

Read Microsoft gaming CEO Asha Sharma's first memo on the future of Xbox

Dear team,

Today I begin my role as CEO of Microsoft Gaming.

I feel two things at once: humility and urgency.

Humility because this team has built something extraordinary over decades. Urgency because gaming is in a period of rapid change, and we need to move with clarity and conviction.

I am stepping into work shaped by generations of artists, engineers, designers, writers, musicians, operators and more who create worlds that have brought joy and deep personal meaning to hundreds of millions of players. The level of craft here is exceptional, and it is amplified by Xbox, which was founded in the belief that the power of games connect people and push the industry forward.

Thank you to Phil for his leadership, and to every studio, platform, and operations team that built this foundation. We are stewards of some of the most loved stories and characters in entertainment and bring players and creators together around the fun and community of gaming in entirely new ways. My first job is simple: understand what makes this work and protect it.

That starts with three commitments.

First, great games.

Everything begins here. We must have great games beloved by players before we do anything. Unforgettable characters, stories that make us feel, innovative game play, and creative excellence. We will empower our studios, invest in iconic franchises, and back bold new ideas. We will take risks. We will enter new categories and markets where we can add real value, grounded in what players care about most.

I promoted Matt Booty in honor of this commitment. He understands the craft and the challenges of building great games, has led teams that deliver award-winning work, and has earned the trust of game developers across the industry.

Second, the return of Xbox.

We will recommit to our core Xbox fans and players, those who have invested with us for the past 25 years, and to the developers who build the expansive universes and experiences that are embraced by players across the world.

We will celebrate our roots with a renewed commitment to Xbox starting with console which has shaped who we are. It connects us to the players and fans who invest in Xbox, and to the developers who build ambitious experiences for it.

Gaming now lives across devices, not within the limits of any single piece of hardware. As we expand across PC, mobile, and cloud, Xbox should feel seamless, instant, and worthy of the communities we serve. We will break down barriers so developers can build once and reach players everywhere without compromise.

Third, future of play.

We are witnessing the reinvention of play.

To meet the moment, we will invent new business models and new ways to play by leaning into what we already have: iconic teams, characters, and worlds that people love. But we will not treat those worlds as static IP to milk and monetize. We

will build a shared platform and tools that empower developers and players to create and share their own stories.

As monetization and AI evolve and influence this future, we will not chase short-term efficiency or flood our ecosystem with soulless AI slop. Games are and always will be art, crafted by humans, and created with the most innovative technology provided by us.

The next 25 years belong to the teams who dare to build something surprising, something no one else is willing to try, and have the patience to see it through. We have done this before, and I am here to help us do it again. I want to return to the renegade spirit that built Xbox in the first place. It will require us to relentlessly question everything, revisit processes, protect what works, and be brave enough to change what does not.

Thank you for welcoming me into this journey.

Asha

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