

What is shaping culture? Gaming

By  Brett Rogers

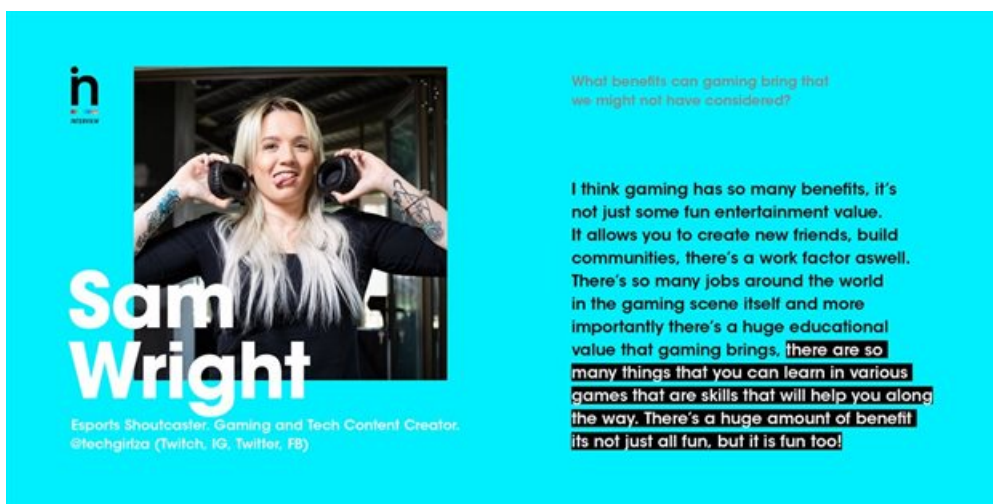
21 Sep 2020

Gaming is a whole universe that seems separate from 'the real world', yet it has an almost subspace existence in that

.....It's everywhere
.....all the time
.....on every level
.....even if you don't notice it.



Gaming is involved in almost every consumer-based industry, from financial services (yeah, Discovery) to your local coffee shop (rockin' it, Mugg & Bean). And it is used to encourage certain behaviours, which benefit them ... and possibly you.



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Gamification can undoubtedly be used for good. You'll witness people of all ages learning quicker when using education platforms in which they can win points. Take language apps as an example; they using gaming techniques to provide a different way to learn a language. Those who game in daily life have been seen to have quicker reaction times, more alert imaginations can rapidly learn complex tasks quicker than most, their memory skills are elevated and, in some cases, they learn the essential value of teamwork.

7.8 billion people on earth.
2.5 billion are gamers.



We did the calculation: 32% of the world's population are gamers in one way or another. Whether it's mobile, PC or console gaming, this industry has a massive impact on how we spend our time. There is something for everyone, as pioneer Grant Hinds says: "One of the ways I like to look at gaming is like reading a book. You might not consider yourself a reader, but there are definitely books you like and genres you like. It's kind of the same thing with games."

“

I don't need
to 'get a life'.
I'm a gamer.
I have lots of lives.

- UNKNOWN

GAMING

”

The plethora of gaming opportunities out there means that there is literally something for everyone. Gaming companies have considered all aspects of people's abilities, desires and ableness. In an earlier article, I referenced design work done on the game *Monument Valley 2*, where a level was even designed based on the aesthetics of a drag queen. Everyone is invited to the world of gaming. It is in many ways the great equaliser, where none of the things that impact us in our daily lives matter. Neither gender, age, race nor religion matters when you need Mario to do his stuff in *Mario Kart*.

China was the first country
to treat 'internet addiction'
clinically in 2008.



Of course, on the flip side, gaming has taken people way too far into its world. And there have been repercussions. Last year, China placed strict regulations on gaming, restricting players under the age of 18 from participating in online games between 22:00 and 08:00. They also imposed a 90-minute limit on weekdays and allowed only three hours of gaming on weekends and holidays.

Gaming addiction is still not entirely recognised or understood. It is not known whether the disorder is a separate clinical entity or a manifestation of underlying psychiatric disorders.

And then, unfortunately, 'death by gaming' is a phenomenon, too. People have been found to have gamed so long that they have died. Some from health issues that have not been attended to, others from lack of sleep and the effects of malnutrition. In some instances, people have committed murder when seeking passwords, gaming controllers or through negligence.

The reality of gaming addiction is as tragic and worrying as any addiction, and the same attention and care need to be applied when considering people suffering from this problem.

Conclusion



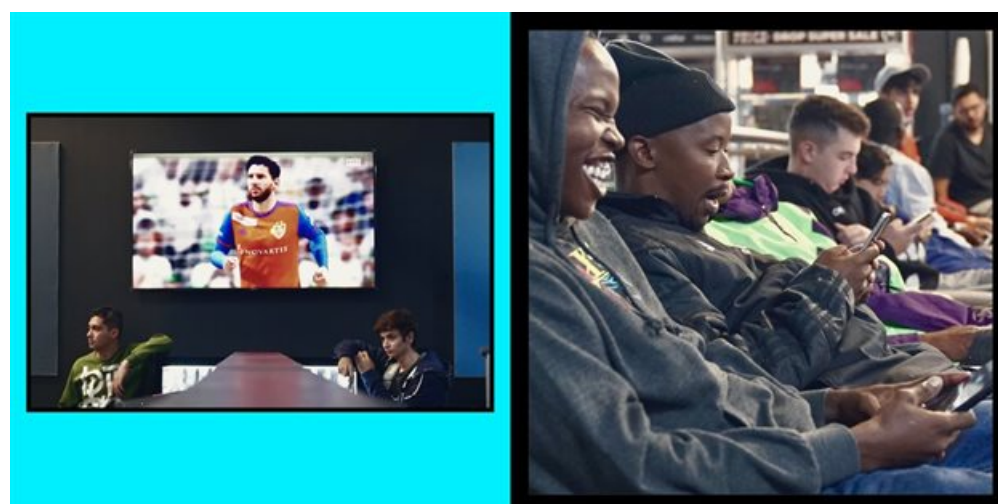
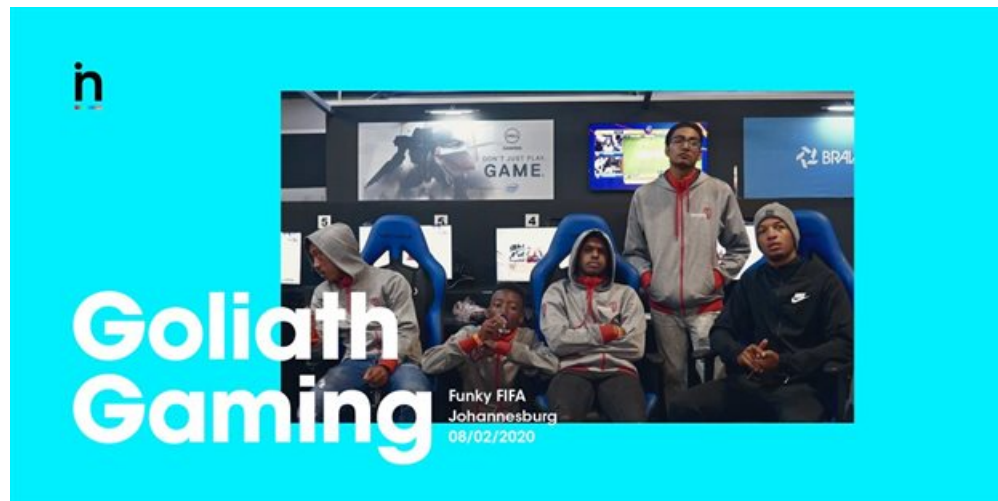
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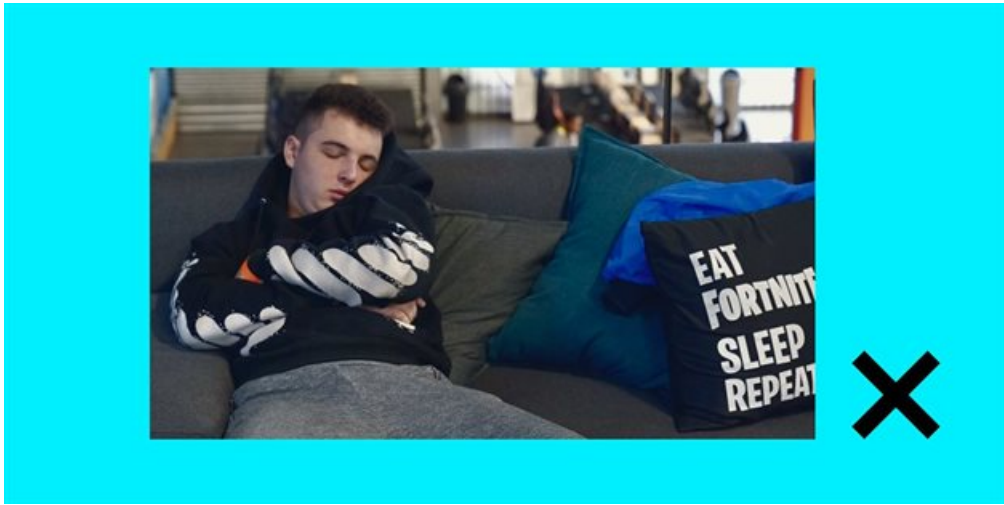
What can't be ignored is that gaming is here to stay. And, as gaming stream site Twitch annihilates the numbers put up by any traditional competitor like YouTube, be aware of the massive impact that gaming is going to have on you, whether you like it, or are even aware of it.

For part of our exploration into gaming, we went to stay in the Goliath Gaming Headquarters in Johannesburg. Goliath Gaming is an esports team owning *Fifa*, *Street Fighter V*, *StarCraft* & *Counter-Strike* squads. Respected globally but still very down-to-earth, they welcomed this N00b into their building.

Gaming has left behind the stereotype of the energy-drink-drinking dirty-long-haired sulky teenager in the corner and emerged with professionalism and focussed goals. Goliath Gaming, for example, provides their professional players with training that includes yoga instructors, psychologists, personal trainers and nutritionists to take these e-athletes to greater heights.

In 2019, Goliath Gaming's 'The Beast' won the Funky Fifa Esports Challenge at The Maverick LAN Gaming Centre. In 2020, he and his fellow pros went up against the best esports players in the country. It wasn't to be for 'The Beast' as his Goliath teammate 'Yung Savage' took the overall win, but overall Goliath won three of the top four places, staking their claim to be of the best in the country. Their goals though are global, with ambitions to be the best in the world.





ABOUT BRETT ROGERS

Brett Rogers, culture lead at Cape Town advertising agency HaveYouHeard and content curator for In_, a channel of content, which showcases cultural forces that are changing the world. It aims to inform, inspire and entertain the viewer and does so with multimedia posts, including podcasts, videos, google trends, mini Q+A's and more. In_ talks to those interested in in-depth cultural exploration and those curious about the world we live in.

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