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# Campus Knowledge of eSports

Kenny Sugishita

*University of South Carolina - Columbia*

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CAMPUS KNOWLEDGE OF ESPORTS

by

Kenny Sugishita

Bachelor of Science  
University of South Carolina Upstate, 2013

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management

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Accepted by:

Mark Nagel, Director of Thesis

Amber Fallucca, Reader

Lacy Ford, Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

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## ABSTRACT

This research study investigates private college and university admission's officers levels of familiarity of the electronic sports (eSports) industry along with determining the level of emphasis universities place on academics and co-curricular activities. A thorough examination of the professional eSports space is extensively detailed providing information about the history of video games, the development of professional eSports, and the development of collegiate eSports. Additionally, examination of trends in higher education, especially as it relates to private institutions, is explained in detail. With the eSports industry continuing to expand, this study is timely as small private colleges and universities are searching for new, innovative solutions to increase enrollment.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

On October 18, 2014, 40,000 spectators paid to attend the *League of Legends* (LoL) World Championship final match held in Seoul, South Korea's World Cup Stadium. In addition to live attendance, an additional 11.2 million concurrent viewers watched the concluding match online with a total viewer count of 27 million throughout the championship tournament (Gafford, 2014). Though *LoL* is the most popular electronic sport (eSports) game, a variety of other video games, including the *Call of Duty* series, *StarCraft II*, *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive*, and *Defense of the Ancients II* (Dota 2) offer local, regional, national and world championship tournaments that often pay top performing participants thousands of dollars ("eSports earnings..." 2015). *Dota 2* currently has a prize pool exceeding \$18 million for the 2015 International Compendium Championship (Chalk, 2015). The proliferation of prominent eSports tournaments has created an environment where professional video gamers can not only sustain a living, but in some cases can earn hundreds of thousands of dollars through prize winnings and other video game activities such as streaming video game content and utilizing sponsorships (Robbins, 2015).

Though unofficial video game competitions have been held since the late 1970's, as technology has advanced and the interest in various games has increased, a variety of entities have begun to form and support eSports teams. Among the various groups are



“unofficial” college teams, often formed among friends living together in dorms or off campus. Though most college eSports teams are not sanctioned on campus as official clubs, a variety of eSports competitions have specifically targeted college-aged players. The North American Collegiate Championships (NACC) is currently comprised of over 1,600 college eSports clubs across the U.S. and Canada. The 2015 NACC Tournament awarded scholarship prizes totaling over \$360,000 to the top teams, \$300,000 of which was distributed to the top four teams. The 2016 season financial winnings are projected to increase to \$540,000 for the winning teams (Lingle, 2015). The 2016 NACC tournament will allocate scholarship prize winnings across all 32 teams that qualify for the tournament (See Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: 2016 NACC Scholarship Prize Winnings (NACC, 2015)

<b>Finishing Position</b>	<b>Number of Players</b>	<b>Scholarship Per Player</b>	<b>Total Amount</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	5	\$30,000	\$150,000
2 <sup>nd</sup>	5	\$15,000	\$75,000
3 <sup>rd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	10	\$7,500	\$75,000
5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	20	\$4,000	\$80,000
9 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup>	40	\$2,000	\$80,000
17 <sup>th</sup> – 32 <sup>nd</sup>	80	\$1,000	\$80,000
<b>Total</b>	160		\$540,000

The rapid increase of college-aged players participating in eSports competitions is an interesting trend, particularly in light of heightened competition to attract

undergraduates to campus, especially at private institutions (Miller, 2014). Though completing a college education is seen as a critical step for most people in launching a successful career, the proliferation of new colleges and universities and the rapid expansion of enrollment at many established higher education institutions has created a “recruiting” environment for college administrators. In particular, college campuses have been focused upon attracting men as 30-year trends indicate that male college enrollment is decreasing as a percentage of the overall campus population (“The disappearing male...,” 2014). With males being the overwhelming current participants in eSports, there appears to be a new potential recruiting and retention tool for colleges and universities (“Sizing and profiling eSports...,” 2014). Recently, Robert Morris University of Chicago (RMU) became the first institute of higher learning to create an eSports “varsity” team, complete with a \$100,000 remodeled classroom for team practices and partial scholarships for the 25 recruited students that can equal as much as \$19,000 a year per person (“Gamers to get...,” 2014). At the 2015 NACC Tournament in Santa Monica, California, RMU finished in second place behind the University of British Columbia. As part of their runner-up finish, each student on the RMU team received \$15,000 in prize winnings. The tournament attracted over 82,000 viewers online (Smith, 2015).

Given the rapid expansion of eSports in general, the current enrollment realities on various college campuses, and the recent investment made by RMU to fund a formal eSports team, it is important to understand how eSports is perceived on campus, especially among admissions officers, the administrators most active in attracting new

students to campus. Unfortunately, little academic research exists regarding higher education admissions officers' knowledge of eSports. In addition, no research exists regarding how the knowledge of eSports by admissions officers may be related to various campus characteristics. This research study will investigate admissions officers' familiarity with eSports. In addition, it will explore the perception of eSports as a potential co-curricular activity that can assist in driving enrollment to private colleges and universities. Given the growth of competitive eSports, and the struggle for private universities to attract and retain students, the present research will provide timely information exploring this burgeoning field.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE ESPORTS INDUSTRY AND TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

#### **Video Game Industry**

In the 1950's there were a variety of games introduced that were byproducts of science or research pertaining to physics and human computer interaction. However, the potential of video games remained largely undiscovered as most recreational play of games in arcades involved *Pinball*. In 1972, the video game industry was unofficially "born" because Atari, an arcade game company, created the first commercially successful video game *Pong*. The success of the newly created game *Pong* generated a surge of other companies - such as Midway and Activision - looking to create new video games as well as hardware on which to play these video games. Throughout the rest of the 1970's, games such as *Asteroids*, *Space Wars*, and *Space Invaders*, attracted widespread attention and tremendous amounts of money. The newly developed video games were not only played in traditional arcades, but non-traditional arcades were also introduced in bars and restaurants.

Building off its arcade game success, in October 1977 Atari released the Video Computer System (VCS), which was bundled with the *Space Invaders* "home" video game. This was the first video game adapted from an arcade version to be played on a home console (Overmars, 2012). As a result, a transition from arcade rooms to the home began to occur, which led to enhanced sales and increased revenues. The new product

release led to over 30 million VCS systems and hundreds of millions of video games being sold (Overmars, 2012).

In the early 1980's, the popularity of video games and VCS games was enhanced with the development of a variety of home video games being produced. Video games such as *Pac-Man* (1980), *Donkey Kong* (1981), and *Mario Bros.* (1983) were introduced to the market with great fanfare. Many, though not all, of the most popular VCS games were traditional arcade games that transitioned into the home setting. Additionally, with the success of Atari's VCS model, other companies began to create their own systems such as Mattel introducing IntelliVision in 1980 and ColecoVision in 1982 (Overmars, 2012). This led to market saturation in the early 1980's that often resulted with competing consoles finding it difficult to effectively capture the video game market with the devices and the video games not performing to the consumer's expected standards. Atari, who was the market leader of the video game industry at the time, bought the rights to *E.T.* from Steven Spielberg for over 20 million dollars in 1982 and created the game version of the blockbuster movie (Overmars, 2012). However, despite Atari's hope that the game would increase their sagging sales, the finalized acquisition only allowed Atari a few weeks of design time to create the game before the Christmas holiday. As a result, the game was poorly developed and not received by their consumers which costed Atari millions of dollars (Overmars, 2012). Atari lost the trust of many of their customers and video game consumers became confused about which game console and video game was the best one to use.

In 1984, the home video game industry experienced a significant setback as the huge consumption of video games in the early 1980s was followed by dramatic decreases in sales from 1984-1986 (see Figure 2.1). In addition to the video game console saturation in the early 1980's, affordable personal computers that were becoming available also offered games which contributed to the decreased demand for VCS systems. In an attempt to recover from the setback in sales, companies such as Atari and Radio Shack released video game computers that allowed a unique feature of being able to save game progress, which led to the introduction of more complex video games (Overmars, 2012). Despite the consumer appreciation for these new features, the market saturation from multiple companies led to an oversupply of games and consoles which limited potential demand for many of the offered products.

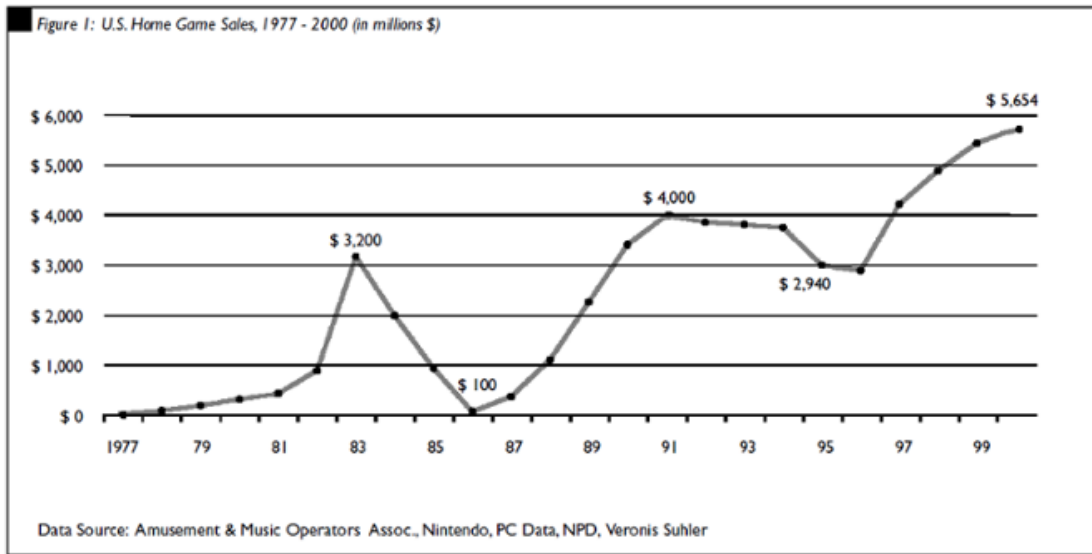


Figure 2.1: U.S. Video Game Sales from 1977-1999. Reprinted directly from (Williams, 2014)

In the mid-1980s, despite the American video game industry experiencing a downturn in sales, companies based in other countries began entering the US marketplace. In 1985, Japanese firm Nintendo released the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) bundled with *Super Mario Bros.* which obviously had success as the video game is still being played presently. Four years later, Nintendo released the *Game Boy* game system which was bundled with the game *Tetris*. Designed by the Russian scientist Alexei Pajitnov, *Tetris* is considered to be the most addictive video game ever created (Overmars, 2012).

As indicated in Figure 2.1, the new companies and games helped the video game industry recover from its stagnating sales as the 1990s saw game sales increase to four billion dollars in the early 1990's (Williams, 2014). The video game industry resurgence coincided with the creation of next generation gaming consoles. Between 1994 and 1996 Sega, Sony, and Nintendo all released advanced gaming consoles that had upgraded hardware and software that dramatically improved graphics and sound quality (Overmars, 2012). The introduction of the new video game consoles such as PlayStation and the Nintendo 64 continued to drive video game sales to an all-time high in the late 1990's.

In addition to the technological improvements to VCS gaming consoles, during the 1990's, Personal Computer (PC) games incorporated similar enhancement which helped increase sales. PC games, due to the more powerful operating systems, allowed games to have even better graphics, more memory, and a much faster processing speed. PC games such as *Sim City*, *Grand Theft Auto*, and *Tomb Raider* were created in the 1990s and continue to have successful sequels today (Overmars, 2012). The primary

game-playing difference between PC games and gaming consoles was the use of keyboards and a mouse, as opposed to a video game console controller. While there is no substantial difference in technological performance of the games, the playing device differences provided video game consumers with more choices. In addition to controller input differences, PCs often had modems that allowed games to be played against competitors in other locations, which became especially important as internet connectivity speeds increased. Enhanced internet speeds helped create the proliferation of multiplayer online role playing games which is one of the largest present forms of international gaming.

At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, further developments and improvements of PCs and consoles continued to create success for the gaming industry. Sony's PlayStation 2, Nintendo's GameCube, and Microsoft's Xbox, were all new gaming consoles introduced in either 2000 or 2001. In addition to better graphics, a lot of the new gaming consoles were now DVD and CD compatible, and gamers had ample opportunities to play video games online against others, often in groups. The increasing demand for better operating systems, better graphics, and user friendly controls led to substantial increases in the development costs of games and their delivery systems. The average cost to develop a typical video game in the earlier part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century increased from one to five million dollars per game, creating fierce competition amongst game developers (Overmars, 2012). PC gaming also continued to gain popularity with the important development of multiplayer online role playing games (MMORPG) such as *World of Warcraft* (WoW), which was introduced in 2004. Since *WoW*'s initial introduction, the MMORPG has attracted as many as 12 million users in a single year with many playing



online multiple hours each day, although sales have declined about 3 million users over the past five years (Newman, 2015). The largest MMORPG game played during 2004 however was a game called *Lineage II* which was mostly played in South Korea (Overmars, 2012). PC video game sales increased from \$5.5 billion in 2000 to \$17.1 billion in 2010 (see Figure 2.2).

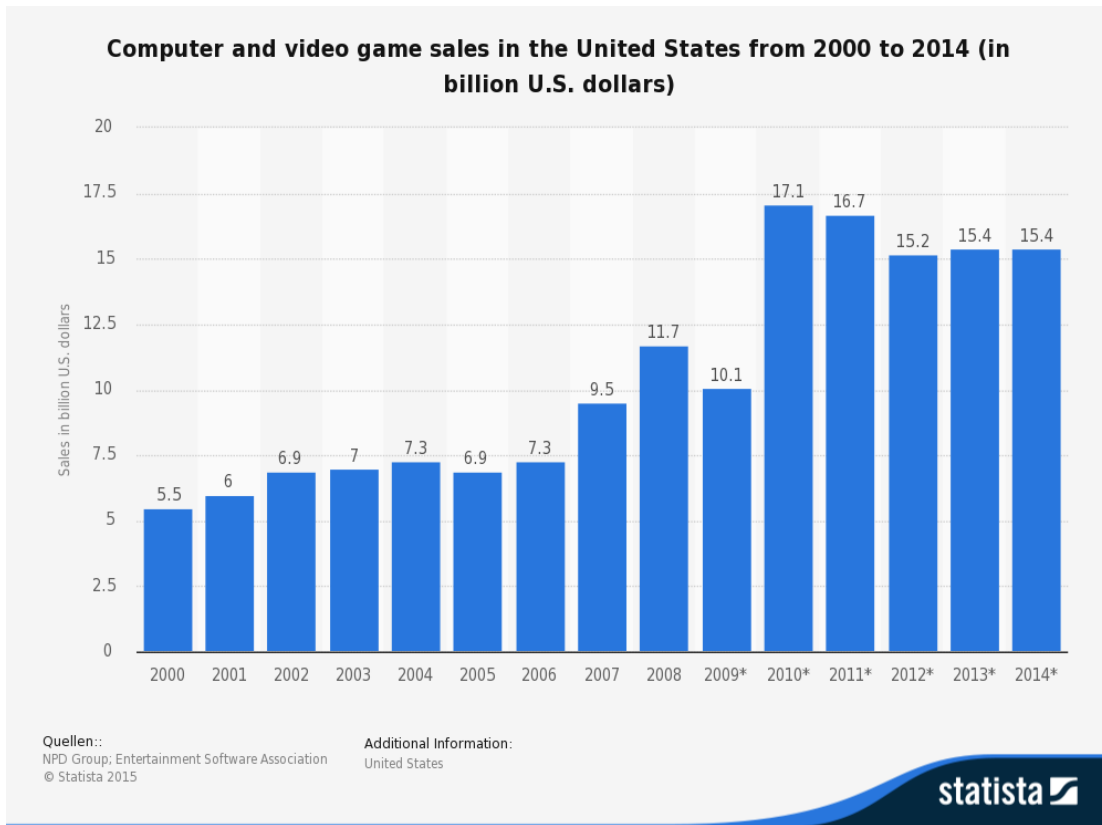


Figure 2.2: Computer and Video Game Sales from 2000-2014. Reprinted directly from (Statista, 2015)

A significant contributor to the enhanced popularity of video games in the 2000's, was the extensive proliferation of smart phones, tablets, and social media which began largely in 2007. A variety of new games and gaming applications (apps) that could be

downloaded directly to smart phones and tablets were developed, including games such as *Farmville* on Facebook, which attracted over 80 million active users (Overmars, 2012). The introduction of video games and apps capable of being downloaded and played with a personal, portable electronic device created yet another avenue for video game consumption. Specifically, the use of smartphones and their capabilities to download apps from app stores such as Google Play or Apples App store. In 2013, the most downloaded iOS application (iPhone app) was the game *Candy-Crush Saga*, which had more downloads than the popular smartphone apps Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram (Russell, 2013). This proliferation of mobile device gaming has become an increasingly important aspect of the gaming industry. Newzoo recently indicated that the total video game market was worth approximately \$108.1 billion in 2014, \$24.5 billion of which came from mobile games (see Figure 2.3).

The typical costs of video game development have broadened as the industry has expanded. Smartphone applications and games typically cost around \$150,000 to create and are then sold for 99 cents to \$10 to each user (Hurd, 2015). The most popular video game development budgets range from \$50 million to \$100 million for games that are sold at retail for \$50 to \$75 (Cox, 2014). As of 2014, the most expensive game to develop was *Grand Theft Auto V* which cost \$260 million (Cox, 2014). Typical video game development expenses are related not only to game graphics and functionality, but also to the contracting of prominent actors to participate. Like some other video games, the *Grand Theft Auto* franchise has mimicked prominent movie productions and film releases. Despite spending \$260 million to develop, *Grand Theft Auto V* sold more than \$1 billion worth of games in the first three days it was on sale (Cox, 2014). Typical video

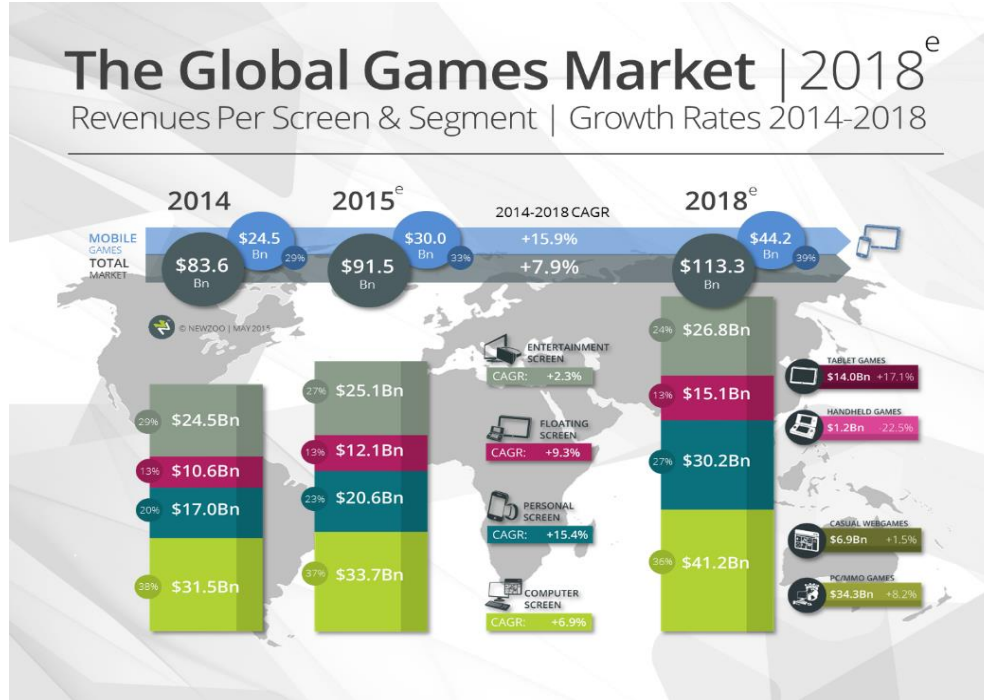


Figure 2.3: Newzoo Total Video Game Market. Reprinted directly from (Newzoo, 2014)

game development expenses are related not only to game graphics and functionality, but also to the contracting of prominent actors to participate. As of 2015, there have been nearly 52 million units sold across all major gaming consoles available including PlayStation 3, PlayStation 4, Xbox 360, Xbox One, and PC's (Sarkar, 2015). Though no comprehensive data exists detailing the exact amount of *Grand Theft Auto V* sales, with most games costing approximately \$50, it is likely the game has exceeded \$2 billion in sales since its release on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

In addition to massive sales, the *Grand Theft Auto* franchise has also prompted some to question the ability of video game players to stop or even limit their game-playing activities (Bissell, 2010). Numerous gamers have noted that *Grand Theft Auto* and

other games have graphics, music and story lines that are well advanced beyond games developed less than 10 years ago. The rapid increase in video game quality has resulted in significant commitments by players to play, with some concerned about the potential negative health ramifications (“Physical consequences of...”, n.d.). In 2011, the average time spent gaming every week for 13-year olds and above was 5.1 hours. In 2013 this increased to 6.3 hours (Vinik, 2014). Currently, 29 percent of gamers are under the age of 18, while the average age of a typical American gamer is 31, a year older than the average age in 2014 (Lofgren, 2015). Though the nearly non-stop playing of video games – particularly among children and young adults - is often seen as addictive and unhealthy, the proliferation of high-quality video games, and “expert” players who consistently hone their craft, has given rise to an emerging industry: organized and professional video gaming.

### **The Rise of eSports**

With the rapid expansion of video games, what was once traditionally an activity individuals and small groups enjoyed at home, has greatly expanded into a competitive activity that often transcends international borders. Electronic Sports (eSports) is an organized and professional competitive platform for gamers. While there is debate regarding the classification of eSports as a “sport,” a significant portion of the video game industry is being organized much like highly profitable North American professional sports leagues.

The origins of eSports began with gaming tournaments in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Among many competitions, Atari’s “Space Invaders Tournament” often attracted

over 10,000 participants at the height of the game's popularity (Edwards, 2013). While there were a variety of company sponsored and unsponsored tournaments that took place throughout the 1980s and 1990s, it was not until 1997 when the first "high-stakes" competitive gaming event was held. *Quake*, a first person shooter game, hosted the "Red Annihilation" tournament which attracted over 2,000 participants. The winner was awarded a Ferrari which was formerly owned by John Carmack, the developer of the game (Edwards, 2013).

While a variety of eSports competitions continued to attract gamers after the Red Annihilation tournament, in the early 2000s eSports' popularity expanded greatly. The "Electronic Sports World Cup" and "World Cyber Games" launched at the turn of the millennium and served as international competitive gaming platforms for eSports competitors. These competitions offered opportunities for the two main types of games that usually host competitive tournaments: First Person Shooter (FPS) games and Real Time Strategy (RTS) games. Games such as *Quake*, along with more recently developed games like *Halo* and the *Call of Duty* series are FPS games that focus on rapid implementation and use of buttons, along with quick reflexes and reaction. However, the proliferation of RTS games such as *StarCraft*, *World of Warcraft*, and *League of Legends* (*LoL*) have supported the burgeoning eSports industry (Edwards, 2013). RTS games typically involve more strategy than most other game genres and require careful thought processes and effective planning, much like the game *Chess* (Edwards, 2013). What particularly attracts RTS gamers is the opportunity to choose different characters that have different abilities. Additionally, the competitions usually pit teams comprised of five members on each side against each other which makes collaboration among team

members when choosing characters essential to the success of the team. The development and integration of the internet and technology, along with the introduction of RTS games, has resulted in eSports Tournaments attracting competitors from around the globe, and has resulted in live attendance in the thousands for prominent championship events.

In 2013, the video game developer Valve released the RTS game *Defense of the Ancients 2* (Dota 2) and was quickly recognized in the gaming industry as one of the highest paying games as it relates to eSports competitions and prize winnings (“eSports Earnings...,” 2015). *Dota 2* is currently utilizing players purchasing character attribute upgrades and customizations to raise funds for tournament prize winnings. The International Compendium tournament (explained later in detail) has raised over \$18 million in prize winnings for the tournament (Chalk, 2015). As of April 2014, there were 7.86 million active users or subscribers who played *Dota 2* (Grubb, 2014).

*Dota 2* generates additional revenue similar to the *LoL* micro-transaction process which is explained in further detail below. If a gamer logs onto the *Dota 2* website, they will be provided with the opportunity to purchase “The International Compendium” which is essentially an online virtual book that allows purchasers to upgrade certain criterion with respect to their characters’ capabilities and appearance to assist their gameplay and provide computerized aesthetics for visual enjoyment. The compendium costs either \$9.99 or \$26.99 depending on the awards and benefits each player desires to acquire.

*LoL* however, has a competitive advantage over the higher prize awarding *Dota 2* due to the fact that *LoL* was released four years earlier. As a result, *LoL* currently has

over 67 million users who play on a yearly basis (Grubb, 2014). In 2012, the Santa Monica based Riot Games, the organization that created *LoL*, hosted a World Championship at the University of Southern California's Galen Center where approximately 8,000 people attended (Tassi, 2013). The following year, the *LoL* Championship managed to sell out the 11,000 seat Staples Center in less than one hour (Tassi, 2013). Additionally, 32 million people viewed the 2013 championships around the world via online streaming which tripled the amount of viewers the previous year. The 2014 *LoL* championship gaming final took place in Seoul, South Korea's World Cup Stadium. Over 40,000 tickets to watch the Korean team Samsung White compete against China's Starhorn Royal Club were sold (Tassi, 2014a). Furthermore, the *LoL* North American Championship which was hosted at Madison Square Garden was sold out in minutes where team Counter Logic Gaming beat Team SoloMid to advance to the 2015 *LoL* World Championships which will be held in Berlin (Seidman, 2015).

*LoL* and other tournaments are held that sell tickets, generate media attention, attract sponsors, and generate revenues through ancillary sources similar (though on a smaller scale) to the successful models established by the National Football League (NFL) and other North American professional sports leagues. While eSports tournaments and North American professional sports leagues attract customers from those who play in their sports, eSports have unique revenue channels they can maximize that are not presently available to their traditional sports counterparts.

Like many other computer games, *LoL* requires no fees to play. However, Riot Games was able to achieve \$1 billion in 2014 revenue partially because of micro-

transactions (Levy, 2014). Though the business model encourages individuals to download and play the game for free, users will not be able to access premium content that can greatly enhance game enjoyment and competitive success without purchasing these additions. For example, points can be purchased in the game to improve the appearance of the respective characters the gamers choose to utilize. The upgrades typically change the visual aspects pertaining to characters' appearance, often referred to as "skins." With the purchase of the new character skins, not only do appearances change but the visual aesthetics pertaining to the characters' abilities also change, although there is no difference in effectiveness during gameplay (Tassi, 2015a). While the premium content can be earned for free by earning points in the game, the option to purchase points is less time consuming and allows players to improve their online rank rapidly. *LoL* provides options to purchase points ranging from 650 (\$5) to 15,000 (\$100) (Jacobs, 2015). While the term micro-transactions indicate the purchase of new character development would be cheap, typically new character skins range anywhere from \$5 to \$10 with new releases of character skins costing as much as \$25 (Tassi, 2014b). With 67 million monthly players upgrading their characters and/or choosing new characters to upgrade in order to be more competitive against select opponents, the micro-transactions quickly generate tremendous amounts of revenue, with future revenues expected to increase (Chalk, 2014). Riot Games hosts competitions through various eSports associations that all lead to the championship series. Riot Games typically loses money hosting the tournaments despite charging attending patrons \$15-\$50 per ticket. Instead of generating direct profits, the tournaments are currently being utilized as a marketing tool to attract aspiring players (Levy, 2014).



The *LoL* championship series is undoubtedly one of the most popular games currently being played with 67 million monthly players, 27 million of whom play daily (Tassi, 2014b). However, Riot Games is not the only organization that is hosting popular tournaments. There are professional organizations such as Major League Gaming (MLG) headquartered in New York, the Korean E-Sports Association, and the Electronic Sports League (ESL) that are hosting numerous RTS and FPS video game tournaments that often offer significant prize money and attract a substantial in-person and online audience. Additionally, there are other eSports associations such as the eSports Association (TeSPA) and IvyLoL which cater to collegiate eSports associations that are organizing clubs at universities across North America. With the growth of the video game industry and the rise of eSports, the number of competitive eSports tournaments has grown substantially over the past few years (see Figure 2.4). The tournaments consist of a wide variety of FPS and RTS games depending on the organization such as *LoL*, *StarCraft II*, *Dota 2*, and *Call of Duty*.

While *LoL* and other prominent tournaments have created a tremendous following in the eSports industry, Major League Gaming (MLG) is an organization that provides championships and tournaments to various RTS and FPS video games such as *Call of Duty* (CoD), *Defense of the Ancients* (DotA), *Starcraft*, *Halo*, and *Super Smash Brothers*. The FPS game *Call of Duty: Ghosts* (CoD) playoff took place over a three-day competition in an arena built by Major League Gaming (MLG) in Columbus, Ohio. This tournament championship was a culmination of a nine-month season of various CoD gamers and competitions (Smith, 2014). MLG's efforts have been designed to capture a

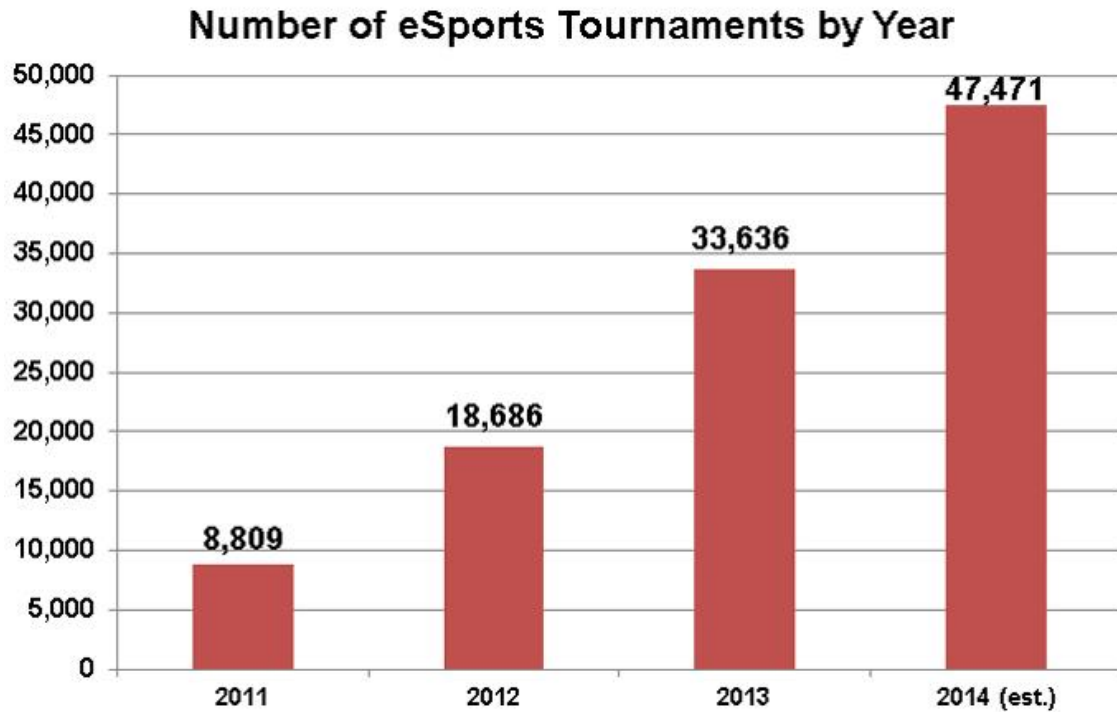


Figure 2.4: Number of eSports Tournaments 2011-2014 (“eSports in Numbers...,” 2014)

piece of the expanding video game market share by serving as the primary professional gaming league in the United States. MLG has managed to establish an actual league with various teams and competitors who participate in the video games mentioned above.

MLG however, is not a typical league comprised of teams from respective locations. For example, Los Angeles is not the home for a respective gaming team. Due to the nature of modern video games being played online, teams are often comprised of members from around the country, or even various countries around the world. Once the teams enter a competition, it is similar to that of the NCAA Basketball Tournament meaning that they must qualify and win in order to move towards the championship rounds.

MLG’s business model is not designed to generate profits from hosting events, rather, they make money by creating an environment where viewers can interact and

learn directly from professional players. Prior to 2015, MLG had consistent financial losses, including every quarter of 2014 (Weber, 2014). However, MLG's online broadcast entity – MLG.tv – has recently begun to generate significant revenue streams by providing online content, including professional team practices and individual player practices. In addition, they allow fans to interact via online chat rooms with the professional gamers. This allows fans and novice gamers to socialize with professional gamers and potentially seek game-playing advice. Any professional gamer can sign up as long as they meet certain criterion that exemplifies their status as a professional gamer. The criteria includes reaching a certain ranking or having a specific amount of followers per month. It is free for the players to stream their content and they often receive payments from MLG through their sponsorships and advertisements. This creates an environment that is unlike any other sport since fans can actually communicate with professionals and even donate money if they desire. On the MLG website consumers can view up to 50 different professional gamers playing live events or one can watch replays of past tournaments.

Viewers at MLG and any other eSports site will be exposed to a variety of advertisements, which generate revenue for the parent site. The two metrics that most online advertising agencies examine when investigating eSports sites (or other online advertising opportunities) are Cost per Thousand (CPM) and Click Through Rate (CTR). CPM is essentially how many dollars an organization such as MLG or Twitch (a top competitor described in detail later) charges for every 1,000 impressions. CTR is the percentage of people who are viewing a website that click on a particular advertisement. According to Investopedia, given that most internet users have become accustomed to

seeing advertisements frequently, a typical CTR is about two to three users per 1,000 or 0.3%. These metrics are important for potential professional gamers because sponsorship revenue is the one of their primary sources of income in addition to competing in competitions. The MLG website claims that they have 2.1% CTR on all of their video advertisements on MLG.tv. The CPM was not disclosed for MLG.tv as they most likely have varying prices for different advertising agencies. As noted earlier, MLG CEO DiGiovanni has recently stated that the introduction of MLG.tv has had a positive effect on revenues for the organization (Weber, 2014).

Although MLG has a rapidly growing presence in eSports, other organizations are also capitalizing on the recent popularity of the rapidly expanding industry. Among many popular sites that specialize in streaming video game content, Twitch has become one of the most popular. MLG used to utilize Twitch as their primary source of content delivery until they decided to make their own streaming website. The difference between Twitch and MLG.tv is that Twitch streams video games including FPS, RTS, and some sports video games. Twitch has been able to broadcast 11 million videos per month. Additionally, Twitch has reached 100 million viewers with over 16 billion minutes of video content being watched every month (see Figure 2.5) (Brightman, 2015). The rapid growth and huge popularity of Twitch led Amazon to purchase Twitch for \$970 million in 2014 (Wingfield, 2014b). As of 2014, Twitch managed to produce the fourth most trafficked website at 1.8 percent behind corporations like Netflix, Google, and Apple (see Figure 2.6) (Maiberg, 2014).

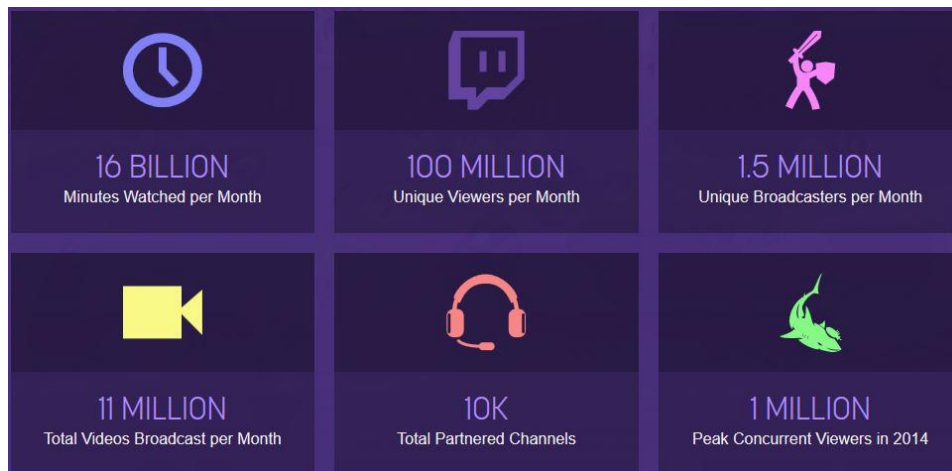


Figure 2.5: Twitch Retrospective. Reprinted directly from (Twitch, 2014)

### ESports Participation and Viewership Demographics

Much like the growth in the overall eSports industry, as of 2012 MLG had 11.7 million live online viewers, which had increased from 1.8 million viewers in 2010 and 3.5 million viewers in 2011. Among those 11.7 million viewers:

- 90% were male
- 80% ranged from ages 16 to 34
- 40% had a household income of over \$100,00 (MLG.tv Website)

The demographic data describing MLG viewers is consistent with other information regarding eSports participants and viewers. Newzoo, an organization that specializes in games market research provided a free report that quantifiably sized and profiled eSports and the popularity within the industry for western nations. Newzoo provides various charts detailing eSports popularity. Among their most recent findings:

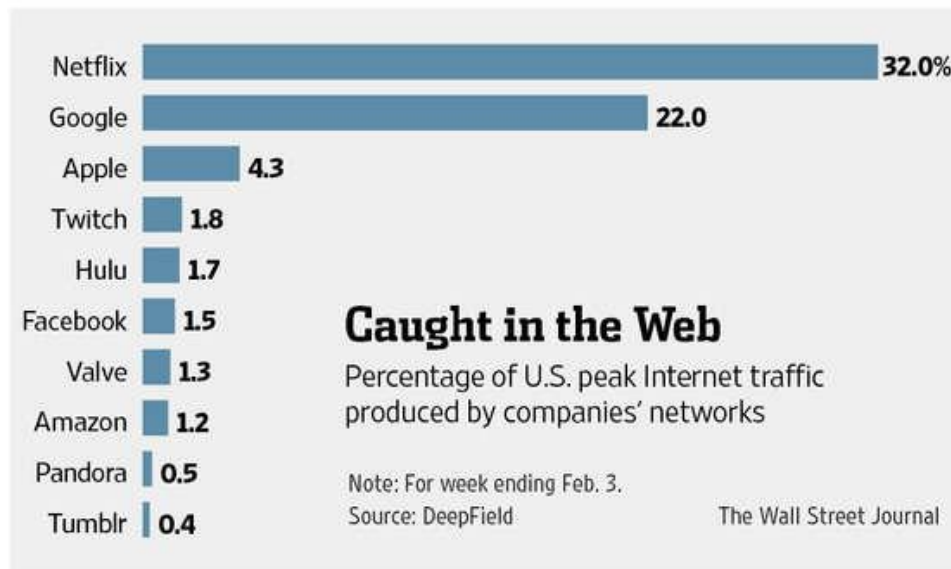


Figure 2.6: Peak Internet Traffic Percentages for 2014. Reprinted directly from (Brightman, 2014)

- 31.4 million eSports viewers live in the United States.
- 16.3 million eSports viewers live in Western Europe.
- 2.8 million people participate in eSports in the United States regularly (At least three hours per week).
- 10.2 million avid fans watch eSports regularly (Three hours per week).
- 60 percent of Western Europe and United States eSports fans have attended at least one eSports event.
- 59 percent of the profiled individuals are between the ages of 21 and 35.

Eventbrite (2014) has also investigated eSports consumers, noting that 75 percent of eSports attendees are between the ages 18-34. In addition, 82 percent of those attendees are male. Also, 44 percent of the attendees are college students. Among those

studied, 67 percent admitted to playing their respective game for at least three hours every day, while 30 percent noted they play more than five hours per day. When asked why they were attending an event, 82 percent noted they wanted to be a part of the gaming community and 67 percent wanted to connect with other gamers who they met online through a particular game (Tassi, 2015b).

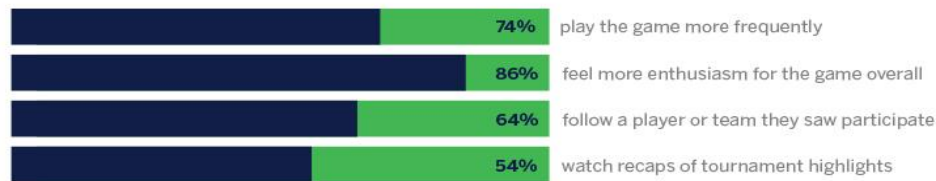
Overwhelmingly, eSports participants and viewers are young, male and technologically savvy. In addition, given the financial commitment needed to participate (computers, tablets, game consoles, etc.) eSports tends to attract middle class and affluent participants, or, perhaps better stated, younger individuals whose families have middle class or affluent demographic profiles.

It is important to study and track demographic information for eSports participants, but it is equally important to catalog their unique behaviors. Eventbrite reported that 30 percent of eSports event attendees will continue to play their respective game even more because they purchased new content such as character upgrades that are offered exclusively at tournaments (Eventbrite, 2015). Additionally, 41 percent of patrons attend the events to purchase “gear” that is only sold at particular tournaments. Like traditional sport consumers buying the products of professional athletes, eSports consumers desire to purchase gear that might include jerseys that professional gamers wear, clothing that gaming organizations provide, and even gaming equipment such as controllers and specialty keyboards and computer mice (Eventbrite, 2015). Most importantly, 74 percent of patrons play the game at the event more frequently after

watching a live event and 86 percent conclude that they develop more enthusiasm for the game overall (see Figure 2.7) (Tassi, 2015b).

### After going to an eSports event, gamers are increasingly likely to

#### Be even more avid fans



#### Buy more stuff



**30%** play even more because they bought new content

**41%** go to buy exclusive gear that they can't get anywhere else

Figure 2.7: Fan Engagement. Reprinted directly from (Eventbrite, 2014)

### Sponsorship Activities

With the rapid growth of eSports and the disposable income many participants have, a wide variety of corporations have begun sponsoring eSports in an assortment of ways including sponsorship of leagues (MLG), game developers (Riot), and individual teams. For example, Lions Gate Entertainment Inc. recently signed a sponsorship agreement with MLG to promote the DVD release of *Ender's Game* on MLG.tv.

Meanwhile game developers such as Riot have sponsors such as Coca-Cola entering



long-term partnerships with *LoL* that intends to use Coke Zero as a sponsor of a competitive league comprised of up-and-coming eSports players called the League of Legends Championship Series (LCS) (Boone, 2013). Coke has noted its interest in eSports because of its ability to reach a variety of younger, habit-forming individuals around the globe (Boone, 2013). Much like Coke, American Express' (AmEx) Ian Swanson, the vice president of Enterprise Growth, notes that AmEx is looking to reach the male millennial audience on a consistent basis, as these 18-24 year old professional gamers engage in up to eight hours every day strategizing and playing *LoL* (Gaudiosi, 2013). According to the AmEx website, the partnership with Riot Games is setting up a rewards system for *LoL* players. Essentially, when *LoL* players use the AmEx credit card, gamers earn points that allow the competitors to make in-game purchases that allow for additional customization of video game character skins. Stefan Happ, Senior Vice President of US Payment Options for AmEx, believes that the partnership with Riot is creating a co-branded product which in turn will help *LoL* players earn points through a unique rewards system (Gaudiosi, 2013).

Nissan has recently partnered with professional *LoL* team "Team Curse" in order to promote a campaign designed for gamers to develop short videos for the chance to win a \$1,000 gift card to Amazon along with their video to appear in a Nissan commercial (Gaudiosi, 2013). Meanwhile, in South Korea, Samsung has sponsored professional eSports teams since 2000, managing players participating in RTS games such as *Star Craft II* and *League of Legends* (Keach, 2015). It will be interesting to see how sponsorship for the eSports industry will develop as it grows and continues to serve as a great platform for reaching a global market (ESports Expand, 2014).

## Careers and Money

As eSports have attracted sponsorships and large viewership numbers internationally, substantial prize money has become available for the players who succeed in marquee events. Though they do not make nearly as much money as those in “traditional” professional sports like basketball, football, or baseball, there are now opportunities for players to achieve a viable profession by playing video games, particularly if they can find other successful players to team with for top events. According to [esportsearnings.com](http://esportsearnings.com), the top five games have awarded 7,800 players prize money totaling to \$79 million over approximately 4,500 international tournaments as of 2015 (eSports Earnings, 2015). Table 2.1 details the top five games with respect to prize money being awarded since each games’ inception. Table 2.2 lists the top tournaments by prize money awarded.

Table 2.1: Top 5 Games for Total All-time Prize Money (eSports Earnings, 2015)

<u>Game</u>	<u>Prize Money</u>	<u>Players</u>	<u>Tournaments</u>
Dota 2	\$ 50,025,496.81	1128	426
League of Legends	\$ 23,568,570.58	3222	1461
StarCraft II	\$ 17,399,571.79	1334	1334
Counter-Strike	\$ 10,730,875.39	2475	2475
Counter-Strike: Global Offensive	\$ 7,139,183.74	450	450

Table 2.2: Top Individual Tournament Prize Money Awarded (eSports Earnings, 2015)

<u>Tournament</u>	<u>Prize Money</u>	<u>Game</u>	<u>Teams</u>	<u>Players</u>
International 2015	\$ 18,426,613	Dota 2	16	80
International 2014	\$ 10,931,103	Dota 2	14	70
DAC 2015	\$ 3,057,521	Dota 2	20	100
International 2013	\$ 2,874,407	Dota 2	8	40
Smite World Championship 2015	\$ 2,612,259	Smite	8	40
LoL 2014 World Championship	\$ 2,130,000	LoL	16	82
LoL Season 3 World Championship	\$ 2,050,000	LoL	14	70

As tournaments continue to generate event revenue, it is not uncommon to see tournaments awarding teams prize money in the seven or eight figure range. Though most of the tournaments utilize traditional “sport event” revenue models, some also incorporate alternative methods besides selling tickets and sponsorships and creating interest through media channels. The highest amount of prize money awarded for any tournament was the 2015 *Defense of the Ancients 2* (Dota 2) International Compendium Tournament, which was an increase from the 2014 event which awarded over \$10 million in prize money. As previously mentioned, *Dota 2* sells an online compendium from which 25% of proceeds are allotted to the player prize pool (Chalk, 2015). With the various industry revenue streams growing, a number of eSports competitors have crafted profitable careers in the industry. Table 2.3 lists the top male eSports gamers by total career and tournament

winnings. As the chart indicates, it is not unreasonable for a young gamer to aspire to a highly profitable career in eSports.

Table 2.3: Highest Overall Career eSports Tournament Earnings (eSports Earnings, 2015)

<b><u>Player Name</u></b>	<b><u>Total Career Earnings</u></b>	<b><u>Country</u></b>	<b><u>Primary Game</u></b>
Saahil Arora	\$ 1,964,038.64	United States	Dota 2
Peter Dager	\$ 1,961,183.29	United States	Dota 2
Kurtis Ling	\$ 1,881,147.04	Canada	Dota 2
Clinton Loomis	\$ 1,735,983.84	United States	Dota 2
Zhang Ning	\$ 1,662,202.73	China	Dota 2
Sumail Hassan	\$ 1,640,777.34	Pakistan	Dota 2
Chen Zhihao	\$ 1,562,946.23	China	Dota 2
Jiao Wang	\$ 1,211,250.16	China	Dota 2
Wan Zhaohui	\$ 1,205,274.33	China	Dota 2
Zhang Pan	\$ 1,193,811.11	China	Dota 2

The United States government has helped to build the attention and subsequent prize money for highly popular eSports competitions by granting eSports gamers visas that recognize them as professional athletes (Tassi, 2013). This classification, and subsequent application of similar coding to U.S. “athletes” competing abroad, has enabled the top gamers to compete around the world, usually without substantial immigration issues.

For those pursuing an international eSports “career” a variety of gamers can provide examples of what can be achieved in this burgeoning industry. Peter Dager (22) is the current captain of the team “Evil Geniuses” for the game Dota 2. In 2012, Dager earned an income amounting to less than \$20,000. However, in the summer of 2013 he had already earned more than \$200,000 by competing in tournaments internationally. In addition, he practiced for hours every day with his teammates in Northern California, Canada, and Sweden online, while simultaneously streaming their gameplay online to fans (Wingfield, 2014a). Matt Haag, a 21-year-old gamer, who is sponsored by Red Bull eSports, competes in the Major League Gaming sponsored Call of Duty video game. After a 2013 MLG championship held in the Anaheim Convention Center, Haag spent the better part of two hours signing autographs on t-shirts, and video game controllers, and then took selfies with teenagers and even some parents who remained from the 18,000 attendees. Currently, Haag produces videos of him gaming, and streams to the 1.2 million subscribers on his YouTube channel, and regularly tweets to his 600,000 followers. Haag is one of thousands of other gamers in Major League Gaming who are also streaming their own personal videos (Garfat, 2014). Haag and Dager serve as an example of the careers that can be made as a professional eSports gamer.

While men typically comprise most of the competitors in major eSports tournaments, a number of top female players are beginning to emerge. Table 2.4 lists the highest paid female eSports competitors as it relates to total career earnings. Sasha Hostyn, or as her gamer tag displays “Scarlett,” is a 20-year old woman from Canada. She is one of the most highly regarded *StarCraft* players in North America (McGrath, 2014). Scarlett would practice with such intensity that she once practiced for almost

forty-eight hours with only water and bathroom breaks (McGrath, 2014). Scarlett is the second highest paid female eSports athlete in the world, with career earnings exceeding \$114,000 (see Table 2.4). Though top female eSports competitors make a fraction of their male counterparts, there are indications that their opportunities to generate revenue through winnings and sponsorships will likely grow dramatically in the future, particularly as more women begin to compete at the highest levels of the industry.

Table 2.4: Top 10 Highest Paid Female eSports Competitors (eSports Earnings, 2015)

<u>Player Name</u>	<u>Career Earnings</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Primary Game</u>
Katherine Gunn	\$ 122,000.00	United States	Halo: Reach
“Scarlett” Hostyn	\$ 114,676.17	Canada	StarCraft II
Marjorie Bartell	\$ 55,000.00	United States	Dead or Alive 4
Sarah Harrison	\$ 50,000.00	Great Britain	Dead or Alive 4
Vanessa Artega	\$ 20,000.00	United States	Dead or Alive 4
Christine Chi	\$ 18,365.61	United States	Counter-Strike
Alice Lew	\$ 17,600.00	United States	Counter-Strike
Stephanie Harvey	\$ 16,775.61	Canada	Counter-Strike
Rumay Wang	\$ 16,366.67	United States	World of WarCraft
Ricki Ortiz	\$ 16,161.05	United States	Capcom vs. SNK 2

With so many eSports players pursuing their passion, it is not difficult to find unique stories of players disregarding their parents', friends', or professors' advice to pursue an education or a "real" career. Among many interesting life stories, perhaps the most intriguing is that of the 19-year old *LoL* player Lee Sang-hyeok, known as "Faker" in the gaming community. Faker's career arch began as a high school teenager who lived in the outskirts of Seoul, South Korea. Through countless hours of practice, he managed to climb into top online rankings as one of the best *LoL* players. His debut as a professional gamer competing for the South Korean team "SK Telecom" was against one of the most popular teams in South Korea, "CJ Blaze." Faker led SK Telecom to a victory over CJ Blaze. Later that year he led his team to Los Angeles for the 2013 *LoL* world championship where SK Telecom beat the Chinese team "Royal Club" for a one million dollar prize divided amongst the five-member team (Kimes, 2015). After the championships, Faker and SK Telecom won 15 other major tournaments in a row which led to Faker becoming a nearly household name in Seoul. Many eSports enthusiasts consider Faker to be the "Michael Jordan" or "Tiger Woods" of the industry because Faker's competitive gameplay brought the gaming industry to a new level. Some consider Faker to be the first truly global eSports superstar (Kimes, 2015). Despite his fame and sponsorship support, Faker does not yet rank among the top 15 for highest career tournament winnings.

### **Trends in Higher Education**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, namely the 1900's to 1930's enrollment in higher education experienced substantial growth as many colleges and universities expanded as

the United States population greatly increased and the economy morphed from agrarian-based to industrial-based. In the first decade (1900-1910) enrollment grew by 50 percent, in the second decade enrollment grew by 68 percent, and in the third decade enrollment grew by 84 percent (Snyder, 1993). The late 1930's economic downturn slowed enrollment growth; however, the total enrollment still grew 36 percent. Following The Great Depression and during the early 1940's, male enrollment dropped due to the large numbers of young males going to fight in World War II. After the war in the late 1940's college enrollment began to surge. With World War II ending, there were approximately 15.7 million veterans returning home after serving their country (Leddy, 2009). As a result, the GI Bill was created to help integrate veterans back into society. One of the most prominent benefits of the bill was the offering of financial assistance for education and housing. Over 51 percent of GI's utilized the educational provision by attending college and participating in vocational training (Leddy, 2009). The GI Bill successfully integrated returning GI's and was a primary factor in increasing higher education enrollment.

Throughout the 1950's, enrollment continued to grow rapidly which led to colleges expanding drastically (Snyder, 1993). During the 1960's, enrollment rose by another 120 percent and by 1969 35 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds in the United States were enrolled. The high growth in the 1960's can be attributed to a couple of factors. First, the Higher Education Act of 1965 affected college enrollment because the act extended financial aid and assistance to the general population. Additionally, the federal government provided facility construction subsidies to universities. Federal spending on higher education increased from \$655 million in 1956 to \$3.5 billion in 1966 (Brock,



2010). During the 1970's, enrollment grew similar to that of the 1950's (45 percent) and in the 1980's enrollment increased by 17 percent, followed by minor percentage increases in the 1990's (Snyder, 1993). The various programs and expansion in higher education of the 1960's and 1970's undoubtedly contributed to the rise in enrollment. In fact, from 1965 to 2005 total fall enrollment increased from 5.9 million to 17.5 million, close to a 300 percent increase (Brock, 2010).

More recently, technology has had a profound effect on higher education. Online courses are now being offered to benefit part-time students who cannot always go to scheduled classes due to work or other circumstances. From 2002 to 2011 there has been a 157.7 percent increase in online enrollment (Allen & Seamen, 2013). As of 2011, there are over 6.5 million students who are taking at least one online course (Allen & Seamen, 2013). While online courses offer convenience to a wide array of students, online degrees are now also being offered at schools. In addition to full online education degrees offered at schools such as the University of Phoenix, a variety of other online education systems offer Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to anyone in the world with an internet connection (Carey, 2015). In addition to online degrees, badges or certifications are also offered online; however, for the most part they are not yet replacing on-campus degrees. Most educational systems that offer traditional in-class instruction do not award many online degrees thus keeping a high demand for enrollment on campus.

Since the Great Recession of 2008, there has been a trend of small colleges struggling to remain financially viable as a result of increases in student debt and the cost of tuition, competition from online programs, and lack of job opportunity for graduates

(McDonald, 2014). In the years immediately preceding 2008, an average of five colleges would either be acquired or shut down every year. Since 2008, the number of colleges being acquired or shut down has nearly doubled (McDonald, 2014). A Vanderbilt study noted that many schools with enrollment below 1,000 students that were closed had religious affiliations (McDonald, 2014).

Tuition for education is also a component that prospective students are contemplating when choosing an institution to attend. Direct public funding for institutions as a percentage of the overall budget has largely dropped over the past 10 years, necessitating an even steeper tuition increase than likely would have otherwise occurred (Oliff, Palocios, Johnson, & Leachman, 2013). The increased cost of tuition has led to increases in student expenses (and debt) that were once more commonly covered by the state (Oliff, et al., 2013). In addition, due to in-state budget cuts at public universities, many universities have taken an initiative to actively recruit out-of-state and international students in order to increase their program rankings as well as increase tuition revenue (Burd, 2015).

With tuition costs increasing at a time when demand is softening among some potential students, partially due to age shifts in the overall United States' population, colleges and universities often face a tough marketplace for “customers,” especially with the proliferation of online alternatives. The current environment has caused many prospective students to apply to more colleges and price shop to find the most affordable deal. Since 2008, 12 percent of private colleges now offer tuition discount rates of over 50 percent via scholarships or financial aid which has increased from four percent in

2004 (Pendered, 2014). For many schools, offering a competitive price is essential to driving enrollment. However, lowering the cost of tuition is one of the contributing factors leading to the increase of small colleges experiencing financial difficulty. Furthermore, many of the top public universities are beginning to expand regional recruitment efforts in order to keep in-state tuition costs lower by attracting a higher number of out-of-state students who pay a higher tuition rate (Pendered, 2014). As a result, many small colleges are beginning to experience a downward financial spiral.

In addition to changes in college and university enrollment numbers, over the past 65 years, there has been a rather dramatic shift pertaining to the percentage of enrollees by gender. In 1979, women surpassed men as a percentage of enrollees. The percentage of women has continued to steadily increase since 1979. Figure 2.8 details the changing higher education enrollment percentages with female graduates now accounting for approximately 60 percent of U.S. bachelor's degree holders (Fisher, 2013). The gender trends do not necessarily indicate that men are less studious. However, studies show that female dropouts face worse job prospects than men because men often have more opportunities in higher paying jobs in manufacturing, construction, and transportation (Fisher, 2013). Regardless of the reasons, the recruitment and retention of males has become an important component of most college and university enrollment policies.

While trends indicate there is a substantial decrease in male enrollment on campus, other attendance trends have occurred, particularly those concerning the traditional-age student (18-22 year olds) becoming a smaller percentage of campus attendees. One-third of college students are enrolled full time and recent data indicates

approximately 40 percent of college students are more than 25 years old (Azziz, 2014). As a result, it is no longer a “given” that a high percentage of traditional college-aged individuals will enroll in college immediately after completing high school.

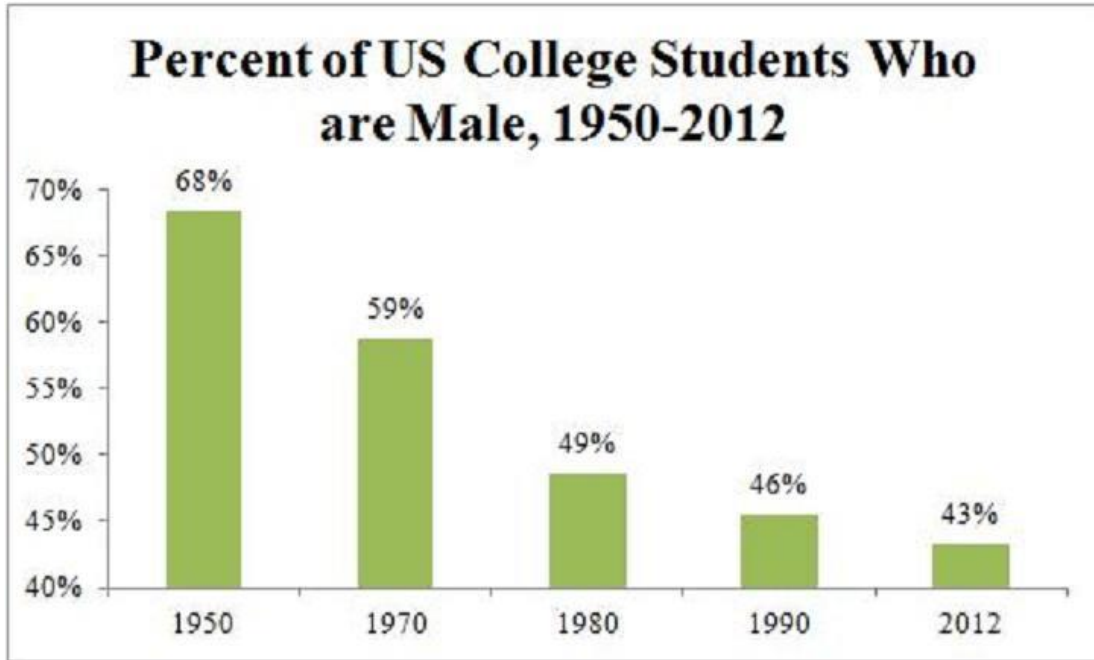


Figure 2.8: Percent of College Students that are Male. Reprinted directly from (The Disappearing Male, 2014)

### Enrollment Factors

With the competition for students increasing, colleges and universities have sought mechanisms to attract and retain needed enrollment figures for the institution to remain financially viable. Certainly, the long-standing centerpiece of any higher education institution is its curriculum and the faculty who teach students. The opportunity to learn and to potentially advance their career prospects has been a student driver of college enrollment since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, over the past 20 years, many

“universities have come to the realization that their academic prestige alone is not enough to attract the world’s top students, athletes, and overall academic participants (“The 25 most amazing...,” n.d., para.1). Many of the institutions making the largest investments are considered research institutions (which includes many of the top state institutions throughout the United States), with some critics claiming the non-curricular investments have been made to distract students from the lack of attention to student instruction (Sperber, 2000). On many campuses, it is not uncommon to see student affairs professionals alter their mission from exclusively helping students to learn and advance toward graduation to instead focus much of its efforts on shaping the campus to be a place that students can find opportunities to recreate and have a better social experience. The on-campus experience is often not just limited to social experiences. It is not uncommon for co-curricular activities to include activities that are tied to institutional goals or objectives such as providing a better housing experience. All of these offerings are important components of college student retention. In many cases, the development and maintenance of extensive non-curricular activities require a tremendous amount of financial and human resources. Though there has been a rapid increase in tuition and fees on most college campuses, the costs have not necessarily been applied to higher spending on classroom instruction (Smith, 2015b).

There are certainly a number of examples of universities spending millions of dollars on non-academic facilities when in competition for students. In 2011, Louisiana State University embarked on an \$85 million upgrade to its recreation center which contained rock walls, a lazy river, a ropes course, and a 40,000 square foot gym with exercise equipment (Woodhouse, 2015). The upgrade was pursued in part because of a

study by the National Bureau of Economic Research that indicated that spending on ‘consumption’ amenities will increase enrollment of students not aspiring to go to elite colleges, which ultimately generates more revenue (Woodhouse, 2015). A number of other campuses have been praised for providing five-star amenities in their campus recreation centers (“The 25 most amazing...,” n. d.). Paying for these amenities at universities is often financed over the span of a decade and many universities attempt to utilize rapidly increasing student fees to assist in payment for the facilities. Heightened student expectations of non-academic experiences have spurred increased spending on student services by 20 to 30 percent, which is more than any other educational category (Miller & Fennell, 2014). Small colleges that often do not have the financial resources or potential student fee structure to finance such non-curricular facilities and activities may be at a disadvantage when recruiting new students.

Though there are a variety of non-curricular activities that drive enrollment, the most high-profile on most campuses is intercollegiate athletics. Often described as the “front porch” of the institution, revenue sports such as football and men’s and women’s basketball can attract thousands of fans to games and expand the brand building activities of the institution to millions through media coverage. Universities that belong to the Power Five conferences (SEC, Pac-12, Big 10, ACC, Big 12) can particularly exploit these intercollege athletic opportunities, but there is evidence that other Division I institutions attempt to utilize athletics programs to attract non-participating students to campus. Some athletic departments are able to capitalize on various methods to generate revenue such as seat licensing and ticket revenue, media and TV deals, lucrative sponsor

partnerships, and large donation and endowed funds, often exceeding \$100 million in yearly revenue (Gaines, 2014).

College athletic departments that are not operating with multi-million dollar budgets often struggle to find sufficient funds to support their athletic programs. For example, there were no Division II or Division III institution's that were able to generate revenues that exceeded expenses in 2013 (Burnsed, 2014). Smaller Division I schools, along with Division II and III schools, are often faced with daunting tasks of meeting budget expectations placed upon them from their respective institutions. The use of student fees and institutional support often subsidizes the financial operation of college athletic programs, even at some of the Power Five conference members (Solomon, 2014). Despite this, a variety of institutions, even those that are small and private, have sought to expand their college athletic offerings to attract not only athletes, but non-athletes.

A prime example of a small school expanding its intercollegiate athletic program is Adrian College, located in Michigan close to the Ohio border. Adrian College was struggling with enrollment for a ten year period leading to 2006 when total enrollment (that was typically well over 1,000 in most past years) reached a crisis point of 840 students (Cohen, 2012). This led to the college not being able to adequately maintain its operating budget. In order to fix the financial situation, the administrative staff decided to invest their resources in intercollegiate sports, recreation programs, and updated facilities to drive enrollment. Focusing primarily on the wants of their primary demographic, traditional college-age students, Adrian College constructed a \$5.5 million dollar multi-purpose facility and created an intercollegiate football team (Cohen, 2012). Additionally,

a \$6.5 million dollar ice-skating rink that was designed to host men's and women's hockey, club hockey, synchronized skating, and some campus recreational skating was built. Administrators estimated that the ice-skating arena would attract approximately 150 students who would not be interested in Adrian College otherwise (Cohen, 2012). This same strategy was used to create men's and women's lacrosse teams along with a marching band that has over 100 members. In a matter of six years, Adrian College's operating budget doubled in size to over \$55 million, and enrollment increased to 1,670 students (Cohen, 2012). Adrian College does not offer athletic scholarships to attract intercollegiate participants. This means that every new student, whether athlete or non-athlete, who came to the college paid full tuition of approximately \$30,000 per year.

Though the decision to invest extensively in athletic facilities is not always the chosen solution, the situation facing Adrian College is a familiar one across the United States, particularly among smaller colleges which cannot pursue large research grants or solicit an extensive alumni network to subsidize their operations. For every campus, whether large or small or public or private, tuition dollars are a focal point of their overall revenue plan. With the recent rise of eSports and the popularity of video games among traditional college-aged individuals, it is not a surprise that eSports have begun to be integrated on college campuses.

### **eSports on Campus: Clubs and Varsity Sport**

There are currently four organizations in the U.S. that provide competitive formal platforms for collegiate gamers. They are "The eSports Association" (TeSpa), "The Collegiate Star League" (CSL), "IvyLoL", and "WellPlayed." Each respective league



combines for over 1000 eSports clubs that compete regularly in tournaments throughout the year. CSL has over 550 teams and more than 5,600 members and TeSpa currently has 700 school clubs participating, with growth anticipated in the future (Lingle, 2014). In order for teams to be eligible to register with the respective associations, there are a few rules that must be followed. Each team member must be enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited university. Additionally, each of the players on the respective team must all attend the same university. This obviously differs from most professional eSports leagues where team composition is not limited by geography. While there is a wide range of video games that can be played in these various leagues and clubs, *LoL* is undoubtedly the most popular.

Riot Games has constructed the “North American College Championship” (NACC) which is a tournament series that has three tiers of competition: qualifying rounds, playoffs, and the championship. The championship tier is comprised of four teams representing their respective region in North America. Both Canada and the U.S. are divided into four different regions: North, South, East, and West. The four collegiate eSports organizations serve as community partners for teams to register with in order to enter the NACC. Each community has their own qualification and registration deadlines. Depending on whether or not a team registering has been playing together or they are a new team will determine which community partner they choose to enter. For example, if a team is looking to practice and develop more in the qualification process then they may choose a different league than a team looking for experience or team development. Furthermore, teams or college clubs that have practiced together and do not need as much practice as newly developed teams may choose a different association to register with in

order to get to the qualifying rounds. It appears that the various collegiate eSports associations are comprised of varying levels of talent. Additionally, choosing which association to register with can become strategic as it relates to finding the most effective way to reach the qualifying rounds. According to the NACC website, the championship qualifiers all receive \$7,500 in scholarship prize winnings and participants on the team that wins the tournament each receive \$30,000 in scholarship money. The top four teams will earn a total of \$360,000 when the tournament is finished. The aforementioned organizations assist in hosting the qualifying rounds which creates a “survive and advance” mentality, similar to what occurs in the NCAA Basketball Tournaments.

As mentioned previously, Riot Games awards thousands of dollars to eSports competitors in the form of scholarships. However, other organizations such as TeSpa have found a new way to create financial rewards for their eSports chapters (club members). The video game developer Blizzard recently decided to start funding TeSpa depending on the level of commitment for each club. There are benchmarks that qualify clubs to receive certain benefits. For example, if a club is to acquire 65 members Blizzard provides a \$300 cash and product sponsorships. When a club reaches 80 members, the club receives upgraded gaming equipment to utilize. This progression continues all the way to a club acquiring 300 members which would result in a \$500 reward along with memorabilia and a meet-and-greet opportunity with Blizzard (Lingle, 2014). This means that various gaming organizations and game developers are partnering to make an impact on college campuses. More importantly, both developers and gaming club organizations are continuing to develop and see substantial growth from year to year.

In 2014, eSports on campus became more formalized. Robert Morris University (RMU) in Chicago began to offer 35 partial scholarships to various professional and semi-professional League of Legends players if they would enroll at the \$39,000 a year school. This initiative of declaring video games as a full sponsored university “sport” was headed by RMU associate athletic director Kurt Melcher (Wingfield, 2014).

Approximately one year later, the University of Pikeville (Kentucky) introduced gaming as a “sport” offering scholarships to a team headed by media director Bruce Parsons. Much like traditional athletics, the Pikeville video game players will have to maintain a certain GPA and they will have designated practice times along with mandates to study other teams before upcoming competitions (Tassi, 2015c).

The commitment to video games does not just concern scholarship money. RMU has designated a \$100,000 classroom with various gaming equipment and large video screens for the gamers to practice (Ruby, 2014). A simple estimation of finances indicates why these schools may be pursuing formalized eSports programs. The gaming room and 35 students on a half scholarship costs RMU approximately \$782,500. Additional revenue for RMU (assuming all of the new players would not have enrolled otherwise) will generate approximately \$682,500 in tuition fees. It is important to note that not all of the eSports athletes are on a 50 percent scholarship; some are on much lower scholarships (Tassi, 2015c) meaning the venture is likely a financial benefit for RMU, even before accounting for any additional “walk-ons” the new team might attract. Given that there are already a proliferation of official and unofficial campus clubs participating in gaming it seems that students and gaming organizations alike are anxious to see eSports become a more formal on-campus activity. Robert Morris and the

University of Pikeville are not well known colleges throughout the nation. However, there were over 2,000 applicants that applied to compete for RMU's varsity eSports team after its first year of competition.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the expanding video game industry with respect to competitive eSports and how it is understood on college and university campuses, specifically within the admissions office of private institutions. With over 1,000 collegiate clubs, national competitions, and universities such as RMU establishing formal varsity level eSports teams, eSports on campus is a growing presence regardless of perceptions as to whether or not it is an actual "sport." With an increased demand for students at all colleges and universities, but particularly private institutions, it is timely to conduct research to determine the knowledge of eSports by those most responsible for attracting students to campus. With the percentage of male students on campus decreasing and eSports attracting a predominantly male consumer, the link between eSports and private institutions recruiting presents a timely research environment in which to explore.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODS

The primary goal of this research is to investigate if college admissions officers at private institutions are familiar with eSports and their presence on college campuses. The study also is designed to compare admissions officers' answers to various campus characteristics. Admission officers are appropriate college administrators to study due to their responsibilities specifically related to recruiting new students, and their interaction with various other key campus administrators (Presidents, Provosts, Office of Student Life, etc.). Although there are more than 1,000 institutions of higher education to potentially examine, in an effort to study smaller private institutions (defined as campuses with 2,000-7,000 enrolled students) where the presence of eSports might have its greatest impact, a population of 187 private colleges and universities matching the enrollment criteria was retrieved from the website [www.collegecalc.org](http://www.collegecalc.org). Phone numbers and email addresses of admissions offices were cataloged. Prior to soliciting online survey participation, an initial "pre-survey" phone call was made to each admissions office in order to increase the survey response rate. Once an admissions officer was contacted, the researcher solicited the officer's interest in participating in the survey. If the particular officer did not want or did not feel it was appropriate to complete the survey, they were then asked to recommend who in their admissions office would be the person to contact. If an initial call was not answered, a follow up call was made one week after the initial contact attempt. Upon completion of the initials call, a direct email, via

Survey Monkey, was sent to the recommended individual asking them to participate in the survey. For those institutions where no phone contact was made, the survey invitation was emailed to the institutions' admission office "general" email address.

The created survey administered through Survey Monkey was comprised of 22 questions requesting information concerning the respondents' video game participation habits, familiarity with eSports in general and its use on college and university campuses, likeliness of implementing an eSports program at the respective institution, as well as selected demographic information (gender, age, job title, etc.) (see Appendix A). Critically, the respondents were asked to identify their institution so that various collected information could be utilized in the data analysis. Of the 22 questions, eight utilized a Likert scale (Vagias, 2006), six questions were short answer, two questions were multiple choice, and the remaining six questions asked to provide demographic or institutional information. Additionally, respondents were asked if they desired to receive the results of the research study. In order to test the survey for clarity and appropriate use of terminology, the survey was sent to various academic researchers as well as on-campus staff members for feedback before final implementation.

The data from each respondent was analyzed in congruence with other publicly available data with respect to the respondents' institution. The purpose of acquiring the additional information was to determine if any independent variables (listed below) impact eSports campus participation or impact the likeliness of implementing an eSports program. The publicly available data was acquired from the website College Navigator

(<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>). The additional variables initially collected for analysis included the following:

Enrollment

Tuition and fees

Campus setting

Religious affiliation

Percent of applicants admitted

Percent of students that are male

Percent of full-time students

Percent of out-of-state and international students

Intercollegiate athletic status

Most popular majors

## CHAPTER 4

### SURVEY RESULTS

For each of the initial 187 private colleges and universities that met the 2,000 to 7,000 enrollment criteria, phone calls were made to the general admissions office phone number. Most calls were answered by an administrative assistant who directed the phone call to someone who each administrative assistant thought to be most appropriate to assist in the research project. The researcher then explained the importance of the research study either to the connected individual or their respective voicemail. The researcher asked potential subjects to participate in the online survey and how to send them an email with the link to the Survey Monkey questionnaire. In some cases, a direct email address was provided and in other cases the researcher was advised to send the survey to the general admissions email address. Individuals who agreed to participate in the survey were given one week to complete the survey. If the individual did not finish the survey within one week, a follow up survey was sent. In cases where no direct phone interaction occurred, a survey invitation was sent to the institutions' general admissions email address.

There were a total of 92 individuals who agreed to participate in the survey when initially contacted via phone. However, a total of 29 ( $n = 29$ ) completed and usable surveys were collected. Given the timeframe of the data collection (October-November) it was particularly difficult to collect surveys since many respondents who agreed to participate indicated that their admissions office was particularly busy the immediate



weeks prior to December 1, which on many campuses is the deadline to submit undergraduate admissions applications. Of the 29 respondents, one individual chose not to indicate their gender, resulting with 28 individuals comprised of 15 female and 13 male respondents (see Table 4.1). There were three individuals who preferred not to declare their age (see Table 4.2). There were four different job titles that were given including seven (24.1%) general admissions counselors, 12 (41.4%) assistant or associate directors of admissions, six (20.7%) senior associate directors of admissions and four (13.8%) dean or vice president of admissions (see Table 4.3). The participants were also asked to indicate how much time they spent in a typical week playing video games. Table 4.4 details their responses. The results indicated that 25 (86.2%) respondents play less than one hour a week of video games across any platform.

Table 4.1: Survey Respondents Gender

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Male	44.8%	13
Female	51.7%	15
Prefer not to respond	3.4%	1
Total	100%	29

One of the primary examinations of the survey was investigating the familiarity levels of participants as it relates to professional and collegiate eSports competitions, leagues, and associations. For professional eSports knowledge, 15 (51.7%) of the respondents noted no familiarity. Similarly, 19 (65.5%) indicated no familiarity with collegiate eSports (see Table 4.5). It is interesting to note that only two of the respondents are even moderately familiar with eSports. As a result, it was not surprising to see that

Table 4.2: Age of Survey Respondents

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
18 – 24	21.4%	6
24 – 34	46.4%	13
35 – 44	14.3%	4
45 – 54	7.1%	2
55 or older	3.6%	1
Prefer not to respond	7.1%	3
Total	100%	29

Table 4.3: Survey Respondents Job Titles

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Admissions Counselor	24.1%	7
Assistant/Associate Director of Admissions	41.4%	12
Senior Associate Director of Admissions	20.7%	6
Dean or Vice President of Admissions	13.8%	4
Other	0.0%	0
Total	100%	29

Table 4.4: Respondent's Time Spent Participating in Gaming

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
0 minutes	72.4%	21
1 - 59 minutes	13.8%	4
1 hour - 5 hours	10.3%	3
Between 5 and 14 hours	3.4%	1
14 hours or more	0.0%	0
Total	100%	29

Knowledge of Robert Morris University of Chicago and the University of Pikeville varsity eSports programs is extremely low with 27 (93.1%) respondents being unaware of eSports program implementation. There were 25 (86.2%) respondents who considered it unlikely or extremely unlikely that their respective institution would implement a varsity, scholarship eSports program (see Table 4.6). The respondents were asked to follow up with a statement describing why they took their stance on the potential implementation of an eSports program at their institution. Of the 21 respondents, 10 (48%) noted that implementing an eSports program would not happen due to scholarship concerns. Some of the concerns entailed not being able to provide athletic scholarships or only being able to provide merit-based scholarships for academics. Additionally, if particular institutions had leeway to provide financial aid, respondents indicated the money would likely be spent elsewhere.

Table 4.5: Familiarity of Professional and Collegiate eSports Competitions, Leagues, and Associations

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent - Professional</b>	<b>Response Count</b>	<b>Response Percent - Collegiate</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Not at all familiar	51.7%	15	65.5%	19
Slightly familiar	27.6%	8	24.1%	7
Somewhat familiar	13.8%	4	3.4%	1
Moderately familiar	6.9%	2	6.9%	2
Extremely familiar	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29</b>

Table 4.6: Likelihood to implement a varsity eSports program

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Extremely unlikely	62.1%	18
Unlikely	24.1%	7
Neutral	10.3%	3
Likely	3.4%	1
Extremely likely	0.0%	0
Total	100%	29

In addition to eSports knowledge and likelihood of utilization on campus, the survey also investigated the use of academics and co-curricular activities as they related to successful undergraduate recruitment. The 28 responses indicated that an average of 69.71 percent of perceived undergraduate recruitment success is a result of their respective institution's academic offerings and an average of 30.29 percent of their recruitment success is derived from co-curricular activities. There were seven (25%) of the respondents who indicated that they believe 50 percent or more of their respective institutions' undergraduate recruitment success was attributed to co-curricular activities. The data indicated that five (71.43%) of the seven respondents were either directors or vice presidents of admissions. Initially, the researcher had hoped to conduct further statistical examination of the responses indicating a stronger use of co-curricular activities as a recruitment tool, but unfortunately due to the small sample of respondents such an examination was not possible. There were no apparent trends by data available through College Navigator including athletic programs competition level and religious affiliation.

Investigation of the data indicated that 26 (89.66%) of the respondents believe that out-of-state and international student recruiting is moderately or extremely important (see Table 4.7). A follow up question asked respondents to place a percentage of time that each admissions office spends focusing on out-of-state and international students. Of the 27 usable responses, the percentage of time placed on recruiting these students averaged 55 percent with a median of 60 percent. Additionally, 55 percent of the respondents spend 60 percent or more time focusing on recruiting out-of-state and international students with 33.33 percent of respondents spending 80 percent or more of their recruiting efforts on out-of-state and international students.

Table 4.7: Importance of Recruiting Out-of-State and International Students

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Not at all important	0.0%	0
Slightly important	3.4%	1
Somewhat important	6.9%	2
Moderately important	31.0%	9
Extremely important	58.6%	17
Total	100%	29

The respondents were also asked to project how they thought admissions activities would change in the future. Only one (3.4%) of the respondents believed that the use of co-curricular activities will slightly diminish in importance. The remaining 28 (96.6%) believed that the use of co-curricular activities will at least remain at the same level of importance as it relates to enrollment (see Table 4.8). Four (13.8%) of the respondents believed that the importance of co-curricular activities as it relates to enrollment would significantly increase. There are no similarities to the respondents as it

relates to job title, age, or gender. Unfortunately, the low sample size prevented further advanced statistical analysis in this area. The survey provided follow up questions requesting that the respondents answer what type of significant co-curricular activities will be implemented (first question) or significantly enhanced (second question). For analysis, there were 18 respondents for the first question and 22 respondents for the second question. The answers were grouped into the following categories:

- Athletics and Intramurals
- Community and Professional Support
- None or Unsure
- Other

Athletics and intramurals consisted of responses that were suggesting that the co-curricular activities being enhanced or implemented would be related to some form of sport, whether intercollegiate or club. Also included in this section was any enhancements made to athletic facilities. Community and professional support consisted of responses that were looking to engage more with the local community through the use of career fairs, internship programs, academic activities, and student support mechanisms such as a new Greek Life chapter or more support for LGBTQ students. Respondents that were unsure as to which types of activities will be implemented or enhanced were included with respondents that said nothing will change. There is undoubtedly an emphasis on investing in implementing or enhancing athletic or intramural activities with 11 of the respondents indicating they can foresee enhancements being made along with six of the respondents indicating that they foresee implementing more athletic and intramural activities.

Table 4.8: Co-Curricular Activities Future Importance

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Significantly diminish in importance	0.0%	0
Slightly diminish in importance	3.4%	1
Remain the same level of importance	41.4%	12
Slightly increase in importance	41.4%	12
Significantly increase in importance	13.8%	4
Total	100.0%	29

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND INTERPRETATION

The data provides a clear indication that the overall admission officers' knowledge and familiarity as it relates to eSports at a professional and collegiate level are low based off of the information gathered from the respondents. Additionally, admissions personnel consider the possibility of implementing an eSports program similar to that of RMU and the University of Pikeville to be extremely unlikely. Obviously, this could change as there have been past examples of new academic and co-curricular programs being implemented rapidly. It is interesting to note that a majority of admissions personnel believe that campus offerings of co-curricular activities will remain important or increase in importance in the years to come, indicating that these personnel see the value of "other" activities when recruiting students.

Data also suggests that an emphasis on significantly enhancing co-curricular activities, especially sports or intramural sports, will be an important factor and is even a priority for some of the private institution personnel who responded. RMU implemented a varsity eSports program that has experienced moderate competitive success, namely finishing in second place in the most recent NACC tournament. There were also over 2,000 students who applied to participate on RMU's eSports team in their second year of existence. However, RMU invested a considerable amount of capital in order to successfully recruit students. A classroom was completely remodeled and outfitted to meet the needs of participating gamers. In addition, RMU hired an eSports coach to



efficiently recruit and train the new gamers. It is understandable as to why the respondents would appear to be ambivalent about implementing an eSports program considering the low levels of familiarity about eSports and the potential start-up capital needed to create an effective team. The focus and importance of recruiting out-of-state and international students mimics previous discussions on this topic. Due to in-state budget cuts at public universities, many universities have taken an initiative to actively recruit out-of-state and international students in order to increase their program rankings as well as increase tuition revenue (Burd, 2015). As a result, universities are making efforts to make their campus a destination campus that attracts out-of-state students (Qian, 2015).

One of the unique factors about eSports is that it is an international phenomenon. Major championship series, such as the *LoL* World Championships, have taken place in large metropolitan areas and over international territories. Teams and individual players compete from countries around the world given eSports' online presence. Although the data in this study show no indication that eSports will soon become an important component of private institutions recruiting efforts, if it is soon shown that formal eSports teams can help attract out-of-state or international students, many schools are likely to invest. This may be especially important on campuses losing students or those concerned about the decreasing percentages of male students. With eSports participants and fans being overwhelmingly male, creating a team could potentially become a viable solution to successfully recruiting students, much to the chagrin of many who cannot fathom how playing video games can be a viable component of higher education.

## Future Research

Given the details and data collected from surveying private colleges with enrollment between 2,000 and 7,000, future research studies could expand the methodology employed to public colleges and universities, especially if eSports continues to expand in popularity (and in prize money). Due to the trend of many small private colleges struggling with enrollment and retention, this particular study is timely. However, if eSports continues to grow and develop into a major spectator activity, other colleges may become interested in the eSports space as an effective co-curricular activity to offer on campus. Another potential study could be to use a similar survey instrument, but solicit responses from another department within the respective college or university. For example, administering the survey to the officers of Student Affairs, Provosts, Athletic Departments, and Presidents and Chancellors could be enlightening, especially since they may carry more influence over campus initiatives and direction. Research within eSports will likely not be limited to the campus setting. One of the most interesting aspects of eSports is the millions of online fans and subscribers who diligently watch eSports competitions, practices, and live video streams of their favorite players where the fans can interact with them via online chat rooms. It is not uncommon for eSports competitors to have fans that follow their progress, buy their sponsor's products, and, in some cases, donate money to the gamer's cause. Future research could investigate eSports fan identity, particularly as it compares to other, more traditional sport and entertainment personalities and teams. Such research could provide valuable information regarding what the lucrative eSports audience consumes, thus providing valuable information to eSports leagues, associations, and sponsors.

While RTS games such as *LoL* and *Dota 2*, and FPS game *Call of Duty* are the current most popular video games, it would be interesting to examine the motives and characteristics of eSports fans across various types of games. For example, are there any sociological differences between RTS fans and FPS fans? Would those fans be similar to those who follow sports-oriented games such as EA Sports video games *Madden NFL* and *FIFA*. Additionally, further examination of professional player motives and the differentiations amongst the various games played within the eSports space could be insightful as it could provide information concerning the competitive gamer community.

Lastly, one of the primary discussions as it relates to eSports is whether or not competitive gaming is actually considered a “sport.” While the U.S. government has granted travel visas to international professional gamers under the professional athlete description, there are still discrepancies about the true definition of sport and how that differs from competitive gaming. It would be interesting to examine current perception of eSports “sport” status and then track potential changes as the industry matures and develops a greater following among a variety of constituents.

Finally, a case study of RMU and the University of Pikeville would provide insights regarding the eSports on campus and how specific actions led to potential levels of success. At the moment, RMU has garnered much greater success and publicity for their eSports efforts than Pikeville. There are likely a variety of factors contributing to each campus’ achievement levels. Understanding their actions and the resulting outcomes would be helpful for any school planning to implement a similar eSports program on their campus.

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## APPENDIX A – SURVEY INSTRUMENT



Dear Participant:

You are invited to participate in a web-based survey investigating college admissions officer's knowledge of competitive gaming or eSports. This is a research project being conducted by Kenny Sugishita, a graduate student at the University of South Carolina, under the supervision of Dr. Mark Nagel. This survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to complete any particular question(s) you do not wish to answer for any reason(s). You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about eSports and its use as a recruiting and retention tool on college campuses. We are happy to share the survey results when completed.

Your survey answers will be sent to a link at SurveyMonkey.com where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. In order to limit response time, we ask you to please indicate your institution where asked (Question #16). This will enable us to link additional publically available data (institution enrollment, tuition, intercollegiate

athletic status, club sports offerings, intramural sports offerings, etc.) to your responses for further analysis. Survey Monkey does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous unless you specifically indicate that information so that we can follow up with our research results. Though the institution will be identified for analysis purposes, no individual or institution names or identifying information would be included in any publications or presentations based on these data, and your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

**Contact:** If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact me or my research supervisor.

<b>Name:</b>	Kenny Sugishita	Dr. Mark Nagel
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:sugishit@email.sc.edu">sugishit@email.sc.edu</a>	<a href="mailto:nagel@sc.edu">nagel@sc.edu</a>
<b>Phone Number:</b>	805-709-1884	803-777-3751

**Electronic Consent:** Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agree	Disagree

1. In a typical week, how many hours of video games (across all platforms) do you play?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0 minutes	1 - 59 minutes	1 hour – 5 hours	Between 5 and 14 hours	14 hours or more

2. On a scale of 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Extremely familiar), please rate your familiarity with professional eSports competitions.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all familiar	Slightly familiar	Somewhat familiar	Moderately familiar	Extremely familiar

3. On a scale of 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Extremely familiar), please rate your familiarity with college eSports competitions, leagues, and associations.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all familiar	Slightly familiar	Somewhat familiar	Moderately familiar	Extremely familiar

4. In your opinion, what percentage of your undergraduate recruitment success can be attributed to your institution's academic offerings and what percentage can be attributed to your institution's co-curricular activities (clubs, events, non-academic facilities, etc.)?

Academic \_\_\_\_\_ (0-100%)

Co-Curricular \_\_\_\_\_ (0-100%)

Please make sure that the total of your two percentages equals 100%

5. On a scale of 1 (Significantly diminish in importance) to 5 (Significantly increase in importance), how do you feel the importance of co-curricular campus activities will change for undergraduate enrollment decisions in the next five years?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Significantly diminish in importance	Slightly diminish in importance	Remain the same level of importance	Slightly increase in importance	Significantly increase in importance

6. What new co-curricular campus activities do you see your campus implementing in the next five years?

7. What specific co-curricular campus activities do you see your campus significantly upgrading or enhancing in the next five years?

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8. On a scale of 1 (Not at all influential) to 5 (Extremely influential), please rate how much influence your admissions office has regarding the creation or implementation of on-campus co-curricular activities.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all influential	Slightly influential	Somewhat influential	Moderately influential	Extremely influential

9. Does your campus currently have an eSports club?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	No	Unsure

a. If yes, approximately how many students regularly participate?

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10. Were you previously aware that Robert Morris University (Chicago) and University of Kentucky at Pikeville have created varsity eSports teams that provide partial scholarships to some participants?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	No

11. On a scale of 1 (Extremely unlikely) to 5 (Extremely likely), please rate the likelihood that your campus would implement a similar eSports scholarship program within the next three years to increase applications and undergraduate enrollment.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extremely unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Extremely likely

12. Please explain why your campus will likely take this stance regarding an eSports scholarship program for undergraduate students?

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13. On a scale of 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important), please rate the relative importance placed on recruiting out-of-state or international students at your institution.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Extremely important

14. What percent of your offices' recruiting time is spent recruiting out-of-state and international students?

--

15. Please estimate what you think the top individual cash prizes are for the most prestigious college eSports tournaments:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1 - \$500	\$501 - \$1500	\$1,501 - \$5,000	\$5,001 - \$10,000	\$10,001 - \$35,000	More than \$35,000

16. Please provide the name of the University you currently work for.

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17. Please specify your gender:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male	Female	Prefer not to respond

18. Please specify your age:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 – 24	25 -34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 or older	Prefer not to respond

19. Please indicate the job title that best describes your role in admissions:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admissions Counselor	Assistant/Associate Director of Admissions	Senior Associate Director of Admissions	Dean or Vice President of Admissions	Other

a. If other, please specify position.

20. If you wish to receive the results of this survey, please provide your contact information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_