

Reducing our current and future environmental impacts

While our sector, being mostly digital, is greener than most, we know we must keep working hard to further reduce our environmental impacts. Our members are investing into improving their technologies and designs to achieve environmental and carbon reduction outcomes, while still improving their products. We are fully engaged in green policy discussions, such as goals for phasing out hard-to-recycle plastics, practical packaging reduction targets, and improving access to repair. We also support government policies that help to address climate change and increase the availability of renewable power.

What is the impact of video games on the environment?

Like all human activities, communities, and industries, video games have a carbon footprint. However, as a predominantly and increasingly digital industry, we believe that our industry is less energy-intensive, creates less waste, and produces less transportation-related emissions than most others. While video game consoles and some games are sold in physical format, all relevant video game companies are members of the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation, as is IGEA, or comply with equivalent standards. Further, as consoles are designed to not need to be replaced for years (consoles are often sold and repaired at cost or for a loss), are multi-function, are often easily repaired, and have high re-sale values, they produce relatively limited e-waste.

What are video games businesses doing to reduce their environmental impacts?

As our industry grows, video game companies are continuously investing in their products and services to further reduce their environmental impacts. For example, the makers of video game consoles and devices continuously work on increasing the energy efficiency of their products, such as by improving their low power modes. Similarly, video game developers are constantly investing in improving how they deliver content to their players, from new network infrastructure to cloud gaming, with a key goal being to reduce the energy consumption of the gaming community. Many video game companies have further set ambitious green goals, from using 100% recycled and non-toxic packaging, to setting targets for becoming fully carbon-neutral.

What is IGEA's perspective on 'right to repair'?

We acknowledge the ongoing conversation about 'right to repair', including its environmental objectives. We engage openly in these discussions. However, environmental 'right to repair' arguments have limited relevance to us, given that as discussed above, video game consoles are designed to have a long and productive life, and when they are no longer wanted or even when unrepairable, are easily re-saleable or recycled. Critically in this debate, our sector also faces a unique threat from copyright infringement through the 'chipping' or 'modding' of consoles, which historically has been linked to independent repairers. For this and other reasons, all three console makers have invested heavily into extensive and high quality repair and/or replacement services.

Ben Au, Director of Policy & Government Affairs, ben@igea.net