

An overhead photograph of two people sitting on a white, shaggy rug on a light-colored wooden floor. They are both holding black video game controllers and appear to be playing a game. A large, round, woven basket hangs from the ceiling in the upper left corner. The scene is brightly lit, creating a warm and casual atmosphere.

Why Gamers Should Be Part of Your Audience Strategy

Written by
Kim Thompson

Published
December 2015

Topics
Video, Consumer
Trends

Do you know how many gaming devotees you have in your core audience? Kim Thompson, SVP group client director of digital, MediaVest, shares new research about why gamers are an attractive audience for marketers in any category.

think with **Google**

For nearly two decades, I've been a professional marketer. For just as long, I've also been an avid gamer. With a lens on both worlds, I've learned one thing: Gamers are an incredibly influential—and untapped—segment of consumers. And they aren't just budget-challenged young males. (I'm living proof of that.)

[Gaming isn't just a thing you can do anymore. It's also a thing you can watch.](#) Increasingly, gaming content on YouTube is becoming a major destination for gamers' [I-want-to-watch-what-I'm-into moments](#).

Believe it or not, watching someone play Call of Duty (one of my personal favorites) can be just as exhilarating as actually playing it.

To understand more about exactly how influential gamers can be for marketers, Google recently partnered with Ipsos MediaCT to survey a total of 4,803 participants in the U.S., ages 18-54, out of whom 2,802 go online at least monthly (aka "General Online Population") and 2,001 go online at least monthly and stated that they watch gaming videos on YouTube at least monthly (aka "YouTube Gamers" or "Gamers").¹ What the survey found shed new light on YouTube Gamer demographics, 30% of whom are female.² (See? I'm not the only female watching.)

The same study also found that while Gamers certainly skew younger, over a third of them are actually above the 34-year-old millennial threshold. And some of these people, who were raised blowing into game cartridges, are now [raising little gamers of their own](#)—47% of the YouTube Gamers surveyed are now parents.³

The emerging purchasing power of gamers

The study also uncovered what I've believed to be true for a long time-- that Gamers are an attractive audience for a broad range of advertisers. Gamers are more likely than the general online population to consider purchasing computers, smartphones, media and entertainment products

such as movie tickets, music albums, and even cars, whether for themselves or as gifts.⁴

In fact, you might consider gamers as “uber-consumers,” who are not only more likely to buy certain products than the general online population, but are also more likely to be key influencers for your brand regardless of whether you are in the gaming industry or not.

Source: Google/Ipsos MediaCT, U.S. YouTube Gamers Study, among 2,000 people, ages 18-54, who watch gaming videos on YouTube, October 2015)

YouTube Gamers are more likely to purchase certain goods than the general online population.



YouTube Gamers are not only more likely to buy certain products—they're also more likely to buy premium products. For example, 74% of YouTube Gamers surveyed said they would pay more for top-quality media and entertainment products and services. 85% said they are willing to pay more for top quality consumer electronics products and services. And 73% made the same declaration regarding top-quality food and beverage products and services.⁵

How Gamers influence the purchasing decisions of others

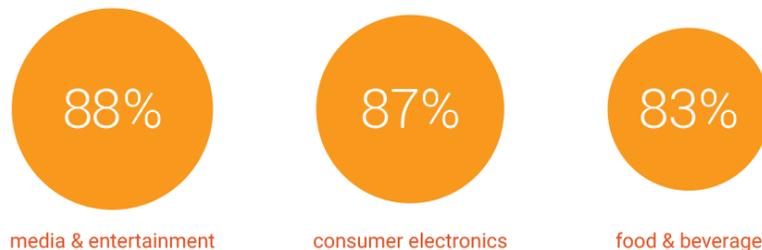
As you might expect, YouTube Gamers love their electronics. And so it shouldn't come as a surprise that for electronics in particular, YouTube Gamers are highly influential. Eighty-seven percent of those surveyed who have recently bought a consumer electronics product or service say they typically recommend what they've bought to people they know.⁶

Sixty-nine percent of those are also very likely to rate and review their purchase online.⁷

But Gamers' influence doesn't stop at electronics goods. In fact, the ripple effect YouTube Gamers have on other people's purchasing decisions is also observed in the media and entertainment and food and beverage categories, too.

Percent of YouTube Gamers who give product recommendations in the following categories:

Base: Made a recent purchase in the category (media and entertainment N=1,443; consumer electronics N=1,042; packaged food and beverages N=2,264)



In short, this group not only buys a lot of stuff, it has a strong influence on what others buy as well.

How to maximize reach and engagement with Gamers

What do you need to know to reach this valuable and influential audience?

Online video influences Gamers' purchases. Forty percent of YouTube Gamers who recently bought a media and entertainment, food and beverages, or consumer electronics product say they are influenced by videos they watched online.⁸

YouTube is Gamers' preferred platform. Of all the places to watch video content online, YouTube is their #1 destination to find the content that influences their purchasing decisions.⁹ (Curious what they're tuning into? Check out sample Google Preferred [video gaming content lineup](#).)

Gamers have high expectations for how brands engage them online.

They want content from brands that entertains them (83%), taps into their passions (75%), and gives them useful information about how to use their products/services (70%).¹⁰ These items were significantly more important to Gamers than to the average YouTube user.¹¹

Universal Pictures saw firsthand how powerful the gaming audience on YouTube is. The company worked with [PewDiePie](#), one of the leading YouTube gaming creators, to promote the horror film, *As Above, So Below*. Universal Pictures gamified PewDiePie's experience on the movie set, letting him work his way through the catacombs from the movie, unlocking challenges along the way. The filmmakers tapped into the interests of the gaming community, and gave it a unique way to engage in the film. As a result, the content reached more than 12M views, 900K likes and 70K comments across the [campaign videos](#).

Sure, Gamers are more likely to have high expectations for brands' content online, but their proclivity to share and influence others makes them an audience worth trying to attract. And tapping into the imaginative gamer mentality can be a way to reach them that builds credibility and makes an impact. Treating Gamers not just as consumers who might buy your products but as influencers who can help sell them has worked exceptionally well for companies that see this market as forward-thinking and trendsetting.

Sources

Google/Ipsos MediaCT, U.S. YouTube Gamers Study, September 2015, N=4,803 among respondents A18-54 who go online at least monthly.

1-4 Base: total respondents (N=4,803)

5-8 Base: Made a recent purchase in the category (media and entertainment N=1,443; consumer electronics N=1,042; packaged food and beverages N=2,264)

9 Base: Made a purchase in the category and online video influenced purchases (media and entertainment N=645; consumer electronics N=461; packaged food and beverages N=409)

10-11 Base: Visit YouTube at least monthly (N=4,009)