2020

Protect the Herd:
Virtual Esports Tournament

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Introduction and Overview

On August 31st Point Park University will begin their Fall 2021 semester with one new addition to our athletics department - an esports focused collegiate team. During these uncertain times due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, we understand the need for social distancing and finding sources of entertainment while keeping our fans and students safe. As such, we are planning to take advantage of the one detail that separates esports from all traditional sports - with a fully virtual "Protect the Herd" virtual launch party to showcase our new competing athletes and engage with our students and fans.

This project will see viewers from across the 4,000 students that are part of the Point Park Student Body (University Fact Sheet). In addition to the students we will be inviting, we will be streaming our launch party to Twitch and utilize our team Discord, university Twitter and our individual team member's social platforms to open the viewership to over ten thousand potential viewers. The two games we will be representing, League of Legends and Rocket League, are among two of the most popular games in the esports world - akin to the popularity of Hockey and Football among traditional sports viewers.

Epsorts is a fast growing source of entertainment - with a viewership that is a third female, and that is heavily dominated by the under 35 male demographic (Sponsorships Market in Competitive Esports: Up and Running). This high representation with the under 35 male demographic represents a large number of current and future employees who have the ability to influence purchasing choices of employers around the region in regards to their choice for healthcare providers. By sponsoring this event, you will tie the UPMC brand to an exciting new form of entertainment, and build trust with this otherwise hard to reach influential demographic. Without having to spend on the level to compete with national brands like Geico and Tinder, you'll be achieve top billing locally in the markets that most impact your bottom line.

Goals

Our hope in reaching out to you as a sponsor is to create a genuine partnership that will allow UPMC a foothold into the emerging world of esports both within our city and on a national platform. By tying our vision to the "Protect The Herd" concept, we believe this partnership will also support your current goals of keeping your healthcare facilities supported with low infection rates across the region. We want to give all of Pittsburgh a sport they can watch from the safety of their homes, away from the crowds that could pose risks to their health and to your employees.

With your help we hope to run an event with at least five thousand viewers that reaches households across the western Pennsylvania region and into Ohio. This will both encourage viewers to continue to tune into Point Park esports, but will also allow your title sponsorship to reach into households in a time when most forms of entertainment are stifled.

As part of an ongoing partnership we will be able to promote your brand throughout our 2020-2021 esports season, allowing your brand to see continued exposure through May 2021.

Marketing Strategy

We will advertise our launch party on the University Twitter, in university emails to alumni and students, and through the social media outlets of our esports athletes. In addition, if we are able to secure your support, we hope to utilize targeted Twitter and Facebook ads to promote both the launch party as well as our ongoing partnership with UPMC. Marketing will begin in mid July and ramp up through August until our early September launch party. Following the launch party we will continue to retarget attendees and those who interacted with our advertisements and platforms with ads to continue our "Protect the Herd" mentality.

Timeline - Key Dates

June 15	June 16-July 1	July 15-Sept 4	Sept 5th	Sep5-Oct 10
All sponsorships finalized	Ad proofs finalized and campaigns created	Facebook, Twitter, Twitch, University Email and addl. Adwork run to promote event and PPU esport athletics.	"Protect the Herd" Virtual launch party runs 11am-4pm	Retargeting campaigns run on all platforms.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

ITEM	COST ESTIMATE	NOTES
Facebook ad buy	$2000	
Twitter ad buy	$2000	
Team Uniform with Sponsor Branding produced and provided to all members	$1000	Polo shirts with UPMC logo on right and team logo on left. Branded stickers on player right headphone. Branded jackets/hoodies with UPMC logo featured prominently on back.
Protect The Herd event T-shirts featuring sponsorships to be sent to attendees who register	$4000	Includes shipping. UPMC will be privy to all data collected from registrants to use in internal retargeting campaigns.
Banners and other visuals to use during tournament play	$1000	These will be used to prominently display logo behind players as they compete. If we are unable to meet in person to host the tournament these will be provided to athletes to provide backdrops in their shelter in place locations.
Ad campaign development and execution	$5000	To be provided by a local advertising agency to ensure highest recapture rate and strong visual connection between our event and all sponsors.
Total Estimated Budget	$ 15,000	

Conclusion

We hope that UPMC can see the value of investing in a form of entertainment that keeps our region excited about sports as well as safely socially distanced during these trying times. If you have any questions regarding this sponsorship, please do not hesitate to reach out to our department.

References

Commitment to the Community. n.d. 20 Apr 2020. <https://www.upmc.com/about/community-commitment>.

Sponsorships Market in Competitive Esports: Up and Running. n.d. 20 Apr 2020. <https://medium.com/dreamteam-gg/sponsorships-market-in-competitive-esports-up-and-running-32878447073f>.

University Fact Sheet. n.d. 20 Apr 2020. <https://www.pointpark.edu/about/admindepts/marketingandcommunications/MediaKit/factsheets/UniversityFactSheet>.