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Learn how to get started in the biggest game market in the world

Comprehensive guide for PC developers



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Table of Contents

PORT.322://2137034

- 1. Why even consider the Chinese market?**
- 2. FAQ: Availability, Licensing, Language Barriers**
- 3. Chinese platforms you need to know**
- 4. HeyBox – check your wishlists in China**
- 5. Bilibili – find videos about your game**
- 6. Douyin – introduction to the Chinese TikTok**
- 7. Your Next Steps**
- 8. Closing remarks**

"Chinese video games market? Too complicated - with local regulations and many rules to follow, it's not a safe investment."

Not at all! Let us show you:

With twice as many gamers as there are people in the US, it's no wonder that China takes one of the top spots among the biggest gaming markets in the world.

The revenue is forecasted to reach US\$105.90bn in 2023 - and to be growing even further in the upcoming years.

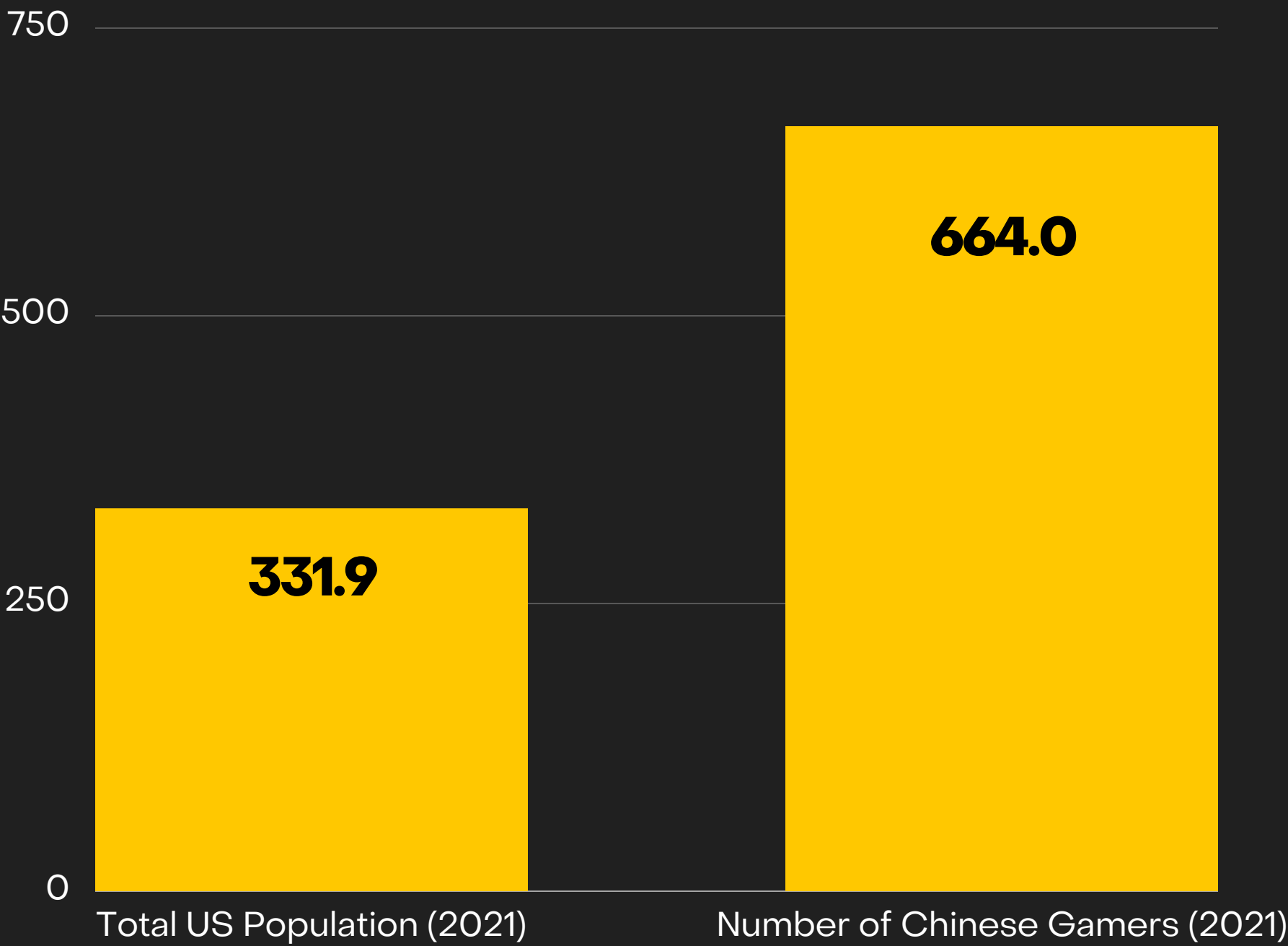
Entering the Chinese market is ESSENTIAL in achieving global success. But there are many misconceptions when it comes to China.

Is entering the Chinese market as difficult as they say?

CHINESE GAMING IS HUGE!

NUMBER OF THE TOTAL UNITED STATES' POPULATION AND JUST CHINESE GAMERS (IN MILIONS)

SOURCE: STATISTA.COM



ASSUMPTION 1:
MY GAME ISN'T AVAILABLE IN CHINA!

ISBN

If you are a PC developer, **you don't need an ISBN number – nor a local publisher** – to have your game available in China.

The reason is simple – your game is already there, as long as it was published on the global version of Steam.

game on global Steam = Chinese gamers can buy it, even without the need of VPN

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE? DON'T I NEED A LICENSE?

Chinese gamers can purchase and play games freely through platforms like **Sonkwo** or **HeyBox**.

Chinese gamers can even get your games directly from Steam, although that's more tricky!

This way, you make profit without the lengthy process of obtaining an official licence.

ASSUMPTION 3:

WHAT IF I DON'T SPEAK CHINESE?

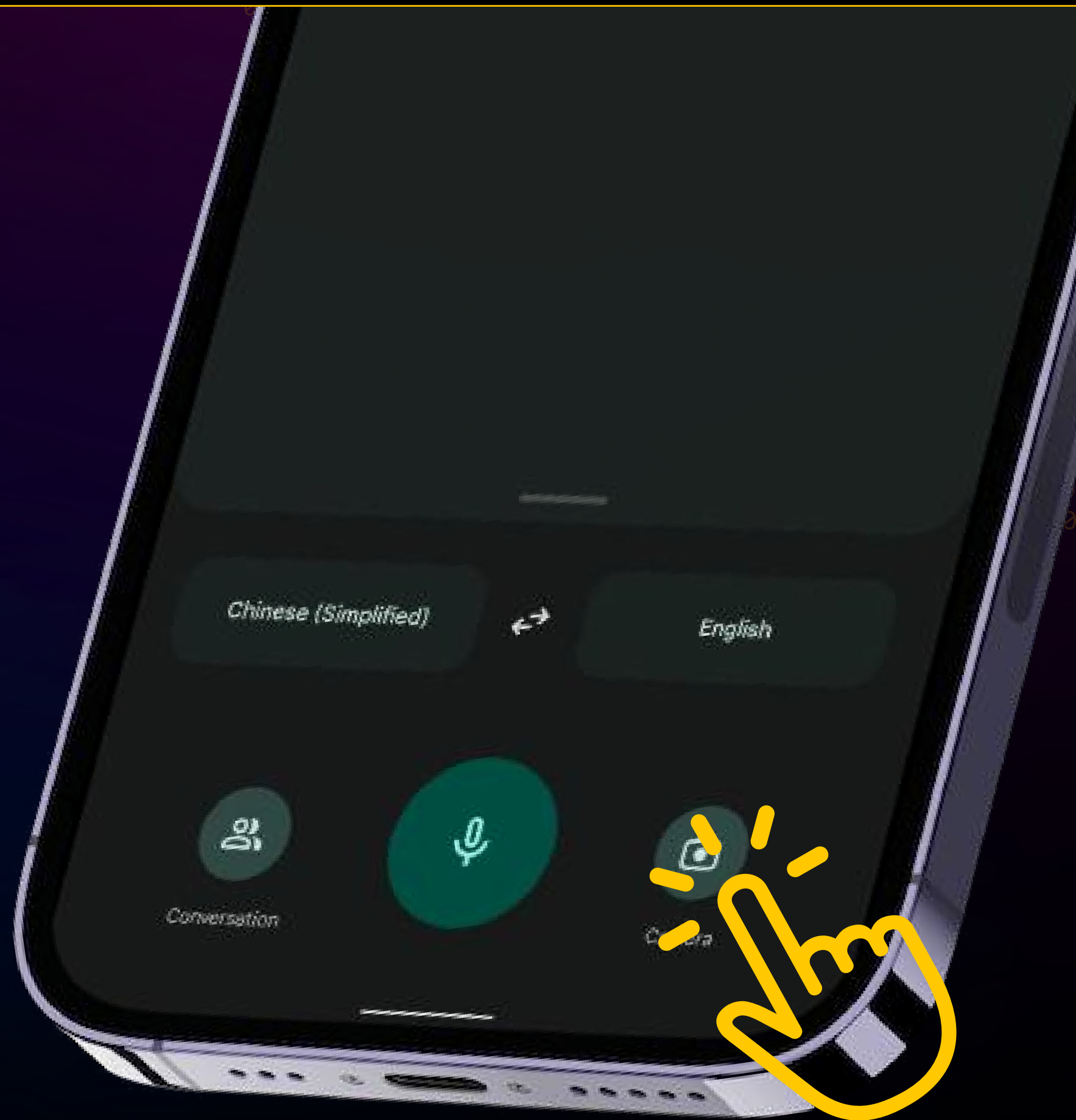
LENS ON CHINA

No worries!

Using this guide doesn't require any Chinese language skills. The solution is simple – **and probably already on your phone.**

Go to **Google Translate** app, pick the option located in the bottom left corner (named '**Camera**') and **scan the text** of your choosing in your preferred language.

You can also **use photos** you have previously made such as **screenshots of comments or reviews!**



**I WOULD HAVE TO COMPLY
WITH STRICT CENSORSHIP RULES.**

Obviously, there are things that won't be suitable for Chinese social media platforms – for example full nudity – in a video on BiliBili. But would YouTube allow similar content?

Adjusting the contents of your game to strict rules would be relevant if you applied for an ISBN – and again, **it's not necessary for PC developers.**



STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

While considering engagement in the Chinese market, there is one important thing to mention

- **you can't use Youtube or Google there.** That would require a VPN, and only **5–10%** of players actually use it.

Therefore, **Chinese gamers rely on local platforms:**

Chinese YouTube and Twitch, combined

332,6 MAU, 90,3 DAU (2022).

Bilibili is a popular Chinese video-sharing website, mainly focused on anime and game related content.

It is a primary platform for influencer outreach and community management.

Front-end to Steam

50 mln+ MAU (2022).

HeyBox is a so-called front-end to Steam – it allows the Chinese gamers to buy or wishlist your game. It also allows you to check all the stats in its official app.

What's more, the wishlists you see there are separate from the ones on your Steam account.

Chinese TikTok

639+ mln MAU (2022).

In China, TikTok (Douyin)'s layout varies much from the version known in the West, especially since it is much more focused on longer and more gaming related videos.

It's especially great for mobile games
and vertical content.

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HOW TO CHECK YOUR GAME'S PERFORMANCE ON HEYBOX

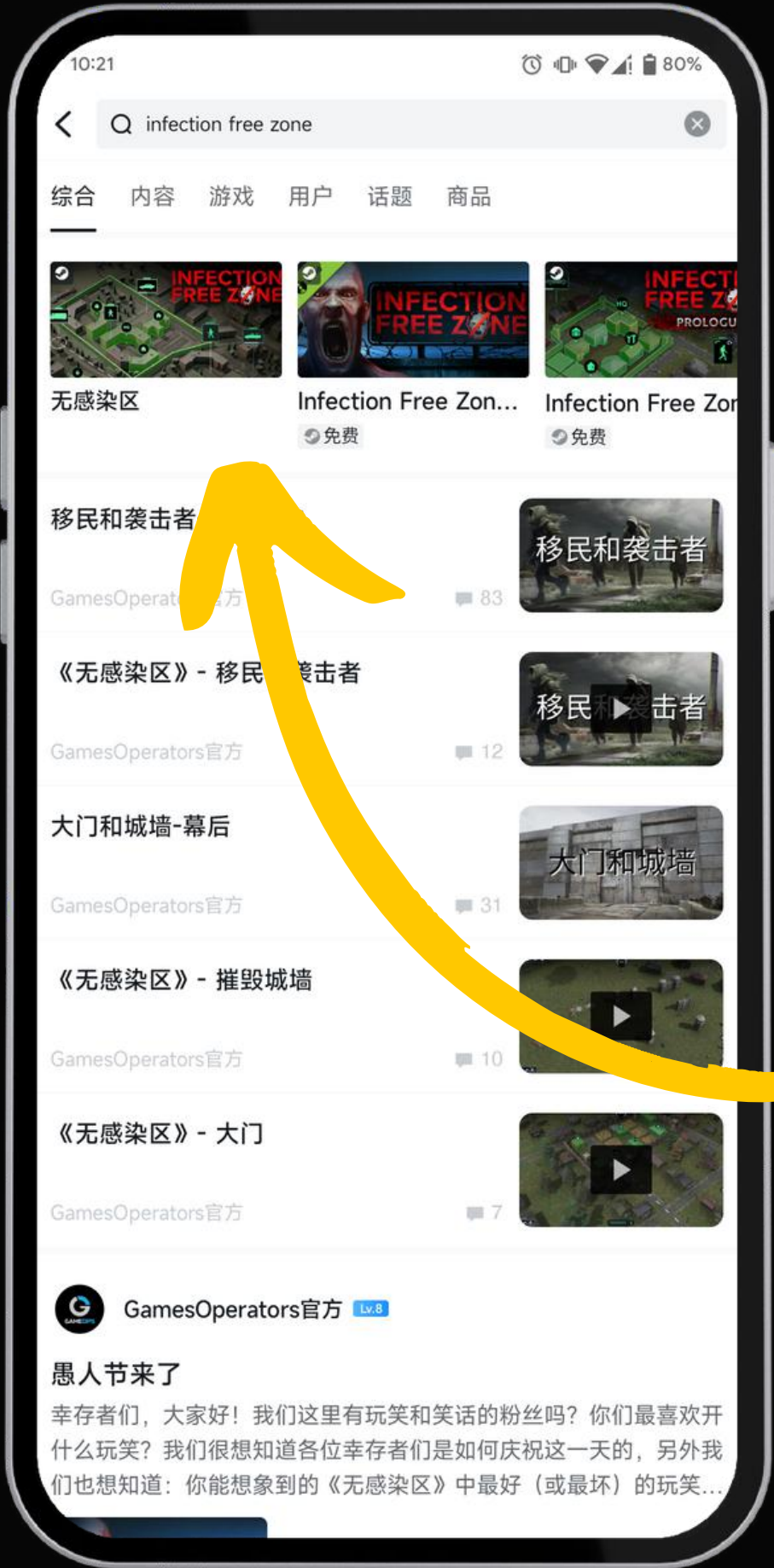
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

STEP #1

☞ Scan the QR code to download **HeyBox**:



– or visit
<https://xiaoheihe.cn/>
for a direct link.



STEP #2

☞ Type your game's title into the search bar and **pick the correct version**.

Usually you will find a few separate results for a main version, demos, and different platforms.

This result appears to be the main game.

In most cases you can judge it by **the thumbnail**.

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HOW TO CHECK YOUR GAME'S PERFORMANCE ON HEYBOX

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

STEP #3



☞ If your game is before release, check the number next to the heart – **this is your wishlist number.**

Here, you can see that GameOps' Infection Free Zone has **129 000 wishlists** at the moment. Congrats!

(Reminder! – 万, wan – it means you have to multiply the number by 10k.)

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

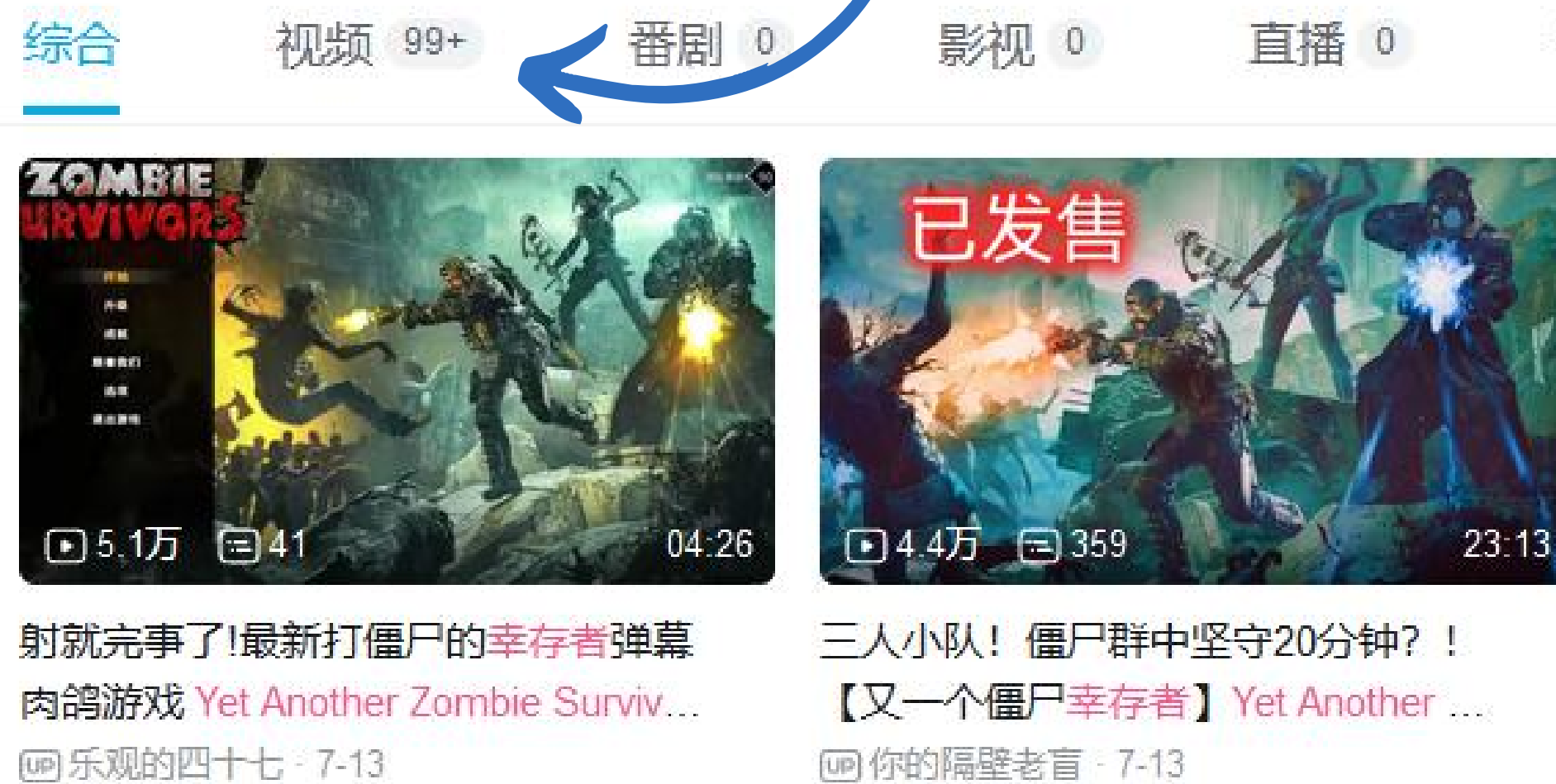
👉 Visit [bilibili.com](https://www.bilibili.com) in your browser!
No need to download anything!



👉 Use filters and sorting settings!

Type the name of your game into the search bar and check the results.

Here's the page for **Yet Another Zombie Survivors**
– as you can see, the game launched in Early Access
on July 13th and there's already a lot of videos !



STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1. Comprehensive results (综合排序),
2. Most views (最多播放),
3. Latest videos (最新发布),
4. Biggest number of "bullet messages" (最多弹幕),
5. Bookmarked the most (最多收藏).

最多收藏

Let's now try clicking on one of the videos.

30.1万 622 2023-07-14 21:33:25 未经授权，禁止转载

On the bottom,
number of likes and reshares among others.

20 人正在看，已装填 622 条弹幕

彈 彈

[请先 登录](#) 或 [注册](#)

弹幕礼仪 >

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 稿件投诉
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STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

👉 You can also scroll down
and learn what the Chinese players think
about your game in the comment section.
– **using Google Lens will make it easier for you!**



惊了 这厂子居然还会出新作 我记得前作是叫又一个僵尸塔防👁️:

2023-07-15 03:48  2  [回复](#)



发现最近这种固定地图打怪的游戏好像很火耶🐱

2023-07-14 22:02 9 [回复](#)

👉 **After you are finished, click the portrait**
on the right to learn more about the content creator.



籽岷  发消息

为人民服务 以纪录片的方式探索游戏世界 ...

⚡ 充电

+ 关注 422.7万

Check **their recently uploaded content**,
if you like what you see, leave them a message!

TA的视频 5408 最新发布 最多播放 最多收藏



(Reminder! - 万, wan - it means you have to multiply the number by 10k.)

IS YOUR GAME POPULAR ON DOUYIN?

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

STEP #1 and #2

👉 Visit douyin.com and search for your game.



STEP #3

👉 Use filters to your advantage.

Latest release (最新发布) – this category will help you find active influencers as it arranges the videos in the chronological order.

Most liked videos (最多点赞) – select “within 6 months”
– we don’t want to waste our time browsing videos from users that are no longer active.

FYI: Settings below work the best for us!



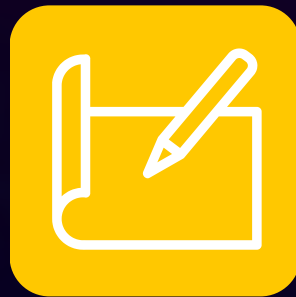
include g strategy?

03

After all, 24% of Steam player base speaks Chinese (around 60 mln players).

From our experience,
we know that successful
marketing campaigns can
lead to having the player base
of Chinese players grow from
3-4% to about 30-40%
of sold copies.

The Chinese gaming market generates substantial revenue. China's gamers are not afraid to spend on **in-game purchases, virtual goods, and other gaming-related content, even merch!**



Make sure you have all the assets necessary

Align your strategy with your current timeline

- **Localized Steam page.**
- Promotional materials such as:
 - trailers, logos, sneak-peaks.
- Playable game build

that's content creator-friendly!

■ If you need help, a 30-minute discovery call can do wonders!

■ Localize your game

to save yourself from trouble!

YOUR GAME ROADMAP

AT HUQIAO, WE SPECIALIZE IN SOLVING PROBLEMS PREVENTING YOUR GAMES FROM ACHIEVING WIDESPREAD SUCCESSES IN CHINA AND EAST ASIA.

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GAME DEVELOPMENT & PRE-LAUNCH

- Localizing existing assets, text, video, graphics.
- Simplified & traditional Chinese, Japanese & Korean.
- Localizing Steam page.

LOCALIZATION

- Based on our expertise and current wishlist number, as well as content in China, and similar titles.

ASSESSING TITLE'S POTENTIAL FOR SUCCESS IN CHINA

- Input during game design process.
- Answering the most important question – what might attract Chinese gamers? What do they like?
- Putting easter eggs for the Chinese community to find.

THE CHINESE PART OF THE GAME'S DESIGN BOOK

- Sonkwo & Heybox – intro to platforms or signing a non-exclusive agreement.

ENTERING NEW DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS

- Custom videos and materials targeting China.

TRAILER CREATION

POST-LAUNCH

CROSSOVERS WITH OTHER IP'S

- Connecting with other clients who are active on the Chinese market.

NEW DLC & UPDATES PROMOTION

- Campaigns focused on a certain marketing beat.

PERFORMANCE MARKETING & ADSET CREATION

- Setting up & creating assets for performance marketing campaigns – mostly for mobile games.

- Enlisting unique expertise about East Asian market, Chinese in particular.
- Cultural contexts applicable not only in marketing, but in game development too.
- Ability to avoid PR risks.

CONTENT MARKETING

- Chinese New Year, Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival-inspired in-game events, skins, cosmetics and other content.
- Participating in online events and festivals, adding it to content marketing.

IN-GAME EVENTS & MARKETING ASSETS

- Holding one in China, or on a selected platform.
- Running livestreams, moderating comments, preparing all the assets.

ONLINE & OFFLINE EVENTS

- Considering all possible options, \$ invested vs. forecasted results.
- Preparing a one-page action plan & acting on it.

MARKETING STRATEGY FOR CHINA

MARKETING (PRE-LAUNCH, LAUNCH, POST-LAUNCH)

INFLUENCER OUTREACH

- Non-paid & paid campaigns.
- Pitching game to Chinese influencers, creative campaigns.

MASSIVE OUTREACH TO INFLUENCERS

- Pitching the game to 50+ selected influencers.
- Sharing game activation ie. Steam keys.

FEEDBACK FROM CHINESE GAMERS

- Feedback and/or reviews on embargo;
- Outreach to selected influencers and deep dive into possible roadblocks to achieving over 95%+ positive Steam review.

STEAM CURATORS OUTREACH

- Reviews on embargo.

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

- Moderating on selected channel;
- Passing valuable feedback to the studio;
- Creating engaging narratives.

OUTREACH & FEEDBACK

YOUR GAME'S SUCCESS

www.hugiao.pl