

Industry Cluster:

Computer Gaming



Computer gaming is an \$18 billion industry and a growing industry cluster in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. Richardson expects to see steady growth in this industry segment due to its proximity to the three major universities in the area offering educational programs emphasizing computer graphics, computer animation, simulation and gaming. The University of Texas at Dallas (located in Richardson), Southern Methodist University and the University of North Texas are key higher educational institutions creating the great talent pool for existing and prospective new gaming companies to hire.

Richardson and nearby communities are home to dozens of computer gaming companies and independent gaming consultants, including:

Barking Lizards Technologies, LLC
Bottle Rocket Apps
Escalation Studios
Gearbox Software
id Software
KingsIsle Entertainment Inc.
Method Solutions
MumboJumbo
Nerve Software
Playnet, Inc.
Presagis Software
Sickhead Games, LLC
SpiderMonk Entertainment LLC
Terminal Reality
Windstorm Studios

Infrastructure to Support Technology Companies

Richardson's communications infrastructure provides a perfect environment for growing industries such as online gaming, data centers and cloud computing. The city has more than 418 miles of fiber optic cable within its 28 square miles; that translates to over 15 miles of fiber optic cable per square mile. The fiber backbones of AT&T, Verizon, Sprint and Level 3 Communications all run through Richardson.

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The University of Texas at Dallas (UT Dallas) recently announced the expansion of its Arts & Technology (ATEC) program with the groundbreaking for a \$60 million, 155,000-square-foot campus facility. The new facility will house programs in visual arts, emerging media technology and multimedia communications, as well as a 1,200-seat auditorium. UT Dallas currently has more than 1,000 students in the advanced ATEC curriculum and expects to double that enrollment in the next few years with the completion of the new facility. The ATEC program will provide qualified developers, directors and animators for the local video gaming industry.

ATEC is home to one of the most sophisticated Motion Capture laboratories in the nation. Sixteen cameras mounted on the wall surround a 40 square-foot performance space that can capture the movement of up to six people at a time. Motion path data captured in the lab provides students, university partners and researchers with complex and subtle movements that can be applied to animated sequences, game characters, simulations and biomedical research.

ATEC research project First Person Culture Training (FPCT), a four-level immersive game which allows army leaders and other appropriate personnel to practice culturally correct ways of interacting with different populations around the world, has received three national awards in serious gaming. The game features a variety of innovations, like a branching conversation system and methods for displaying non-verbal communication and environmental perception.

Guildhall is the premier graduate video game education program at nearby **Southern Methodist University (SMU)**, and is considered one of the best in the U.S. Many of the school's founders are industry icons, and classes are run by industry veterans. Since 2005, the program has graduated nearly 400 students, and alumni are working at more than 140 video game studios around the world.

In 1993, the **University of North Texas (UNT)** became one of the first universities in the country to offer courses in game programming and began offering a certificate program in 2008. Since 1993, more than 500 students have passed through UNT's gaming courses. Today, many of UNT's graduates are making an impact in the gaming industry.

"I firmly believe that all games are educational by nature, and that there is no subject that cannot be approached through the medium."

-Dr. Monica Evans, Assistant Professor, Computer Game Design, University of Texas at Dallas

