Whistle previously established that Gen-Z males are attracted to activities for the competition. For gaming, there’s an even deeper layer – playing and watching is the way they socialize.

**Connecting With Friends**

Unlike Millennials, gaming for Gen-Z is less a way to measure up against their friends and more a point of connection, camaraderie and companionship. For Gen-Z, gaming is the new ‘going to the mall’.

- **It is important that I am better than my friends at the video games we play**
- **Playing video games helps me to stay connected with my friends**

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<thead>
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<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Gen-Z</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>74%</td>
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</tbody>
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+6%  
+19%

**Building Online Communities**

Gen-Z males also differentiate in their propensity to watch video games. More than 3 in 4 do so, a 25% increase over their Millennial counterparts.

And, while previous generations connected online via the chat room, today’s generation uses video game streaming platforms such as Twitch to build online communities and friendships.

- **Are regular video game watchers**
- **Online gaming is an important part of my social life**

77%  
58%

“I’m part of a community on Twitch, and so there’s a lot of people I know. You can watch your video of interest - for me, my gaming - while talking to people in the Twitch chat, and I think that’s a cool element.”

- Ian, 16

This increased social engagement has deepened the role that gaming plays in their lives. 68% of Gen-Z males now say that gaming is an important part of their personal identity.