zero or negative change, and 6.8% gained +100 or more.



Share of total followers gained (312K)



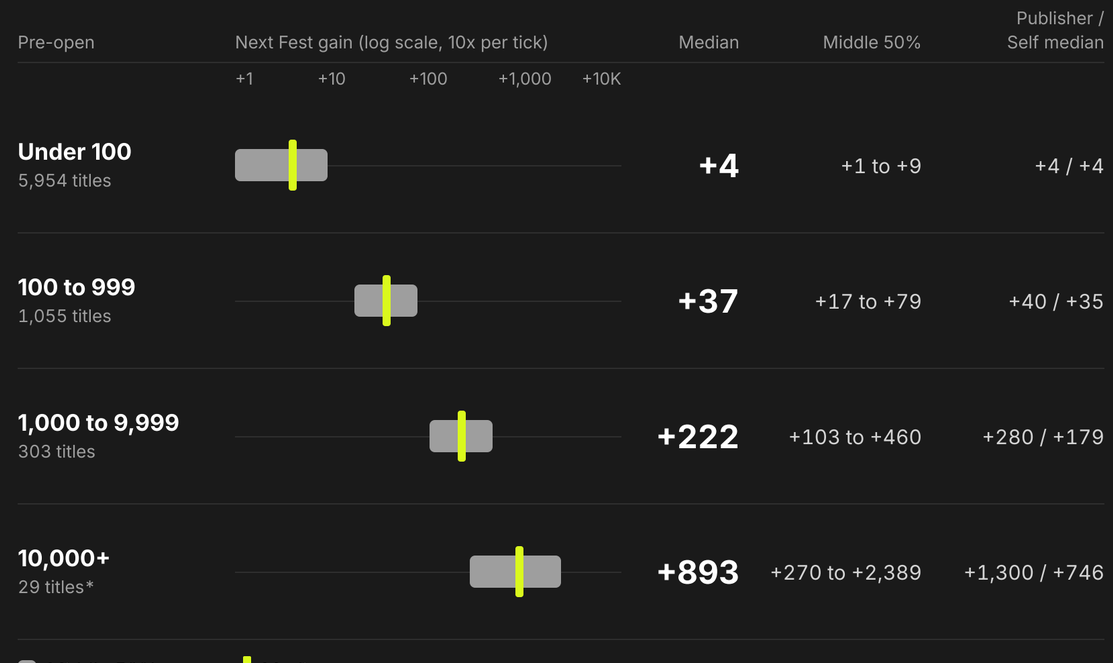
The top 10% of titles captured 81% of all 312K followers gained during the festival, and the Most Played Top 50 alone took 23%. In this festival, only a small share of entrants saw large gains.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants (pre-open to pre-close)

CHAPTER 1 FESTIVAL REALITY / BY PRE-OPEN BAND

Next Fest gains by pre-open follower band

Next Fest gains tracked pre-open follower counts closely, with a **0.70 rank correlation** (7,341 titles). Match your current follower count to the band below to see the median gain and middle 50% range.



In every band, publisher-backed and self-published medians fell inside that band's middle 50% range; under 100 followers, both were +4.

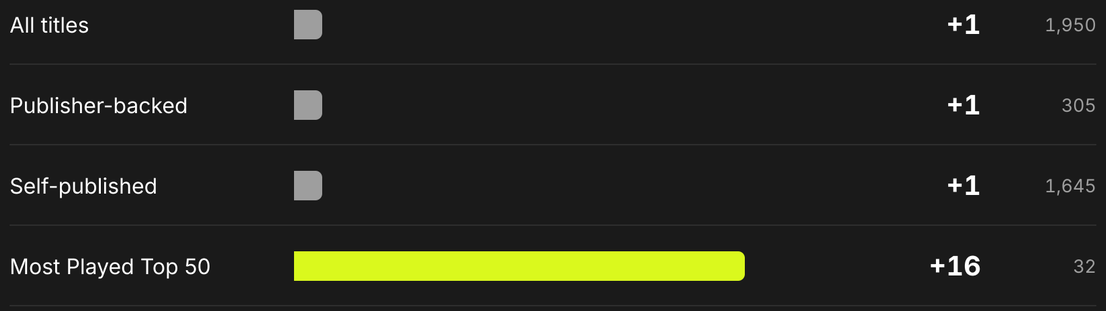
Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants (pre-open to pre-close; *under 30 titles)

CHAPTER 1 FESTIVAL REALITY / X, 1,950 TITLES

X follower changes during Next Fest

X follower counts barely moved during the festival. Median gain was **+1**, and 47% saw zero or negative change. Both publisher-backed and self-published medians were +1, and even the Most Played Top 50 (32 titles) had a median of only +16.

Median X follower gain during Next Fest



No increase (0 or less)
47 %
911 titles

Top 10% cutoff
+21+
of 1,950

Gained +100 or more
2.3 %
45 titles

X follower counts rarely jumped during the seven-day festival.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 1,950 titles with their own X account (Oct 20 01:05 to Oct 27 02:35 JST)

CHAPTER 1 FESTIVAL REALITY / DISCORD, YOUTUBE, TWITCH & NEWS

Discord, YouTube, Twitch and Steam news

Median gains were +2 Discord members and 0 YouTube subscribers, as small as on X. The Most Played Top 50 stood apart on **Discord (+266 median) and Twitch (all 42 titles with a category were streamed)**.

Discord members
+2 median
- No increase: 31%
- Top 50 (32 titles) median: +266

1,679 titles compared (pre-close reading ~2 days before end)

YouTube subscribers
0 median
- No increase: 61%
- Top 50 (28 titles*) median: +22

2,031 titles compared (~22h before open and close)

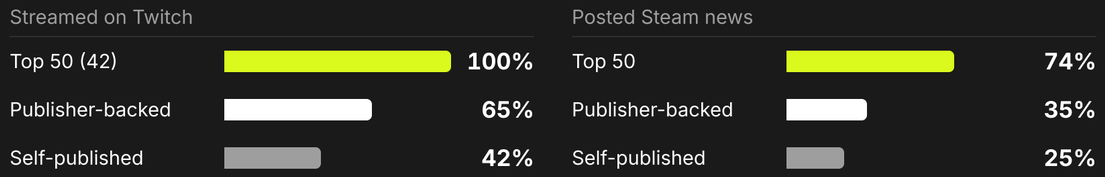
Streamed on Twitch
46 %
- Median peak viewers when streamed: 21
- Top 50: all 42 with a Twitch category

2,848 titles with a Twitch category, hourly checks

Posted Steam news
27 %
- 7 days before open: 24%
- Top 50: 74% (37 of 50)

7,446 titles with news data

Share by group and publishing setup

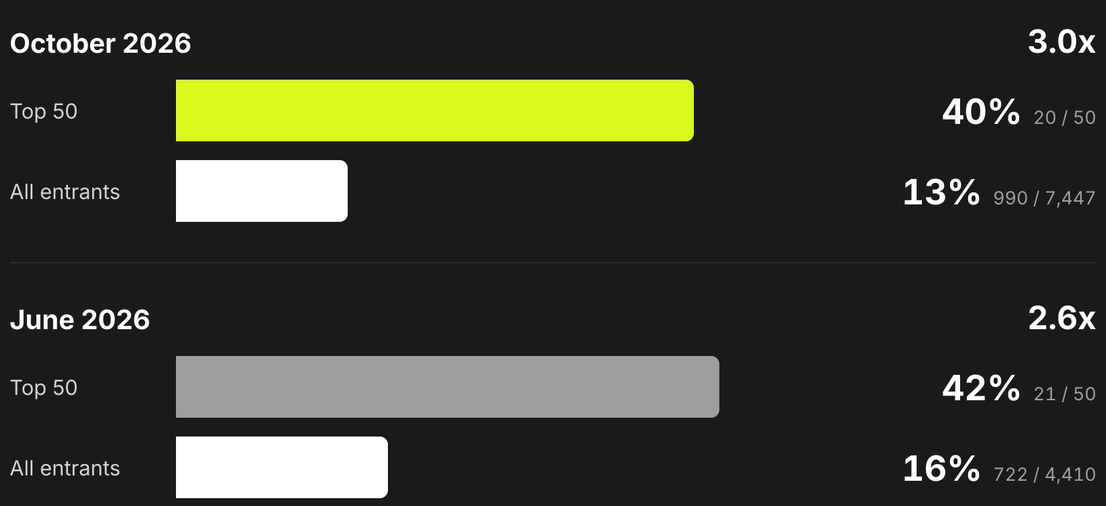


Source: Game Market Copilot / Discord 1,679, YouTube 2,031, Twitch 2,848, Steam news 7,446 titles (*under 30 titles)

CHAPTER 2 PUBLISHERS & PRE-OPEN SCALE / OCT & JUN

Publisher-backed share in the Most Played Top 50

In Steam's Most Played Top 50, **40% (20 of 50)** were publisher-backed, 3.0x the 13% field share and close to June's 2.6x. Taken at face value, having a publisher looks like the deciding factor.



On the next page, comparing titles within the same pre-open follower band changes that picture.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,447 Oct & 4,410 Jun entrants, Steam Most Played Top 50

CHAPTER 2 PUBLISHERS & PRE-OPEN SCALE / BY BAND

Controlling for pre-open follower count

42 of the Top 50 started with 1,000+ followers. Median pre-open followers were 4,867 for the Top 50 vs 16 for all entrants.

Pre-open band	Titles	In Top 50	Publisher-backed in Top 50	Publisher-backed outside Top 50
Under 100	5,954	0	None	**9.8%** 584 / 5,954
100 to 999	1,055	8	**13%** 1 / 8	**25%** 260 / 1,047
1,000 to 9,999	303	25	**44%** 11 / 25	**40%** 110 / 278
10,000+	29	17	**47%** 8 / 17	**42%** 5 / 12

> The 3.0x gap on p. 10 compares titles of different starting sizes. Among the 332 titles starting at 1,000+ followers, the publisher-backed share is **45% (19/42) in the Top 50 vs 40% (115/290) outside it**, with no clear gap. Pre-open follower scale, not publisher backing, aligns with Top 50 placement.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants & Most Played Top 50 (pre-open followers)

CHAPTER 2 PUBLISHERS & PRE-OPEN SCALE / 7,341 TITLES

Pre-open follower distribution and Aug-Sep levels

Pre-open Steam followers had a median of 16 and a top-10% cutoff of 331. Of the 1.94M followers combined, 76% belonged to the 332 titles (4.5% of titles) with 1,000+ followers.

Share of titles vs. share of total pre-open followers

Pre-open band	Share of titles (7,341 = 100%)	Share of followers (1.94M total = 100%)
Under 100 — 5,954 titles	81%	6.0%
100 to 999 — 1,055 titles	14%	18%
1,000 to 9,999 — 303 titles	4.1%	43%
10,000+ — 29 titles	0.4%	32%
1,000+ combined — 332 titles	4.5%	76%

Aug-Sep follower counts of the 1,000+ group

225 of the 332 titles at 1,000+ with readings on or before Oct 11

159 titles (71%) Already at 1,000+ | **66** Under 1,000

Median followers: Aug-Sep **1,401** → Pre-open **2,213**

Of the 225 titles with an earlier reading by Oct 11, 71% had already crossed 1,000 at that reading (216 from Aug-Sep, 9 from Oct 1-11).

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants (Aug-Sep = earliest reading Jul 25 to Oct 11)

CHAPTER 2 PUBLISHERS & PRE-OPEN SCALE / 1,000+ (332 TITLES)

Traits of titles with 1,000+ pre-open followers

The widest gaps between the 332 titles at 1,000+ followers and the 7,009 under 1,000 were in **regular Steam news and community setup**.

Trait	1,000+ (332) share with trait	Under 1,000 (7,009) share with trait
Pre-open activity		
Posted Steam news in prior 90 days	88%	47%
First Steam news 1+ year before open	32%	3.1%
Demo launched 3+ months before open	28%	17%
Discord link on store page	79%	34%
Supports 5+ languages	69%	42%
Title and studio		
Publisher-backed	40%	12%
Developer has a prior game with 1,000+ reviews	21%	1.6%
3D game	51%	38%
Online co-op	22%	12%
Adult content	14%	4.8%
Genres (top 6 among entrants)		
Casual	13%	24%
Strategy	8.7%	19%
Simulation	20%	17%
Action	16%	17%
Adventure	16%	13%
Puzzle	3.6%	11%

Highlighted bars mark traits significantly higher in the 1,000+ group ($p<0.01$). The share with a demo launched 1+ month before the open was 47% in both groups.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants (pre-open followers, store metadata, Oct 21 tags)

CHAPTER 3 TOP 16 BEFORE THE OPEN / PRE-OPEN ACTIVITY

What the top 16 did before the open

The top 16 combine the top 11 titles by pre-open followers and the top 6 by pre-open demo reviews (one overlaps). 15 appeared in showcases or events, and 12 had a public demo before the open.

Pre-open activity	Of 16	Examples
Appeared in showcases or events	15	All except Find The Needle; Hela: of Mice & Magic appeared ~15 times in 23 months
Public demo before the open	12	Acts of Blood since Nov 2024; the other 4 launched demos during the festival
Announcement in final 2 weeks (Oct 5-18)	12	Demo, release date, showcase, or milestone; Acts of Blood: publisher and release date (Oct 14)
Published wishlist count	12	6 announced 400K+; Haunted Paws passed 900K (Aug 28)
Steam news for 1.5+ years	10	Emberville started posting in Nov 2023
June showcases (SGF week)	8	4 appeared in Wholesome Direct
Series, IP, past hit, streamer co-founder	8	Stronghold 4 (series since 2001), Frostrail (Barotrauma dev)
Triple-i Initiative showcase	7	5 appeared on Oct 8 (11 days before open)
IGN show or exclusive trailer	7	3 featured in IGN Fan Fest
Playtest or beta	7	Haunted Paws reported 375,984 playtesters
Crowdfunding	2	Loftia (2023), Wyldheart (2026)

Counts cover these 16 titles only, with no comparison group. Wishlist and playtester figures are self-reported.

Source: Game Market Copilot / Top 16 pre-open titles (public records through Oct 19)

CHAPTER 3 TOP 16 BEFORE THE OPEN / FOUR PATTERNS

Four pre-open patterns among the top 16

Four distinct build-up patterns emerged. Figures show last pre-open followers; fast risers also show their earliest August reading.

Major IP or studio + tentpole reveal

Series, IP, hit studio, or streamer co-founded team revealed at State of Play, PC Gaming Show, Triple-i, or IGN.

ArcheAge Chronicles	50,794
Stronghold 4	40,089
Warhammer Survivors	21,782
Frostrail	36,137
Emberville	44,143

Repeated showcase appearances

Appeared repeatedly at Wholesome Direct, Gamescom, and Triple-i from reveal to Next Fest.

Hela: of Mice & Magic	37,961
Haunted Paws	40,251
PRISON OF HUSKS	11,568
DREADMOOR	24,625
Beastfolk Barber	8,275

Long playable window

Ran public demos or playtests for ~1 year before the open, collecting 234 to 1,552 pre-open demo reviews.

Expedition: Into Darkness	34,161
Acts of Blood	16,371
Haunted Paws	40,251

Short-window surge

First revealed in 2026 and scaled up within a few months.

Probably Stolen - Cyberpunk Shopkee...	8/14 3,338→17,541
Find The Needle	8/28 1→6,581
Wyldheart	36,083

> 10 of the 16 posted Steam news for 1.5 to 3 years before the open. All 5 titles first revealed in 2026 (Beastfolk Barber, Wyldheart, Stronghold 4, Probably Stolen, Find The Needle) had a public demo before Next Fest opened.

Haunted Paws fits two patterns; classification covers these 16 titles only.

Source: Game Market Copilot / Top 16 pre-open titles (public records through Oct 19)

CHAPTER 4 FESTIVAL GAINERS / TOP 20 COMPARISON

Pre-close leaders vs. largest Next Fest gainers

17 of the top 20 by pre-close followers were already in the top 20 before the open. Only 9 overlap with the top 20 by festival gain, which includes 4 titles that started under 1,000. **The two top-20 lists differ sharply in makeup.**

Share of pre-close followers added during the festival

All entrants (7,341)	14%
Top 20 pre-close	7.9%
Top 20 by gain	21%

Comparing the two top-20 lists

	Top 20 pre-close	Top 20 by gain
Already top 20 pre-open	17	7
Pre-open followers (median)	22,875	6,007
Next Fest gain (median)	+1,494	+3,399
Growth rate (median)	9.3%	66%
Started under 1,000	0	4
Made Most Played Top 50	15	11

Of the top 1% by gain (73 titles at +723 or more; 31 publisher-backed, 42 self-published), 43 (59%) were outside the Most Played Top 50 and 16 started under 1,000 followers.

Growth rate equals festival gain divided by pre-open followers.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants (pre-open to pre-close), Most Played Top 50

CHAPTER 4 FESTIVAL GAINERS / TOP 20 BY GAIN

Top 20 titles by Next Fest follower gain

Ranked strictly by festival follower gain. "–" marks the 9 titles outside the Most Played Top 50. P = publisher-backed, S = self-published (6 adult titles masked).

Rank		Title	Pub	Pre-open followers	Festival gain	Most Played rank
1		ArcheAge Chronicles	S	50,794	+9,722	5
2	Adult	The Serena Villa Files	S	1,664	+6,892	-
3		Probably Stolen - Cyberpunk Shop...	P	17,541	+4,362	2
4		Emberville	S	44,143	+4,228	16
5	Adult	Project Exhibitionist	S	4,059	+4,058	35
6	Adult	LYSSA: Goddess of Rage	S	73	+3,978	-
7		Abyssal Lapidary	P	2,120	+3,828	9
8	Adult	CUMING FEAR	S	1,262	+3,740	-
9		Frostrail	P	36,137	+3,577	6
10		ReBlade: The Death Spiral	P	10,676	+3,410	23
11		Your Judgment, Inquisitor	S	1,089	+3,387	-
12	Adult	Lovely Cafe: Lusty Latte	P	59	+3,149	-
13		Wyldheart	S	36,083	+2,821	19
14		Loftia	S	23,967	+2,770	10
15	Adult	Horny Slots: Spin to Sin	P	520	+2,739	-
16		Potion-making: Path of the Alchemist	P	1,872	+2,714	-
17		DREADMOOR	P	24,625	+2,389	27
18		Goodbye Seoul	P	7,955	+2,268	-
19		Impersonal	P	6	+2,013	-
20		Never Be Alone	P	11,411	+1,924	20

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants (pre-open to pre-close), images from Steam

CHAPTER 4 FESTIVAL GAINERS / SAME-BAND COMPARISON, 7,341

Traits of top-decile gainers within each band

Against peers with similar pre-open follower counts, leaving out in-festival events, top-decile gainers differed most on demo timing in every band: **75 to 78% launched their demo within a month of the open or during the festival** (vs 46 to 52% for others).

	Under 100 pre-open 606 of 5,954	100 to 999 pre-open 105 of 1,055	1,000+ pre-open 37 of 332
Median Next Fest gain	Top 10%: +21 Other: +3	Top 10%: +225 Other: +33	Top 10%: +1,725 Other: +196
Demo launch timing (titles with date)			
Demo launched ≤1 mo before open or during festival	78% 52%	78% 46%	75% 50%
During the festival			
Posted Steam news	38% 20%	53% 39%	70% 58%
In the trending row	1.5% 0%	22% 0.8%	73% 20%

> By contrast, fewer top gainers had first posted Steam news 1+ year before the open (1.0% vs 13% in 100 to 999; 16% vs 34% in 1,000+). Fresh demos tended to move more during the festival than older store pages.

Other traits (Discord link, language count, publisher, 3D, co-op, adult, genre, Twitch, Most Played, demo reviews) varied by band or showed no consistent gap.

Highlighted bars mark gaps whose 95% Newcombe interval excludes 0 across all three peer windows (1,000+ Steam news, 70% vs 58%, does not). Only 37 titles are top-decile gainers at 1,000+, and the trending row cannot separate cause from effect.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,341 entrants (compared against ±100 nearest peers by pre-open followers)

CHAPTER 4 FESTIVAL GAINERS / 15 CASE EXAMPLES

15 examples: demo launch, Steam news and trending row

All 15 titles are top-decile gainers from p. 18. 12 of the 14 with a demo date launched within a month of the open or during the festival, and all 15 appeared in the trending row. 4 had a 100K+ YouTube video or 1,000+ viewer Twitch peak on their biggest day or the day before.

Title (by gain)	Pre-open	Gain	Demo launch	Festival news	Trending	Demo peak CCU
The Serena Villa Files Adult	1,664	**+6,892**	-	2	23x	579
Abyssal Lapidary	2,120	**+3,828**	10/16	1	29x	4,713
Mortuus	1,305	**+1,725**	10/14	-	29x	1,533
DEADLINE: Afterlife Processing	419	**+1,247**	In fest	4	15x	909
Real Zombie Survivors	834	**+1,002**	In fest	-	1x	63
Malignus	233	**+955**	In fest	-	6x	375
Unharvest	747	**+864**	10/07	-	29x	269
天坑追匪 Adult	531	**+810**	In fest	2	5x	16
Worst Class Ever	202	**+754**	10/11	2	19x	27,528
Fart Together	533	**+666**	10/08	-	25x	4,513
GoGeez	25	**+658**	In fest	1	1x	56
Tin Coffins	12	**+553**	10/08	1	1x	66
Rip It! Card Collector	493	**+476**	10/13	2	29x	911
Meltdown	27	**+468**	5/02	1	1x	42
Fathom Reach	19	**+466**	9/03	1	1x	47

15 examples from 18 top-decile candidates (12 under 1,000 pre-open, 3 at 1,305 to 2,120). Across 473 titles with demo CCU data and a gain of 100 or more, median gain-to-demo-peak-CCU was 5.5x; 3 of 18 at 100x+ were excluded.

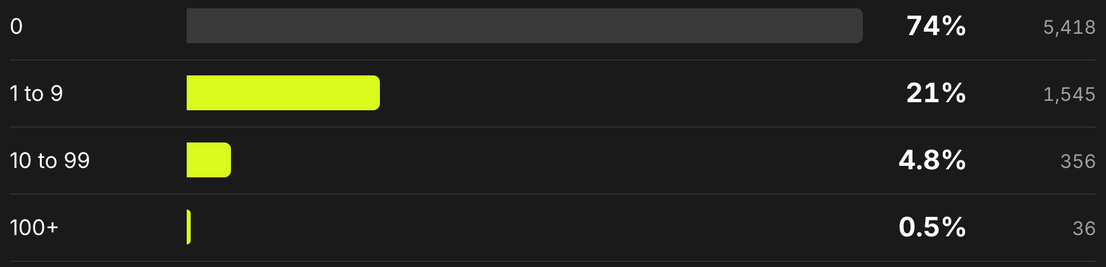
Source: Game Market Copilot / 15 cases (29 trending checks during festival), images from Steam

CHAPTER 5 DEMO REVIEWS & PLAYTIME / 7,355 DEMOS

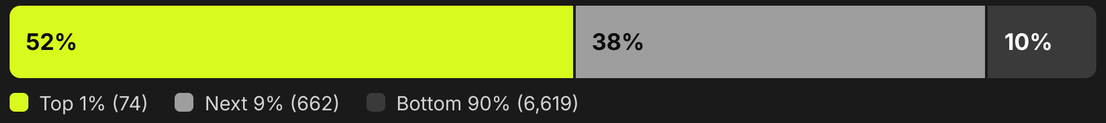
Demo reviews posted during Next Fest

Demos received 22,441 reviews during the festival. 26% of demos (1,937) received at least one review, and the top 1% (74 demos) accounted for 52% of all reviews.

Next Fest reviews per demo



Share of total Next Fest reviews (22,441)



On Steam, only demos with a separate demo store page have a review section, so the 0-review group includes demos that cannot be reviewed. Of the 2,150 demos with pre-open reviews, 68% got festival reviews too; the median for the 2,150 was 2.

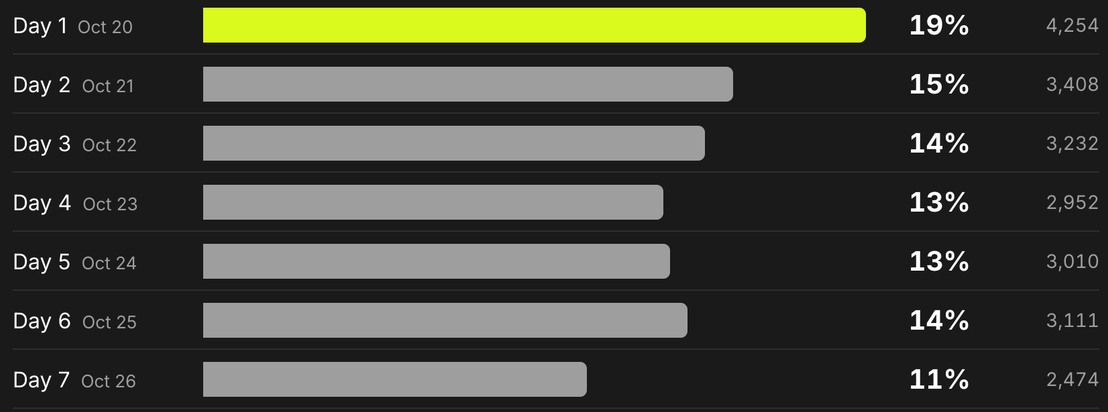
Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,355 demos, 22,441 festival reviews (Oct 20 to Oct 27 JST; pulled Oct 28, 19:00 to 20:00 JST)

CHAPTER 5 DEMO REVIEWS & PLAYTIME / BY DAY

Daily timing and pre-open correlation

19% of festival reviews arrived on day 1, then 11 to 15% on each later day. Of the 1,937 reviewed demos, 476 received their first-ever review during the festival.

Share of festival reviews per 24-hour window



First review in festival
476
25% of 1,937 reviewed demos

Time to first review
32 h
Median from open

First 2 days' share
29 %
Median across 392 demos with 10+ reviews (34% overall)

Among 5,205 demos with 0 pre-open reviews, 9.1% received a festival review. 81% of festival reviews went to demos that already had pre-open reviews (pre-open vs festival counts: 0.64 rank correlation, 7,355 demos).

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,355 demos, 22,441 reviews (Day 1 starts Oct 20, 02:00 JST; pulled Oct 28, 19:00 to 20:00 JST)

CHAPTER 5 DEMO REVIEWS & PLAYTIME / POSITIVE SHARE

Share of positive demo reviews

88% of Next Fest demo reviews were positive (Recommended). Across the 392 demos with 10+ reviews, the median positive share was 92%, and 117 demos were 100% positive.

All Next Fest reviews	Per-demo median	100% positive	Under 70% positive
88 %	92 %	30 %	12 %
22,441 reviews	392 demos (10+)	117 demos	46 demos

Positive-share distribution (392 demos with 10+ reviews)

Under 50%	2.8%	11
50 to 69%	8.9%	35
70 to 79%	9.9%	39
80 to 89%	20%	78
90 to 99%	29%	112
100%	30%	117

Positive share was 87% for publisher-backed demos and 88% for self-published demos (festival-period reviews only).

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,355 demos, 22,441 reviews (distribution: 392 demos with 10+; pulled Oct 28, 19:00 to 20:00 JST)

CHAPTER 5 DEMO REVIEWS & PLAYTIME / PLAYTIME

Demo playtime at the time of review

While 88% of reviews were positive, not-recommended reviews came at shorter playtime: a median of **31 minutes vs 72 minutes for recommended**. Within the same demo, not-recommended playtime was shorter in 82% of 591 demos.

Playtime at review (log scale, 10x per tick)



Median within-demo gap across 591 demos with both types was 29.5 minutes. Outer bar shows the middle 80%. Playtime is demo playtime.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,355 demos, 22,441 reviews (Steam playtime at review; pulled Oct 28, 19:00 to 20:00 JST)

CHAPTER 5 DEMO REVIEWS & PLAYTIME / 2,503 SUMMARIES

Praise, complaints and requests in demo reviews

GMC used AI to sort per-demo review summaries into 26 topics. Visuals and art led praise (29%), **bugs and crashes led complaints (15%)**, and variety/replayability led requests (8.3%). Difficulty, onboarding, and UI followed among complaints.

Praised topics		Complaints		Requests	
Visuals & art	29%	Bugs & crashes	15%	Variety & replayability	8.3%
Want to buy / wishlisted	28%	Difficulty & balance	13%	UI & menus	6.8%
Core gameplay loop	27%	Tutorial & onboarding	10%	Mechanical depth	5.9%
Atmosphere	23%	UI & menus	10%	Controls & input	5.6%
Mechanical depth	22%	Controls & input	8.6%	Demo length & scope	3.9%
Concept & originality	21%	Demo length & scope	7.6%	Tutorial & onboarding	2.9%

Covers 2,503 demos with summaries (including pre-open reviews); shares show demos where the topic appeared in 2+ reviews.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 2,503 demos with review summaries (Oct 18-28, incl. pre-open reviews)

CHAPTER 5 DEMO REVIEWS & PLAYTIME / 8 GENRES

Top review topics by genre

The top praised topic varied by genre: atmosphere in horror (55%), visuals and story in visual novels, and core loop or depth in roguelikes and card games. Bugs led complaints in management (23%), while difficulty led roguelikes (19%) and tower defense (18%).

Genre Demos summarized	Praise (top 2)	Complaints (top 2)	Requests (top 2)
All demos 2,503	Visuals **29%** Want to buy **28%**	Bugs **15%** Difficulty **13%**	Variety **8.3%** UI/Menus **6.8%**
Roguelike 474	Core loop **39%** Depth **35%**	Difficulty **19%** UI/Menus **10%**	Variety **10%** UI/Menus **5.7%**
Puzzle 226	Atmosphere **30%** Visuals **30%**	Difficulty **11%** Controls **10%**	UI/Menus **6.6%** Controls **6.2%**
Idle / Incremental 377	Core loop **44%** Want to buy **29%**	Pacing **13%** Demo length **11%**	Variety **8.2%** Depth **6.9%**
Horror 266	Atmosphere **55%** Want to buy **36%**	Bugs **18%** Tutorial **15%**	Variety **6.4%** Controls **6.0%**
Card game 117	Depth **38%** Core loop **37%**	Difficulty **11%** Tutorial **7.7%**	Variety **7.7%** Depth **3.4%**
Visual novel 97	Visuals **54%** Story **51%**	Story **14%** Demo length **11%**	Story **8.2%** Depth **7.2%**
Management 134	Core loop **46%** Depth **33%**	Bugs **23%** Difficulty **17%**	Depth **12%** Variety **12%**
Tower defense 82	Depth **31%** Concept **31%**	Difficulty **18%** Bugs **17%**	Variety **16%** Depth **11%**

Genres use each title's top 5 Steam tags (titles can appear in multiple genres). Shares for genres with under 100 demos are less precise.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 2,503 demos with review summaries (Oct 18-28, incl. pre-open reviews)

CLOSING / PHASED CHECKLIST

What to check before your next fest

Next Fest gains scale with pre-open followers. Five checks organized by preparation phase:

MONTHS BEFORE THE OPEN

01 Benchmark your follower band early

Median Next Fest gains were +4 under 100 followers, +37 for 100 to 999, and +222 for 1,000 to 9,999. 71% of the 225 titles at 1,000+ with an earlier reading had already passed 1,000 by August or September, offering a reference point months ahead (pp. 7, 12).

02 Plan showcases and steady Steam news

15 of the top 16 appeared in showcases or events before the open. Among 1,000+ titles, 88% posted Steam news in the prior 90 days and 79% linked a Discord server (pp. 13-15).

FINAL MONTH BEFORE OPEN

03 Time the demo launch and enable reviews

75 to 78% of top-decile gainers in every band launched their demo within a month of the open or during the festival (vs 46 to 52%). Reviews require a separate demo store page (pp. 18, 20).

04 Check common demo complaints and onboarding

Not-recommended reviews came at a median 31 minutes (vs 72 for recommended). Across 2,503 summarized demos, top complaints were bugs (15%), difficulty (13%), and onboarding (10%). Check these areas first (pp. 23-25).

DURING & AFTER NEXT FEST

05 Compare within your band and watch day 1

Evaluate gains against peers in your starting band rather than the overall +5 median. Day 1 brings 19% of festival reviews, making it the key window for hotfix triage (pp. 7, 21).

Scope note

These figures describe observed patterns, not causes. Demo review dynamics are specific to Next Fest demos and do not generalize directly to launched games.

Source: Game Market Copilot / 7,447 entrants (full methodology on p. 27)

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Titles and measures in detail

Entrants & publishing setup

7,447 base-game store pages listed on the event page between Oct 20 02:00 and Oct 27 02:00 JST. Titles with no publisher or matching developer/publisher names are counted as self-published.

Most Played Top 50

Steam's official post-festival ranking by unique players, captured ~2 hours after close in October and ~15 hours after close in June.

Steam followers

Difference between the last reading within 24h before open and the last before close across 7,341 titles with both readings.

Pre-open & public records

Steam news, store links, languages, demo launch dates, and prior titles reflect pre-open state. Trending row reflects 29 checks during the festival. Activities on pp. 14, 15, and 19 use dated public records (YouTube views as of Nov 2).

Demo reviews & topics

Reviews posted during the festival across 7,355 demos (pulled Oct 28, 19:00 to 20:00 JST). Topics come from AI classification of GMC's per-demo summaries (2,503 demos, Oct 18-28, including pre-open reviews).

Social accounts

Covers titles with one account of their own and both readings: X (1,950 titles, Oct 20 01:05 to Oct 27 02:35 JST), Discord (1,679), and YouTube (2,031).

Game Market Copilot (GMC) tracks Steam store, follower, review, and showcase data to support developer and publisher decisions. You may cite these figures and republish GMC-made charts with credit to Game Market Copilot (game images remain the property of their respective owners).

Looking for early partner studios and publishers

We are taking on a small number of early partners for Steam data analysis and Next Fest / launch marketing support at early-partner rates. Reach out at gamemarketcopilot.com/contact.

Source: Game Market Copilot / Steam Next Fest October 2026 / Compiled Oct 28, 2026