**BECOMING A STREAMER: USING QUALITATIVE OUTCOMES AND
QUANTITATIVE OUTPUTS TO IMPACT STREAMING SUCCESS**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case study was to discover what it takes to become a successful streamer through the streaming platform Twitch. The measurement of streamer success is the qualifications of becoming a Twitch Affiliate, meaning a streamer who has met the minimum requirements to be paid through the platform.

The case study revealed what matters and what does not matter when it comes to increasing viewership on Twitch. Text messaging, social media, and email are helpful in gaining unique viewership and contributing to streamer success. Using external sources, such as guides and videos, can help gain skills in streaming and allow for more energy in other areas. Releasing information about upcoming streams can help increase views for the upcoming stream. Streaming issues and music do not largely contribute to streamer success or failure.

These results demonstrate the importance of using Crowd Creation, tracking stream data, and exercising patience with oneself to help fuel success on Twitch and other livestreaming platforms.

INTRODUCTION

Although streaming has gained traction in the past 5-10 years, the concept is decades old. J.J. Styles, better known by his gamer tag as "Zot the Avenger" broke new ground in the early 90s, essentially becoming the world's first streamer, or person who shares their screens and broadcast games, art, live content, and more. Zot, who appeared on his own television show from 1993 to 1997, had one camera facing him, and another facing the TV he would use while he was playing video games. While playing, Zot would talk trash about his opponent,

comment on the game, offer advice, and even answer phone calls from people who called to make requests, ask questions, and more (McCarty, 2021).

A lot has changed since Zot paved the way for streaming nearly 30 years ago. With help from the evolution of the media environment, anyone can share their content with the world. And they do not need to have their own television show to do it. These "content creators" come in different forms - namely influencers and streamers – and, in addition to creating content, use their talents and skills to autonomously generate income, become producers, editors, business owners, podcasters, game show hosts, and more. Hair, Bonifacio, and Wohn's 2022 research describes streamer-autonomy as the following:

> "Creators can opt to bypass traditional intermediaries – production studios, publishing houses and so forth – and release their content directly to consumers. In doing so, creators become entrepreneurs who take on the non-creative tasks previously delegated to intermediaries, such as financial management, audience management and self-branding and promotion" (p. 3).

Streamers can film themselves using their own video enabled device. They can ask their friend to edit their content for the web and upload it to their chosen platform, or they can do it themselves. With the advances in technology, there is no longer a need for a professional video production crew to create a successful video. Most people have the tools to do so on their own.

Unlike Zot's one-of-a-kind television stream in the 90s, the digital economy has made it so that anyone with an email address, a desktop or mobile device, and a video camera can become a streamer and connect with their audience easier than ever. Streaming and video platforms such as YouTube and Twitch create opportunities for streamers to produce live content, upload videos, generate subscribers, and grow their community. Streamers can

connect with their subscribers and community through live streams, email, social media, websites, and e-sales.

By combining engaging video content with live viewing, streamers can create communities based on their viewers' shared streaming interests. However, growing a streaming community is not as easy as it may seem. Out of 9.5 million active monthly Twitch streamers, only 1.2 million are Twitch Affiliates, meaning they have met Twitch's minimum requirements and are creating consistent content, have developed a following, and can earn revenue through the platform (Total Twitch Streamers, 2022). So, what does it take to be a part of this elite group? What does it take to become a successful streamer?

The focus of this project is to discover – through experience and data analysis - what it takes to become a successful streamer through the streaming platform Twitch. The project and deliverable will serve as a best practice guide for other beginner streamers to help jumpstart their path to streamer success by avoiding my streaming mistakes and capitalizing on any gains.

To design this case study, I researched requirements for meeting the minimum requirements to become a Twitch Affiliate. I sought information on popular and least popular Twitch streaming categories, as well as common mistakes and best practices for streaming. My readings and research helped to inform my recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Little research has been conducted using case studies to determine how the use of qualitative outcomes and quantitative outputs can impact streamer success. Most research focuses on best practices of current successful streamers, which can be helpful, but lacks a full

picture of the path to success. Prior existing research also left out the opportunity to adjust approaches in real-time using qualitative outcomes and quantitative outputs to measure success. I examined this type of research, as well as articles from non-academic websites to learn about approaches to streamer success and then I consulted literature to help construct the case study.

Streamer

Live streaming is the practice of broadcasting real-time content for an audience (Ruberg & Lark, 2021). A streamer is someone who participates in the act of live streaming. Streamers broadcast their live activity by sharing their computer or phone screens with viewers, allowing viewers to see and hear what the player is experiencing in real-time. Streamers use their computer, phone, video game equipment, and other resources to broadcast their live activity, making it possible for viewers to tune in using video streaming platforms on their own computers and phones.

For a person to livestream using a live-streaming platform, there is no minimum threshold of views, viewers, subscribers, and followers. However, live-streamers must meet a minimum threshold of views, viewers, and followers on live-streaming platforms for their stream to become monetized – a benchmark many streamers see as a sign of success.

Twitch

Twitch will be used as the primary platform of discussion for the purposes of this thesis project. This section will provide a brief overview on what Twitch is, how viewers can interact with streamers, and costs associated with platform use.

Twitch is the world's leading live-streaming platform for gamers. Streamers use Twitch as a platform to broadcast their live content, allowing their subscribers and viewers to interact with them in real-time. Using Twitch chat, the platform allows viewers to comment, ask questions, make suggestions, and potentially receive real-time responses from the streamer. Twitch automatically saves streams for a limited time, making it possible for community members to rewatch a stream or view it for the first time (Haryacha, 2021). The platform, which spun off from a social cam site Justin.tv in June 2011, boasted 9 million monthly streamers and an average of 2.78 million annual concurrent viewers in 2021 alone (Iqbal, 2022).

Twitch is free to use. However, many people pay for monthly subscriptions to their favorite streamers. Paid Twitch streamers, known as Twitch Partners or Affiliates, receive 50% of the subscription fees. Monthly subscriptions provide premium benefits to viewers and are a popular way for streamers to make money using the platform. (Haryacha, 2021). Subscription benefits can include exclusive access to merchandise sales, exclusive chat rooms and competitions, additional content, and more. For a streamer to become a Twitch Partner or Affiliate, they must meet minimum requirements for hours streamed, number of views, followers, and average viewers within a 30-day period.

Although Twitch is one of the most well-known live-streaming platforms, it is only one of 28 primary video game streaming platforms in the world (Streaming Platforms, n.d.). Many of the insights from this project can be transferred into other live-streaming platforms.

YouTube

YouTube is used in this project and can help create a greater understanding of how video platforms influence streaming. This section will provide a brief overview of what YouTube is, costs and revenue associated with the platform, and how YouTube is used in this project.

Since its 2005 inception, YouTube has been known mainly as a platform for pre-recorded videos. In August 2015, YouTube offered users the ability to live stream and has since become one of the world's biggest live-streaming platforms (Leskin, 2020). YouTube allows streamers to broadcast their screens - which can display content such as video games, Adobe tutorials, makeup tutorials, and more – while interacting with their subscribers and viewers. Streams can be saved for viewers to watch again later or watch for the first time.

Unlike Twitch, subscribing to a streamer on YouTube does not require a monthly fee. Similar to Twitch, it offers a YouTube Partner Program to help streamers generate income. Eligibility includes being in good standing with YouTube, having 4,000 valid public watch hours in the past 12 months, and having at least 1,000 subscribers. YouTube Partners earn money from ads and YouTube Premium subscribers (How to Make Money on Youtube, n.d.). YouTube and Twitch streamers can leverage their views and following from other sites like Patreon,[1] for example, and offer premium content for a monthly fee. Subscription benefits can include exclusive access to merchandise sales, exclusive chat rooms and competitions, additional content, and more.

Many Twitch streamers also use YouTube to host and monetize their VOD (Video On Demand) - the video stream temporarily saved by Twitch - as a more permanent method of

hosting (Twitch will automatically delete VODs after 14 days for non-Partners and Affiliates and 60 days for Partners and Affiliates). Because of its permanency feature, VODs from this project are uploaded to YouTube as a part of the final deliverable.

Content and Streamer Characteristics

Twitch streamers contribute similar but varying characteristics and content to the streamer profile. This section will describe streamer content, work ethic, and how streamers can differentiate themselves.

A typical stream created by a streamer features music, a streaming activity that falls within a Twitch streaming category, and engaging commentary in which the streamer talks to their chat. Streamers stay on top of trending games and topics to maximize views, and often incorporate trending topics and activities into their stream. They can also collaborate with other streamers by playing games or creating content with them on stream.

Streamers are characterized by their work ethic and autonomy, often being the creators, producers, and editors of their own content. Twitch streamer ItmeJP is quoted on his take on streamer work ethic in Bingman's Talking about Twitch: Dropped Frames and a normative theory of new media production:

> "You have to be the type of person who can sit down and learn something by yourself or go out and find the resources to do it. Because there's a lot of stuff in streaming, especially when it comes to…getting the video stuff right, getting in the software, getting all that crap right, getting the audio stuff right, where either you need to have people that know what they're doing, you need to be able to find guides, or you need to be able to do it yourself. And it can be pretty daunting as you start taking those steps yourself" (Bingman, 2020, p. 7).

While many streamers share creative characteristics, streamers can differentiate themselves through their persona – a factor that can influence the success of a stream channel even more than gameplay skills (Pellicone & Ahn, 2017, p. 2, 5, 7). A streamer's personality, engagement with their chat, personal style, stream background, use of memes, and more all contribute to a streamer's persona. Streamers can also differentiate themselves by streaming unique content, stream customization, offering valuable tiered subscription benefits, and showing gratitude to their followers and subscribers (Jackson, 2021, p. 2-3).

Streamers can use Twitch settings and various settings to customize their stream and contribute to their Twitch branding. Standard customizations can include username, display name, bio, social media links, profile picture, profile accent color, profile banner, and video player banner. Channel customization can also include Feature Content, My Streamer Shelf, and more.

Twitch offers additional opportunities for stream customization using suggested plugins outlined in the Streaming Tools category of the Creator Dashboard. Customization tools include Soundtrack by Twitch (choose music to be played during live streams. It will not be saved on the VOD, therefore bypassing potential copyright infringements with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)). Additional plugins offer streamers the ability to share tips, customize their chatbox, create merchandise and logos, offer loyalty points, host giveaways, host leaderboards, and more.

Quantitative Outcomes

Several quantitative outcomes can affect the success of a streamer. The quantitative outcomes assessed through this thesis project include the qualifications for acceptance into the Twitch Affiliate Program and Twitch Partner Program. The Quantitative Outcomes section will explain the qualifications of acceptance into the Twitch Affiliate Program and the Twitch Partner Program. It will then describe the unique qualifications and how streamers can use quantitative outputs to be successful.

Twitch Affiliate Program

Twitch offers streamers the ability to monetize their content through the Twitch Affiliate Program or the Twitch Partners Program. The Twitch Affiliate Program eligibility requirements include at least 500 minutes (about 8 and a half hours) of broadcasting time within the past 30 days, at least 7 unique broadcasts in the past 30 days, an average of 3 concurrent viewers or more over the past 30 days, and at least 50 followers. Affiliates can earn revenue through subscribers, ads, and bits (Joining the Affiliate Program, n.d.).

Twitch Partner Program

The Partner Program allows people to make money on YouTube by allowing advertisements on their stream, paid channel subscribers, merchandise sales, Super Chat and Super Stickers, and YouTube Premium Revenue. The YouTube Partner Program has minimum eligibility requirements. For example, to receive ad revenue, participants must be at least 18 years old, or have a legal guardian older than eighteen who can oversee platform payments and create content that meets YouTube's advertiser-friendly content guidelines (Twitch Partner

Program, n.d.). Most notably, a Twitch Partner must first demonstrate consistent success as a Twitch Affiliate and must apply to be accepted into the Program (Twitch Partner Program Overview, n.d.). As of August 2021, there are an estimated 51,500 Twitch Partners (Iqbal, 2022).

Views and Viewers

The number of people watching a stream concurrently helps determine the number of views a stream has. A person does not have to be logged into Twitch to count as a viewer. However, they must be logged into Twitch to participate in chat. Streamers can count toward their total channel followers. A person can also count as a viewer if a stream is opened in another tab, on mute, or playing in the background on mobile devices (Understanding Viewer Count vs. Users in Chat, n.d.). The number of concurrent viewers counts towards the eligibility requirements for the Twitch Affiliate Program (and ultimately the Twitch Partner Program).

Followers

A "follow" is an effortless way for viewers to support a streamer on Twitch. A Twitch follower is a person who signs up to receive notifications for the latest content from a streamer. Streamer content will show up on their Twitch homepage and Twitch app. Being a follower is a completely free way to support a streamer and can include additional benefits designated by the streamer.

Subscribers

A person who subscribes to a Twitch stream – an elevated way to support a Twitch streamer - is considered a "subscriber," or "sub." A subscription allows the subscriber to access

elite benefits based on the Tier-level subscription, such as ad-free viewing, special merchandise, unique opportunities for interaction with the streamer, and more. A Tier 1 monthly subscription on Twitch is $4.99. A Tier 2 monthly subscription is $9.99, and a Tier 3 subscription is $24.99 (Twitch Subscriptions: What They Are And How They Work, 2022). Subscriptions can be paid for using Amazon Prime, PayPal, Amazon Pay, and a credit card. Subscriptions can be renewed monthly, every 3 months, or every 6 months and can be canceled at any time.

Comments and audience response

Analyzing comments and audience response for positive and negative connotations and adjusting accordingly could help maximize the qualitative aspects of a stream, leading to an increase in followers, viewers, and viewer duration.

Qualitative Outputs

The success of a Twitch streamer can be evaluated through several qualitative outputs. The qualitative outputs evaluated through this thesis project include Twitch brand, tags, and streaming category. This section will discuss the components that make up Twitch brand, tags, and streaming categories.

Twitch brand

Streamers can use Twitch settings and various settings to customize their stream and contribute to their Twitch branding. Streamers can customize their channel by selecting their username, display name, and bio. Streamers can also add up to five social media links that will be visible in the streamer profile. Twitch streamers and users can select a profile picture, profile

accent color, profile banner, and video player banner. Channel customization can also include

Feature Content, which allows streamers to select options for auto hosting (Hernandez, D.,

2016), show recently streamed categories, and personalize My Streamer Shelf, which displays

the streamer's recommended channels.

Twitch offers additional opportunities for stream customization using suggested plugins

outlined in the Streaming Tools category of the Creator Dashboard. Customization tools include

Soundtrack by Twitch, Streamlabs, StreamElements, OBS.Live, Muxy, Opera Event, and OWN3D

Pro.

Streamers can use Twitch brand and customizations to be successful, helping them to

maximize their followers and subscribers. Using customizations to engage with people in their

chat and offer rewards to current subscribers can help encourage increases in qualitative

outcomes and quantitative outputs.

Tags

In 2018, Twitch added the Tags feature to help viewers easily search for content that

interests them and to help streamers label their content for maximum viewership. Tags are set

automatically by Twitch and can be added to by the streamer. Tags show up beside the stream

title, video thumbnail, and the game or category. A streamer may tag a gaming stream as

"Adventure Game," or "Driving/Racing Game," for example, to help viewers locate the

streaming category that interests them most. Tags can also be more specific. A stream could be

tagged as "Dyslexia," for example, which is a tag created for streams and content featuring the

dyslexia community (List of all tags, n.d.). As many as ten tags can be added to describe a

stream. Twitch also uses these tags to recommend streams to viewers based on past views (Introducing tags and new categories: new ways to discover new streamers on Twitch, 2018).

Streaming categories

The Twitch platform is broken down into five streaming categories: Games, IRL (In Real Life), Music, Esports, and Creative. The Games category - the streaming category of focus for this project - is comprised of Twitch's primary viewing audience. Game streamers include those who play video games based on expertise and those who play for entertainment purposes only (Leith, 2020). Many video games and video game consoles are permitted for streaming use. However, Twitch provides a list of prohibited games to help streamers comply with terms and conditions and maximize their success on the platform (List of Prohibited Games, n.d.).

Described by Twitch as "The home for everything from working out to exploring the world of chatting and beyond," IRL subcategories include Just Chatting, Pools, Hot tubs, and Beaches, Travel and Outdoors, Fitness and Health, Politics, Science and Technology, ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response), Special Events, Talk Shows and Podcasts, and Sports (IRL, n.d.). This category was added in 2016 when the platform began attracting non-gaming content creators. The Just Chatting subcategory has since surpassed the gaming category in total views (How Just Chatting Became One of the Most Popular Categories on Twitch, 2020).

The Creative category includes the following subcategories: Art, Food and Drink, Makers and Crafting, and Software and Game Development.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis project answered the following research questions:

RQ1: How can a Twitch streamer use quantitative data to define success?

RQ2: How can a Twitch streamer use qualitative data to define success?

RQ3: How can Twitch streamers use qualitative metrics and quantitative data to increase their views, viewer duration, and channel followers?

RQ4: What are the elements of a successful stream/streamer on Twitch?

Questions 1-4 were answered in part by participating in a case study. As a part of my research, I joined the Twitch platform and created content as a streamer. I used the qualitative metrics listed above to determine how they affect the quantitative data. Question 4 was answered using data from the case study and research about best practices for streamer success.

This thesis project focused on the following quantitative outcomes:

1. Number of views: the number of people who watch a Twitch stream;

2. Channel followers: the number of people who sign up to receive notifications for latest content from the streamer;

3. Comments and audience response.

Outcomes 1-3 were selected based on the criteria for a streamer to become a Twitch affiliate, a level of streaming on Twitch in which the streamer receives compensation.

Qualitative outputs I focused on include (Wasib, 2021):

- Twitch brand: using emotes, characters, and other extensions to customize a stream;

- Tags: Labeling a stream with tags helps potential viewers understand the content of the stream and helps recommend the stream to the appropriate audience who are most likely to tune in;

- Streaming category: Twitch's streaming categories include Gaming, IRL (In Real Life), Music, Esports, and Creative (Directory: Browse, n.d.).

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

Research Method

The methodology for this project is a case study. For three weeks, I became a streamer, using the time after streaming and between stream weeks to analyze the collected data and adjust my approach. As a person who has limited experience playing video games, becoming a streamer allowed me to understand more about the streaming process and the timing on the path to increasing viewership and followers since I was starting from the bottom. It also allowed me to use trial and error while adjusting my approach in real-time, which is not possible by simply studying successful streamers.

Procedure

I. *Select and download streaming software*

Streaming software was selected and downloaded. Twitch's Streaming Tools on the Creator Dashboard suggest common tools for broadcasting to help content creators with the

streaming process. Suggested streaming software includes Twitch Studio Beta, Open

Broadcaster Software (OBS), Streamlabs Desktop, LightStream Studio, Melon, XSplit

Broadcaster, and Gamecaster. Streaming software was evaluated and selected based on ease of

use, ratings, and availability for Windows. For this case study, OBS was used for desktop

streams, and Streamlabs for mobile streams.

II. *Identify and purchase the technology needed*

Streaming technology was needed for a basic streaming setup. A basic streaming setup

includes a computer, a webcam, a microphone, and an HD streaming device. An HD streaming

device, called a card reader, was purchased. All other technologies had been purchased prior to

the case study.

III. *Customize channel*

The streamer channel was customized at the start of the project. Customization options

included username, display name, bio, social media links, profile picture, profile accent color,

profile banner, and video player banner. Channel customization also included Feature Content,

My Streamer Shelf, and various suggested plugins outlined in the Streaming Tools category of

the Creator Dashboard.

IV. *Determine tags for Streaming Category*

Tags are automatically selected by Twitch based on the activity or streaming category.

Additional tags were added (Guide to tags, n.d.).

V. Create a Streaming Schedule

The schedule below contains dates for streaming and data analysis, the streaming

category, and the streaming activity.

Streaming Schedule

Date	Streaming Category	Activity
November 7, 2022	Games	Mario Kart
November 8, 2022	Creative/Art	Adobe Illustrator – creating a flyer
November 9, 2022	Games	Grand Theft Auto V
November 10, 2022	IRL	Hobbies – Gift Wrapping
November 11, 2022	Games	Sims
November 12-13, 2022	N/A	Streaming data analysis
November 14, 2022	Games	Mario Kart
November 15, 2022	Creative/Art	Adobe Illustrator – turning a picture into a drawing part I
November 16, 2022	Games	Grand Theft Auto V
November 17, 2022	IRL	Hobbies – Looking at houses on Zillow
November 18, 2022	Games	Sims
November 19-20, 2022	N/A	Streaming data analysis
November 21, 2022	Games	Mario Kart
November 22, 2022	Creative/Art	Adobe Illustrator – turning a picture into a drawing part II
November 23, 2022	Games	Grand Theft Auto V
November 24, 2022	Creative/Art	Hobbies – turning a picture into a drawing part III
November 25, 2022	Games	Sims
November 26-December 5, 2022	N/A	Examine Quantitative and Qualitative data Finalize thesis project

VI. Review and make changes to personal social media channels

To protect my anonymity, I chose to streamline my Twitch username with some of my

other social media channels and "hide" or "private" any content that could reveal my location,

since my home address is public. With the increase in swatting in the streamer universe, I wanted to decrease the chances someone could search my name and find out personal details about me (Grayson, 2022). I transitioned my Pinterest and Twitter to have my same Twitch username (the username does not incorporate my actual name) and deleted details about where I live. On Facebook and Instagram, I changed information that was public to private, changed my username to my Twitch username, and added my Twitch channel to the bio section. My goal was to have more control of the amount of information that is shared through streaming, stay consistent with branding, and spread the word about my Twitch channel. I also wanted to increase the number of organic views as much as possible, so I did not include information about my thesis project – only the link to my Twitch channel - in any of my social media bios that are visible to the public.

VII. *Streaming - Week 1*

Streaming began on November 7, 2022, by playing Mario Kart in the Games Streaming Category. The following day's stream was creating a flyer in the Creative Streaming Category through Adobe Illustrator, and the next day transitioned back to the Games Streaming Category by playing Grand Theft Auto V. The fourth day of streams moved to IRL with Hobbies (gift wrapping tutorial and challenge), and the fifth day moved back to the Games Streaming Category by playing Sims. Streams lasted between 48 – 194 minutes and featured gameplay, activities, and commentary.

VIII.   Collecting and analyzing data

November 12-13, 2022 was spent collecting and analyzing the data from Week 1. Findings from the analysis were used to adjust the current streaming methods to increase quantitative and qualitative metrics.

IX. *Streaming – Week 2*

Week 2 mirrored Week 1 after qualitative and quantitative adjustments were made. Week 2 began on November 14, 2022 by playing Mario Kart in the Games Streaming Category. The following day's stream was "turning a picture into a drawing" in the Creative Streaming Category through Adobe Illustrator, and the next day transitioned back to the Games Streaming Category by playing Grand Theft Auto V. The fourth day of streams moved to IRL with Hobbies (looking at pictures of houses on Zillow), and the fifth day moved back to the Games Streaming Category by playing Sims. The streams lasted between 48 – 152 minutes and featured gameplay, activities, and commentary.

X. *Collecting and analyzing data*

November 19-20, 2022 was spent collecting and analyzing the data from Week 2. Findings from the analysis were used to adjust the current streaming methods to increase quantitative and qualitative metrics.

XI. *Streaming – Week 3*

Week 3 mirrored Week 1 and 2 after qualitative and quantitative adjustments were made. Week 3 began on November 21, 2022, by playing Mario Kart in the Games Streaming

Category. The following day's stream was completing the "turning a picture into a drawing" activity in the Creative Streaming Category through Adobe Illustrator, and the next day transitioned back to the Games Streaming Category by playing Grand Theft Auto V. The fourth day of streams moved to Creative with Hobbies (finished "turning a picture into a drawing"), and the fifth day moved back to the Games Streaming Category by playing Sims. The streams lasted between 83 – 183 minutes and featured gameplay, activities, and commentary.

XII. Collecting and analyzing data

November 26-December 2, 2022 began a final streaming analysis inclusive of the data collected from weeks 1, 2, and 3.

AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

In addition to a Twitch account and technology, resources needed for streaming included the following video games: Grand Theft Auto V, Sims 4, and Mario Kart. Adobe Illustrator, a program offered through Adobe Creative Suite and accessible to me through UNC-Chapel Hill's student resources, was also necessary to fulfill the streaming schedule. Materials associated with hobbies were also needed (gift wrapping paper and supplies, gifts, tripod, etc.). Grand Theft Auto V, gift wrapping supplies, and the tripod used for my mobile stream were the only activity-related resource in need of purchase prior to the start of my research and were paid for using personal funds.

Streaming technology was needed for a basic streaming setup. A basic streaming setup includes a computer, a webcam, a microphone, and an HD streaming device. Streaming software – OBS and Streamlabs – was also selected and downloaded at no charge.

All VODs were uploaded on YouTube for more permanent storage and a WordPress website was used to highlight key findings from this project. The website also includes data and other tips for becoming a successful streamer and was created using the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill's free use of WordPress.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection included collecting Twitch's auto-generated data after each live stream. It also included qualitative data related to stream customization, and comments and audience response.

Following each streaming session, Twitch auto-generated data for the live stream. Data captured included Stream Duration, Average Viewers (cumulative streaming history), Unique Viewers (specific to completed stream and compared to previous stream), Unique Chatters (specific to completed stream and compared to previous stream), Followers (cumulative streaming history and compared to cumulative streaming history from previous stream), and Number of Subscribers. Twitch also tracks where viewers come from, such as Twitch, Channels, and External Sources. Channel followers can opt to receive a notification when the channel goes live. Twitch tracks Notification Engagement and Follower Reach following the streaming session.

Primary qualitative data collected and analyzed included the types of customizations used (social media links, bio, profile picture, etc.), the types of tags used, the streaming category, and number of livestream comments and type of audience response (positive, negative, neutral).

Quantitative data was collected and analyzed following each stream and included Number of Views, Channel followers, Channel subscribers, Stream Duration, Average Viewers, Unique Viewers, Unique Chatters, Followers, Follower sources (Twitch, Channels, and External Sources), Number of VOD views, and Notification Engagement and Follower Reach.

I also documented my observations and experiences following each stream, using stream VODs to help me capture any notes I may not remember after streaming.

DATA ANALYSIS

I analyzed qualitative and quantitative data from the case study, considering the sample size, study timing, subject experience and skills, subject social media following and frequency, and stream variations. I compared stream duration with the number of unique viewers, unique chatters, and average viewers throughout my streaming history. I also compared Follower Sources (Twitch, Channels, or External, or views from outside Twitch) to Social Media Use, Text messaging prior to going live, and Emailed link to channel.

I compared the number and type (positive, negative, and neutral) of comments on stream to whether music was incorporated into the stream, the category streamed, and documentation of issues with technology.

My analysis helped me to determine which quantitative and qualitative outcomes are considered helpful, neutral, unhelpful, or uncertain for streamer success.

- Helpful – Contributes to an increase in average number of viewers and number of followers;

- Neutral – Neither contributes nor does not contribute to an increase in average number of viewers and number of followers;

- Unhelpful – Does not contribute or leads to a decrease in average number of viewers and number of followers;

- Uncertain – Based on this study, it is unknown whether this contributes or does not contribute to an increase in the average number of viewers and number of followers.

RESULTS

My Streamer Profile and Demographics	
Age	32
Sex	Female
Race	Caucasian
Highest level of education	2 years of graduate school
Undergraduate major	English Education
Graduate degree	Digital Communication (proposed)
Education status (part-time, full-time, or not in school)	Part-time
Job status (part-time, full-time, or unemployed)	Full-time
Favorite games/streaming activities	Mario Kart Deluxe, Adobe Illustrator, Grand Theft Auto V, and Sims
Personal social media platforms	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest
Social media experience (self-described as beginner, intermediate, or advanced)	Intermediate
Social media post frequency (self-described as low, moderate, or high)	Low
Social media followers/friends	
Facebook	317
Instagram	162
Twitter	20
Pinterest	21

Gaming experience (self-described as beginner, intermediate, or advanced)	Beginner
Familiarity with Twitch as a platform (self-described as beginner, intermediate, or advanced)	Intermediate
Familiarity with Twitch as a streamer (self-described as beginner, intermediate, or advanced)	Beginner

Stream Data – Week 1

- Quantitative and qualitative adjustments and results labeled Helpful are in Blue.

- Quantitative and qualitative adjustments and results labeled Neutral are in Orange.

- Quantitative and qualitative adjustments and results labeled Unhelpful are in Green.

- Quantitative and qualitative adjustments and results labeled Uncertain are in Yellow.

Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics	Nov 7	Nov 8	Nov 9	Nov 10	Nov 11	Week 1 total
Stream/channel data						
Stream duration (minutes)	74	100	85	48	194	501
Average viewers	2	2	4	1	1	2
Unique viewers	4	4	6	5	7	26
Followers	6	7	7	7	8	8
Subscribers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unique chatters	2	2	2	1	2	9
Number of VOD views	14	11	16	8	26	75
Follower source						
Twitch	1	2	1	3	3	10
Channels	0	0	0	0	0	0
External	0	0	2	2	0	4
Engagement						
Notification Engagement	0	2	0	1	1	4
Follower reach	100	100	100	100	100	100

Social media use before going live	no	no	no	no	no	0
Text messaging before going live	yes	yes	yes	no	no	3
Email before going live	no	no	no	no	no	0
Number of livestream comments	25	25	169	12	67	298
Positive comments	8	3	7	0	2	20
Percentage	32	12	4	0	3	
Negative comments	0	0	20	0	0	20
Percentage	0	0	12	0	0	
Neutral comments	17	22	142	12	65	258
Percentage	68	88	84	100	97	
Streaming Category						
Games	yes		yes		yes	3
Creative		yes		yes		2
IRL (In Real Life)				yes		1
Just chatting						0
Streaming activities						
Game/activity	Mario Kart	Adobe Illustrator	Grand Theft Auto V	Gift wrapping	Sims	
Stream challenge incorporated	no	no	no	yes	yes	2
Positive or neutral notes						
Increased by one follower	yes	yes			yes	3
Looked up how-tos on the other monitor						0
Felt like an easier stream						0
Added a moderator				yes		1
One of Twitch's most popular games			yes			1
Total positive or neutral notes						5
Negative notes						
Issues figuring out music						0
Left mic on mute for several minutes	yes					1
Thought stream was frozen	yes					1

Forgot to change game on Twitch	yes					1
Struggled with content during the stream		yes	yes			2
Complaints about lack of music		yes				1
Lagging						0
Struggled with volume					yes	1
Issues/lessons on tags					yes	1
Issues with new app				yes		1
Issues due to lack of technology				yes		1
Issues with saving game						0
Struggled with controller			yes			1
Struggled remembering characters and plot						0
Total negative notes						11
Branding						
Usage of social media links	no	no	no	no	no	0
Usage of bio	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of profile picture	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of accent color	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of profile banner	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of video player banner	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of feature content						
Auto hosting	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Recently streamed categories	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
My streamer shelf	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Streamer software						
Streamlabs	no	no	no	yes	no	1
StreamElements	no	no	no	no	no	0
OBS live	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	4
Muxy	no	no	no	no	no	0
OWN3D Pro	no	no	no	no	no	0
Opera Event	no	no	no	no	no	0
Tags						
Simulation					yes	1
Open world					yes	1
RPG					yes	1

Creative				yes		1
Adobe						0
Illustrator						0
English	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
USA	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
IRL				yes		1
Adventure game			yes			1
FPS			yes			1
Shooter			yes			1
Action	yes		yes			2
Driving/racing game	yes		yes			2
Party	yes					1
Arcade	yes					1
Just chatting						0

Stream Data – Week 2

Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics	Nov 14	Nov 15	Nov 16	Nov 17	Nov 18	Week 2 total
Stream/channel data						
Stream duration (minutes)	62	49	48	152	150	461
Average viewers	1	2	1	2	2	1.8
Unique viewers	2	6	3	3	4	18
Followers	8	8	8	8	9	9
Subscribers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unique chatters	1	2	1	2	1	7
Number of VOD views	5	7	6	12	7	37
Follower source						
Twitch	2	1	1	2	1	7
Channels	0	0	0	0	0	0
External	0	1	0	0	0	1
Engagement						
Notification Engagement	1	0	0	0	1	2
Follower reach	100	100	100	100	100	100
Social media use before going live	no	no	no	no	no	0
Text messaging before going live	no	no	no	yes	no	3

Email before going live	no	yes	no	no	no	0
Number of livestream comments	14	21	15	34	31	115
Positive comments	5	1	0	5	1	12
Percentage	36	5	0	15	3	
Negative comments	0	0	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0	0	0	0	3	
Neutral comments	9	20	15	28	29	258
Percentage	64	95	100	82	94	
Streaming Category						
Games	yes		yes		yes	3
Creative		yes				1
IRL (In Real Life)						0
Just chatting				yes		1
Streaming activities						
Game/activity	Mario Kart	Adobe Illustrator	Grand Theft Auto V	Zillow	Sims	3
Stream challenge incorporated	no	no	no	no	no	0
Positive or neutral notes						
Increased by one follower					yes	1
Looked up how-tos on the other monitor				yes	yes	2
Felt like an easier stream	yes					1
Added a moderator						0
One of Twitch's most popular games			yes			1
Total positive or neutral notes						5
Negative notes						
Issues figuring out music		yes				1
Left mic on mute for several minutes						0
Thought stream was frozen						0
Forgot to change game on Twitch						0
Struggled with content during the stream						0

Complaints about lack of music		yes		yes		2
Lagging				yes		1
Struggled with volume						0
Issues/lessons on tags						0
Issues with new app						0
Issues due to lack of technology				yes		1
Issues with saving game					yes	1
Struggled with controller			yes			1
Struggled remembering characters and plot			yes			1
Total negative notes						8
Branding						
Usage of social media links	no	no	no	no	no	0
Usage of bio	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of profile picture	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of accent color	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of profile banner	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of video player banner	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of feature content						
Auto hosting	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Recently streamed categories	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
My streamer shelf	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Streamer software						
Streamlabs	no	no	no	no	no	0
StreamElements	no	no	no	no	no	0
OBS live	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Muxy	no	no	no	no	no	0
OWN3D Pro	no	no	no	no	no	0
Opera Event	no	no	no	no	no	0
Tags						
Simulation					yes	1
Open world					yes	1
RPG					yes	1
Creative		yes				1
Adobe		yes				1
Illustrator		yes				1
English	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5

USA	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
IRL		yes				1
Adventure game			yes			1
FPS			yes			1
Shooter			yes			1
Action	yes		yes			2
Driving/racing game	yes		yes			2
Party	yes					1
Arcade	yes					1
Just chatting				yes		1

Stream Data – Week 3

Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics	Nov 21	Nov 22	Nov 23	Nov 24	Nov 25	Week 3 total
Stream/channel data						
Stream duration (minutes)	83	108	145	169	183	688
Average viewers	2	2	1	2	2	1.8
Unique viewers	5	5	4	5	5	24
Followers	9	9	9	9	10	10
Subscribers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unique chatters	3	2	1	2	1	9
Number of VOD views	11	12	10	6	4	43
Follower source						
Twitch	0	1	1	2	2	6
Channels	0	0	0	0	0	0
External	1	3	2	4	1	6
Engagement						
Notification Engagement	1	1	2	1	1	6
Follower reach	90	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9
Social media use before going live	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	0
Text messaging before going live	yes	no	no	no	no	3
Email before going live	no	no	no	no	no	0
Number of livestream comments	14	21	15	34	31	115
Positive comments	5	1	0	5	1	12

	Mario Kart	Adobe Illustrator	Grand Theft Auto V	Adobe Illustrator	Sims	
Percentage	36	5	0	15	3	
Negative comments	0	0	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0	0	0	0	3	
Neutral comments	9	20	15	28	29	258
Percentage	64	95	100	82	94	
Streaming Category						
Games	yes		yes		yes	3
Creative		yes		yes		2
IRL (In Real Life)						0
Just chatting						0
Streaming activities						
Game/activity	Mario Kart	Adobe Illustrator	Grand Theft Auto V	Adobe Illustrator	Sims	3
Stream challenge incorporated	no	no	no	no	no	0
Positive or neutral notes						
Increased by one follower					yes	1
Looked up how-tos on the other monitor					yes	1
Felt like an easier stream		yes		yes		2
Added a moderator						0
One of Twitch's most popular games			yes			1
Total positive or neutral notes						5
Negative notes						
Issues figuring out music		yes				1
Left mic on mute for several minutes						0
Thought stream was frozen						0
Forgot to change game on Twitch						0
Struggled with content during the stream			yes			1
Complaints about lack of music						0
Lagging						0
Struggled with volume						0

Issues/lessons on tags						0
Issues with new app						0
Issues due to lack of technology						0
Issues with saving game						0
Struggled with controller						0
Struggled remembering characters and plot						0
Total negative notes						2
Branding						
Usage of social media links	no	no	no	no	no	0
Usage of bio	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of profile picture	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of accent color	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of profile banner	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of video player banner	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Usage of feature content						
Auto hosting	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Recently streamed categories	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
My streamer shelf	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Streamer software						
Streamlabs	no	no	no	no	no	0
StreamElements	no	no	no	no	no	0
OBS live	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
Muxy	no	no	no	no	no	0
OWN3D Pro	no	no	no	no	no	0
Opera Event	no	no	no	no	no	0
Tags						
Simulation					yes	1
Open world					yes	1
RPG					yes	1
Creative		yes		yes		2
Adobe		yes		yes		2
Illustrator		yes		yes		2
English	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
USA	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
IRL		yes		yes		2
Adventure game			yes			1
FPS			yes			1

Shooter		yes			1
Action	yes	yes			2
Driving/racing game	yes	yes			2
Party	yes				1
Arcade	yes				1
Just chatting					0

Summary of Findings

Throughout the case study, I streamed 1,650 minutes (500 minutes are required to reach Twitch Affiliate), streamed on 15 different days (7 days are required), had 1.8 average viewers (3 are required), and gained 10 total followers (50 are required). Although I did not reach Twitch Affiliate, I gained insight into becoming a successful streamer.

Releasing information about upcoming content during stream could lead to an increase in viewership for the next stream. Text messaging, social media, and email are helpful in gaining unique viewership and contributing to streamer success, especially in the Games streaming category. Not only are social media and texting effective for gaining viewership, doing both (texting the streamer's network and posting to social media about going live) is most effective. Streaming issues, such as issues with technology, can contribute to a streamer's uneasiness but do not largely contribute to streamer success or failure. Whether a stream had music did not contribute to the qualifications for streamer success but should be considered if it increases viewers' overall experience. Game popularity may increase the percentage of negative comments. Longer streams may not significantly impact the number of unique viewers.

An increase in viewer duration could contribute to the number of average viewers. Data for viewer duration was inconclusive and emphasis in this area should be considered when conducting further research.

Findings

Helpful – Using Social Media, Email, and Text messaging to gain viewership

My longest stream (194 minutes) had the highest number of unique viewers (7) but also incorporated Part II of the previous day's stream. In the previous day's stream, I lost a challenge I gave to myself and promised the chat I would cut my hair in the next day's stream. Releasing information about upcoming content could lead to an increase in viewership for the next stream. It may make a difference whether the information released about upcoming content is considered shocking, like a haircut. This should be considered for further research.

Although I struggled the most with average viewers (there were an average of 2 viewers in Week 1, 1.8 in Week 2, and 1.8 in Week 3), average viewers were the highest on day 3 of streaming (4 viewers) during Grand Theft Auto V (games is one of the most popular streaming categories and Grand Theft Auto V is the most viewed game) despite having technology and content issues (I struggled with the controller and difficult situations during the game), indicating a struggle with technology and content may neither hurt nor help viewership. An increase in viewer duration could contribute to the number of average viewers. Data for viewer duration was inconclusive and emphasis in this area should be considered when conducting further research.

Unique viewers, however, were highest during Week 1 and 3 of Grand Theft Auto V in which text messaging and social media were used to gain viewership. Social media, email, and texting made a bigger difference for unique viewers in the games category (17 unique game viewers in week 1, 9 in week 2, and 14 in week 3) than in Creative, Just Chatting, and IRL, which stayed consistent (9 unique other category viewers in week 1, 9 in week 2, and 10 in week 3). As social media, email, and text message notifications increased (social media posts about going live were made 0/5 times in week 1, 0/5 times in week 2, and 5/5 times in week 3. Email notifications were sent 0/5 times in week 1, 1/5 times in week 2, and 0/5 times in week 3. Text messages were sent 3/5 days in week 1, 1/5 days in week 2, and 1/5 days in week 3), the External Follower source increased (4 followers were from external sources in week 1, 2 in week 2, and 6 in week 3), indicating social media, email, and text message notifications were effective.

The highest number of unique chatters happened on the day I posted to social media and texted before going live (there were three unique chatters during Mario Kart on Week 4). Text messaging prior to going live produced a similar number of unique viewers as posting to social media (there were 26 unique viewers in Week 1 in which texting with the primary notification source, and 24 unique viewers in Week 3 where social media was the primary notification source). This data indicates that not only is social media and texting effective for gaining viewership, doing both (texting the streamer's network and posting to social media about going live) is most effective.

Neutral for streamers – Negative comments, technology issues, stream duration, and music neither help nor hurt

The highest percentage of negative comments happened during the most popular game (In Week 1, 20% of the 169 comments during Grand Theft Auto V were negative. This day produced the greatest number of total comments, as well as the greatest number of negative comments). However, in Week 3, which is most like Week 1 in terms of stream notification, total comments during Grand Theft Auto V were 44, with 4% being negative (the second highest percent of negative comments, tied with Adobe Illustrator in Week 3). This data indicates that game popularity may increase the percentage of negative comments.

As the number of stream issues decreased (11 streaming issues in week 1, 8 in week 2, and 2 in week 3), the number of neutral and negative comments did not significantly change (86% of comments in week 1 were neutral, 88% in week 2, and 90% in week 3. 7% of comments in week 1 were negative, 2% in week 2, and 4% in week 3, indicating stream issues may not have a significant effect on audience response.

In Week 1 and 3 in which texting and social media served as the primary notification for going live, the number of unique viewers (unique viewers in Week 1 was 26 and Week 3 was 24) was not greatly affected even though Week 3 had longer stream durations (Week 1 total minutes streamed was 501 and week 3 was 688), indicating longer streams may not significantly impact the number of unique viewers.

Unhelpful for streamers – Avoiding audience requests

Music (or lack thereof) may have helped increase the number of comments from week to week (on Week 3, music from YouTube was played on Tuesday and Thursday streams) but did not make much difference in other quantitative outcomes. Introducing music to the stream (that had more variety than game music) in Week 3 contributed to a decrease in the negative notes, but not an overall increase in positive comments from week to week (7% in Week 1, 10% in Week 2, 6% in Week 3). However, adding music can contribute to the audience's enjoyment of the stream, and accommodating music requests should be done when possible.

Uncertain – How lack of branding affects streamer success

Because I chose to include a bio, profile picture, accent color, banner, video player banner, and feature content on each of my streams, it is unclear how not using Twitch branding affects streamer success. More time for the case study could help answer this question.

LIMITATIONS

The case study was informative in finding ways to define and contribute to success as a streamer. There were, however, limitations that should be considered if this research is to be expanded upon in the future. Limitations included Sample Size, Time, Experience and Skills, Social Media Following, and Stream Variations.

Sampling

As the only participant in this case study, the sample size is too low to accept the findings as definitive. Being able to consider the experience and data collected from a larger number of beginner streamers - considering their age, gender, experience with technology and

video games, social media following, and streaming availability – could help to better understand how quantitative and qualitative adjustments can impact streamer success.

Time

Although I did not miss any scheduled streaming sessions, I was late for many. I created a streaming schedule on Twitch that is visible to anyone who visits my channel. The streaming schedule included the date, activity, and time I would be streaming (8:30 pm was my goal streaming start time). I always started the stream before 9:00 pm, but rarely did it start by 8:30 pm. Being late to streams could have cost potential viewership.

Having more time to prepare for streams between working a full-time job and streaming start times was a limitation and led me to sacrifice being on time for being prepared for the stream in other areas. However, working a full-time job does not hold back streamers from engaging in the practice – whether streaming just for fun, or on the path to Affiliate or Partner. Eliminating various limitations - such as an increased understanding of streamer technology and further-developed skills – could make it easier to balance a full-time job and responsibilities as a Twitch Affiliate or Partner.

The amount of time streamed – 15 days – is an additional limiting factor for this case study. Although it is technically possible to meet the requirements to become a Twitch Affiliate within 7 days, increasing the amount of time to reach Twitch Affiliate could allow for a better understanding of what it takes to become a successful streamer. Additionally, my streams did not last more than 194 minutes in one day. It could be beneficial to increase or decrease the amount of time streamed to learn more about how it affects viewership.

Experience and Skills

Technology challenges proved to be a limitation, especially in my Week 1 streams. It was helpful to have a household member watching my stream on their mobile device, and they were able to alert me when something was not working correctly. Otherwise, it would be difficult to know if I was not being heard by the limited audience in the chat. Determining how to use technology to be able to stream hobbies was a limitation in Week 1 when attempting my Gift-Wrapping Stream. There were many instances in which a bird's eye view of the activity would have enhanced the experience for viewers, but it was challenging to determine what technology to use and how to set it up. For that reason, I opted to make my Week 2 and 3 hobbies-streams computer-based instead of craft-related activities like I originally planned. As the weeks progressed, I began to feel more comfortable using the technology. However, using the basic streaming technology was not a limitation I anticipated.

Although my streaming categories were diverse to appeal to a variety of audiences, my lack of experience and skills in video games was a limitation, especially in Grand Theft Auto V. There were times when I was not sure what to do next or how to get out of a situation for an extended period. With the Games category being Twitch's second most popular streaming category next to World of Warcraft and Just Chatting, being able to perform in this area is important for gaining viewers and visibility (Twitch tracker, December 2022). Grand Theft Auto V is Twitch's Most-Watched video game on Twitch, so I was interested to see how the game could contribute to my measures of success for this project. For future studies, it would be interesting to see how varying levels of skill may contribute to an increase in qualitative outcomes and quantitative outputs.

Social media following

My personal social media accounts consist of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest, with my most active social media accounts being Facebook and Instagram. My social media accounts have a limited following (162 Instagram followers and 317 Facebook friends) and are not regularly active comparatively. From June-November 2022, I posted to Instagram one time and to Facebook (prior to my case study) four times. Given the findings, having a more active social media presence could help contribute to an increase in quantitative outputs.

Stream variations

Limitations also include Stream Variations. I chose activities I felt most comfortable doing and chose the streaming categories accordingly. However, a case study in which only one activity or Streaming Category was used may make for more compelling data. For example, participants in the case study could stream for a specific period only in the Games streaming category, or only stream a particular game. Building a reputation and a following in a particular category may make it easier to break into lesser-viewed categories and activities in the future.

ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How can a Twitch streamer use quantitative data to define success?

Streamers can track changes in average viewers, unique viewers, followers, subscribers, unique chatters, Follower sources, Notification Engagement, Follower reach, Follower Engagement methods (social media, text messaging, email), VOD views, music, and streaming

categories and activities to follow trends and make adjustments to lead to an increase in viewership and followers.

RQ2: How can a Twitch streamer use qualitative data to define success?

Streamers can track changes in Twitch branding, such as usage of social media links, bio, profile picture, accent color, profile banner, video player banner, feature content, auto hosting, recently streamed categories, and my streamer shelf on their streamer profile and adjust accordingly. However, these elements were not adjusted throughout this case study, so there is no data to support that adjustments in these areas could make a positive difference in viewership or followers. Streamers can track changes in tags, streaming categories, and livestream comments (whether positive, negative, or neutral) and adjust to increase viewership and followers.

RQ3: How can Twitch streamers use qualitative metrics and quantitative data to increase their views, viewer duration, and channel followers?

Although additional studies are needed to draw a definitive conclusion, based on readings from external sources, literature, and case study findings, streamers can use qualitative metrics and quantitative data to increase their views, viewer duration, and channel subscribers in the following ways: Releasing information about upcoming content during stream could lead to an increase in viewership for the next stream. Text messaging, social media, and email are helpful in gaining unique viewership and contributing to streamer success, especially in the Games streaming category. Not only is social media and texting effective for gaining viewership, doing both (texting the streamer's network and posting to social media

about going live) is most effective. Streaming issues, such as issues with technology, can contribute to a streamer's uneasiness but does not largely contribute to streamer success or failure. Whether a stream had music did not contribute to the qualifications for streamer success. Longer streams may not significantly impact the number of unique viewers.

An increase in viewer duration could contribute to the number of average viewers. Data for viewer duration was inconclusive and emphasis in this area should be considered when conducting further research.

RQ4: What are the elements of a successful stream/streamer on Twitch?

A successful streamer on Twitch will use opportunities to release information about upcoming streams to help increase future viewership. Successful streamers will also use social media, email, text messaging, and crowd creation through other networks to help increase viewership. Using external resources (guides, videos, etc.) to help learn the software and technology used for streaming can help streamline the livestreaming process, leading to an increase in energy in other areas to help make the stream successful.

DISCUSSION

The recommendations for becoming a successful streamer through Twitch through increased viewership and followers are to 1) use Crowd Creation by reaching out to networks, posting on social media, emailing, and texting prior to going live, 2) use external resources to help learn the software and technology used for streaming to allow for easier streams, and 3) release information about future streams to help contribute to increased viewership.

Limitations – including sampling, time, experience, skills, social media activity and following, and stream category variations – should be considered when evaluating the results of the case study. A larger case study with more participants could help further this research.

In the future, it may be beneficial to consider the following for further research: An increase in viewer duration could contribute to the number of average viewers. Data for viewer duration in this study was inconclusive and emphasis on this area should be considered. Variations in branding were not studied thoroughly in this case study. Stream and channel branding, as well as streaming style and personality, can play a significant role in streamer success and should be considered for further research. It was determined through this study that releasing information about upcoming content could lead to an increase in viewership for the next stream. It may make a difference, however, whether the information released about upcoming content is considered shocking, like a haircut, versus typical content, like playing a video game. This should be considered for further research. An increase in viewer duration could contribute to the number of average viewers. However, data for viewer duration was inconclusive and a greater emphasis in this area could help further the understanding of streamer success.

CONCLUSION

Learning how to become a successful streamer by capitalizing on gains and avoiding mistakes made in this case study can help beginner streamers get a jumpstart on their journey to Affiliate status.

The results of this case study can be transferred to other livestreaming platforms, as they highlight the importance of capitalizing on social media, email, and other networking tools to fuel viewership for streamer success.

There are many successful streamers who have earned the notoriety of Twitch Affiliate or Partner. Studying their methods is not enough for other streamers – whether beginner or advanced - to reach this status. Streamers should use Crowd Creation, track their stream data, and have patience with themselves in becoming a successful streamer through Twitch or any other livestreaming platform.

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