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IARC Rating System Administers ESRB Ratings in North America for
Windows Store Games and Apps

New York, NY – The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) today announced that Microsoft will begin deploying the International Age Rating Coalition (IARC) rating system to administer its familiar age and content ratings for all games and apps in the Windows Store for PC, tablet and phones.

Established by ESRB and other international rating organizations, the IARC rating system streamlines the process for assigning age and content ratings to the high volume of digitally delivered games and apps coming into the market today. ESRB ratings are also displayed in Google Play, Firefox Marketplace and Nintendo eShop using the IARC rating system. ESRB will continue to assign ratings for console downloadable and/or packaged games that play on Microsoft's Xbox, Nintendo, and PlayStation platforms through traditional means.

While Microsoft has long been a supporter of the ESRB ratings, this represents the first time it is deploying the new streamlined process for assigning age ratings for digitally delivered games and apps via the Windows Dev Center developer portal. Launched in 2014, the IARC rating system simplifies the process by which developers obtain age ratings by having them answer a single set of questions about their product's content and interactive elements. Their responses automatically generate different age ratings from each participating territory along with a generic rating for the rest of the world. Currently, the IARC rating system administers the familiar and trusted content ratings from ESRB in North America, PEGI in Europe, ClassInd in Brazil, USK in Germany and the Classification Board in Australia with more rating authorities expected to join in the future.

"With low barriers to entry and single-click access to a global digital marketplace, the number of game and app developers has sky-rocketed as has the volume of digital games and apps they publish. To address these market forces, international rating authorities joined forces to establish a revolutionary unified process that simultaneously generates trusted and familiar ratings for multiple territories while preserving each of their distinct cultural standards," said Patricia Vance, president of ESRB and chairperson of IARC. "We applaud these storefronts for

deploying the IARC rating system, enabling developers to obtain ratings at no cost and providing consumers with culturally relevant and trustworthy guidance about age appropriateness of the content in games and apps they may be considering for download."

"Microsoft has long supported IARC's efforts to bring forward a single, much streamlined and cost effective global rating process for developers. We're pleased to make the IARC system available in early 2016 in the Windows Store as a way to help our customers find regionally relevant ratings for games and apps," said Todd Brix, General Manager, Windows Store and Developer Marketing, Microsoft.

 For more information about IARC, including a [video](#) and [infographic](#), please visit [www.globalratings.com.](#)

About ESRB

The ESRB is a non-profit, self-regulatory body that independently assigns age and content ratings for video games and mobile apps so parents can make informed choices. It also enforces advertising guidelines adopted by the video game industry and helps companies implement responsible online and mobile privacy practices under its Privacy Certified program. Visit [www.esrb.org](#) for more information.

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