

# Spanish Twitch streamers: Personal influence in a broadcast model akin to television

[ACCEPTED VERSION]

**How to cite:** Sixto-García, J., & Losada-Fernández, D. (2023). Spanish Twitch streamers: Personal influence in a broadcast model akin to television. *Convergence*, 29(3), 713-729. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13548565221149892>

**Abstract:** Following the migration of influencers from YouTube to Twitch and the boom in popularity experienced by the latter social network, this paper explores if brands are capitalizing on the influence capacity of streamers or if streamers might be getting money from their own content. In order to investigate this, it was necessary to perform a quantitative analysis on the publication schedules and broadcast formats used by streamers. This facilitated the simultaneous identification of another main finding: Spanish streamers are using a broadcast model on Twitch that resembles that of open linear television. Although they only broadcast content related to video games, trends towards other types of audiovisual content have already been identified. Moreover, it has been found that influential streamers prioritize Twitch over other social networks even though feedback flows have been detected, especially from Twitch to other platforms. This work represents a contribution to knowledge in terms of understanding Twitch and understanding platforms and influencers. It is important to determine whether these new forms of broadcasting and interaction could be considered a hybrid model between linear television and social media streaming.

**Keywords:** Twitch; streamers; influencers; social media; gameplay.

## 1. Introduction

Live streaming is expanding at great speed in both production and consumption, whilst Twitch and its streamers are at the forefront of that revolution (Johnson & Woodcock, 2019). Digital influencers play a fundamental role for companies because they function as mediators of cultural and social values, as sources of information and advice, as behavioral models and as diffusers of innovation (SanMiguel, Guercini & Sábada, 2018). They have learned to easily detect the needs of the audiences and to overcome the passivity that some users experience when they connect to social networks (Santamaría & Meana, 2017), so that with the democratization of information and communication, their opinions and takes on events turns them into great advocates (Segarra-Saavedra & Hidalgo-Marí, 2018).

Influencers have always existed, albeit in different forms and under different nomenclatures (Català, 2019). The use of celebrities in advertising is recognized as a strategy to transfer the ideas behind these personalities to the products offered by brands (López & Martínez, 2012). Nonetheless, it was not until the rise of social networks that the figure of the influencer (Castelló & del Pino, 2015) and social media superstars (Budzinski & Gaenssle, 2018) developed within a context characterized by a hyper-connected society, advertising saturation, audience fragmentation, audiences with greater knowledge of marketing and advertising, and an enormous power of the references issued by the user community when making decisions (Gómez, 2018; López & Martínez, 2012), and, now, with the use of the power of live streaming and the formats similar to traditional television. Nothing influences the average person more than a recommendation made by a friend or another trusted person (Ramos, 2019), but also branding and business practices are involved in game live streaming and its hosting communities (Taylor, 2018).

Working closely and directly with their audience, influencers have been gaining ground in the attention

economy (Marwick, 2013), first in blogs and then in Twitter, Instagram and YouTube (Muiños, 2017). Following the success of YouTube and Twitch, the number of streamers has multiplied. YouTube paved the way for the transformation of users into content creators and broadcasters of audiovisual products, that is, into youtubers and/or vloggers (Vizcaíno, de Casas & Aguaded, 2019). Their target audience, typically just a few years younger, look to them for their opinions on topical issues because they address current issues in an informal manner (Rego & Romero-Rodríguez, 2016) and also promote products supplied by brands (Tur-Viñes, Núñez-Gómez & González-Río, 2018). Many of these opinion leaders began by sharing their experiences of video games, books, clothing, cosmetics or food (Establés, Guerrero-Pico & Contreras-Espinosa, 2019), but the landscape seems to be changing and require further research on all social networks and the influence activities that take place on them.

This research is justified by the need to identify the type of content and broadcast Twitch streamers are utilizing. In order to determine this, those influencers who were not previously known outside the Internet, their posting schedules and the contents of their live shows, were all analyzed. The research showed that Twitch has become the main platform for active streamers and that live streaming games are the predominant content trend. The number of promoted posts on Twitch were also compared with those of other social networks and it was found that streamers do not need to associate their image with other brands to boost their profiles. This is one of the main contributions of this paper to the scientific literature, since this analysis shows that streamers are profiting from their own content and that the presence of promotional material is residual on their social networks. Another relevant finding is that the activity carried out on Twitch by streamers led to a tendency towards transforming this social network and its broadcasts into a kind of linear television channel, which is one of the most important reasons for their success. Most live streaming research has focused on English and American speakers, whether implicitly or explicitly. This study provides a Spanish perspective which complements the more global vision already offered by previous authors. Currently, other researchers are focusing on Australian, Japanese and Brazilian streamers, and probably many others, so this paper will sit alongside those other studies as they come out.

## **2. The phenomenon of influence on Twitch**

The last two years have seen a large migration of streamers from YouTube to Twitch (Libo Marketing, 2021; Be Shared, 2020). One of the biggest drawbacks that creators face on YouTube is the network's monetization policy, which has led to the flight of several prestigious youtubers such as AuronPlay, Rubius and The Grefg, among others, to Twitch. The reason for this is that while YouTube depends fundamentally on advertising investment, that is, on those profiles that attract advertisers due to their viralization capacity, Twitch's monetization is based on both the advertising secured and on the number of subscribers attained by the streamers (Abarbanel & Johnson, 2020; Gutiérrez & Cuartero, 2020; Hamilton, Garretson, & Kerne, 2014). In this way, there has been a fragmentation in the consumption habits of users, who now choose Twitch to watch streamed videos, while YouTube mostly exists as a reference platform for all other types of video consumption (We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2021).

Twitch is a streaming video platform mainly focused on video games and eSports, although content on other topics is becoming increasingly popular. This feature makes Twitch an ideal place for all kinds of influencer marketing. Unlike YouTube, subscribers are not necessarily followers, but only paying users. On each channel, users can see who is streaming, the number of viewers and followers, and the category of the game. If the channel is broadcasting at the time of clicking, the user can get access to the live broadcast. This is the most popular format on the network, where live streamers or influencers may unbox promotional items to showcase the products they wish to recommend. Some previous studies highlight that viewers seem to develop parasocial relationships with the streamers, in which the streamer intentionally or unintentionally creates an illusion of intimacy that makes viewers feel special (Wohn et al., 2019).

Although the origins of Twitch date back to 2007, when it was part of a live broadcast project called Justin.tv that was accessible to anyone (Aguilar, 2020), early on the creators realized that what users enjoyed the most were the video game broadcasts that were made from the Twitch section. In fact, the network was really born in 2011, with the aim of supporting e-sports and, in turn, to competing with YouTube in streaming. Since it was bought by Amazon in 2014, Twitch has become the benchmark for video games and for all other cultural products that derive from video games.

Its success is built on a focus on the community of gamers, as well as on gameplays, and audience participation and interaction with users (Carías, 2020; Gutiérrez & Cuartero, 2020). These focuses have made Twitch a window to the privacy of other internet users (GQ Spain, 2018). Nonetheless, Twitch is increasingly offering more diverse content, such as music, talks with users, live sports (Tyreal Yizhou Qian, 2021) and lifestyle content (Queiruga, 2020). Upon observing this, it is safe to say that Twitch's future development will not be limited to just videogames. For example, 'spatial switching' and 'affective switching' are some ways in which Twitch introduces new dimensions of flexibility, convenience and user-control to flow, liveness and linear-TV (Spilker, Ask, & Hansen, 2020).

In this context, brands are showing interest in Twitch influencers as a means through which to capture new promotional opportunities due to the low market saturation compared to other networks such as Facebook or Instagram. These influencers' continuous growth, self-serving promotion, and the sheer power of interaction of the network also drive this interest (Borrás, 2020). In relation to the migration of influencers from YouTube to Twitch, Aguilar (2020) explains that while the latter pays for the popularity of a channel, the former offers the possibility of subscription (Spilker & Colbjørnsen, 2020).

This model is similar to Netflix, Spotify or Hulu (Sanson & Steirer, 2019), but rather than consuming a movie, users consume streams and streamers. Therefore, streamers who do not rely on advertising contracts, but who have millions of subscribers on their channel, can still receive large dividends (Martín, 2021; Siutila, 2018). In fact, this distribution infrastructure includes features that allow viewers to financially support Twitch streamers (Bingham 2017). New viewing and audience practices of the streaming platform Twitch (Spilker, Ask, & Hansen, 2020) start to be used by brands. Additionally, Twitch is becoming the gold standard platform for live broadcasting (Partin, 2020).

Depending on the type of subscription, users can access ad-free streams, subscriber-only streams, can talk privately with the streamer, or access subscriber emoticons and badges. Queiruga (2020) highlights other income mechanisms on Twitch. (1) Through donations via PayPal or a donation panel; (2) using the affiliate program for those who have broadcasted more than 8 hours in the last 30 days, or who have done so for seven different days in the last 30 days with an average of three or more simultaneous viewers in the last 30 days and maintain at least 50 followers; (3) using bits that users can buy to send cheers; (4) via the Twitch partner program with more customization options than affiliate programs, which is accessible to those who have broadcasted 25 hours in the last 30 days, or 12 different days in the last 30 days, while averaging 75 viewers in the last 30 days; (5) through commissions for sales of games and related items; (6) via advertising.

The main factor that allows brands to develop strategies with influencers on this platform is the engagement that creators get from users. Twitch is a social network designed for interaction and where users can actively participate with streamers (Leith, 2021). Regarding the most successful formats on the platform, SocialPubli (2020) notes the following trends: (a) product placement in the streamer's set up, (b) associating the brand name with the competitions that take place in the creators' own channels, (c) the branded content in e-sports and (d) the storytelling of product operation explanations with direct resolution of user doubts.

### 3. Hypothesis and Objectives

This research sets out the following initial hypothesis: That Twitch streamers generate income mainly from their own content, as there aren't yet many brands that are turning to these influencers to advertise their products.

To confirm or refute this hypothesis, it is necessary that we consider the following research objectives:

- O1. Determine the level of influence of these streamers according to the number of followers and views of their audiovisual productions.
- O2. Identify the posting schedules of these influencers on Twitch, with particular emphasis on the type of broadcast and the type of content.
- O3. Compare the number of promoted posts with other social networks to determine if brands prioritize the influence of these streamers on Twitch compared to other social networks.

### 4. Methodology

The sample is made up of the top ten Spanish streamers on Twitch, according to the quantitative analysis carried out on March 1, 2021 by TwitchTracker, the leading platform regarding the study of metrics on Twitch (see table 1). As the accounts of the most viewed creators are consistent throughout the analysis period (from March 1 to May 1, 2021), the data in table 1 refers to May 1, 2021 so as to offer the most up-to-date data possible. It should be noted that the streamer LOLiTOFDEZ would be in sixth position in terms of number of followers, were it not for the fact that this streamer has not broadcast live for three years since signing on Facebook Live (Sabán, 2019).

**Table 1.** The ten most followed Spanish streamers on Twitch

Creator	Followers	Active Subscribers	Views	Hours Broadcast	Hours Viewed	Historical Average Audience	Largest ever Audience	Days Active
Rubius	8,92M	14.607	167M	2.403	107M	44.376	344.676	649
AuronPlay	8,37M	30.395	129M	1.355	109M	80.386	313.347	443
TheGrefg	7,22M	9.750	137M	1.945	76.7M	39.433	2.470.347	506
ibai	5,87M	27.147	185M	2.619	103M	39.162	544.239	672
Alexby11	2,53M	Hidden	30.8M	2.636	15.4M	5.855	70.418	806
IamCristinini	2,01M	4.212*	57.3M	7.046	17.6M	2.503	58.228	1.227
Perxita	1,75M	Hidden	28.4M	1.659	17.2M	10.372	77.009	395
Reborn_Live	7,22M	7.433	33.4M	1.522	23M	15.129	113.707	321
bysTaXx	5,87M	Hidden	21.3M	1.588	9.93M	6.251	269.907	405
Vicens	2,53M	Hidden	17M	1.306	7.36M	5.638	46.393	282

\*The subscribers' figure for IamCristinini was extracted from the April 29, 2021 livestream

**Source:** Own elaboration. Data extracted from TwitchTracker on May 1, 2021.

The presences of all the streamers that make up the sample on YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok (the most popular social networks in Spain according to data from IAB, 2021) have also been tracked in order to consider potential comparative arguments relating to Twitch and the other social networks (see table 2).

**Table 2.** Profiles and followers of the ten main Spanish streamers on other social networks

Name	YouTube	Twitter	Instagram	Facebook	TikTok
El Rubius	elrubiusOMG (Main) 39.8M	@Rubiu5 16.6M	@elrubiuswtf 14.5M	@elrubiusO MG 7.76M	@rubius 3M
	Rubius Z (Secondary) 10.2M				
AuronPlay	AuronPlay (Main) 27.8M	@auronplay 10M	@auronplay 15.1M	@AuronPla yOficial 8.1M	None
	Auron (Secondary) 11.1M				
The Grefg	TheGrefg 16.8M	@TheGrefg 4.9M	@grefg_official 6.7M	@Thegrefg 2.3M	@thegrefg 4.2M
Ibai Llanos	Ibai (Main) 5,81M	@IbaiLlanos 4.2M	@ibaillanos 4.1M	None	@ibaillanos 2.6M
	Charlando Tranquilamente (Secondary) 570k				
Alexby11	aLexBY11 8.9M	@aLexBY11 6M	@alexby11yt 3.3M	None	None
IamCristinini	Cristinini (Main) 1.14M	@IamCristin ini 501.9k	@iamcristinini 839k	None	@iamcristinini 476.5k
	Cristinini RP (Secondary) 51.1k				
Perxitaa	Perxitaa 2.57M	@Perxitaa 1.3M	@perxitaa 1.2M	None	None
Reborn_Live	Reborn_Live 1,09M	@DonReborn2 725.1k	@rebornislive 477k	None	None
bysTaXx	bysTaXx 5,74M	@bysTaXx 4.2M	@bystaxx 2.5M	@bysTaXx 1.3M	None
Vicens	Vicens 1,88M	@ItsVicens 409.5k	@vicenss_ 763k	None	@vicens.official 260.1k

**Source:** own elaboration with data extracted from each social network on 1st May 2021.

Once the length and depth of the sample was decided, the data collection began in each of the networks. The common quantitative values were determined (see table 3), as were the description items, so as to establish thematic categories of content, since Dalle and his team (2005) also include content analysis as one of the main data production techniques in quantitative research. The data was collected between April 1 and 30, 2021 according to the technical-communication characteristics of each platform.

**Table 3.** Analysis variables in each of the social networks.

Social Network	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Observations
<b>Twitch</b>	Date	Time	Title	Description: When streamers are said to have been 'talking to their followers', it means that they have been doing so for periods of time greater than 30 minutes. Otherwise, this interaction is considered as a dynamic characteristic of the introduction or greeting of each creator.	Length of time	Average audience	TVTOP, a leading tool for monitoring streamer statistics, was turned to for data collection. Together with TwitchTracker it was used to collect the figures of some of Vicens' live shows (for unknown reasons, the data for his live shows on 3, 16, April 18, 23 and 30 are not on the TVTOP website), and for all the streams of lamCristinini. The latter actually does not authorize the publication of statistics of its live shows (TVTOP Spain, 2020, 2021).
<b>YouTube</b>	Date	Title	Number of views	Likes	Dislikes	Number of comments	Activity not registered on stories.
<b>Twitter</b>	Date	Number of retweets.  Quotes from other users are also included. This happens automatically on this social network when viewing the feed.	Number of likes	Number of comments	Description	Date	Activity not registered on fleets
<b>TikTok</b>	Date	Title	Views	Likes	Number of comments	Number of times shared	
<b>Facebook</b>	Date	Number of reactions	Number of comments	Number of times shared	Description		Activity not registered on stories
<b>Instagram</b>	Date	Post text	Number of likes	Number of comments	Tags or mentions	Sponsored post	Description
<b>Instagram Stories</b>	Date	Approximate time	Swipe up	Tags or mentions	Interaction with the audience	Description	Date

**Source:** own elaboration.

## 5. Results

Streamers' activity on Twitch is characterized by an almost daily broadcast routine (see table 4). Those such as TheGrefg and Ibai Llanos perform live shows every day, whilst Alexby11, Cristinini and Perxitaa take one day off a week. Apart from Alexby11, content creators stick to a specific broadcast time slot, as is the case with traditional free-to-air television. They start broadcasting between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. and end between 9:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. The average duration of

the broadcasts is between 260-270 minutes, although Cristinini's (477') are double that.

The content of the live shows (table 4) has been classified into three categories: (1) exclusive broadcasts of video games, (2) live broadcasts exempt from gameplay and (3) mixed broadcasts (in which gameplay is combined with conversation with followers, giveaways, video comments or unboxings). There is a clear difference between the streamers that take the top five positions and those that are in the last five. That is, that while the top five dedicate a greater percentage of their live broadcasts to producing non-video game content, the bottom five, excluding Reborn, focus primarily on gameplay, either exclusively or combined with other activities.

The practice of combining gameplay with conversation with followers has also been standardized, since one of the main reasons for Twitch's success is its conversational nature. It operates as an open space for any users' comments to be read out by one of their idols, a potential that streamers are aware of and which they dedicate time and importance to in their live shows.

**Table 4.** Streamer activity on Twitch

Creator	Broadcasts	Time slot	Average Length	(1) Videogame Broadcasts	(2) Broadcasts with no gaming	(3) Mixed Broadcasts
<b>El Rubius</b>	19	19:00/20:30 to 01:00/03:30	345'	26.3%	10.5%	63.2%
<b>AuronPlay</b>	21	16:30/17:00 to 20:00/22:00	246'	9.6%	19%	71.4%
<b>The Grefg</b>	34	17:00/19:00 to 21:00/23:00	238'	44.1%	8.9%	47%
<b>Ibai Llanos</b>	35	17:30 to 23:30	205'	20%	42.8%	37.2%
<b>Alexby11</b>	26	No use	236'	3.8%	30.8%	65.4%
<b>IamCristinini</b>	25	18:00/19:00 to 01:30/03:00	477'	40%	0%	60%
<b>Perxita</b>	25	16:00/16:30 to 20:30/21:00	273'	96%	0%	4%
<b>Reborn_Live</b>	21	20:30/21:00 to 00:30/01:30	273'	0%	14.3%	85.7%
<b>bysTaXx</b>	6	18:00 to 22:30	235'	100%	0%	0%
<b>Vicens</b>	21	15:30/17:30 to 21:00/21:30	292'	90.5%	0%	9.5%

**Source:** own elaboration.

When analyzing Twitch’s evolution (see table 5) in terms of the number of followers and video views, it is clear that there is a high level of audience interest in gameplay broadcasting generally, although each streamer focuses their content on their own niche audience: TheGrefg and Vicens have focused their activity on Fortnite, Cristinini and Perxिताa have become specialists in roleplaying for Grand Theft Auto 5 and bysTaXx has exclusively broadcast the shooter game Counter Strike.

However, streamers such as Ibai Llanos are making the network evolve towards spaces other than video games. This creator conducts interviews, broadcasts soccer matches and freestyle competitions, and performs magic shows. Other streamers have taken similar steps to diversify. Indeed, it is not strange to see El Rubius broadcasting a live cooking session, or to see TheGrefg skiing or Alexby11 narrating football matches.

**Table 5.** The evolution of streamers’ number of followers and views

<b>Creator</b>	<b>Change in followers</b>	<b>Increase in views</b>
<b>Rubius</b>	+255k	+10,9M
<b>AuronPlay</b>	+435k	+12,5M
<b>TheGrefg</b>	+197k	+11,7M
<b>ibai</b>	+331k	+17,7M
<b>Alexby11</b>	+70,9k	+2,31M
<b>IamCristinini</b>	+196k	+5,96M
<b>Perxिताa</b>	+132k	+3,14M
<b>Reborn_Live</b>	-3,7k	+867k
<b>bysTaXx</b>	-2,5k	+289k
<b>Vicens</b>	47,5k	+2,04M

**Source:** own elaboration, data from TwitchTracker (1st April 2021 – 30th April 2021).

There is a clear trend of content creators using YouTube to distribute content that was originally generated on Twitch live streams (see table 6). In effect, these creators have turned their individual YouTube channels into a kind of highlight reel for their best and funniest moments on Twitch. The absence of original content translates into a decrease in user interaction. Except for the big four -El Rubius, AuronPlay, TheGrefg and Ibai Llanos-, the rest of the content creators received low engagement figures, especially considering the volume of subscribers that some of them have: Alexby11 (8.9 million), bysTaXx (5.74 million) or Perxिताa (2.57 million).



**Table 6.** Streamers' activity on YouTube

Creator	Videos	Original content	Content originally broadcast on Twitch	Hybrid content	Average			
					Views	Likes	Dislikes	Comments
<b>El Rubius</b>	7	0%	100%	0%	3.11M	344.9k	2.720	10,710
<b>AuronPlay</b>	17	0%	100%	0%	1.90M	152.6k	1.200	4,613
<b>TheGrefg</b>	21	28,6%	9.5%	61.9%	1.76M	148k	2.934	6,318
<b>Ibai Llanos</b>	26*	3.8%	96.2%	0%	1.73M	135k	1.421	2,726
	43**	0%	100%	0%	131.7k	7,343	67,9	303
<b>Alexby11</b>	18	0%	100%	0%	230k	25.9k	212	510
<b>IamCristinini</b>	12*	8.4%	91.6%	0%	245k	21.2k	163	475
	20**	0%	100%	0%	2,699	298	1	14
<b>Perxिताa</b>	18	0%	100%	0%	53k	5,473	33	186
<b>Reborn_Live</b>	15	0%	100%	0%	31.2k	5,602	56	392
<b>bysTaXx</b>	44	52.3%	47.7%	0%	126.4k	13,460	84	277
<b>Vicens</b>	12	41.7%	41.7%	16.6%	196.1k	9,448	183	441

\*Main channel and \*\*secondary channel. **Source:** own elaboration.

Regarding presence on Twitter (see table 7), Ibai Llanos (298 publications), TheGrefg (293) and Cristinini (235) stand out. The tweets that show interaction between the streamers and their followers are the most noteworthy. The evidence is clear that there is great cohesion within the content creator community. It is common to see AuronPlay, Ibai, TheGrefg or Cristinini interact with each other, despite any possible concerns about competitive tensions existing between the parties. Moreover, streamers spend more effort keeping their Twitter followers informed on their activity on Twitch than on their activity on YouTube.

Based on the promoted publications, these influential figures do not need to spend much time advertising brand collaborations to further their platforms. Promotions for new video games such as Knockout City prevail, which both AuronPlay and Perxिताa announced with the hashtag #SponsoredbyEA are more prevalent. The same is true in regards to technology companies such as Samsung, Logitech (both on Cristinini's profile) or NVIDIA (on Vicens's profile). El Rubius, TheGrefg, Ibai, Reborn and bysTaXx did not register any advertising posts on Twitter.

**Table 7.** Streamers' activity on Twitter

Creator	Publications	Personal publications	Interactions with other users	Publications related to Twitch	Promotional publications	Publications related to YouTube
<b>El Rubius</b>	31	32.3%	41.9%	25.8%	0%	0%
<b>AuronPlay</b>	125	16%	80%	3.2%	0.8%	0%
<b>The Grefg</b>	293	13.9%	43.5%	33.8%	0%	8.8%
<b>Ibai Llanos</b>	298	30.5%	47.3%	22.2%	0%	0%
<b>Alexby11</b>	77	7.8%	18.2%	49.4%	1.2%	23.4%
<b>IamCristinini</b>	235	12.7%	53.2%	29.9%	4.2%	0%
<b>Perxitaa</b>	73	28.8%	49.4%	17.8%	2.7%	1.3%
<b>Reborn_Live</b>	40	10%	60%	30%	0%	0%
<b>bysTaXx</b>	63	11.2%	26.9%	36.6%	0%	25.3%
<b>Vicens</b>	43	13.9%	51.3%	23.3%	6.9%	4.6%

**Source:** own elaboration.

Table eight shows that, with the exception of AuronPlay, these content creators are less active on Instagram. AuronPlay's only published post, a photograph explaining that his pet, Don Gato, had passed away, reached very high engagement figures. As on Twitter, his publication was flooded with likes and messages of encouragement. More promotional content is evidenced on Instagram than on Twitter. On the former, El Rubius promoted the ASUS computer brand under the hashtag #Ad), TheGrefg uploaded a promotional poster of the new Adidas campaign, Alexby11 promoted a Barcelona based business called Chelios Props, Cristinini announced a Chollometro raffle and promoted NVIDIA and the Coolmod IT company, and Perxitaa promoted the new Warner Bros. movie.

Only TheGrefg and Ibai Llanos have really made use of the stories feature on Instagram. Apart from Ibai Llanos, Alexby11, Cristinini and Reborn, all content creators have mostly uploaded personal content, while stories are utilized for nothing more than to access the Twitch channel by swiping up. Again, the importance that streamers give to their activity on Twitch in front of YouTube is made apparent. Regarding promotional content, video games like Knockout City or Core Games are again promoted, always under hashtags that identify the advertising content as #SponsoredbyEA or #Ad.

**Table 8.** Streamers' activity on Instagram

Posts						
Creator	Posts	Personal videos/photos	Promotions	Other	Average	
					Likes	Comments
<b>El Rubius</b>	3	66.7%	33.3%	0	1.63M	26,452
<b>AuronPlay</b>	1	100%	0%	0%	6.3M	247,002
<b>The Grefg</b>	8	37.5%	12.5%	50%	614.7k	4,599
<b>Ibai Llanos</b>	2	100%	0%	0%	671.4k	6,938
<b>Alexby11</b>	2	50%	50%	0%	292.1k	1.175
<b>IamCristinini</b>	5	60%	40%	0%	156k	2,658
<b>Perxिताa</b>	1	0%	100%	0%	109.4k	462
<b>Reborn_Live</b>	3	0%	0%	100%	50.4k	848
<b>bysTaXx</b>	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0
<b>Vicens</b>	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0

Stories						
Creator	Stories	Personal stories	Stories relating to Twitch	Stories relating to YouTube	Promotions	Others
<b>El Rubius</b>	69	44.9%	13%	0%	2.8%	39.3%
<b>AuronPlay</b>	93	62.3%	21.5%	0%	4.3%	11.9%
<b>The Grefg</b>	211	62%	21%	7.6%	1.4%	8%
<b>Ibai Llanos</b>	224	44.2%	55.8%	0%	0%	0
<b>Alexby11</b>	4	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%
<b>IamCristinini</b>	18	22.3%	11.1%	0%	16.6%	50%
<b>Perxिताa</b>	48	50%	4.2%	0%	14.6%	31.2%
<b>Reborn_Live</b>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
<b>bysTaXx</b>	30	83.4%	13.3%	3.3%	0%	0%
<b>Vicens</b>	27	48.2%	33.3%	3.7%	7.4%	7.4%

**Source:** own elaboration

Only five of the creators have an official profile on TikTok (see table 9). Their lack of activity here is perhaps due to the fact that most of these streamers have only just arrived on the platform (Ibai Llanos created his account on April 1). Within the general framework of this study, it was interesting to study their presence on this social network. The results show that TikTok is a platform that is yet to be exploited. Although active streamers are progressively adapting to the type of content that is trending, it is made apparent that strengthening their presence on TikTok is not a strategic priority.

**Table 9. Streamer activity on TikTok**

Creator	Official account	Posts	Personal videos	Challenges and musical videos	Clips from Twitch	Use of viral filters	Average			
							Views	Likes	Comments	Shares
<b>El Rubius</b>	Yes	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0	0
<b>AuronPlay</b>	No									
<b>TheGrefg</b>	Yes	9	0%	55.5%	44.5%	0%	1.4M	282.5k	2,322	1,523
<b>Ibai Llanos</b>	Yes	16	12.5%	62.5%	25%	0%	4.2M	733k	6,419	7,006
<b>Alexby11</b>	No									
<b>IamCristinini</b>	Yes	6	0%	16.7%	16.7%	66.6%	1M	182k	1,002	298
<b>Perxitaa</b>	No									
<b>Reborn Live</b>	No									
<b>bysTaXx</b>	No									
<b>Vicens</b>	Yes	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0	0

Source: own elaboration.

Lastly, Facebook is the social network that is least used by these streamers. Only the veteran streamers have a Facebook page (El Rubius, AuronPlay, TheGrefg and bysTaXx), and even then, they have not been active on their accounts for months. This may in part be due to the competition between Twitch and Facebook Live.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

As other previous studies had already concluded (Johnson & Woodcock, 2019; Spilker, Ask & Hansen, 2020), the potential of Twitch in the digital field is defined by new ways of interaction. The influence is no longer limited to more traditional social networks such as Twitter, Instagram or YouTube (Muñíos, 2017), but Twitch has become an ideal platform for social media superstars (Budzinski & Gaenssle, 2018) of live streaming. In this research, the activity of the ten most prominent Spanish streamers was studied in depth. Also in Spain, and according to Taylor (2018), live streaming games are the predominant trend of content on Twitch. It has been found that it is the four creators with the most followers –El Rubius, AuronPlay, TheGrefg and Ibai Llanos– who have set the bar for streamers today.

All these streamers achieved notoriety on the networks due to their number of followers and were not already known outside the internet. El Rubius and AuronPlay are old school content creators who cultivated their personal brands on YouTube and have continued to further them on Twitch. Nonetheless, Ibai Llanos has done the most groundbreaking work of the group. Although he also previously had close links with the gaming world, he has decided to turn his Twitch channel into what is practically a television network. This amounts to a totally new approach too, and a new way of understanding streaming. It remains to be seen whether this approach will set a new trend for the coming years. TheGrefg exists somewhere between the other three accounts. Younger than Ibai, he maintains that attachment to the gaming world, but increasingly diversifies his brand. He is a master of drawing attention to himself and fostering curiosity. Through this kind of self-promotion, TheGrefg is able to generate expectation and intrigue among his followers to encourage them to enter his live shows.

Despite the fact that also branding and business practices are also involved in game live streaming and its hosting communities (Taylor, 2018), the starting hypothesis is confirmed: that streamers generate income mainly from content created by themselves, and that the presence of promotional content is residual on all their social networks. They do not need to associate their image with another brand or a gameplay in order to maintain or increase their profiles, although when they publish advertising content they do so with transparency and honesty.

Regarding O1, it has been proven that Twitch has become the main platform for streamers to carry out their work. In fact, the global activity of content creators on other social networks revolves around content created for Twitch. Even though they all have more than a million followers on Twitch, streamers like ElRubius, AuronPlay, TheGrefg, Alexby11 or bysTaXx were already well known thanks to their prior work on YouTube, something that made their transition over to Twitch much more fruitful. Today, their YouTube channels exist mostly as a repository of their best moments on Twitch, producing very little original content (the migration from YouTube to Twitch is confirmed once again). Only Cristinini, Reborn and Vicens have done the opposite, that is, transferring their influence from Twitch to the other platforms.

In relation to publishing schedules (O2), there is a clear tendency towards transforming Twitch and its broadcasts into a kind of linear television channel. Streamers' activity on Twitch is characterized by an almost daily broadcast routine. Indeed, all creators, except bysTaXx, put out daily broadcasts with one or two days off per week. It has been determined that content creators follow defined broadcast guidelines with delimited time slots. It is only a matter of time until streamers start to follow the path laid out by Ibai Llanos, opting for weekly formats in the vein of 'Chatting Quietly' style, that creator's standout program. Regarding the content of the streams, it can be confirmed that they only upload content related to video games.

Influencers are people with the necessary potential to generate engagement (IAB, 2019), but being creators who began developing their activity by publishing famous gameplays, they limit their range of action to that field and discard other creative possibilities. In the Spanish case, there is no coincidence with other previous studies (Spilker, Ask & Hansen, 2020). It can be confirmed here that the broadcast of content on Twitch is limited to video games. Nonetheless, the linear nature of the broadcasts could be seen as a revival of linear television on social networks, following the line of research that Spilker and collaborators (2020) had already initiated. The findings also highlight the percentage of broadcast time spent talking with their followers and commenting on videos of various kinds. The latter has become a common pursuit for streamers, who see it as a straightforward way to interact with their viewers, regardless of the monetary donations obtained (Bingham 2017; Partin, 2020; Siutila, 2018). It was found that the practice of combining gameplay with conversation with followers has also been standardized, since one of the main reasons for Twitch's success is its conversational nature.

All the streamers studied here operate similarly on other social networks. However, Twitch is the quintessential space (Castelló & del Pino, 2015) for their influence. Also, according to O3, though the promotional content they share is not greater on other networks, they do prioritize Twitch for both organic and promotional broadcasts. While on Twitter they mainly focus on interaction with users, on Instagram content of a more personal nature predominates, although on all other networks they make constant references to their activity on Twitch. That one may share more content than another on a specific network can only be considered a reflection of an individual streamer's own personal strategy and their betting on one social network over another. With that being said, the Instagram swipe up feature is widely used because it allows a direct link that connects both platforms. In fact, Twitter and Instagram are the networks in which the most activity is registered, followed by YouTube. On the contrary, presence on TikTok remains low and Facebook seems to have been completely disregarded. On the latter network, content creators have been completely inactive. There is a clear trend of content creators using YouTube to distribute content that was originally generated on Twitch live streams

Finally, there is no evidence of a correlation between the number of followers an account has and its number of subscribers. For example, the active subscriptions of AuronPlay (30,395) and Ibai Llanos (27,147) practically double those of El Rubius (14,607), yet it is the third content creator that has the most followers on Twitch. Conclusive reasons for this cannot be provided here. Indeed, subscriptions provide the same advantages across the board. It can only be speculated that factors such as the

personality of the streamer, the relationship the streamer has with the followers, the collaborative feeling of each online community of fans, as well as the type of content provided, may or may not encourage users to activate a subscription.

While Twitch is intended for those who aim to spend long periods of time in direct contact with their favorite streamers, YouTube remains the go-to portal for those seeking smaller doses of entertainment without the need for the kind of instant consumption that is intrinsic to a stream. Nonetheless, one of the success factors of Twitch is that relationships between streamers and viewers seems special because a place of intimacy is created (Wohn et al., 2019), something that transcends the traditional models of subscription to on-demand television channels (Sanson & Steirer, 2019; Spilker & Colbjørnsen, 2020).

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that brands have not yet picked up on the power of Twitch influencers (granted by their number of followers and views) as a tool to implement influencer campaigns. From a different perspective, the analysis of publication schedules shows that these streamers are developing a type of broadcast that is increasingly similar to regular online television, although the content remains almost monothematic and centered around video games. However, in the coming years, it is likely that other kinds of content beyond gameplay will become more prominent on Twitch. This includes interviews, the narration of different types of events, live sports, debates, and cooking. Therefore, the scientific community must pay special attention to the coexistence of influence with new types of emerging contents and the preferred broadcast models.

## References

- Abarbanel, B. & Johnson, M. (2020). Gambling engagement mechanisms in Twitch live streaming. *International Gambling Studies*, 20(3), 393-413. DOI: 10.1080/14459795.2020.1766097
- Aguilar, M. (2020). Twitch, la red social de gamers, terreno fértil para marcas e influencers. *TopicFlower*. <https://topicflower.com/blog/twitch-la-red-social-de-gamers-terreno-fertil-para-marcas-e-influencers/>
- Be Shared (2020). Twitch desbanca a Youtube entre los gamers. <https://beshared.es/twitch-desbanca-youtube-gamers/>
- Bingham, C. M. (2020). Talking about Twitch: Dropped Frames and a normative theory of new media production. *Convergence*, 26(2): 269-286. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856517736974>
- Borrás, H. (2020). Marketing en Twitch, la clave para llegar a los centennials. *Cyberclick*. <https://www.cyberclick.es/numerical-blog/marketing-en-twitch-la-clave-para-llegar-a-los-centennials>
- Budzinski, O. & Gaenssle, S. (2018). The economics of social media (super-)stars: an empirical investigation of stardom and success on YouTube, *Journal of Media Economics*, 31(3-4), 75-95. DOI: 10.1080/08997764.2020.1849228
- Carías, C. (2020). ¿Cómo ser influencer en Twitch? Guía completa 2021. *Get Social Agencia*. <https://www.getsocialagencia.com/influencer-en-twitch-guia-completa-2021/>
- Castelló, A. & del Pino, C. (2015). La comunicación publicitaria con influencers. *Redmarka: revista académica de marketing aplicado*, 1(14), 21-50.
- Català, J. M. (2019). Los influencers y el marketing digital, una convivencia necesaria. *Oikonomics*, 11, 21-28. <https://doi.org/10.7238/o.n11.1903>

- Establés, M. J., Guerrero-Pico, M. & Contreras-Espinosa, R. (2019). Jugadores, escritores e influencers en redes sociales: procesos de profesionalización entre adolescentes. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 74, 214-236. DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-2019-1328
- Gómez, B. (2018). El influencer: herramienta clave en el contexto digital de la publicidad engañosa. *methaodos. Revista De Ciencias Sociales*, 6(1), 149-156. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17502/m.rcs.v6i1.212>
- GQ España. (2018). *Así es Twitch, la plataforma que ha revolucionado los videojuegos*. <https://www.revistagq.com/noticias/cultura/articulos/twitch-plataforma-streaming-videojuegos/31712>
- Gutiérrez, J. F. & Cuartero, A. (2020). El auge de Twitch: nuevas ofertas audiovisuales y cambios del consumo televisivo entre la audiencia juvenil. *Ámbitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación*, 50, 159-175. <https://doi.org/10.12795/Ambitos.2020.i50.11>
- Hamilton, W. A., Garretson, O. & Kerne, A. (2014). Streaming on Twitch: fostering participatory communities of play within live mixed media. En Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems, pp. 1315-1324. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1145/2556288.2557048>
- IAB (2019). *Libro Blanco Marketing de Influencers*. [https://www.amic.media/media/files/file\\_352\\_2145.pdf](https://www.amic.media/media/files/file_352_2145.pdf)
- IAB Spain (2021). *Estudio de Redes Sociales 2021*. <https://iabspain.es/download/55091/>
- Johnson, M. R., & Woodcock, J. (2019). “And today’s top donator is”: How live streamers on Twitch. tv monetize and gamify their broadcasts. *Social Media + Society*, 5(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2056305119881694>
- Johnson, M. R., & Woodcock, J. (2019). ‘It’s like the gold rush’: the lives and careers of professional video game streamers on Twitch. tv. *Information, Communication & Society*, 22(3), 336-351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1386229>
- Leith, A. (2021) Parasocial cues: The ubiquity of parasocial relationships on Twitch. *Communication Monographs*, 88(1), 111-129. DOI: 10.1080/03637751.2020.1868544
- Libo Marketing (2021). Los youtubers se mudan a Twitch. <https://libomarketing.com/los-youtubers-se-mudan-a-twitch/>
- López, R. & Martínez, J. (2012). Publicidad e ídolos de la juventud: una simbiosis inseparable. ¿También en Internet? *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, (96), 181-195.
- Martín, E. (2021). Twitch: ¿Qué ofrece la nueva red social de moda? *El Correo*. <https://www.elcorreo.com/vivir/tecnologia/como-funciona-twitch-20210119085318-ntrc.html?ref=https:%2F%2Fwww.elcorreo.com%2Fvivir%2Ftecnologia%2Fcomo-funciona-twitch-20210119085318-ntrc.html>
- Marwick, A. (2013): *Status update*. New Haven.
- Muñoz, P. (2017). Los influencers en el protocolo. Un caso de estudio. *Revista Estudios Institucionales*, 4(6), 67-78.
- Partin, W. C. (2020). Bit by (twitch) bit: “platform capture” and the evolution of digital platforms. *Social media + Society*, 6(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2056305120933981>
- Queiruga, S. (2020). Qué es y cómo funciona Twitch, la plataforma de streaming de referencia para gamers (y no gamers). *Marketing 4 Ecommerce*. <https://marketing4ecommerce.net/que-es-y-como-funciona-twitch/>

- Ramos, J. (2019). *Marketing de influencers*. <https://es.scribd.com/book/401771539/Marketing-de-Influencers>
- Rego, S. & Romero-Rodríguez, L. M. (2016). Representación discursiva y lenguaje de los 'youtubers' españoles: estudio del caso de los 'gamers' más populares. *Index.comunicación: Revista científica en el ámbito de la Comunicación Aplicada*, 6(1), 197-224.
- Sabán, A. (2019). LOLITO se pasa a Facebook Gaming para hacer sus directos y confirma la otra "guerra del streaming". *Genbeta*. <https://www.genbeta.com/redes-sociales-y-comunidades/lolito-se-pasa-a-facebook-gaming-para-hacer-sus-directos-confirma-otra-guerra-streaming>
- SanMiguel, P. (2020). *Influencer Marketing: Conecta tu marca con tu público*. Editorial LID.
- SanMiguel, P., Guercini, S. & Sádaba, T. (2018). The impact of attitudes towards influencers amongst millennial fashion buyers. *Studies in Communication Sciences*, 18(2), 439-460. <https://doi.org/10.24434/j.scoms.2018.02.016>
- Sanson, K. & Steirer, G. (2019). Hulu, streaming, and the contemporary television ecosystem. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(8), 1210-1227. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443718823144>
- Santamaría, E. & Meana, R. J. (2017). Redes sociales y «fenómeno influencer». Reflexiones desde una perspectiva psicológica. *Miscelánea Comillas*, 75(147), 443-469.
- Segarra-Saavedra, J. & Hidalgo-Marí, T. (2018). Influencers, moda femenina e Instagram: el poder de prescripción en la era 2.0. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, 9(1), 313-325. doi:10.14198/MEDCOM2018.9.1.17
- SocialPubli. (2020). *Marketing en Twitch con influencers*. <https://socialpubli.com/es/blog/twitch-influencers/>
- Spilker, H. S., Ask, K., & Hansen, M. (2020). The new practices and infrastructures of participation: How the popularity of Twitch. tv challenges old and new ideas about television viewing. *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(4), 605-620. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1529193>
- Spilker, H. S., & Colbjørnsen, T. (2020). The dimensions of streaming: toward a typology of an evolving concept. *Media, Culture & Society*, 42(7-8), 1210-1225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443720904587>
- Siutila, M. 2018. The gamification of gaming streams. GamiFIN Conference 2018 (pp. 131-140), Pori, Finland.
- Taylor, T. L. (2018). *Watch me play: Twitch and the rise of game live streaming*. Princeton University Press.
- Tur-Viñes, V., Núñez-Gómez, P. & González-Río, M. J. (2018). Kid influencers on Youtube. A space for responsibility. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 73, 1211-1230. DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-2018-1303
- TVTOP España. (2020, 2 de noviembre). *No publicamos sus datos (x petición suya)*. *Saludos* [tuit]. Twitter. [https://twitter.com/tvtop\\_es/status/1323383577392914436](https://twitter.com/tvtop_es/status/1323383577392914436)
- TVTOP España. (2021). *Perfil de Twitter*. Twitter. [https://twitter.com/tvtop\\_es](https://twitter.com/tvtop_es)
- TwitchTracker. (2021). *Twitch Channels, Games and Global Statistics*. <https://twitchtracker.com/>
- Tyreal Yizhou Qian (2021) Watching sports on Twitch? A study of factors influencing continuance intentions to watch Thursday Night Football co-streaming, *Sport Management Review*. DOI: 10.1080/14413523.2021.1930700



Vizcaíno, A., de Casas, P. & Aguaded, I. (2019). Youtubers e instagramers. En *Competencia mediática y digital: Del acceso al empoderamiento* (pp. 211-220). Grupo Comunicar.

We Are Social & Hootsuite. (2021). *Digital 2021: Global overview report*.

[https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-global-overview-report?utm\\_source=Reports&utm\\_medium=PDF&utm\\_campaign=Digital\\_2021&utm\\_content=Dual\\_Report\\_Promo\\_Slide](https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-global-overview-report?utm_source=Reports&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=Digital_2021&utm_content=Dual_Report_Promo_Slide)

Wohn, D. Y., Jough, P., Eskander, P., Siri, J. S., Shimobayashi, M., & Desai, P. (2019, October). Understanding digital patronage: Why do people subscribe to streamers on Twitch? In Proceedings of the Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play (pp. 99-110).