

Emergence of Twitch in the Gaming Industry

Why people prefer to watch and not to play

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<p>Description</p> <p>The study aimed at exploring the viewers of Twitch, a gameplay streaming platform, and their motivations to watch the streams of games instead of playing themselves. Throughout the research phase, academic literature, articles, dissertations and theses were explored and the gaps in the knowledge of the chosen segment were addressed. The main objective was to obtain deep understanding of the personal motivations of the viewers to watch streamed gameplay, and describe them as broad as possible.</p> <p>The research data was obtained by using two methods: semi-structured interviews and forum observations. For the interviews, 11 respondents, representing the biggest group of viewers by age and gender, were chosen and interviewed. For additional contribution, numerous English and Russian forums were observed, and all the unique answers were recorded. Based on content analysis, a data matrix was created corresponding to both sources. The results were then compared and represented in 3 groups as follows: similar for both groups, unique for forums, and unique for interviews.</p> <p>This study provided evidence that the motivation behind Twitch users was much more complex than what is presented in the current literature. During the study over 20 different motivations were discovered: socialization and sharing of the experience, E-sports spectating, learning, avoiding technical and personal obstacles, seeing development process of the game and watching live review of the game are only tiny part of the motivations discovered during this research.</p> <p>This work can be used for habituation with the streaming world and motives of viewers for better understanding of viewers by steamers, games and software producers and companies that are currently working with Twitch or planning such cooperation. Furthermore, the information from this research can be used for advanced targeting of the advertisements or streaming content on Twitch.</p>		
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1 Introduction

With the development of computer technology, gaming is becoming more and more popular, especially among the millennials. A new form of sport, E- Sports, is gaining recognition and legitimacy around the world and gaining the attention of television networks. For example, the CS:GO E-League tournament in 2016 was broadcasted on the American TV channel TBS, attracting an average of 275000 viewers (Bullock 2017). In addition, Disney has announced the broadcast of similar Super Smash Bros and Street Fighter tournaments on their channel Disney XD (Beck 2017). With the growth in recognition and popularity granted to gaming and e-sports, the Twitch streaming platform's popularity is growing accordingly. As of 2017, Twitch is the 44th most accessed website in the world, and the 15th in the U.S. (Alexa 2017).

Currently, Twitch attracts more than 15 million daily viewers, 58% of whom spend more than 20 hours per week watching Twitch. This amounts to 2.8 hours per day. For some perspective, the average American watches 4.3 hours of TV daily. This raises a question of why 8.7 million people from all over the world are spending 2.8 hours daily watching other people play games instead of playing themselves. The aim of this study was to find the answer to this question relying on the personal experience of Twitch users.

Such research is important because the number of Twitch users and gamers is constantly growing. At the moment, Twitch attracts more than 100 million viewers monthly, 68% percent of whom have decreased their time watching TV and focused only on gaming entertainment. However, their motivations are yet to be thoroughly explored. This study hoped to shed light on this often disregarded segment of the entertainment industry.

In its larger context, it was hoped that this study would serve as a foundation for further studies of Twitch users and the impact of Twitch on their activities from the perspectives of business, sociology, psychology and other disciplines that are interested in understanding and modelling the behaviour of gaming streams viewers. In addition, this information can be useful for Twitch itself and other streamers in order to better understand the consumer base and its motivations and in order to adapt their product to the target customer.

2 Theoretical Basis

In order to define some key terms, streaming is transmitting digital audio or video content while users listen or watch (PCMag Encyclopedia 2017). According to the Oxford Living Dictionary (2017), streaming is: “A method of transmitting or receiving data (especially video and audio material) over a computer network as a steady, continuous flow, allowing playback to start while the rest of the data is still being received”. Simply, it can be described as broadcasting an image from a computer in realtime to the internet or any other platform that is compatible with this service.

Twitch, by definition, is a gaming streaming platform. Any member who has a stable broadband internet connection can stream their gaming sessions live using certain recording software, such as OBS, and stream it to their freely-accessible Twitch channel. The main idea behind Twitch is that every person can visit the platform and access these streams in realtime with no restrictions.

The typical Twitch channel interface consists of five main elements (see Appendix 1). This interface is common for all streams regardless of their content. The first element is the main window, which is fully customizable and, by using specific streaming software, it can be customized. However, it is generally reserved for the actual game or what the gamer/streamer sees on his/her screen. Appendix 1 is an example of this from a Dota 2 stream by the popular Russian streamer A1taOda. Inside the main window, there is a customizable smaller window, typically streaming video from the gamer's webcam. It allows the viewers to see the gamer's reactions during gameplay, and it is frequently used as an advertising space as well. Under the main window, there is an information panel. This panel is fully customizable and can be stylized using Markdown coding. Commonly, it is used by streamers for the channel description and different URLs. The figures under the main window represent the users' activity on the channel, the number of current viewers (the red figure), and the total views on a channel (the black figure). For some perspective, the most viewed Twitch channel is “riotblade” with 935,016,061 total views (Socialblade 2017).

On the right side of the channel, there is a chat feature available to all authorized users. In the chat, they can communicate with one another and even ask questions

from the streamer. This chat is visible to the streamer and all viewers. Optionally, it can be switched off.

2.1 Why Twitch is worth studying?

Gaming streaming is a relatively new subcategory of the entertainment industry that has been growing steadily since the mid-2011 and the launch of Twitch. Currently, Twitch is the most popular game streaming platform in the world with 15 million active daily users, more than 2 million unique monthly streamers, and over 25 thousand partners all over the world. It claims 43% of the gaming content industry revenue with 1.6 billion \$. (Brouwer 2015)

Twitch is also the fifth biggest video entertainment web-site globally (see appendix 12) (Haulica 2014). In 2014, Twitch was responsible for 1.8% of the peak internet traffic in the U.S., which is 0.3% more than Facebook and 0.6% more than Amazon (see appendix 2), and it accounted for 43.6% of all live-video streaming in America.

According to Twitch Retrospective (2015 and 2016) and Craig Smith (2017), there were 241 and 292 billion total minutes streamed on the platform in 2015 and 2016 respectively, so the annual increase was 51 billion hours, which was 97 000 years of streaming. Such figures were produced by 2.2 million unique streamers using Twitch. Moreover, Twitch announced that there were 14.2 billion chat messages sent by Twitch users in 2015, which was 39 million chat messages daily (only the logged users can send messages).

On a different note, Twitch actively supports charities, advertising streamers who are in real time collecting money for charity purposes: in 2016 Twitch reported about \$25.3 million raised for charity. On the social level, Twitch's annual conference TwitchCon was visited by 20000 people in 2015, with 1.9 million people more following the event online. In 2016, the number of visitors reached 35000.

This gigantic impact can be observed a mere 6 years after the platform's establishment. In 2015, the platform set a record of 2,098,529 peak concurrent viewers and at the moment, according to my TwitchTools stats (31 October- 7 November 2017) analysis (see appendix 5), the average number of active users is 687,243 and 26,588 streamers, which makes 25847 persons/stream.

It is important to consider that all these figures increase dramatically when the global e-sports tournaments are held. For example, the Intel Extreme Masters Katowice 2017 was watched by 46 million unique viewers (Statista 2017) (see appendix 6), which made it a match to events of the size of big sports tournaments. It is rather simplistic to say that this all happened solely due to Twitch, but it could be stated with certainty that Twitch is one of the reasons why e-sports have become so popular, considering that it functions as an auditorium showcasing the players' talent.

Yet, perhaps the most interesting fact is the amount of time that the average Twitch user spends on the platform. It is sometimes stated that Twitch is an alternative to the TV for gamers. When we compare the amount of time that an average American spends watching TV and an average Twitch user watching streams, we can see impressive parallels. The average Twitch user spends 1.76 hours on Twitch per day. About 50% of Twitch viewers spend at least 20 hours per week – 2.8 hours per day (MediaKix 2017). On the other hand, the average American watches TV for 4.3 hours daily. (Kafka 2016) (see appendix 7).

This finding leads to the logical questions: "What is the reason behind those figures? Who are the people watching Twitch? What are they watching on Twitch? Finally, why do they spend their time watching other people playing, rather than play themselves?"

2.2 Demographics of Twitch users

The demographic aspect of Twitch is rarely described in great specificity. The most recent data about it comes from Quantstats. However, Twitch no longer shares its traffic with this website. Therefore, this source is not available for use. All other resources are 3-4 years old and deal with similar issues.

The statistics provided by Chris Coles (see appendix 13) shows that the majority of the Twitch user base is in the age group 18 to 49 (generally Generation X and Millennials). The average viewer in this group is 21 (Coles 2014). According to Cole, more than 60% of Generation X and more than 70% of Millennials in America have played computer games in the last 60 days (New Face of Gamers 2014). According to this piece of data, it is clear that even though Twitch has already reached an impressive expansion in the gaming industry, potential for the growth of this platform is still significant.

Furthermore, it is important to outline that 68% of Twitch users have decreased the time that they spend watching TV and concentrated on the gaming entertainment content. This describes Twitch as a potential partner to TV in the future, especially among the gamers.

2.3 Types of content on Twitch

When defining the content on Twitch, gameplay is the obvious answer. However, that term is too nebulous for the purposes of this paper. Moreover, there is other content on Twitch that is not centred around gaming. The main focus of the Twitch platform, however, is on the gaming content, which can be divided in two aspects.

The first is individual gaming, streamed by independent streamers who play alone or with their friends. These range from casual players to professional gamers. Twitch users often state that the most attractive feature in streaming is that every single game, regardless of the platform (consoles or PCs) can be streamed on Twitch. Therefore, every user can find content tailored to their interests or stream that content themselves .

The second type of content is E-Sports. With the growing popularity of competitive gaming based on team-play, different tournaments are becoming more and more popular, which has led to the formation of professional teams who have united the best gamers from all over the world competing against one another on E-Sports tournaments in different countries. Such events unite the gamers from all over the world in front of their screens, too. For example, the Katowice 2017 tournament was watched by 47 million unique viewers (see appendix 6).

There are other non-gameplay categories of activity on Twitch that are worth mentioning. Editors, publishers, and game developers who are connected to the gaming industry, major gaming portals and journals, game developers and other stakeholders in the gaming industry have created their own channels and occasionally do different streams for Twitch users. For them, it is a universal platform for communication with the target customers. For the viewers, it is a chance to keep up with the latest trends in the gaming world. In addition, different events held all around the world are being streamed live on Twitch, such as ComicCon - one of the most popular comic books conventions in the world. For the people not able to visit these events, it is a chance to see them live from their homes.

Another interesting category is called User Generated Programming. It unites all the creative content made by the Twitch community. It could be anything from co-operative gameplay to drawing lessons or even social eating, an activity that is very popular in Asia. There are no limitations for the streamers and no strict rules, which means that there is something for everyone.

Finally, Twitch's team of developers is always open to enthusiastic and creative ideas that the streamers, users or companies have. For example, they recently launched a 'Bob Ross marathon' that was called "Twitch's Joy of Painting marathon", where many of Ross' TV programmes were translated and streamed. It has provoked a real dissonance on the Internet and even led to the creation of the Bob Ross meme which has become popular on Twitch (see appendix 8). Peter Bright (2015) described this marathon as follows: "It has become more than a few tens of thousands of people watching a charming TV series in their own homes; it has become a few tens of thousands of people watching it together in a shared experience."

Actually, emotes (the small faces that are representing different emotions and can be entered into the text conversation like emoji) themselves have become a very important part of the Twitch culture and they are actively used by the whole community. Twitch even publishes the statistics of the most frequently-used emotes in the Retrospective 2015, a Twitch datasheet (see appendix 9).

Twitch provides streamers and users with the freedom of choice, as Bisaha Stephan states: “Users can stream video of themselves doing just about anything: shopping for shoes, unboxing new gadgets, singing Christmas Carols” (Bisaha 2017). However, the main focus of the platform is still gaming.

2.4 Motivation of the Twitch users

Even though Twitch is a relatively massive social phenomenon, the amount of research on the consumer motivation is small and mostly vague. One of the key issues is that most of the research explores Twitch from a cultural perspective, for example, Anthony Pellicone’s (2017) study *Performing Play: Cultural Production on Twitch.tv* or *Twitching as a cultural production form* by Jessie Daniels, Tressie McMillan Cottom, Karen Gregory book: *Digital Sociologies* (2017). These works explore and explain the cultural value of streams and the streamers’ perspective of Twitch. On the other hand, viewers are discussed from the perspective of the cultural outflow that they provide. This underlines the fact that Twitch viewers, who are, in fact, the biggest stakeholders, are still neglected in the academic study of Twitch. *Changing Roles in Gaming: Twitch and new gaming audiences* (2016) by Mirjam Vosmeer, Gabriele Ferri and Ben Schouten is also an interesting study that provides promising information about this topic, but is yet to be completed and cannot provide a comprehensive view on the problem.

Streaming on Twitch: Fostering Participatory Communities of Play within Live Mixed Media (2017) written by William A. Hamilton, Oliver Garretson and Andruud Kerne is a more detailed work and addresses the viewers’ perspective on streaming. However, it looks at the viewers and streamers as a community and explains the motivations for visiting streams based on generalising methods from psychological mechanisms’ perspective: theory of the third place, hot and cold media, and the

sense of community. In addition, the interviewees in these works are mainly streamers - 11 streamers and 4 users, to be exact. This approach cannot be seen as valid research that is focused specifically on the motivation of an individual viewer.

Based on the theoretical foundation, four main reasons for why people are watching Twitch can be outlined. Generally, all of them are repetitively mentioned in different articles and studies as well as information from the Twitch website. They represent four general groups of motivations. The first is entertaining the interest of the viewers in a particular type of streamed content. This can be the gameplay of a particular streamer and his movements, the specific game that the viewer is interested in or even a particular streamer's personality. E-Sports tournaments can be referred to this group as well because they serve the same purpose: entertainment.

The second reason explored is communication. Users want to interact with the stream community and connect with the streamer and other viewers. That is one of the most frequently alluded reasons as to why people are watching Twitch. In some sources, it is called a "sense of community". From the users' perspective, Twitch is a social network for gamers. According to Hamilton, Garretson and Kerne (2017), Twitch can be called a third place for the gamers: "The public places on neutral ground where people can gather and interact" (Oldenburg, 2016) but in the virtual space.

However, not all the Twitch users use Twitch for entertainment in the same way. According to Hernandez (2016), Twitch can have visible influence on the game buying decision of the viewers. For some viewers Twitch serves a more pragmatic purpose (Hernandez 2016). It allows them the possibility to preview the games before purchasing them, thus avoiding the risk of dissatisfaction, especially because trailers and gameplay previews of new games are commonly much better than the actual releases.

Lastly, Twitch is method for gamers to learn the gameplay, for both the beginners and advanced players. Twitch can be called an online school of gaming where the teacher (streamer) is in direct communication with the students (viewers).

Frequently, the viewers in the chatrooms ask the streamer about good solutions and movements and share their experiences with others.

However, the previously referenced research does not deal with these motivations and groups in depth. The aim of this paper was to seek a more detailed analysis of the reasons for which people watch Twitch and find new perspectives to this question that was not covered in the sources that were used for the theoretical exploration of the topic.

3 Methodology

The author of the thesis has been involved in this research in one form or another for 4 years - ever since he became an active Twitch user himself. He has been a gamer who was able to spend 8 hours a day playing on a computer or console and spend 4-5 hours per day watching streams and tournaments on this platform, even trying to stream himself at some point. Therefore, he started this work with a personal knowledge of the Twitch user perspective.

This research started formally with the literature review. During the review, the articles, dissertations, and web-publications in the bibliography were analysed searching for existing information about the Twitch viewers. During this search, it was discovered that this customer group had not been thoroughly explored from the motivation perspective, which led to two main research questions: Why are Twitch users watching Twitch? and Why do they prefer to watch streams instead of playing themselves?

The main focus of this paper was to deepen our knowledge of these questions and provide answers based on the personal experiences of the viewers. To meet these goals, it was decided to use a qualitative approach since it generates what is claimed to be “rich” or “deep” data, usually in the form of text but sometimes as photographs, maps or other visual media as well (Grey 2016). To achieve this, the focus of this study was on the Twitch users and understanding their experiences on this platform.

3.1 Primary data collection method

The qualitative approach made it possible to understand the phenomenon within a context-specific setting (Gray 2009). For this purpose, interviews were decided to be used as the primary data collection method. According to Amunuzzaman (2016), “Interviews are a very systematic method by which a person deeply enters the life of a stranger and can bring out needed information and data for research purposes”. In this paper it was very important to understand the personal motivations of every user involved in the interviews. Moreover, interviews are a way for the participants

to be involved and talk about their views: the interviewees are able to discuss their perceptions and interpretations in regards to a given situation. (Bhamani 1999). This tool helped the author to provide more reliable data based on the personal experiences of the interviewees.

3.2 Form of interview

There are different approaches to an interview. In this study, an attempt was made to use the General interview guide approach, which is intended to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee (Shrivastava & Valenzuela 1999). Such an approach allows the interviewee to have more freedom in communicating with the interviewer.

At the beginning, the decision was to use standardized open-ended interviews with eleven questions. The same open-ended questions are usually asked all the interviewees (Valenzuela & Shrivastava 1999) in order to shorten the interview's duration and narrow the scope of conversation. Such an interview is generally easier to compare and analyse. However, after collecting the first 3 sample interviews, it was decided to use a different approach. The author realized that some of the questions did not provide valuable information as they did not correspond to the research objectives. On the other hand, some of the questions needed to be more specific, and the interviewer needed the possibility to ask additional question and ask the interviewees to elaborate on their answers.

To meet these needs, the form of the interviews was changed to the semi-structured interview in which the researcher has a list of key themes, issues and questions to be covered. In this type of interview, the order of the questions can be changed depending on the direction that the interview takes. An interview guide is also used, but additional questions can be asked (Bhamani 1999). This approach showed positive results after the first sample was collected. The interviews became more like cordial conversations and allowed the interviewees to be more open in discussing the key questions.

3.3 Interviews

There were twelve interviewees in the study all of whom were males with ages ranging from 18 to 27 years. Moreover, they were Russian by nationality. This category was selected for several reasons. First, according to the demographic data on Twitch, this age and gender group makes up approximately 70 % of all users. In addition, the fact that the author was Russian made it easier to interview Russian speakers and to eliminate miscommunications and the language barrier. Lastly, most of the interviewees knew the author personally, which made them more at ease throughout the interview and open about their answers.

All interviews were 15 to 35 minutes long and were conducted via Skype, WhatsApp, Discord or Viber. The audio from each interview was recorded and then transcribed according to the main 5 topics, excluding the information that was not essential to the research process.

First, the interviewees were asked to shortly introduce themselves by including name, age, occupation, place of study or work and hobbies. This aimed to warm up the interviewees and obtain some information about their backgrounds. Secondly, the attitude of the interviewees towards video games and their gaming backgrounds were discussed. This was meant to explore the gaming background of the persons and discover whether they were currently playing games or not. After this, the attitudes towards game streaming and Twitch were addressed in order to understand the background of the respondents as stream viewers and to guide the conversation towards streaming specifically. The main purpose of all these questions was to understand the background of the interviewees and to start the conversation about the main subject.

After this introduction, the interviewees were asked about their motivation to watch Twitch. If they played different games from the ones that they watched on Twitch, they were asked about the reason behind this. During this question's slot, additional questions were asked for further clarification with the aim of establishing a deeper understanding of the answers given by the respondents.

3.4 Observation as an additional primary data collection method

In order to deepen the understanding of the phenomena, I decided to use observations of forums as a secondary research method. A number of forums such as Bungie, Blizzard, HLTV, Quarter to free, and The Question have the pages discussing why people choose to watch Twitch instead of play themselves. The observations were made on several Russian and English speaking platforms and lasted numerous hours, until the forum respondents stopped introducing unique answers. The aim of this method is to find as many reasons and personal motivations and represent them according to the grouping previously introduced.

3.5 Analysis

The interviews, and forum observations create a significant amount of qualitative information that was later analysed using content analysis: a process used to classify, summarise, and tabulate qualitative data (Libweb 2003). The eventual aim is to explore emerging patterns, formulate conclusions, and group numerous motivations into clusters according to the nature of motive. I used this approach because it provides insight into the complex modes of human thought and language use. If used well, it is often considered as an "exact" research method (Utexas 2005).

First, the interviews' transcriptions were analysed using content analysis. All the unique answers were recorded and sorted. Afterwards, all the unique answers, collected during the observations were also analysed, recorded, and sorted. When all the motives had been collected and sorted, both data matrices were analysed for similarities and differences in order to find out the motivations that were mentioned in both sources and figure out which were unique elements brought up each research method (interview vs. forum).

4 Findings

The analysis of the data that was collected during the observations and interviews brought to light a number of similarities and differences between the two data collection methods that are displayed in the following table (see Table 1). The answers that were similar for both data collection methods (Interviews and Forums) are displayed in the first and second columns, whereas in the third column the answers that were unique for each method are represented.

Table 1. Motivations of Twitch viewers grouped by the data collection method

Interviews and Forums	Interviews and Forums additions	Forums
Avoidance of negative emotions in games		See development process of the game
Alternative to a TV		Discover unpopular games
Background noise		To see real-time review of the game
A sense of community		
Complexity of the game		
Game purchase decision making		
E-sports	<i>E-sports competitions as an entertainment</i>	
	<i>Betting</i>	
	<i>Learn from professional players</i>	
Experience the game	<i>Experience the game that person have already played</i>	Interviews
	<i>To see new approaches to walk through the games</i>	Avoid social component of multiplayer games
	<i>Avoidance of the uncomfortable gameplay</i>	Get surrounded with the specific gaming content
Lack of resources	<i>Absence of suitable gaming devices</i>	Nostalgia
	<i>Lack of skill</i>	See different events that person cannot visit himself
	<i>Lack of energy and time</i>	Just to kill time
Learning	<i>Gain knowledge about the game's universe</i>	
	<i>Learn and improve gaming skills</i>	
	<i>Study different software on streams (Photoshop, 3D max etc.)</i>	
Personality of a streamer		

For a deeper understanding of the motivations given in the table, all the aspects are more widely described hereafter. Gaming is an emotionally active activity, and some games are becoming really challenging for more and more gamers. Twitch allows players to disconnect from that emotional involvement and observe and relax. Hence, for some gamers, Twitch is a method to calm down after a game. Moreover, both sources stated numerous times that for them as gamers, Twitch became a partial or complete substitution of the TV. This should not come as a surprise and it is supported by the reviewed literature and Twitch's own surveys.

Background noise

This was one of the most popular answers in the interviews as well as in the different forums. Occasionally, Twitch users often leave streams on the background when they are busy with other activities from eating to gaming. Numerous gamers state that they switch it on instead of TV and enjoy listening to it in the background.

A sense of community

Twitch allows gamers to feel a sense of community or belonging. The ability to chat with other gamers, to streamer themselves, to ask questions and to receive the answers creates an accepting and engaging atmosphere. Some people state that they feel very comfortable on these streams and that they even have been able to make friends through the chat. It is even common for streams to have inside jokes and memes that give it a culture of its own that can vary among different streams.

The complexity of the game

The gaming industry produces immense amounts of different games, and every year, the numbers are constantly growing. Some of them are easy, but others require tens and, sometimes even hundreds, of hours to truly understand the gameplay and begin to acquire some mastery. For example, DOTA, a popular video game in the Twitch community, has more than one hundred heroes with at least four abilities and over 120 items with different effects and dozens of different combinations. As a player, it takes at least 50-60 hours to understand how most of these elements work. For a new player who is learning about this game alone, it takes even more time.

Therefore, gamers who do not have time to practice and learn but who want to somehow connect with the game use Twitch to fill the gap.

Game purchase decision making

In the modern world, the number of games being released is rising dramatically (appendix 10). Therefore, the process of choosing a game is becoming more and more complicated. Twitch gives gamers the opportunity to see the actual graphics and gameplay of a game that can significantly differ from the trailers of the game producers and impact on the final decision. It is a common reason for gamers to watch Twitch streams.

E-sports

E-sports became an integral part of the Twitch experience. They attract millions of people from all over the world (see Appendix 6). Such a discipline is considered differently by the gamers and includes several motivations. The main and the most popular one is entertainment. In the gaming subculture, E-Sports are considered no different than any other sports competitions that people watch all over the world. The most popular answer to the question of why people watch Twitch is, sarcastically: "Why does anybody watch football or any other sports?" For the gamers, such competitions are very personal. Some of them are very big fans of a team or a certain player, which draws them to certain streams. Moreover, tournaments showcase the best players in the world, and for the viewers, this becomes a learning opportunity.

More than 70% of the interviewees stated that they occasionally watched tournaments on Twitch to learn. Like any other sport, the most popular gaming tournaments feature professional commentators and analytics studios who dissect the gameplay, explain the movements, and give tips to the viewers. Such streams are translated to numerous different languages (the same as traditional sports competitions on TV or the internet), making them accessible to a wider audience on Twitch.

Lastly, E-Sport provides the opportunity to bet on different teams and events (for game elements, such as skins, or even real money). Betting encourages people to

watch the games and to follow the performance of their chosen team. Numerous respondents said that it was the only reason why they watched Twitch.

Experience the game

For numerous viewers, Twitch offers the opportunity to experience the game that they will not play themselves. This could be for numerous reasons. For some viewers, streams are the chance to experience a game that they have played long ago and therefore do not need to spend money to buy the game (if they do not have it) or to download it, especially because most of the time, 30-40 minutes of the gameplay is fulfilling enough. In addition, some viewers watch streams of novice players who have just started to play the game to see others go through the same steps that they went through some time ago. Some of the interviewees stated that it was interesting to see a person making his/her first steps into a game that they had been playing for a while or long ago.

There were respondents who reported watching Twitch to see the approaches that others used towards the game. Most single player games have numerous ways to go through them: different builds, quests, strategies... etc. Twitch allows users to see other approaches to the game so that they do not have to spend their own time walking through the whole game again.

Some viewers stated that they were interested in some of the games that the streamers played, but that they did not want to play them themselves. One reason for this was uncomfortable or complicated gameplay. In order to attract new audiences, game producers are frequently experimenting with the gameplay and it is very common for the gamer to be very interested in the storyline and characters, and yet the gameplay could be so uncomfortable that it makes it impossible for them to play. Therefore, they just watch the game played on the streams.

Lack of capable technology devices

This is one of the most understandable motivations. With the rapid development of technologies, games are becoming more and more sensitive to the power of the components on computers, whereas the price of a computer with high-capacity components capable of running the latest releases is relatively high. For people who

cannot afford expensive gaming devices, Twitch is the only way to experience these games. Exclusive games created similar motivation. In the modern gaming world there is strong competition between different playing platforms, therefore some games are being published exclusively on some of them. For example, the “Uncharted” series is published exclusively on PlayStation. The only chance for the gamers to see the gameplay is to buy a PlayStation or watch streams of the game on Twitch. The cost barrier concerns not only the technical aspect but the games as well, because in the modern gaming industry, the prices for the games are relatively high, and it is often challenging and irrational to buy all the latest releases.

One of the reasons why people preferred to watch Twitch instead of playing was an absence of energy and motivation to play themselves. Gaming is an energy-intensive activity which requires good concentration. Some respondents said that they often felt that they are no longer capable of keeping that level of concentration or being too lazy to sit in front of a computer and play. Therefore, they switched on Twitch and relaxed. Another important reason is the lack of skill. Some Twitch users were interested in, seeing streamers that can do certain tasks in the game that they personally cannot complete. In both cases, they were switching to Twitch.

The last motivation in this category was the lack of time. Commonly, gaming is a relatively time-consuming activity. For certain games such as CS:GO or DOTA 2, matches commonly last more than 30 minutes and implicate penalties for leaving the match before it was finished. Therefore, when the fans of these games often cannot afford spending so much time on playing, Twitch is an alternative.

Twitch as a learning platform

The most popular answer for both data collection methods was learning (10/11 interviewees have mentioned this motive). However, it is important to split this point into three different parts.

First, Twitch viewers aimed to improve their gaming skills. E-Sports competitions, streams of the professional players are helping the gamers to improve, to see the movements, tactics, builds, new spots, and new approaches to the game. For most respondents, watching very skilled players helped them to improve their gameplay. On the streams, they were learning in the real time by viewing and asking questions

in the chat to the viewers as well as the streamer. Some respondents claimed that people who are watching streams are much better developed as players and represent better understanding of the game.

Another objective was to learn about the games' background. The biggest games have vast background represented in books, web-sites, movies etc. For example World of Warcraft. Numerous streamers are narrating about this background of the game, retelling the plots of the different references, comparing them to the game and telling the tale of its creation and the contradictions between the original story and the actual game. Since the access to this information can be somehow limited and commonly require immense amount of time to be investigated, people prefer to watch streams where the most relevant information will be revealed.

Furthermore, Twitch provides viewers with the ability to learn about other software and activities available. For respondents, it was important that there are different channels on Twitch that are dedicated to drawing and programming where streamers have been using different computer software and explaining how to use it, or just sharing their experience and giving useful tips. Numerous respondents have emphasized that interest in this content made them watch streams.

The Personality of a streamer

For numerous respondents, the most important thing on Twitch was the streamer. His personality, appearance, ways of the communication with the viewers, sense of humour, and approach to the streaming content.

In both resources, respondents have stated that they are interested in watching streamers that can do something they can't do and play exceptionally. (Ivan Blednykh in his interview said: "This is a chance to see how the other person lives and does the things that I would like to do but can't. That person is making money doing the thing that I like: playing video games").

Some viewers saw streamers as TV personalities or YouTube bloggers. They have stated that they were interested in watching how they live and how do they earn money. Others wanted to see how others can play the games that they were playing themselves and what their skills are like.

Nevertheless, that the forums didn't generate a large amount of new motivations. Still, there were some additions. One example is the chance to see the game in the development process. There are some streamers on Twitch who are actively participating in the creation of the games and stream them before the actual release, sometimes in the middle of development process or on closed beta tests with limited access. In addition, numerous games developers have their own Twitch channel. For gamers who are very interested in the franchise, it is the only chance to see the game that they are waiting before it will be officially released, and even to have an impact on the game development.

Some of the comments made on the forums merely added clarifications to motives that have already been stated. Numerous forum users have stated that they were watching particular streamers who choose to play relatively unpopular games in order to find out about games they might not have heard about. Moreover, one of the forum users have opened the topic of decision-making by calling streams a "live review" of the game, where viewers can ask question to the streamer or other viewers and get their opinion.

The interviews have provided numerous new perspectives regarding the motivations. However, the interviews have mainly served to deepen the rationale of all the answers obtained, since format of interview led to a closer and deeper interaction between researcher and informant than forum boards.

One of the interviewees have focused on the concept of communication in Twitch. In different multiplayer games, especially ones involving teams, communication with teammates is inseparable part of the gaming experience. If a player wants to avoid any social contact in a game, he/she can switch on Twitch and enjoy the game without having to engage in the social component of the game.

Even though that Twitch has different genres of streams, the main focus of the platform is on gaming. Aside from streams, everything on the platform revolves around gaming, even the advertisements. This point is not completely exclusive to the interviews and it is partially covered in the other aspects, but this particular formulation was only in the interviews.

A couple of the interviewees mentioned that they have visited Twitch streams to feel

nostalgic through seeing someone else go through the same stepping stones that they have went over long ago. This aspect was partially covered previously, but it is important to state that it was more elaborately discussed in the interviews. Last, one of the interviewees mentioned that he watched different non-tournament events on the platform such as BlizzCon, ComicCon, TwitchCon... etc. since Twitch is the easiest way for him to do this.

Two more reasons that should be mentioned:

“I can cannot really explain what is the reasoning for me, why am doing this”

“Because I have nothing to do. Just to kill time.”

Based on the research findings and the quantity of unique data contributed by both research methods, it could be said that both research methods provided additional data that have increased the sheer amount of knowledge about the topic and broadened the answers to the research questions, however there is still vast amount of information that can be gathered, using other research methods..

5 Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

Streaming is a relatively new industry. It had started when the Twitch.tv was founded 7 years ago in 2011. Past researches have only scraped the surface when it comes to why people choose to spend their time watching gaming streams, as well as the overall subject of Twitch in the gaming industry. This might be due to the fact that gamers are still not fully accepted in society and researchers are not interested in such a class as Twitch users. An overview of numerous articles, dissertations, theses, books, and other resources have underlined that customer motivations are explained vaguely. There are no detailed studies on this topic. It is important to understand the motivations of this group of people as they are the most valuable asset Twitch has (Edge 2013). Therefore, it was decided to fill this knowledge gap about Twitch through these two research questions: “Why are people watching twitch and why do they prefer to watch, instead of play”. The only way to provide reliable information about this topic was to study the personal experiences of users watching Twitch streams.

In order to understand these personal opinions, interviews with open-ended questions were used as a primary research method. This form of interviews did not limit the interviewees and allow them to express any opinions and thoughts that they have on the topic and helped researcher to collect as many unique opinions as possible. One of the main difficulties in sampling the interviewees was to choose the right group, therefore the demographic and geographic aspects of twitch users were considered. Important factors were: age, gender, nationality, native language, accessibility, and openness of the respondent. During this research, I was discovered that Russia has the 5th highest population of Twitch users and that the biggest user group consists of males between 18 to 47 years old. The average user in this group was 21. Therefore the interviewees were from Russia in the age group of 18 to 28 tears old. Most of them were friends of the researcher or friends of friends. This made it easier to have open and productive conversations straight away.

The ability to speak with the Interviewees in the native language have eliminated the chance of misunderstandings due to language difficulties and made the conversations faster, easier, and more productive. Personal connection of the researcher to the interviewees gave him an opportunity to delve deeper into their answers and get the most reliable information. For more reliability, it was important to cover other age groups that were not reached by this sample. Therefore, the observation of Russian and English speaking forums was used as a secondary data collection method. All in all, both research methods led to the creation of two matrices of information with certain similarities and differences. At the very beginning, It was planned to split all the data into 5-6 big groups according to the general motivation. The answers gathered during the data collection related to the theoretical background information and included all the motivations that were covered in the literature reviewed.

However, the previous research discussed them much more vaguely and divided them into smaller motivational reasons. In the literature review, only 4 broad motivations were discussed without sufficient details: communication, interest in content, learning, and making purchase decisions. In contrast, the research has outlined 11 main motivations common for both research methods and 8 more unique motivations. Moreover, the analysis of the information gathered supported the observation that the difference between the two initial research questions: “Why people are watching Twitch?” and “Why people prefer to watch streams instead of playing themselves?” is much smaller than it appeared at first. All the answers presented in the findings respond to both. However, there could be some distinction drawn.

The motivations can be split into 2 major groups. First group containing the motivations connected to the limited access to the gaming equipment. Whereas the second is excluding these limitations. Motivations from both groups answer the first research questions, but only the second group responds to the second one. Therefore, I suppose that all the groups except reasons: “TV alternative”, “Lack of time”, “not in the mood”, and “background noise” explain why people prefer to watch Twitch instead of playing themselves.

However, there is one reason that appears the most often: It is the sense of community. I think that it is the most important thing behind the popularity of Twitch. This platform gives gamers the opportunity to communicate, share, and feel that they are not alone. Even from my experience, I remember how often I felt misunderstood, even in my own family. User Hechicera from the forum Quarter to Three has written: “I was always confused why my son, daughter and often all their friends would sit around and watch me game sometimes, at all ages, and still now when some visit from college. So while I was thinking ‘why are you all watching me?’ it did seem like a natural social activity (to them) and they were talking to each other more than me with random questions about things I did in the games. Well except the original Thief. Synchronized ducking was fun! I am 100% certain I was also far less entertaining than any streamer today, so it is just a habit and certainly was the way they acted with each other on consoles too”.

This research has reminded me of that, of why I am doing this. The story of the gaming community started long ago, from the relationship between brothers, sisters, and other family members at the very beginning of gaming industry, and inability to play on different platforms and need to share. From the very beginning, gaming was a shared activity, a representation of which we now see in Twitch. It is an effect rather hard to understand by non-gamers, but I perfectly remember the times when my brother, his friends, and I were sitting in front of our very first gaming console, a Play Station 1. They were playing and I was watching because I was too young to participate. That activity created the kind of atmosphere people now seek on Twitch because the gaming experience still has a significant sharing component embedded in it. Gamers are like a social class, with their own sense of humour, stars, idols, and loads of stories that will be shared within the community for years, from the incredible game of Alliance against Na’Vi on The International, about the God of Invoker: Miracle, about the rumours surrounding Half-Life 3, and the good old times of Quake: the godfather of all shooters. For us, games are not only a way to spend time. They are a part of history, a chance to live another life inside our own one with every completed game, to express ourselves, to feel, to empathize with the heroes that we impersonate, to cry, to exult, and to and to admire the stories that we have gone through in this world over and over again. This is important and valuable to us,

this world of games. Twitch gives gamers the opportunity to share all these feelings and to unite. From my perspective, it is hard to even for all the literature about gaming out there to give you a full understating of who are as a group: The gamers.

5.2 Limitations of the study

The interviews and observations have covered a large group of different Twitch users with different personalities. Still, the main emphasis of this research is made on people between 18 and 34 years old. Other groups are not covered that well. This narrows the potential amount of answers to the research question we can have but does not seriously affect the validity of the research itself. The information gathered during the research phase requires a deeper analysis to reach better results. It will be suitable to explore all the motivations from the perspective of social mechanisms, including analysis based on sociology, psychology, and other social sciences.

However, such analysis requires competency that I do not have. That kind of research would also be too time-consuming. For more comfortable use of this research (by Twitch or streamers for example), it will be important to group the motivations according to age and geography of customer segments, which requires deeper analysis of each customer group in each country and a bigger number of respondents. This would be too complex for one research paper written by one person. The lack of theoretical basis and academic literature about the subject is an additional limiting factor. Streaming is a relatively new phenomenon in the world and is therefore insufficiently studied academically. This paper is a mere basis for future research aimed at grouping much of the previous literature and newly-created knowledge in one source.

Last, it is important to mention that still there is a chance that I have missed some information during the content analysis and observations. However, this factor will nor seriously affect the reliability of this study.

5.3 Recommendations for further studies

As I have mentioned above, there is additional work to be done to make this research more valid. The following suggestions are made to future researchers:

Explore the same phenomena from the perspective of the other customer segments and in the context of different geographies. Explore the motivations of streamers instead of viewers.

Explore the importance and ranking of each motivation and their relation to the different age groups and regions.

Research all the information gathered during this research from a social studies perspective and try to explain the motivations from a scientific point of view.

The statements made by the interviewees during the research led me to an additional interesting topic that can be researched: the effect of streams on the viewer's gaming skills." A future exploration could compare people who watch streams and those who don't in regards to their gaming skills.

5.4 Reflection

This research helped me become more mature in my formulation of research and approach to work. It has made me study a lot and learn not only about Twitch, but about psychology, sociology, research methods, the differences between them, and positive/negative attributes. It also taught me to approach the methods I am using more seriously and outlined the importance of preparation not only in the writing component but in the research one as well. I became more familiar with the methods of data collection and analysis, reading some books about them, and the cases in which each method is the most suitable and relevant one.

Moreover, it has shown me how different people are and how differently we all consider the same phenomenon, even when it comes to things as simple as streaming. It is interesting to see what each person perceives as more important and useful, and how differently we all talk about the same things. I have frequently seen that people have the same motivations, but talk about them in completely different ways. This research one more time echoed how important such studies are and how important it is to be ready to hear what others have to say and how different we all are.

Last, working on this thesis reminded me of the good old memories gaming has given in the past. They make me smile every time one of them comes to mind. This is not just a mere paper to get rid of my university studies, it is personal. It is part of my story, a story that I am proud of.

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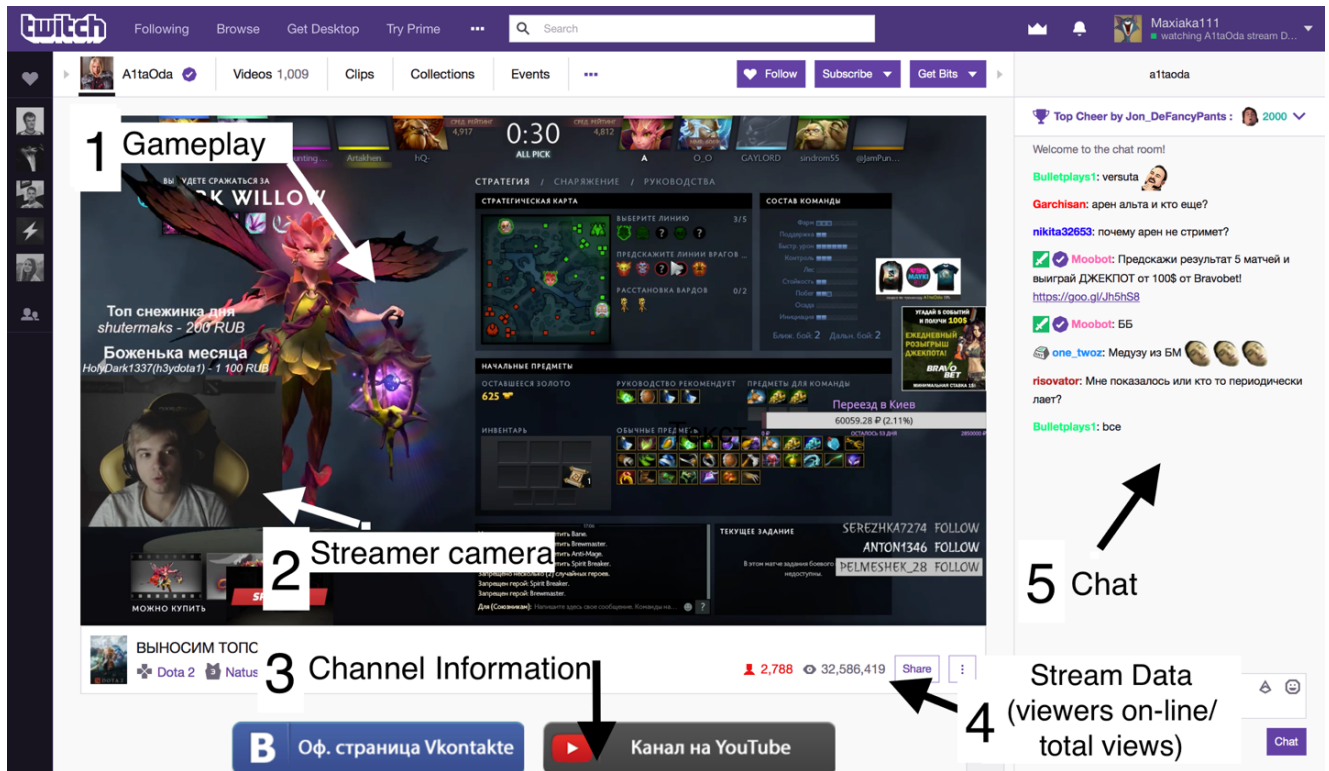
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Wingfield, Nick. 2014. What's Twitch? Gamers Know, and Amazon Is Spending \$1 Billion on It. 25 august 2014. Accessed on 3 November 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/26/technology/amazon-nears-a-deal-for-twitch.html>

Appendices

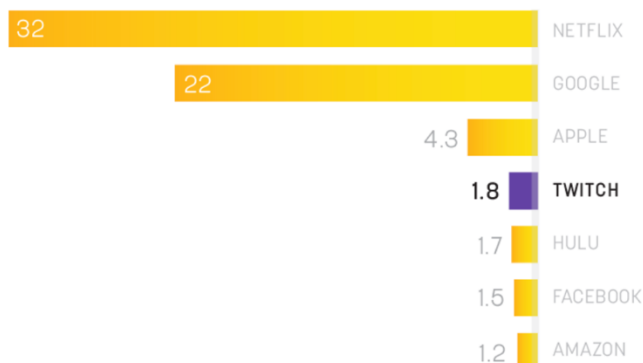
Appendix 1. Typical Twitch cahannel interface. Retrieved from:

<https://go.twitch.tv/a1taodahttps://go.twitch.tv/a1taoda>



Appendix 2. Percetage of U.S. peak Internet traffic produced by the companies.

Retrieved from <http://twitchadvertising.tv/traffic/>

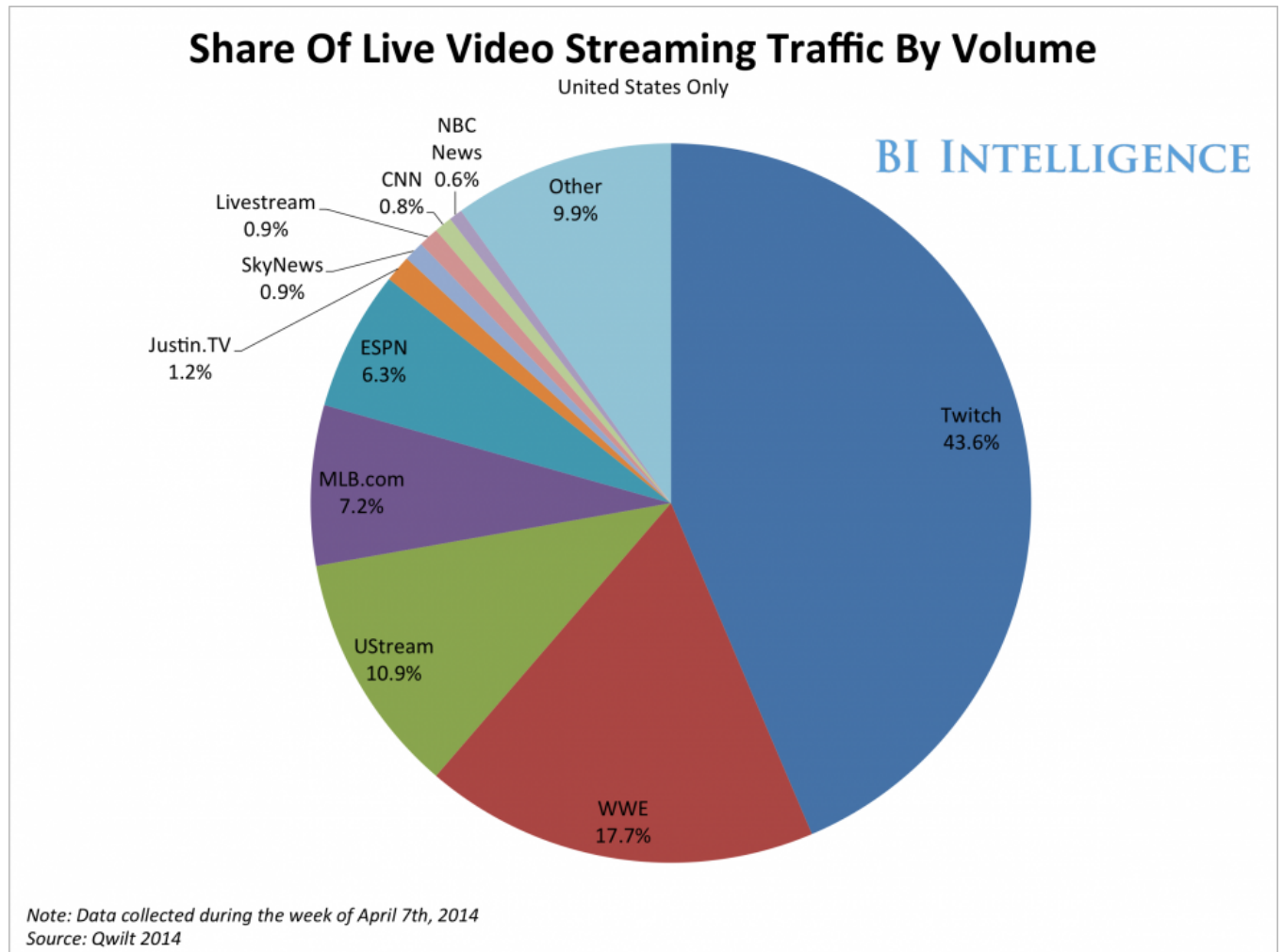


Percentage of U.S. peak Internet traffic produced by companies' networks

For week ending Feb 3, 2014

Source: Deep Field. "Apple Quietly Builds New Networks." *The Wall Street Journal*. February 3, 2014

Appendix 3. Share of live video streaming traffic in U.S. by volume. Retrieved from: <http://www.businessinsider.com/statistics-about-twitch-2014-8>



Appendix 4. Twitch unique viewers and visits in mobile and web. July-August 2016
Retrieved from: <http://www.businessinsider.com/statistics-about-twitch-2014-8>

LAST MONTH JUL 26, 2014 - AUG 24, 2014	UNIQUES	PEOPLE	VISITS	PAGE VIEWS
Web	46,593,936	25,488,988	311,794,144	829,620,160
Mobile Web	10,620,364	---	22,084,680	60,531,396
Online	35,973,572	---	289,709,464	769,088,764

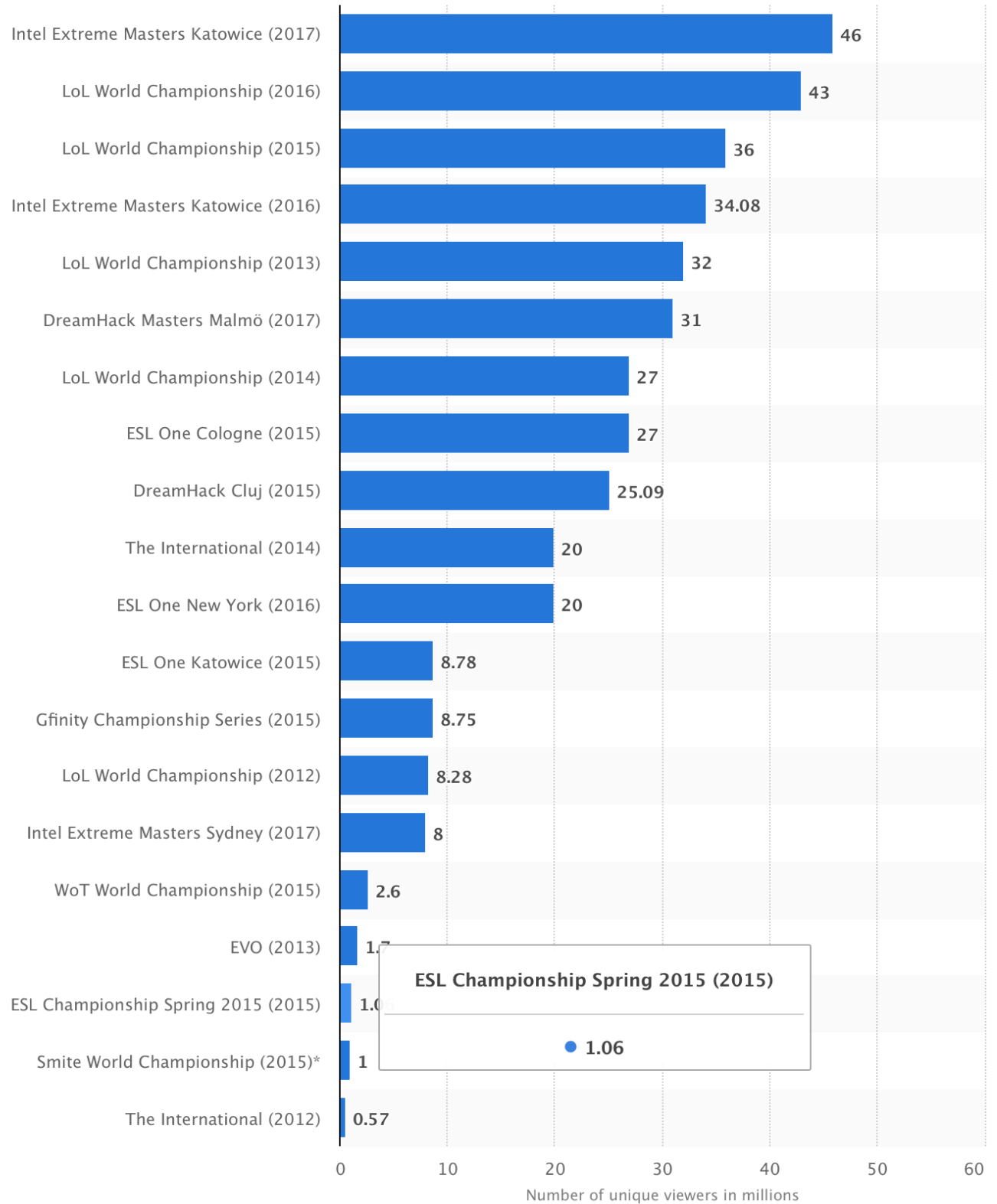
Updated Aug 25, 2014 • Next: Aug 26, 2014 by 9AM PDT

Appendix 5. Twitch viewership analysis for 1 week.

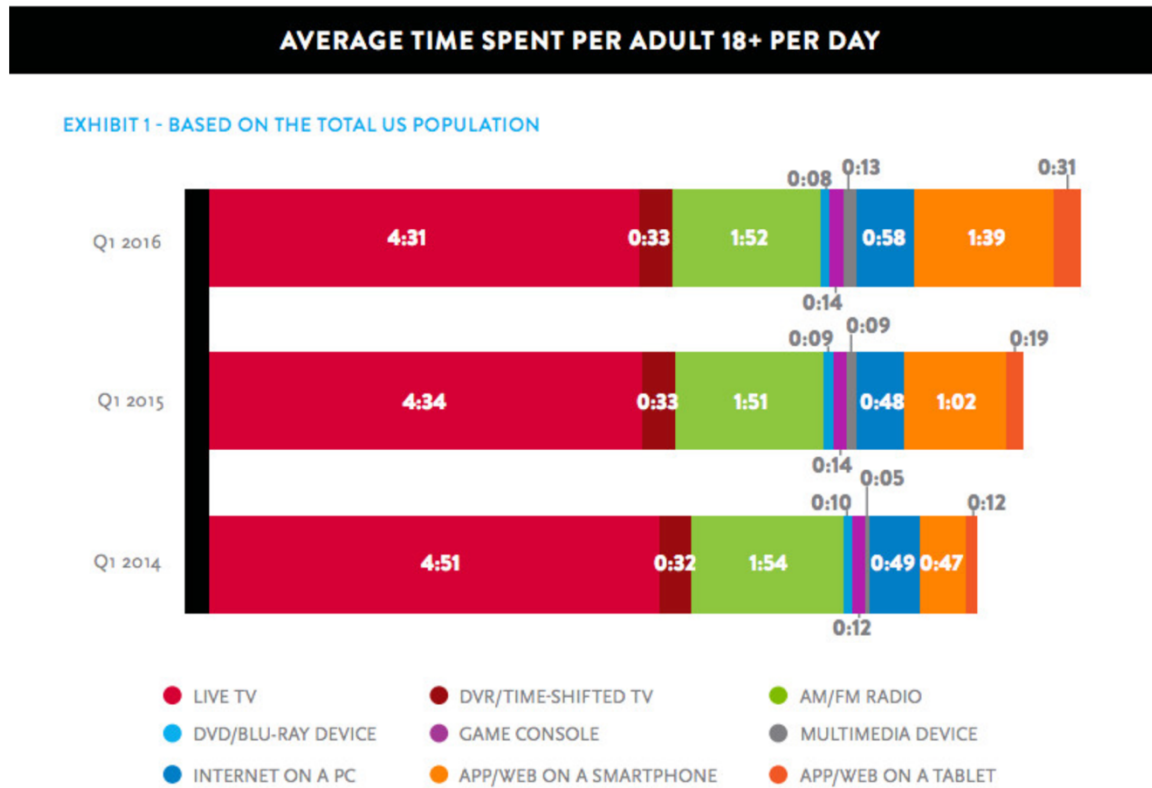
Retrieved from: <https://www.twitchtools.com/stats?type=twitch&method=month>

Day and time.	Viewers	On-Lin Streams	On-ii	Avrg. Viewi	Avrg. Strea
Nov 7, 2017, 3:48:00	591,834			16,644	
Nov 7, 2017, 2:12:00	472,132			14,308	
Nov 7, 2017, 12:36:00	416,96			14,143	
Nov 7, 2017, 11:00:00	443,417			16,654	
Nov 7, 2017, 9:24:00	498,748			21,7	
Nov 7, 2017, 7:48:00	589,403			27,567	
Nov 7, 2017, 6:12:00	663,541			31,242	
Nov 7, 2017, 4:36:00	694,808			30,964	
Nov 7, 2017, 3:00:00	842,774			30,243	
Nov 7, 2017, 1:24:00	970,992			32,107	618,4609
Nov 6, 2017, 11:48:00	1,119,336			34,256	23,5572
Nov 6, 2017, 10:12:00	1,001,967			30,567	
Nov 6, 2017, 8:36:00	913,943			27,257	
Nov 6, 2017, 7:00:00	778,576			23,194	
Nov 6, 2017, 5:24:00	693,204			20,102	
Nov 6, 2017, 3:48:00	557,501			16,401	
Nov 6, 2017, 2:12:00	453,032			14,35	
Nov 6, 2017, 12:36:00	406,71			14,035	
Nov 6, 2017, 11:00:00	438,008			15,879	
Nov 6, 2017, 9:24:00	490,698			19,893	
Nov 6, 2017, 7:48:00	582,385			25,501	
Nov 6, 2017, 6:12:00	665,234			29,336	
Nov 6, 2017, 4:36:00	751,002			31,005	
Nov 6, 2017, 3:00:00	885,235			31,818	
Nov 6, 2017, 1:25:00	1,050,148			36,067	634,627333
Nov 5, 2017, 11:48:00	1,249,772			39,738	24,6440667
Nov 5, 2017, 10:12:00	1,186,544			37,691	
Nov 5, 2017, 8:36:00	1,122,059			33,358	
Nov 5, 2017, 7:00:00	988,986			30,826	
Nov 5, 2017, 5:24:00	936,421			27,202	
Nov 5, 2017, 3:48:00	823,511			23,192	
Nov 5, 2017, 2:12:00	738,335			20,823	
Nov 5, 2017, 12:36:00	634,122			20,335	
Nov 5, 2017, 11:00:00	588,768			23,415	
Nov 5, 2017, 9:24:00	590,001			28,506	
Nov 5, 2017, 7:48:00	667,07			34,039	
Nov 5, 2017, 6:12:00	716,506			38,154	
Nov 5, 2017, 4:36:00	824,659			40,094	
Nov 5, 2017, 3:00:00	1,185,213			41,524	
Nov 5, 2017, 1:24:00	1,384,255			44,091	750,8379
Nov 4, 2017, 11:48:00	1,487,282			43,515	32,1992
Nov 4, 2017, 10:12:00	1,464,398			41,426	
Nov 4, 2017, 8:36:00	1,376,684			37,046	
Nov 4, 2017, 7:00:00	1,114,218			34,08	
Nov 4, 2017, 5:24:00	931,546			28,517	
Nov 4, 2017, 3:48:00	772,452			22,734	
Nov 4, 2017, 2:12:00	587,723			18,246	
Nov 4, 2017, 12:36:00	1,406,563			16,203	
Nov 4, 2017, 11:00:00	1,199,927			18,875	
Nov 4, 2017, 9:24:00	694,846			25,314	
Nov 4, 2017, 7:48:00	649,087			31,906	
Nov 4, 2017, 6:12:00	1,008,413			35,251	
Nov 4, 2017, 4:36:00	1,110,986			36,187	
Nov 4, 2017, 3:00:00	1,213,527			36,996	
Nov 4, 2017, 1:24:00	1,354,881			38,718	727,1308
Nov 3, 2017, 11:48:00	1,418,206			38,467	31,0009333
Nov 3, 2017, 10:12:00	1,486,030			34,479	
Nov 3, 2017, 8:36:00	1,098,168			31,089	
Nov 3, 2017, 7:00:00	994,484			27,808	
Nov 3, 2017, 5:24:00	847,125			23,886	
Nov 3, 2017, 3:48:00	741,834			19,284	
Nov 3, 2017, 2:12:00	557,756			16,489	
Nov 3, 2017, 12:36:00	479,911			15,823	
Nov 3, 2017, 11:00:00	460,691			17,465	
Nov 3, 2017, 9:24:00	518,352			21,612	
Nov 3, 2017, 7:48:00	638,487			28,518	
Nov 3, 2017, 6:12:00	708,877			29,947	
Nov 3, 2017, 4:36:00	766,35			33,214	
Nov 3, 2017, 3:00:00	876,757			32,025	
Nov 3, 2017, 1:24:00	992,473			33,553	715,258083
Nov 2, 2017, 11:48:00	1,090,127			35,824	26,9106
Nov 2, 2017, 10:12:00	1,118,609			32,385	
Nov 2, 2017, 8:36:00	1,009,579			27,031	
Nov 2, 2017, 7:00:00	976,1			23,721	
Nov 2, 2017, 5:24:00	836,156			20,698	
Nov 2, 2017, 3:48:00	657,917			16,912	
Nov 2, 2017, 2:12:00	501,697			13,833	
Nov 2, 2017, 12:36:00	432,545			12,883	
Nov 2, 2017, 11:00:00	419,359			14,157	
Nov 2, 2017, 9:24:00	472,078			18,223	
Nov 2, 2017, 7:48:00	578,703			23,925	
Nov 2, 2017, 6:12:00	660,321			29,302	
Nov 2, 2017, 4:36:00	702,571			32,015	
Nov 2, 2017, 3:00:00	811,542			31,548	
Nov 2, 2017, 1:24:00	932,783			33,359	665,147667
Nov 1, 2017, 11:48:00	1,040,278			35,283	24,3877333
Nov 1, 2017, 10:12:00	997,121			32,813	
Nov 1, 2017, 8:36:00	975,141			28,35	
Nov 1, 2017, 7:00:00	891,231			25,271	
Nov 1, 2017, 5:24:00	778,562			22,191	
Nov 1, 2017, 3:48:00	647,834			17,922	
Nov 1, 2017, 2:12:00	512,415			15,137	
Nov 1, 2017, 12:36:00	443,814			13,381	
Nov 1, 2017, 11:00:00	444,072			14,148	
Nov 1, 2017, 9:24:00	496,305			17,971	
Nov 1, 2017, 7:48:00	594,541			23,624	
Nov 1, 2017, 6:12:00	665,294			29,627	
Nov 1, 2017, 4:36:00	709,795			32,697	
Nov 1, 2017, 3:00:00	818,339			32,345	
Nov 1, 2017, 1:24:00	927,457			33,168	707,280071
Oct 31, 2017, 11:48:00	1,031,005			34,708	24,9285333
Oct 31, 2017, 10:12:00	1,059,909			32,187	
Oct 31, 2017, 8:36:00	967,018			28,045	
Oct 31, 2017, 7:00:00	891,695			25,424	
Oct 31, 2017, 5:24:00	764,184			22,681	
Oct 31, 2017, 3:48:00	661,11			18,473	
Oct 31, 2017, 2:12:00	502,426			15,214	
Oct 31, 2017, 12:36:00	446,822			13,579	
Oct 31, 2017, 11:00:00	435,14			14,145	
Oct 31, 2017, 9:24:00	490,093			17,776	
Oct 31, 2017, 7:48:00	600,819			23,816	
Oct 31, 2017, 6:12:00	705,813			29,461	
Oct 31, 2017, 4:36:00	781,678			32,685	
Oct 31, 2017, 3:00:00	903,708			33,056	
Oct 31, 2017, 1:24:00	1,037,165			34,956	679,208833
					25,0804
					687,243949
					26,5885833

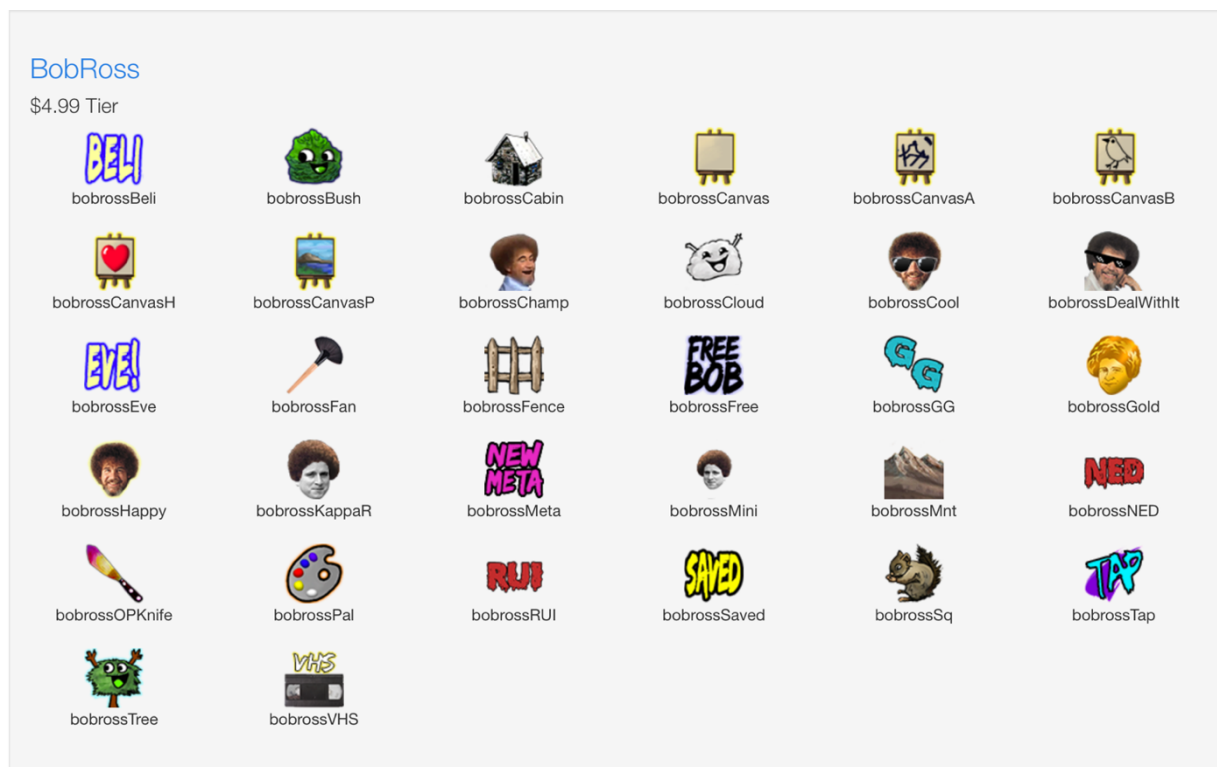
Appendix 6. Number of unique viewers of selected eSports tournaments worldwide from 2012 to 2017 (in millions) Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/507491/esports-tournaments-by-number-viewers-global/>



Appendix 7. Average time spent watching TV per day, by adults 18+ in the U.S.
Retrieved from: <https://www.recode.net/2016/6/27/12041028/tv-hours-per-week-nielsen>






















Appendix 8. Bob Ross emotes on Twitch. Retrieved from:
<https://twitchemotes.com/channel/bobross>



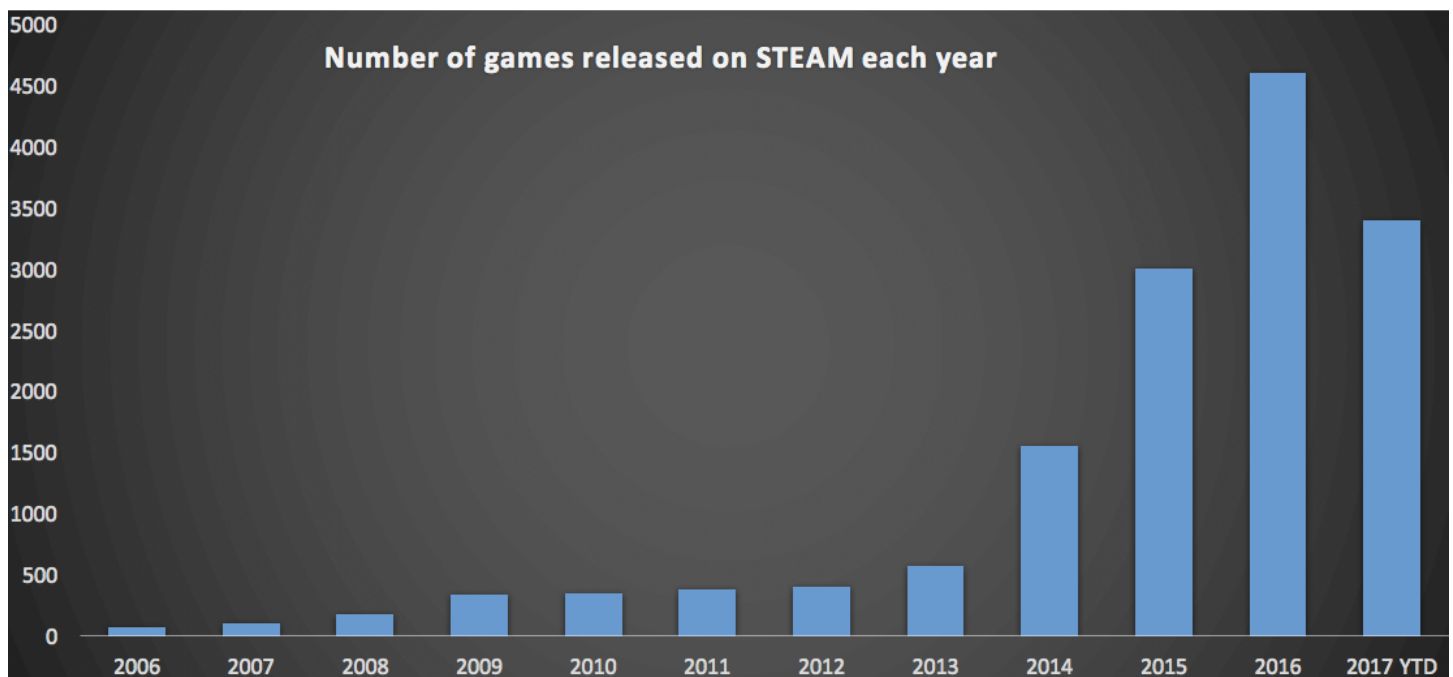
Appendix 9. Emote 2015 ranking. Retrieved from:

<https://www.twitch.tv/year/2015>

2015 Emote Power Rankings

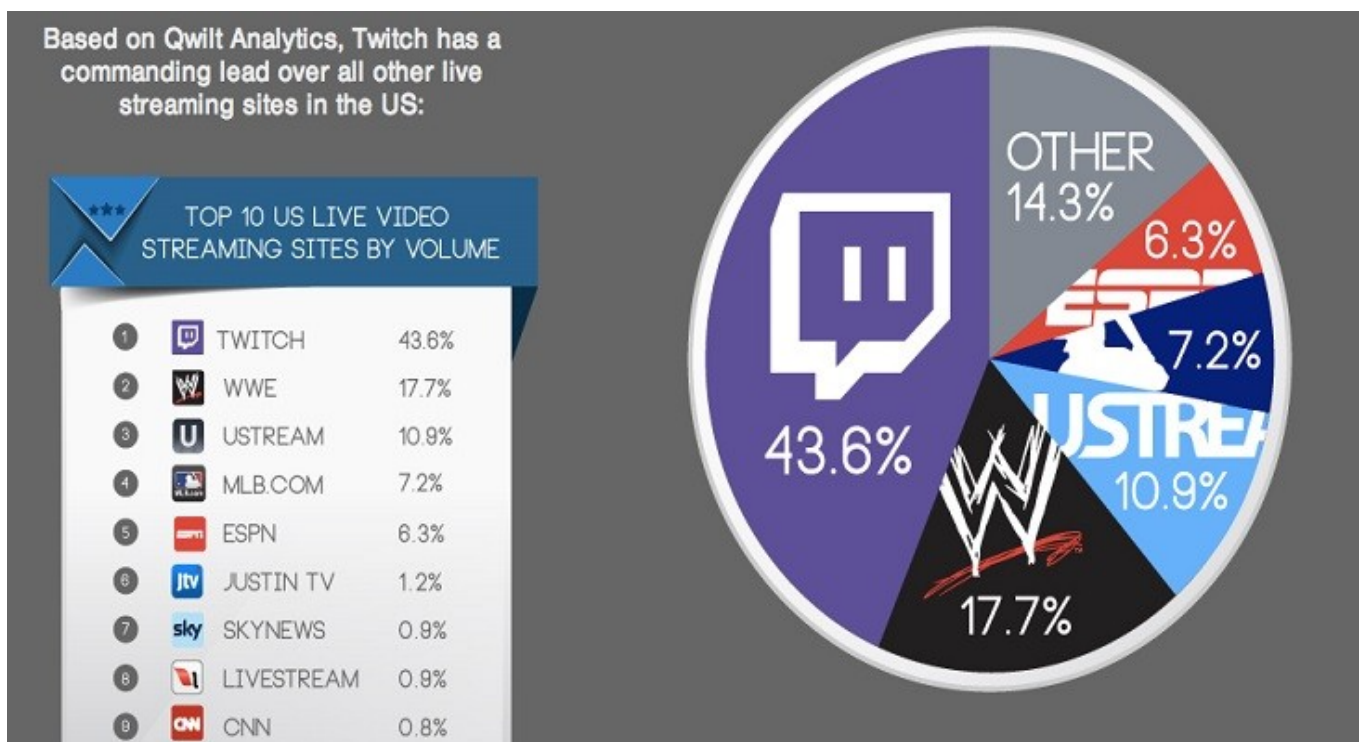
1	 Kappa	2	 :D	3	 <3
4	 :]	5	 PogChamp	6	 DansGame
7	 BibleThump	8	 Kreygasm	9	 4Head
10	 KappaRoss	11	 :[(12	 :P
13	 MingLee	14	 Keepo	15	 EleGiggle
16	 WutFace	17	 KappaPride	18	 FailFish
19	 PJSalt				

Appendix 10. Number of games released in Steam each year. (2006-2017) Retrieved from: <https://www.vg247.com/2017/09/12/the-number-of-games-released-on-steam-in-2017-is-set-to-overtake-the-number-of-releases-between-2006-and-2014/>



Appendix 11. Top 10 US video streaming sites by volume. (2014)

Retrieved from: <http://news.softpedia.com/news/Twitch-Is-the-Most-Popular-Live-Streaming-Service-in-the-Entire-World-Report-439550.shtml>



Appendix 12. Top 5 video entertainment sites in the world. Retrieved from:
<http://news.softpedia.com/news/Twitch-Is-the-Most-Popular-Live-Streaming-Service-in-the-Entire-World-Report-439550.shtml>

Global Domination

Twitch consistently ranks in the top 5 video entertainment sites worldwide







Selected Country Rankings. Source: Qwilt Video Analytics, Week of April 7th, 2014

 Brazil		
1	 Google	50.4%
2	 Netflix	26.6%
3	 VK.com	2.2%
4	 Twitch	1.9%
5	 UOL	1.7%

 Peru		
1	 Google	61.7%
2	 Netflix	13.7%
3	 VK.com	2.1%
4	 Twitch	1.0%
5	 DailyMotion	0.7%

 Taiwan		
1	 Google	51.8%
2	 DailyMotion	11.9%
3	 Twitch	2.7%
4	 Youku	2.3%
5	 QQ.com	1.0%

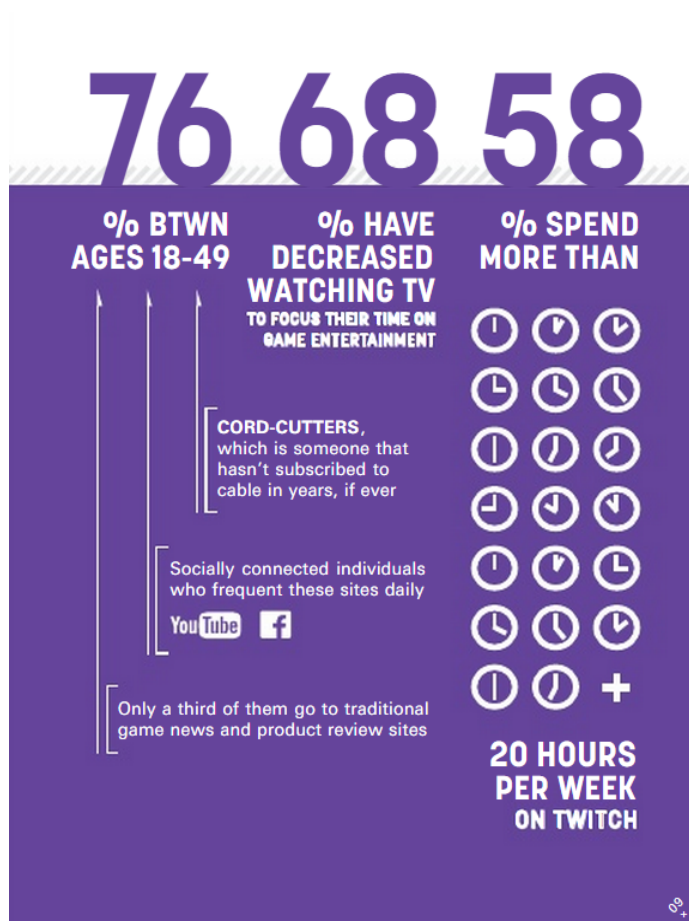
 Thailand		
1	 Google	57.5%
2	 DailyMotion	14.0%
3	 Instagram	1.2%
4	 Facebook	0.4%
5	 Twitch	0.3%

 United Kingdom		
1	 Google	37.0%
2	 Netflix	27.6%
3	 Sky	6.3%
4	 BBC	3.0%
5	 Twitch	2.7%

 United States		
1	 Netflix	57.0%
2	 Google	17.5%
3	 Amazon	3.1%
4	 Hulu	3.0%
5	 Twitch	1.5%

Appendix 13. Twitch users demography (2014)

Retrieved from: <http://synergy.global/rapid-growth-esports-show-provides-legitimate-alternative-real-sport-brands/>



Interviews scripts

Informant 1

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

My name is Ilya Barykin, I have finished university «Management and society communications: international management» and I am a mid user of computer games, for now I am playing computer games for 16 years.

What is your attitude to the computer games?

I like computer games: I am big fan of good games which I perceive as good. I perceive computer games as an actor, I like music, decorations of the game, personal lines of every character, how full is the character and how his actions are impaction on the world of the game. For me good computer game is like a book but in the game you can make an action yourself.

What do you think about streams?

It is a good method to earn money, I see the streamer as a TV man/ commentators or actors. It is interesting as well to look on the commentators of the games. It looks the same for me as that commentator who is telling about the football game. I see It as positive action, because not every person have a chance to play the game or they are interested in buying it and they have a chance to make opinion.

What do you think about Twitch?

Twitch is a good platform to learn. As well it is cool to relax and see it as a show.

It is one of the most popular streaming platform, but it is pretty toughly regulated by the rules of the platform. It is very friendly place for the viewer.

What is your attitude to this platform?

All in all I see it as positive and I do not take any negative from this platform. It gives me an entertaining content and It makes me happy.

Are you watching Twitch?

Yes, sometimes.

What content are you watching on this platform?

It depends. Sometimes it is MOBA games like e-sports games but only in tournaments, or I watch the games that I want to play or come through but I can't. Or pro-gamers streams. As well I watch people who has few viewers and just communicate with this person to find something out for myself.

Why are you watching Twitch instead of playing?

Because I have nothing to do. Gust to kill time. By twitch I can keep in touch with all the gaming world or update my knowledge about games. If don't have money, I am not ready to spend money on the game, that I think is not worth it. I want to see how good is the game. Or I don't have time or conditions to play. Sometimes it is too long to download the game so I just watch. For me it the same as people watching sports or movies. Sometimes it is interesting how other people can play. Or I am just too lazy to play myself. As well sometimes is very hard to find the interest in game, especially if the games is very complicated. Only after you see the other person playing it on a good level or only starting to play, you become interested in it. But for some people, reaction of the streamer is becoming much more important than the game itself.

Informant 2

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

Hey my name is Ivan Blednykh, at the moment I'm studying in St. Petersburg state university on the faculty of psychology and writing my diploma. As well I am working in the touring company which provides light and sound apparatus.

What what is your attitude to the computer games?

Pretty normal if it is staying in limits if you are not spending too much time on them. I like them and I have a big gaming experience.

And what about gaming streams then and Twitch in particular?

I think it's very interesting thing if you want to learn something about the game.

When I don't want to spend time and nerves playing myself, I prefer watching.

Twitch itself is pretty popular platform, in gaming industry it could be even called a brand. I perceive Twitch as the most comfortable and understandable platform from user point of view, with pretty loyal auditorium and various content.

But why are you actually watching Twitch, what is your personal motivation?

Well, firstly, when I don't have a enough money for to buy the game or if I think that it doesn't worth the money that it costs, I prefer to watch it. Secondly, for me is can reduce risks to be unsatisfied with the game because you can see the gameplay how it is and if there are some contradictions between what was shown for example in trailer or press release and the actual appearance of the game, I will not spend my money and regret it.

Is there anything else the motivates you?

As well when I'm lazy to play myself I'm watching. Twitch is a good background content with is an alternative to TV that you switch on when you are busy with some other stuff, for example when I am drawing, I can switch it on and take care of my «business», so to say.

And why do you prefer actually watching and spend your time on Twitch when you have an ability to play?

For me Twitch streamers are the same as bloggers on YouTube: so is it's a chance to see how the other person is leaving and doing the things that I would like to do but I'm not doing. He's making money with the thing that he likes: playing games.

Furthermore, I see Twitch as s small change in the communication between players, because previously it was more about forums or in game contact or just between you and your friends, but now you can sit in the company of the people who are thinking the same as you and love gaming, and you can communicate.

As well you don't need to train or practice a lot in the games which are requiring a very high involvement and pretty long period of time to at least understand how this game is working, for example in DOTA 2- there are more that 100 heroes with at least 4 unique abilities and more that 100 unique artifacts which are affecting the

game. As a player you need loads of hours to at least have some basic Idea about how all this stuff is working. And if you, as a player do not have this time and patience to learn all this, then you are watching, as I do sometimes.

Finally, for me as a gamer it's a chance to socialize with the others if I want or to avoid any social contacts. When you're playing multiplayer games you always depended on your team and you need to communicate. If I love the game but I don't want to communicate with the other people, I'm just watching or if I want to avoid negative emotions that can appear in process of communication I am watching the others playing.

Informant 3

So let's begin from pretty simple questions where are you from what are you studying what are your hobbies and what are you like doing?

My name is Konstantin I'm 20 years old, at the moment I'm studying at the school of management SPBGU the fourth course. On the specialization: «Information management». At the moment I am studying Japanese language. Because I am a big fan of anime and manga. And therefore I have decided to study the original language that they are written in.

Tell me please what is your attitude the computer games?

I love computer games, when I was younger I was playing them with my friends. One of my favorites was Call of Duty. Later on I decided to stop gaming because it became too boring for me.

Ok, so you have some experience in gaming! What do you think then about the pretty close topic: Streaming?

I can say that for me it is the same as YouTube videos, but the difference is that you can keep in contact with the person who is playing at the moment, with the author. I am watching them occasionally.

What do you think about Twitch as a platform then?

It is an interesting platform that provides people with an opportunity to make money and from the other hand to people who are not working but watching to actually see how other people are playing and entertain themselves.

Cool, very clear answer. And why are you watching streams even though that you are not playing games anymore?

I personally like watching a different YouTubers or some comics like Maddison who are streaming. I cannot really explain what is the reasoning for me, why am doing this. But something gets me there I'm really I really like doing it.

Ok let's think a bit about it, why are you are not watching this people on YouTube then, but using Twitch to watch them playing?

For me, understanding that this process is going on-line when you are actually watching stream. It unconsciously makes more interested in the process, so I understand it is this happening right now. It makes me feel more involved into the process, I think.

So am I got you right that you are actually feel personally more connected to the streamer on Twitch than in the YouTube?

Yes, for me, a possibility to feel contact with this person is pretty important.

Can you think of something else that motivates you regularly watch Twitch?

Yes, even though that Twitch is more focused on gaming streams, I have found out that there are different streams that are not connected to the games but to the different software on the computer for: drawing/ game design/ programming etc. On that streams people are showing how to use this software in the real time so I can learn something new about the software that interests me. As well, when I have interest I sometimes visit the gaming channels with small amount of users.

And what interest you the most in this channels?

For me to chance to communicate especially on the small channels where amount of people in chat is pretty small and streamer can keep in contact with you. He is talking with the auditorium and answering to your comments. Or other people in the chat start some interesting conversation that is very interesting to me.

And if we were talking specifically about the gaming streams why are you watching them?

Actually I mostly watch Madison who came from YouTube so I actually watch him just because of his personality. So if he will be streaming something else I will watch him anyways. As well I really like the fact that when I want to know something about the game I don't need to spend loads of time on it. I can watch it everywhere and stop anytime. As well I can put it aside and watch the other person i playing without being fully involved but concentrate when I want like watching a movie or TV.

Ok, in this case how can streamer grab your attention? When you are scrolling different channels what can motivate you stop and start watching one or another streamer?

When I go on the other streams usually I need some «info reason»: for example it could be very popular blogger or celebrity (Like Navalny (president candidate in Russia)) who will stream and everybody is watching it. Or, sometimes I'm just searching for some trash happening on stream or streamer with a very good sense of humor, this works for me as a show actually. And that motivates me to stay.

Informant 4

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

I am Dmitry Perepelkin, I am finishing my education in JAMK University of applied sciences on specialization Investments Analytic. I love traveling, watching documentaries and series. I love hanging around with my friend and family and reading books. At the moment, trading and everything that is connected to Finances is the main aspect of my interest. I am a big fan of different computer games in different genres mainly: shooters, MMOs and strategies.

What is your attitude to the computer games?

Positive, if it not becoming an addiction. They are helping to relax and have fun with your friends. Some games help me to find something new about this world.

What do you think about streams?

I perceive it as one of the ways to spend your free time, it is suitable when you are tired and you want to watch something on side for when you are eating. Sometimes when you do not have time or abilities to play your favorite games, you are able to watch.

What is your attitude to this platform

This is the most popular streaming platform in the internet with extremely huge auditorium and with the key figures of gaming industry(pro-players/ game developers/ YouTubers and the celebrities of gaming world). It provides people with an opportunity to find any content that they are interested in it can be learning how to play or just a charismatic streamer that has a very good sense of humor. As well, championships that are streamed on Twitch are bringing there some people who are interested in cyber sports.

Are you watching Twitch?

At the moment I am not watching it, but previously I was spending there 1-2 hours per day a couple of times in a week.

What content were you watching on Twitch?

I was watching shooters and MMOs streams with very interesting streamers with good personalities.

Good social humor on actual themes, because I didn't have a chance to play myself, so I have watched on the others (and it was a chance for me to get into this game like I was playing it myself). As well it was a form of nostalgia. For me it is a chance to play this game from the perspective of the other person and feel again the same things as I have been feeling earlier when I was on his position.

Why were you watching Twitch instead of playing?

Don't have good enough computer. I don't want to go too deep into the game, because it is pretty hard for me to stop playing therefore I am watching the game process and I know that I can stop it anytime. I can actually call it just a new opportunity to send your time it is like a show for me: basically it is combination of gaming process and entertaining show.

Informant 5

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

Hey my name is Mike hello I am 27 years old I have finished the Omsk national University on the faculty of Philology.

Where are you working?

Now I am working in the PR manager in the cloud service IT Grad.

What is your attitude to the computer games?

Attitude is very positive I'm playing from eight years I have started from the very first consoles like Nintendo long ago.

What do you actually think about streaming?

I think that for me personally it's necessary to split the streaming on two different disciplines first: professional gamers or very high skilled amateurs who are streaming. For me this streams are like teachers they are actually making the educational role, because there are some games like DOTA 2 for example, which have a very high level needed to to get positive emotion from the game and if the person is really interested in this game but he's not able to spend so much time to play it and to learn how to play but he's really want to be involved in this culture he can watch it.

When you're watching professionals you can grow yourself are and you can really grow faster, comparing to the people who are just playing and not watching, because when professionals are playing you can see some movement that they are doing keep them in mind and be better.

Second are the streams that are made to entertain people, when streamer is making a show. I don't really like them so I'm not watching them. I prefer playing myself if I have a chance.

But if you prefer to play yourself, why do you spend your time watching twitch?

Usual which tournaments or professional players when I understand it now at the moment the guys will show really cool game in the very good team which I am not able to reach. I like watching the game of the team who is communicating between each other and playing as one whole mechanism. In the regular public games, it's very hard to have the same level of communication, on tournaments I am able to see the gaming on the level which is much higher than the average. For me such team play is opening the real potential of the game what it has been made for. And it is very hard to open this potential when you're playing alone.

Informant 6

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

My name is Mikhail. I study in high school of management in St. Petersburg on specialization of HRM. In the closest past I was actively playing different computer games and watching twitch, currently I have left this exercises

What is your attitude to the computer games?

I respect and love computer games, I was practicing a lot, but due to the time expenditures that I have with the games I have left this activity.

What do you think about streams?

I think that this is a new era of the development of cyber sports and gaming. A lot of things are moving now into the internet, so I see that internet as the future and Twitch as representation of this.

This is a relatively new platform. I started using it 3-4 years ago.

At the very beginning I have been using it for watching tournaments in Dota 2. I am aware of the completely different content on twitch, such as webinars, seminars, 3D software usage etc. It is an accumulation of the unique content on-line and financially very profitable.

What do you think about Twitch?

It is a opponent to the TV for current generation, people will always spend on such things as TV and Twitch is the same for them/ As well it is good way to make money

even for the people who do not have lots of resources, it is simple. All of this content is in the same category of information (it is all about games) and people who are watching it, do not see anything that is not connected to this sphere, even in the ads everything is about gaming. So all the content that you see is connected to your sphere of interest. That attracts people.

What is your attitude to this platform?

Very positive in perspective of streamers (it is a unique method to make money) Twitch is providing people a chance to make money, creating new jobs. For viewers it is alternative to TV or it is suitable for people who are searching not only to the entertainment but for studying too.

Are you watching Twitch?

Earlier I was watching it, but not now. I have been watching it 1,5-2 hours per day previously.

What content are you watching on this platform?

Tournaments I was concentrated on them. Sidelily: new games that I don't want to play myself, but I was interested in a gameplay, and art channels (I was interested in communication with people, who are in the chat, who are sometimes professionals and can give me interesting opinion on the questions that I am interested in).

Why are you watching Twitch instead of playing?

To learn as a player and use the information that I got on the future for playing.

I was not ready to invest money and my time to buy the game and to learn how to play it on a good level that I want. When I am tired I don't need to sit into near the computer all the time and watch it partly. I was watching it as well as cyber-sports for me it is entertaining itself and as well I was watching how the best players in the world are playing. The games that I like, they are stressing and when I am watching Twitch it helps me to avoid negative emotions that I get playing. When you are good in the game, it is very interesting to look at newbies and go through the experience of getting knowledge from the very beginning about the game with this person.

Informant 7

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

My name is Artiom. At the moment I'm studying at the college. I like playing computer games, playing the guitar and spending my time on different things.

What is your attitude the computer games?

In general positive but I always keep in mind the fact that they are taking extreme amount of your free time. I can play games three times a week and spend 6 hours or more very easy. This is one of the reasons that I am trying to reduce the time that I spend on gaming.

What do you think about streaming then?

I split them in two categories: first is the tournaments and second is the regular streams. I prefer tournaments because there you can see emotions of the players and see the process of how they are playing and making decisions. This is very interesting. How pro players are moving, what artifacts they are using, what tactics are they using. You can see it all in the game and then apply it in your gaming.

What are you usually watching on Twitch?

Are usually watch tournaments and very rarely something else. Most if the time I watch streams on the background, when I'm doing something else: repairing something or reading/doing homework etc. I just switch it on as a TV and do something else.

Sometimes I watch streams because I'm interested in my bets. I bet on the game and I'm just watching how the game is going on and who is winning at the moment. To see how possible by bet will be successful.

Is there anything else except a good background that makes you watch Twitch?

Earlier I was watching them to learn how to play. But at the moment I perceive it as a TV that I can switch aside and take care of the things that must be done.

Informant 8

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

My name is Simon Rykov I'm from Moscow Russia I'm studying at the moment in Moscow State university on the specialization of as Jurisdiction a lawyer

On my free time I like throwing listening music and reading and gaming is well on personal computer.

Ok what is your attitude to gaming?

I like gaming, from my personal opinion it is a very good method to spend your time to have some fun to relax and to entertain yourself

If were thinking pretty the same direction what do you think about game streaming?

The moment I think it's well developed genre, which is getting more and more popular, because of the e-sports. It is becoming more and more popular especially among the gamers.

What is your attitude to streaming?

For me it's pretty neutral and I cannot say that I don't like streaming. I occasionally watch streams and visit different platforms like Twitch. But I can't say that I am a big fan of them.

And when you're watching Twitch what are you actually looking at?

Mostly watch Overwatch exactly one of the streamers which I like the most, he's making a good jokes and supports very friendly atmosphere. I like to spend my time like this.

And I cannot really say that I'm watching it on purpose, usually I switch it on and do my homework or drawing and listen to the conversation that is going on on stream. And sometimes I am focusing on it, but it is pretty rare.

Ok and when you're focusing on what you watching why do you watch instead of playing?

I was watching the tournament in a couple of days ago to learn. Because the people who are playing on the professional arena, they are setting trends in gaming and I can see a lot of different movements that they're doing. I can try all of their tactics and builds in the future when I will be playing. I think that is the main thing it. As well it's just sort of fun because I see it as a sport, as people for example watch football. For the gamer, these tournaments are pretty the same thing as different sport translations for the other people.

Informant 9

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

My name is Nikita Denisov if I'm 21 years old. At the moment I'm doing music and playing computer games. I'm studying University of arts and culture in St. Petersburg.

What is your attitude to the computer games?

I love them and playing a lot myself. I prefer such games as Overwatch, Hearthstone and Counter-Strike.

And what do you think about the gaming streams what is your attitude to them?

I have tried to stream myself but it wasn't so successful. I need some money to put into the marketing because I'm not very popular, but I still occasionally visit Twitch and stream. It see Twitch as very positive thing. I usually watch there some different tournaments or streamers I don't have very strict attachment to the personalities but to the game that I am interested in.

What are you watching on Twitch?

I usually watch the championships and just gameplay that is dependent on skill of a player. I'm not watching single player games because I can't afford them myself and usually go through them if I am interested.

Why are you watching these channels what is motivation?

I watch it mostly to learn and have a look how the other people are playing. What any people are thinking about the game and process of gaming it as well just to chat, to listen what the person or the streamer think about different topics. Because you always can ask the questions that you have and streamer or people from chat will always give you the answers.

But why are you not playing yourself, but watching streamers play?

Usually watch twitch when I don't have the ability to play myself, or I don't have enough resources in some game. For example you cannot afford to buy something in the game or in Hearthstone you can don't have enough dust for to build deck that you want to play. Sometimes you just don't have a computer available. As well I'm watching the exclusive games which are not available on PC or Xbox for example they are available only for PlayStation which I don't have: then I can watch what does their gameplay look like on Twitch in the real time.

Informant 10

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

Hey my name is Artiom I'm 20 years old I'm studying in St. Petersburg on 3 course. At the moment I am really interested in music and journalistic.

What is your attitude to the computer games?

In general, positive. I think that most of the time is just going to be the waste of time, but the time that was spent with fun cannot be called wasted

What do you think about the gaming streams?

I really like the jokes that are going on there and the interaction sometimes can be extremely hilarious and that's the reason why I am watching them. As well I'm not always interested in playing the game myself, and be under some kind of a pressure. It's much easier to just watch how other person is playing, making jokes. Then you get some positive emotions and energy and you are not being so emotionally involved into the game and so concentrated.

What do you usually watch on Twitch?

Basically I am watching the regular streamers who are playing games themselves. I'm usually searching for some funny content with the people who are actually making some kind of a show and have a good sense of humor. Occasionally I watch different tournaments especially in the disciplines like Hearthstone which I am playing myself. As well, sometimes I am watching some events, for example a couple of days ago there was a BlizzCon which I prefer to watch on Twitch because it is much more comfortable, comparing to the other platforms.

But why do you actually prefer to watch instead of playing yourself?

At the very beginning when I only started to play games, my first reason for watching Twitch was to learn how to play. I was watching for some professional players and asking question how do they learn, whom they are watching and where do they pick up the information to develop their skills. And applied it in my gaming experience.

And now I'm just watching it because of the contact. I want to keep in touch with the latest news or just to have a look how other people are playing to have some fun to speak in the chat and simply relax my brain.

Informant 11

Hello, so can you please tell shortly about yourself. Who are you? Where are you from? What are your hobbies?

My name is Vladimir I'm 22 years old at the moment I'm making music: different instrumentals and beats.

What is your attitude to the computer games?

I think that computer games are really good. They're developing a lot of different skills like a reaction and concentration, depending on different types of genre it could vary from strategical thinking to observation skills.

What is your attitude to the Twitch in context of gaming?

I really think that it's sometimes very useless thing which is killing the time and from the other hand it could be very useful for learning it just depends on the type of people who are watching it.

Well, what is it for you then, personally?

When I was starting my gaming career (I was kind of a semi-pro player) I was watching people who are professionals to see their reactions and watch how they are playing and what are they doing in the game. How they're moving. And implement this in As well I see it as an illusion of the communication with some celebrity or famous person who is steaming. You can ask all the questions right in the chat and they will answer them. It is very interesting to watch how the other person in communicating, who is he talking to, because there could be a party of famous YouTubers who are playing together for example. And it is very funny.

What type of content are you usually watching?

I mostly watch the tournaments and very rarely some other streamers who are playing public games. To relax and have some fun. For me it could be as learning as some sort of entertainment. When hat you can watch at the other person what he's doing.

Are you watching people who are playing single player games

Oh yeah thank you for reminding, I sometimes watch the games that I physically cannot play on my computer, because I don't have a good software on my computer. It is not powerful enough to play this game. Then I can have a look at this game on Twitch. And if I'm not ready to buy the game I can watch how does it look like and maybe make my decision if I would like to buy it or not.

As well for me it an opportunity to support the conversation with the people who have played this game themselves, even though that I have not played it personally but I know a lot about this game I know the scenario, the characters. This is important for me.