

IJRM Call for Papers

Special Issue on:

The Game of Life: The Role of Video Games in Marketing

The market for video games is valued at about 200 billion USD in 2022 and is expected to grow to 285 billion USD by 2027. This makes video games the largest segment in the market for digital media, twice as large as the market for video-on-demand ($95B in 2022), which includes streaming companies like Netflix, Disney+, and HBO, and 13 times as large as digital music ($15B in 2022), which includes players like Spotify and Apple Music (Statista, July 2022, Digital media market data analysis and forecast).

What started as arcade games in the 1980s now comprises mobile games played on smartphones and tablets, downloaded games for PC and consoles, and online games, which frequently take the forms of massively multiplayer online games. Video games have led to markets such as online streaming (e.g., Twitch) or eSports, which have grown into multi-billion dollar industries in their own right. Today, 3.2 billion people play video games six to seven hours weekly. Over 60% of the population regularly plays video games in the United States alone, and participation in video games worldwide is roughly 71% of social media participation (3.2 billion users vs. 4.5 billion users, respectively).

Yet, despite this high level of consumer participation, marketers are still not fully acknowledging the importance of video games in many people's lives, and research has largely neglected their role as a marketing channel. Therefore, this special issue of IJRM seeks to publish articles that address various questions in this general domain. Exemplary topics include:

- Video games as a marketing channel: How can brands leverage video games for marketing communication and distribution? Which unique advantages do video games offer over more traditional alternatives? Under which conditions are they likely to be most (least) effective?
- Influencer marketing within video gaming: What is the difference between influencer marketing on traditional social media influencers and video game platforms? How do video game influencers impact consumer behavior? Which strategies should firms use to collaborate with them?
- Player Behavior and Engagement: Which implications do player personality, online community characteristics, and game design (e.g., rewards, achievements, social features) have for marketing within the platform and audience engagement?
- Marketing within video game companies: Do traditional marketing tools work the same way for video game companies? Do we need new techniques to conduct marketing in this dynamic and fast-changing environment? How do different pricing strategies (e.g., pay-to-play, free-to-play, subscription-based) impact player behavior/engagement? What are their broader implications for marketing on the platform?
- Video games as a source for marketing insights: Which unique data emerge from video games, and how can companies use it? How can such data be scraped/ collected? Which new methods do we need to analyze such data?
- Esports: How can firms leverage esports as a tool for marketing communication? Do traditional concepts such as sponsorship apply in the same way to esports as they do to traditional sports?
- Ethics and regulation: Which unique ethical challenges do video games pose? How do they impact the well-being of consumers, especially younger ones? Regulation is needed to protect vulnerable consumer groups from the negative consequences of gaming.

The special issue is open to all methodological approaches, including experimental studies, qualitative research, and empirical modeling. Research should be focused on real-world applications, drawing on rigorous methodology to address substantive concerns. The special issue is also open to research that has the potential to inform regulation and public policy, so long as it relates to marketing phenomena.

The co-editors of this special issue will begin accepting manuscripts for the special issue starting September 1, 2023. Manuscripts must be received no later than December 31, 2023.

Papers considered for the special issue will need to be effectively revised within a short period of time as our editorial aim for the special issue is to make definite up- or down-decisions before the end of 2024 (see also next section).

About IJRM

IJRM is the official journal of the European Marketing Academy and is positioned as the supreme outlet for the most novel and innovative marketing papers.

IJRM is also known for being a very author-friendly outlet. This includes fast turnaround times, a constructive and developmental review approach, and the avoidance of endless rounds of ping-pong between author teams and reviewers. If the authors wholeheartedly invest their deeds *before* the initial submission *and* during the review process, we hope to be able to bring good papers out faster than elsewhere. Time-to-market is too often neglected as a key factor in making marketing research relevant.

This special issue will be managed in this spirit. In particular, papers will need to be effectively revised within a short period of time, and our editorial aim is to make definite up- or down-decisions before the end of 2024.

Submissions

Papers targeting the special issue should be submitted through the IJRM submission system (http://www.editorialmanager.com/ijrm) and will undergo a similar review process as regularly submitted papers.

Important: when submitting your paper, please select as Article Type "**SI: Gaming**."

We start processing submissions for the special issue on September 1, 2023, with the final submission deadline being December 31, 2023. We strongly encourage authors to submit before the deadline. If all authors submit on the same date, the competition for competent and constructive reviewers will be naturally more intense.

All manuscripts must follow the guidelines of the *International Journal of Research in Marketing* (see https://www.elsevier.com/journals/international-journal-of-research-in-marketing/0167-8116/guide-for-authors).

Special Issue Guest Editors:
P.K. Kannan (SI Guest Editor), University of Maryland, U.S., pkannan@umd.edu
Michael Haenlein (SI Guest Editor), ESCP Business School, France, haenlein@escp.eu

IJRM Editor Team:
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Alina Sorescu (Co-Editor), Texas A&M, U.S., asorescu@mays.tamu.edu

IJRM Managing Editor:
Cecilia D Nalagon, cnalagon@ijrm.org