

EA's CEO is following the money to more games with player-created content



EA sees a big opportunity in games that let players create their own content, CEO Andrew Wilson said at a Goldman Sachs conference on Tuesday, as reported by *Axios*. Games like *Minecraft* and *Roblox* with extensive player creation tools have become huge hits with enduring popularity, and it sounds like EA wants to find more ways to let players create content in its own titles.

He highlighted a few EA franchises he feels have notable creative aspects already, like *The Sims* (which will soon be free to play), *FIFA*, and *Battlefield*, and talked about how the upcoming live service *Skate* title will offer many opportunities for player creation.

“Just like the real world, where skateboarding leans into fashion and music and automotive and building and brands, we think that franchise can do that as well,” Wilson said. “So you’ll see us lean more into really engaging and investing in

creation.” The *Skate* team has already teased some of the tools they’re working on, such as in-game “CollaboZones” that can be built collaboratively and appear in others players’ worlds in real time.

Wilson expects that down the line, “there will be the creation of new worlds that sit right next to the worlds that we create, and people will move frictionlessly between those two things,” he said. This sounds somewhat similar to what you can see in *Fortnite* today – expansive player-made worlds are served up right next to Epic’s own modes in the game’s discovery tools.

Wilson indicated that there’s a significant business opportunity in encouraging players to create content. The correlation of “minutes engaged” (aka, how long somebody might be playing a game) to money spent is almost one to one, he said, so whether players or EA creates the content, there’s “an extraordinary opportunity for [EA].”

While EA is going to invest in gaming creation tools, Wilson discussed how the company doesn’t plan to pour money into gaming-adjacent entertainment opportunities like film, like some other companies have. “I’m not going to go out and buy a movie studio just because I think there will be a convergence between linear and interactive,” he said. “I think there are different ways we can do that.”

And despite the popularity of EA’s sports franchises, he’s not looking at expensive sports broadcast rights, either. “I’m not going to go out and spend billions of dollars on linear broadcast sports rights, because I think there’s a way we can deliver and fulfill the needs and motivations of our sports fans inside of our ecosystem in a far more deliberate way that is far more aligned with how they want to consume that content.”

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He also addressed the state of the *Battlefield* franchise, which is trying to recover from the widely-criticized launch of *Battlefield 2042* last year, and acknowledged that EA didn’t live up to expectations. “I don’t think we delivered in the last two iterations in the way that we should have,” he said. “There’s a lot of work we’ve got to do there.” EA has “an extraordinary creative team involved in *Battlefield* now,” he says, and I do think there’s a good chance it’s now on the right path. Vince Zampella, who heads up *Apex Legends* and *Titanfall* developer Respawn, is now in charge of the franchise, and there are new *Battlefield* experiences in the works like a new “narrative campaign” and a mobile game.

Wilson believes *Battlefield* could fill any potential vacuum left by *Call of Duty* following Microsoft’s pending Activision acquisition. “In a world where there may be questions over the future of *Call of Duty* and what platform that might be on or might not be on, being platform agnostic and completely cross platform with *Battlefield* is a tremendous opportunity,” Wilson said.

And while Wilson is on guard for disruption from tech giants that have stepped into gaming (some more successfully than others), he believes EA will endure. “I tell our teams: Never underestimate these giant companies that have innovative DNA, monopolistic tendencies, and deep pockets,” he said. “We always have to ask ourselves what happens if they get it right. But as of today, we have this very, very unique and special opportunity to deliver the future of entertainment.”

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