

USING INFLUENCER MARKETING TO BUILD AWARENESS AND IMAGE OF ESPORTS BRANDS

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ABSTRACT

In an era where esports is rapidly growing, competition is high, and consumers have diverse expectations, it is crucial to build strong brand awareness and brand image. Influencer marketing has become a powerful tool for brands to reach their target audience in the esports industry, build authentic relationships, and build credibility. Reach the right audience Esports influencers have a dedicated following with a genuine interest in esports, enabling brands to effectively reach the right audience. Build credibility and trust Followers often view influencer marketing as a reliable source of information and expertise. When influencers endorse or use a brand's products, it helps build credibility and trust for the brand. Build engagement and relationships Influencer marketing can engage with followers through livestreaming, speaking engagements, or creating engaging content, which helps build strong relationships between brands and consumers. Build brand awareness and image Collaborating with reputable and influential esports influencers can quickly build brand awareness and image on a large scale. Target new market segments of esports Understanding the nature and content of this rapidly growing entertainment industry Esports, or egaming, is the competitive and spectator-oriented playing of video games by professionals. Popular platforms, gamers, and revenue streams are used by marketers to build branding, sales, and retail sales using this medium. Leveraging this knowledge Challenges to these goals are also discussed. Lehnert, K., Walz, A. and Christianson, R. (2022), Defining a clear goal of what brand awareness or image you want to create and identifying the target audience you want to reach. Selecting the right influencer marketing: Consider their follower count, expertise, credibility, and alignment with your brand image. Create engaging and creative content: Work with influencers to create engaging and creative content, such as product reviews, livestreams, or video productions. Measure and evaluate. Regularly monitor and measure the performance of your influencer marketing campaign to assess its effectiveness and improve your strategy. Influencer marketing is a powerful tool for building brand awareness and image in esports. Selecting the right influencer marketing, creating engaging content, and consistently measuring performance can help brands successfully reach their target audience, build strong relationships, and build sustainable credibility in esports.

This article is written to inform readers about the use of influencers to create markets, so it focuses on 2 important issues: 1) Marketing and 2) Brand image in the esports business.

Keywords: Esports, Influencer, Image, Market

INTRODUCTION

In a world where technology is rapidly evolving, the esports industry has quickly become a global phenomenon, with millions of viewers around the world. Exciting competitions, talented players, and vibrant communities present unprecedented business opportunities for brands. However, reaching a large audience and building brand awareness in the highly competitive esports market is no easy feat. That's where the power of influencer marketing comes in. Influencer Marketing: The Key to Success for Esports Brands Influencer marketing has become an indispensable tool for esports brands looking to build brand awareness, build a positive image, and engage their target audience. These influencers are individuals with large followings on social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitch, and Instagram. They have knowledge, passion, and credibility in the esports [1].

industry. When esports brands partner with the right influencers, they can reach a large audience that is already interested in esports content. Influencers can create engaging content, such as video streams, game reviews, and social media posts, to promote the brand's products and services. A brand's image is how consumers perceive and feel about a brand, which in turn influences their decision to purchase or use a service. Building a strong and distinctive brand image helps esports businesses differentiate themselves from their competitors, build brand loyalty, and attract investors or business partners. Esports influencers are individuals who influence the thoughts and decisions of their target audience. They can be famous esports athletes, popular streamers, Or those with expertise in various aspects of the game, partnering with the right influencers can help esports businesses reach their target audience more effectively, build brand awareness and credibility, and promote consumer engagement. Social media influencer marketing by conducting scientific mapping analysis using cutting-edge bibliometric methods to determine current and future trends. Social media influencer marketing is one of the most effective approaches to brand exposure and offer value to consumers through social media. Fauzi, M.A., Ali, Z., Satari, Z., Megat Ramli, P.A. and Omer, M. (2024), To maximize the effectiveness of influencer and brand image creation, esports businesses should consider the following factors: Selecting the right influencers: Influencers should be chosen based on their target audience and brand image, have a large following, and engage with them regularly. Building a good relationship with influencers: A good relationship with influencers should be built on the basis of mutual understanding and respect, so that the collaboration is smooth and effective. Creating interesting and valuable content: Content should be created that is interesting and valuable to the influencer's followers, in order to attract attention and generate engagement. Measuring and evaluating results: Clear KPIs should be set and performance should be measured regularly to assess the effectiveness of the influencer's use and adjust the strategy accordingly. Influencer and brand image creation are important strategies for esports businesses to stand out and attract the attention of their target audience. Selecting the right influencers, building good relationships, and creating interesting content will help esports businesses succeed in competing in a fast-changing market.

The researcher therefore sees that currently, influencers and brand image creation are important strategies for e-sports businesses. Creating businesses and careers and creating many shows the importance of influencers, making the researcher want to study and research about using them to benefit the e-sports business further.

OBJECTIVE

1. To study the driving model of E-sports in Thailand
2. To study the network of E-sports in Thailand

3. To study and analyze the growth of E-sports in Thailand

METHODOLOGY

The study of the effects of using influencers in e-sports marketing can be done using a variety of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative, depending on the purpose of the research. The sample group in the research of influencer marketing in e-sports business is a group of people who represent the target population that the business wants to reach. The main characteristics are that they are interested in, follow, and participate with influencers in the e-sports industry, as well as being interested in products or services related to e-sports, such as games, gaming equipment, or streaming platforms. Examples of sample groups that may be used in the research include game players: online gamers, mobile gamers, console gamers, divided by the types of games played, such as MOBA, FPS, RPG, etc. E-sports viewers, e-sports competition viewers, streamer followers, e-sports content viewers on various online platforms, influencer followers, game casters, streamers, e-sports athlete followers, e-sports page or social media channels followers. Defining a clear sample group will help the research obtain accurate, precise, and realistic data, leading to conclusions and recommendations that are useful for e-sports businesses in effectively developing influencer marketing strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Using Influencer Marketing

If we talk about the consumption behavior and purchasing of products of people in this era, it is believed that most of them have already searched for information about the product or may choose to buy products from the recommendations of people they trust. This person may not be a friend or someone close to them, but may be someone online who has similar interests and likes. Lee, S., & Kim, B. (2018). Or it may be a person who is seen as having special expertise in that area. It can be said that this person will be someone who influences the

purchasing of products or is called an influencer. That is, the influencer profession is a person who can persuade many people to decide to buy products as recommended. Therefore, influencer marketing plays an important role for those who want to do marketing in this era. Influencer marketing is marketing by using people in the influencer profession or people who have influence on social media who can persuade or motivate followers to want the same products that the influencer has brought to see and recommended. It was stated that the intention to consume live esports content played a full mediating role in the relationship between recreational esports gaming behavior and intention to consume live esports events. In addition, we found the mediating effect of live streaming esports content in three types, consistent with Jang, W.W., Byon, K.K., Baker III, T.A. and Tsuji, Y. (2021), By using influencers, at first we should be familiar with is selecting influencers who are famous and popular at that time, such as actors, singers who have famous works in the role of product presenters. Later, in the era when social media began to boom, ordinary people began to produce more content by themselves and became popular, having a large number of followers. These people may have a liking for and interest in that type of product already or are outstanding, memorable in some way. They can produce content that recommends products from real user experiences. The activities of influencers, such as unboxing products, showing the use of products, taking people to visit various stores, also attract a lot of attention because people will feel that influencers, who are ordinary people, have a lifestyle that They are more involved with themselves than celebrities, and they see this group of Relate as friends who recommend things to themselves. Issues of experiential consumption related to e-sports First, competitions are a tactile and emotional performance, allowing consumers to immerse themselves in a memorable experience.

Second, online gaming communities help consumers express themselves through their own work. Third, e-sports apparel companies attract consumers with unique fashion experiences through "lifestyle branding". Brock, T. and Crawford, G. (2024),

Esports Brand Awareness and Image

Today, gaming is a sport that generates income and can be widely advertised, even though it was previously considered a business market. As the consumer base increases and esports itself grows every year, sponsors want to join the esports group more. Today, brands are starting to market more in the context of esports. Controlled communication has a significant impact and has both direct and indirect effects on the basic elements of brand value, which in turn acts as a catalyst for increasing participants' satisfaction and their posting intentions. Wang, X., You, X., Xu, Y. and Zheng, J. (2024), a popular marketing method for esports is to sponsor esports competitions, sponsor esports teams directly, run campaigns with games, produce products with games, and sponsor esports competitions. It makes everyone who is a viewer and a competitor know the sponsor's brand more. It is creating awareness for a business that does not necessarily have to be directly related to esports, but can reach a customer group aged 18-35 years. Choosing to directly sponsor an esports team is considered a Influencer marketing. Because esports teams already have a fan base and customer base, it builds credibility in products and services for followers. It can be seen that the female customer group in esports has a high growth rate. In addition to sponsoring esports teams, brands that want to create activities for players and build brands can also organize campaigns with games, such as giving away coins or prizes in games. By creating a logo and colors, the brand's corporate identity to make consumers remember it well. And create products in conjunction with games to attract brand prominence To create memorability and interest The customer experience of the audience in all four dimensions, perception, emotion, feeling, and society, can predict social identification with the team players. On the other hand, social identification has a positive effect on the purchase intention of the sponsor brand. The perception, emotion, and social dimensions of the experience have an indirect effect on the purchase intention of the sponsor brand through social identification. Navarro-Lucena, F., Anaya-Sánchez, R. and Molinillo, S. (2024), It can be seen that the e-sports market is an interesting customer group because it is a group of teenagers and has a variety of consumption. They have a certain level of purchasing power and are a sport that can be competed frequently because they can be played anywhere. Promotion or advertising is easy and can reach a wide audience. For example, business groups that join e-sports want to convey that it is not necessary to be a sport that only athletes can compete in. But joining e-sports creates the image of the business group as a brand that conveys that all types of sports are valuable and are a support that can reach a large customer group well. The results support the impact of one dimension of participation in e-sports, such as self-expression, on both the perception of appropriateness and the intention of e-sports viewers to buy sponsor products. It was found that participation and self-expression have both a direct and indirect relationship through the perception of appropriateness to purchase intention. This study supports the relationship between the e-sports participation dimension, the perception of the appropriateness of sponsorship, and purchase intention. Polyakova, O., Karagiorgos, T., Anagnostopoulos, C. and Alexandris, K. (2024), Influencer marketing. After the campaign, what marketers expect to happen is Engagement and sales, which are important promotional channels to encourage target groups to take certain actions. Most marketers choose to run campaigns on TikTok because its functions meet consumer behavior better. This raises the question of what will happen to video platforms like YouTube? It is still an interesting influencer marketing tool, affecting the use of influencers in creating awareness and brand image for esports businesses to understand the role of relationships and various interactions involved in the process of creating esports value.

RESULTS

The use of influencers in esports marketing has become a very important strategy today, as influencers play a crucial role in building brand awareness and image, which in turn affects the long-term success of a business. Results of using influencers in esports

Increased brand awareness Influencers help brands gain wider exposure, especially among target groups interested in esports. Influencers' followers are often already interested in topics related to gaming and esports, making it easy and effective to reach their target audience.

Improved brand image Influencers can help build a positive brand image, as followers tend to view influencers as experts and credible individuals. When influencers talk about or use a brand's products or services, it helps build interest and trust in the brand.

Increased customer engagement Influencers can drive customer engagement, such as when influencers organize events with their followers or when influencers create brand-related content, customers can engage with the brand more and feel like they are part of a community.

Increased sales Influencers can help drive sales, as followers tend to trust influencers' recommendations when they recommend a brand's products or services. There is a chance that followers will be interested and decide to buy that product or service.

Increased brand loyalty When customers have a good experience with the brand and are supported by their favorite influencers, it will help create long-term brand loyalty, which is important for the sustainability of the business.

Using influencers in esports marketing is an effective strategy to build brand awareness and image, which affects customer engagement, sales, and brand loyalty. However, choosing the right influencers for the brand and target audience, as well as planning and executing effectively, are essential to achieve the desired results.

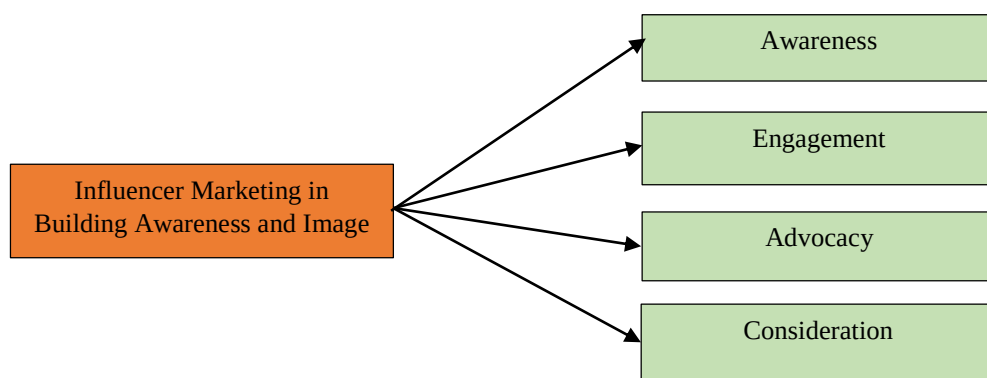


Figure 1. The use of influencer marketing to build awareness and brand image for esports businesses.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

In the digital era where business competition is high, especially in the rapidly growing e-sports industry, creating awareness and a good image for the brand is important. Influencers are people who influence the thoughts and decisions of the target group. Therefore, they have become an important tool for e-sports brands to succeed. Influencers can effectively reach the target group, build credibility, and encourage participation. For example, a gaming brand may collaborate with a famous game caster to review games, live stream, or organize activities with fans, which will help increase awareness, generate interest, and stimulate sales. In addition, influencers help build a strong brand image by communicating the brand's values, identity, and position to the target group. For example, a gaming equipment brand

may sponsor a professional e-sports team to create a modern, quality, and reliable brand image. However, the selection of influencers must be carefully considered, taking into account the alignment with the brand, target group, and marketing objectives. Building a good relationship with the influencer, determining a collaborative approach, and continuous measurement are all important factors that affect success. Influencers play a crucial role in creating awareness and image for e-sports brands. Using influencer marketing strategies wisely will help brands reach their target groups, build credibility, stimulate sales, and achieve sustainable growth in the e-sports industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for invaluable help throughout this research.

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