

# Influence of E-Sports Brand Advertising on Fans' Consumption Behavior

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**Abstract:** Based on the analysis of the current situation of e-sports and fan groups, this paper explores the influence of brand advertising in e-sports on fans' consumption behavior and intention. It is suggested that brands should strive to reach a connection with the competition when designing and releasing advertisements, pay attention to fans' emotional feedback, and design targeted advertisements for fans, so as to attract influential consumer groups in this emerging field. Enhance their purchase desire and consumption behavior.

**Keywords:** Advertising, E-sports fans, Economic consumption behavior.

## 1. Introduction

Esports is a sport that reaches the "competition" level in video game competitions. Esports athletes compete fairly and impartially through electronic devices within the protection of the rules. Different from traditional sports, e-sports has the characteristics of emerging, small movement range, science and technology, but it also belongs to the Olympic Committee recognized sports competition. There are many rules of e-sports competition, including single elimination system, double elimination system, single cycle within the group, double cycle within the group and so on. Important e-sports events around the world include KPL Professional League (King of Glory Professional League), DOTA2 International Invitational Tournament, Overwatch League (OWL), PCS Intercontinental Tournament, League of Legends Global Finals and so on.

With the gradual development of the e-sports field, e-sports has been included in sports professional events. In 2008, the General Administration of Sport of China approved e-sports as the 78th official sports competition. In 2023, esports also appeared as an official event for the first time at the Asian Games held in Hangzhou, China. In September 2023, the International Olympic Committee announced the establishment of the IOC esports Commission, chaired by IOC member David Lapatin. In 2024, the Saudi esports World Cup was held in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, which included 19 events such as LOL, King of Glory, DOTA2, with a total prize pool of more than \$60 million. This emerging event, which combines electronic games and sports competitions, has been gradually accepted by the majority of young people in various countries, and has gained a large number of offline and online fans, forming a relatively stable and unique audience fan group of e-sports events. In particular, the King of Glory Professional League (KPL) and the League of Legends Professional League (LPL), as a typical esports competition, have a high degree of discussion in China, and the League of Legends global Finals have attracted a large number of fans' attention around the world every year. The championship match of the 2017 League of Legends Global Finals was held at the National Stadium in Beijing, China, with 57.6 million unique viewers tuning in, according to official statistics. At the same time, the industry related to e-

sports events has developed rapidly, and e-sports clubs, e-sports players and even e-sports-related variety shows have quickly entered people's lives and horizons. The market to be explored in the economic field of e-sports events and its unlimited potential are being seen by more and more people. Therefore, whether the advertising of the brand can positively promote the purchase intention of the fan group in this new market becomes the key to whether the brand can achieve the purpose of publicity, increase the brand goodwill and profit.

## 2. Fan Consumption Behavior

Consumer behavior can be understood as the sum of psychological and realistic performance of consumer demand, purchase motivation, consumption willingness, etc. The key point of fans' consumption behavior is that the additional emotional value of their consumption demand is higher than the value of the product itself. Relevant studies show that the factors affecting sports fans' consumption behavior are affected by economy, consumption intention and personal emotion. Consumption motivation is related to fan identification [1].

Economy directly determines the consumption power of sports fans. Different income groups also have different affordability and consumption tendency for fans' consumption. For example, middle-income women tend to spend more online sports, while high-income women tend to spend more offline and have a slightly negative attitude towards online sports spending [2]. Consumption intention affects fans' decisions, and the more direct the consumption intention is, the more fans are inclined to buy. Personal emotional influence largely determines fans' views on goods and services, purchase desires and final decisions. The consumer behavior of fans has a high correlation with their "fans", which also shows that the consumer behavior of fans is emotional and self-satisfying, and is easily affected by personal emotions, including the emotion of the "fans" (such as e-sports players, coaches, e-sports clubs, narrators, game characters, etc.) and the emotion of brand advertising and the brand itself. The personal emotion of fans is connected with the "fan" object, and this bond can affect the personal emotion of fans to the goods and services related to the "fan" object, thus promoting the purchase desire of fans. At the same time,

as a fan group's admiration for the "fan" object, it will also produce a joint impression and trust on the "same model" and related objects (which may lead to anchoring inspiration), resulting in an increase in purchase desire.

### 3. Emotional Feedback and Race Identification

The purpose of advertising is to enhance visibility, create a good reputation, introduce goods and services, enhance consumers' desire to buy and harvest customer groups, etc., and the same is true for advertising in the field of e-sports, and its most direct target group is the audience fans corresponding to the event.

Consumption motivation mentions fan identification. According to existing studies, both individual and group fans' event identification have a positive effect on fans' consumption behavior, and individual event identification is the highest influencing item [3]. This shows the great influence of race identification, especially on individuals. Therefore, in the events with strong identification fans, the goods and services promoted by the brand through advertising and even the brand may gain more revenue.

At the same time, groups also play a strong role in helping individuals get emotional feedback to promote individual behavior. When an individual is in the esports circle, under the guidance of the more representative figures in the circle (such as "super talk host", senior "writer", "big powder", etc.), it will enhance its emotional belonging, have a high sense of identity for its identity and the "powder" object and the circle, and produce the willingness to pay for it [4]. If an individual's behavior is encouraged and excellent emotional feedback is obtained, the individual's behavioral willingness will be deepened. For example, if a fan buys a shampoo jointly launched by Qingyang and KPL (King Glory Professional League) and posts the rare player small card gift with the same model in the advertisement on Weibo Super, it is very likely to gain a lot of attention and admiration from super fans, so the fan will enhance the desire to continue buying due to the positive emotional feedback obtained by the behavior. At the same time, when fans cannot get positive emotional feedback, their purchase desire and behavior will be relatively reduced. For example, when two players in the KPL, "Yino" and "Nuanyang", broke out their love affair and caused controversy, their microblog super words generated a lot of abuse war, the positive emotional feedback plummeted, and the purchase desire and behavior of their fans also declined a lot, and a large number of cp fans sold the products related to the players originally purchased and announced that they would no longer buy the products related to the players. For the stimulating effect of negative emotions on fans' consumption, a particularly typical case is the fan voting process when the KPL dream team was formed before the start of the Saudi esports World Cup. After the number of fan votes was ranked by the pull table, the fans of Jiuku, Qingqing, Huahai and other players have a large number of consumer behaviors due to the small number of votes of their favorite players are very likely to be unable to be selected, such as paid canvassing, and the purpose of allowing online red bloggers to help canvassing and publicity by consuming products or giving gifts to online red bloggers. These spending behaviors of fans all reflect that negative emotions can stimulate fans' distressed and competitive mentality, thus promoting fans' consumption. For example, fans of Guangzhou TTG Club

King Glory Branch conducted a comparison of single sales in super after the release of the group issue in the summer of 2023, which stimulated the competitive heart of fans of players with low sales volume, so there was a large number of doubled purchases and bought dozens of magazines. At the same time, the representative and leading figures in the group also have a strong driving force, just like the collective production inside the rice circle, through positive emotional communication and negative emotional stimulation to gain the trust and support of group members, and drive group members to participate in the promotion and purchase of goods and services [4]. Therefore, if the advertising promotion meets the needs of representatives in the group, its strong driving force and promotion can help goods and services reach a deeper level of promotion and even increase the purchase intention and action of individual fans. The emotional feedback and the recognition of the event in the principle of these influences are factors worthy of attention in the design of advertising.

### 4. Brand Fit

Brand fit plays a positive role in promoting fans' purchase intention and attitude towards brands [5], which emphasizes that brands also need to consider the fit degree between brand advertising and e-sports field when advertising. It is not required that the brand positioning must meet the needs of e-sports, nor is it required that the goods can only be special e-sports goods such as headphones and e-sports chairs, but the advertising design and delivery need to meet the needs of the field of e-sports, especially e-competition. This requires the brand to have a deep understanding of the field and the event and reach a certain cooperation with the field before designing the advertisement, and design the advertising content, picture, advertising words, etc., under the premise of ensuring that it meets the theme of the field of e-sports or has a certain association with the field of e-sports (such as the embodiment of the spirit of e-sports, the appearance of relevant characters, the appearance of e-sports elements and e-sports "meme", etc.). After the fit is improved, the fans will not play when watching the advertisement, and will not affect the viewing of the event, and have a sense of affinity, which will naturally increase the good impression of the goods and services and brands presented in the advertisement and enhance the purchase desire. For example, the advertising slogan "super 'send' e-sports sponsors" put forward by Meituan Takeaway, the sponsor of KPL (King Glory Professional League), has won the favor of the majority of KPL fans. It is precisely because of its "super will 'send'" a pun that both promotes the advantages of the United States group delivery delivery also fits the unique "meme" in the field of e-sports - fans often shout that players do not "send heads" to the opposite side during the game. For example, in the advertisement shot by Tissot and EDG e-sports Club, the starters of EDG Club in the game division of the League of Legends are wearing Tissot watches, and the advertisement content includes players preparing for the game, encouraging each other, fighting side by side, etc., showing the posture of the professional league of Legends players on the field, which is fully in line with the e-competition.

### 5. Conclusion

Today, the commercial value of the field of e-sports is still rising, and many brands are eager to seize the opportunities in

this emerging field, hoping to emerge in this special field and occupy the market. At present, there is a lack of specific elements (such as e-sports related characters, e-sports "meme", etc.) in the scope of relevant research on the degree of influence on consumer behavior. At the same time, whether e-sports brand advertising with poor reputation can have the same impact on fan consumption behavior has not been deeply explored by scholars, which can become the direction of future research. This article only carries on a brief analysis of the influence of e-sports brand advertising on fans' consumption behavior from three angles, which is not very perfect, for reference only.

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