

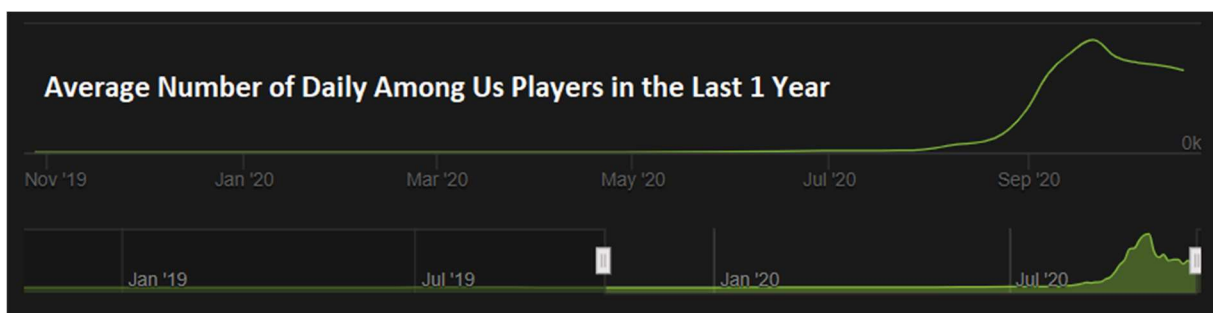
The Sudden Rise of Among Us

by Kaan Ertan

Among Us was inspired by the popular crowd game “Mafia (also known as Werewolf and Vampire)”. The game was initially designed to be a mobile local multiplayer game with a single map. It was released in June 2018 for Android and iOS. Following its release, Among Us had a player count of 30-50 simultaneous players. Referring to this, the game’s programmers stated that the game did not release super well. The initial failure of the game is usually attributed to its studio “InnerSloth”, being very bad at marketing. In fact, its developing team intended to "give up on it several times", yet continued to work on it due to its small but vocal player base. The team first added new tasks and customization options; then on November 16, 2018, released the game on Steam. Thankfully, cross-platform(mobile-computer) play support was available upon the Steam release.

In August and November 2019, InnerSloth added 2 more maps to the game. Although both maps initially required an additional payment of \$4, they became free in June 2020. Currently, only customization options like pets are purchasable with additional payment. The developing team continued to work with the game for a very long time, putting regular updates to the game as often as once a week. Later on, they even postponed their plans for “Among Us 2”, in order to focus on the current game. This led to a continuing increase in players, eventually attracting the attention of some Twitch streamers as well.

Among Us became extremely popular in a very short time thanks to many different reasons, combining at the same time. Although the apparent reason is many Twitch streamers starting to stream Among Us games, the underlying reasons are different. The first reason is that it is a game that everyone had played at some point as a child. Mafia, Werewolf, and Vampire are all known and loved games by people of all ages all over the globe. Among Us is an uncomplicated, yet enjoyable online adaptation of these games. Although people would still prefer to play face-to-face alternatives for Among Us, the coronavirus pandemic turned the tables for the favor of Among Us. With the social gatherings limited and discouraged, Among Us became a place to socialize and have fun with friends without having to go out.



It is clearly seen that the game’s popularity skyrocketed in the last 2 months, reaching a peak player amount of 438.524 people on September 21, 2020¹

In addition to these factors, Among Us offers very enjoyable gameplay for all. Even if you do not turn out to be the impostor, you still have tasks to do and you can put an effort to find the impostor. Some players even set traps for the impostor, such as stacking on each other's characters or watching the cameras. Even if you die during the game, you still have to complete your tasks. Thanks to these inclusive game dynamics, players are constantly busy and not bored, which is essential to keep them playing. We can even say that this made Among Us more successful and fun to play than some incredibly more complicated games such as the Town of Salem, at least for the time being. ²

Lastly, we need to see the importance of social media and internet memes for Among Us. Although all of the listed reasons took part in making the game popular, the real player base is the people who saw TikTok and Instagram posts about the game. These posts are selected from the most fun and exciting parts of the game. They sometimes show an impostor getting caught and lying his/her way out of being kicked, and sometimes show a player's pet baby sadly waiting for them after he/she dies. These, combined with the comments and music, really attract the attention of social media users and make them give it a try. Most people first try the game for free on their phones, and when they like it they buy it on a computer, which is easier to play on. This way or that way, many of us became a fan of this lovely game and all the jokes about it. I hope, thanks to social games like this, the quarantine process will pass easier for all of us.

1- <https://steamcharts.com/app/945360#1y>

2- <https://www.pcgamer.com/how-among-us-became-so-popular/>

Cover Photo:

