

COMPANY AUDIT:

March 3

RIOT GAMES

By Samah Mohamed and Ayushman Pisupati

Riot Games

Business Overview

Riot Games is an American video game development studio that released games like League of Legends and Valorant. The company was founded in 2006 by Brandon Beck and Marc Merill in Los Angeles, Calif.



Riot released its first game, League of Legends in 2009 as a free-to-play game on PC and Mac. Riot has steadily gained a solid player base since then and went on to release multiple online games afterwards, with Valorant being the latest and also one of its most popular ones. Riot averages over 180 million players on a monthly basis across all its titles.



The company's customer base mainly consists of members from the gaming and esports community. All games by Riot are free to play and sell in-game currency and online collectibles as a source of revenue. Riot also sells merchandise like clothing, accessories, figurines, artworks and more. The developer also partners with streamers, YouTubers and brands to boost their presence in the gaming market. They also host esports tournaments regularly where they invite streamers and esports players alike, to participate.

Riot Games has a hand across all sections of the PESO model. It uses paid advertising on various social media platforms to promote their games and events. The company receives earned media from its

active presence in the esports community. It has shared media on social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Its owned platforms include their website and forums where they provide information on the company, games and patches.

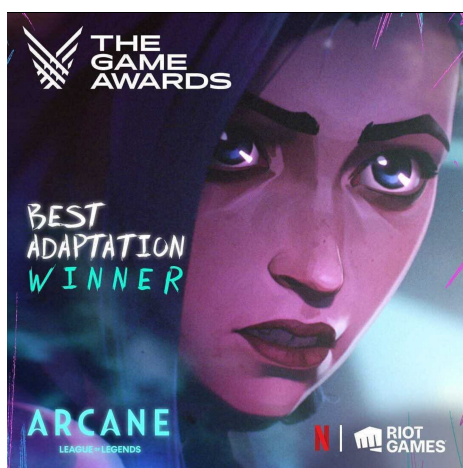
Content Review

Paid:

Riot Games uses a very unusual media strategy when it comes to the paid model. One of the ways Riot uses the paid strategy is by making music inspired by their games. It has a separate artist page on Spotify, where they collaborate with global music artists who help in producing songs tailored specifically to each game. Riot has separate artist pages for League of Legends and Valorant, for which they have the most number of songs.



Riot also produces music videos by creating their own animations and adding the music that they've collaborated to produce.



Riot games most recently partnered with Netflix to release a limited series based on League of Legends, called 'Arcane'. The show was met with global praise and was well-received by both the gaming community and film buffs. The show won the 'best adaptation' award at The Game Awards in 2022.

We believe that this is a very effective strategy to build exposure for their games. Riot is known for producing great music and the fans eagerly wait for new music to release. Their music

videos are also known for being beautifully animated and cinematic, adding to the experience. This makes players feel more connected to the characters as it adds an extra element of seeing them animated in a way that is different from the games, making them feel more life-like. Being a game development studio, Riot capitalizes on the fact that they are known for its animations and character design.

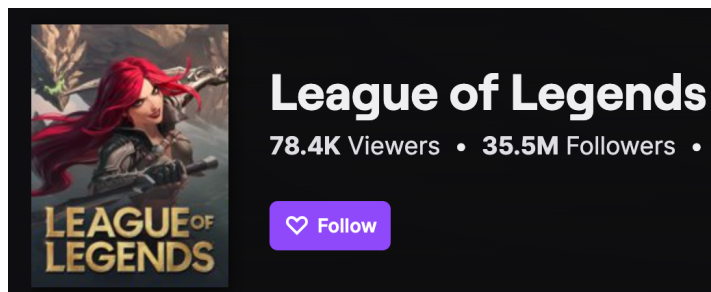
Earned:

Riot Games has steadily increased its presence online with the help of influencers and streamers. Streamers like Tenz, Tarik, Kyedae are some of the influencers that have helped bring the spotlight onto Valorant, which has seen a steady growth in its players since its launch.

Tenz, a popular Canadian streamer, who used to play 'CS:GO' professionally, has since switched to Valorant which helped bring in a lot of players from CS:GO to Valorant, since both games share similar game mechanics. Kyedae has collaborated with Valorant to create an outfit based on one of the characters from the game.



Riot Games also receives significant coverage from their esports tournaments. These events have been covered by esports publications and even major news outlets like The New York Times.



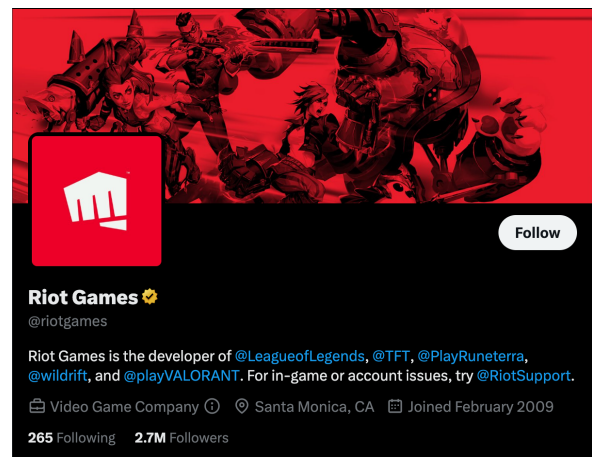
The earned media strategies that Riot Games uses are also extremely successful. The gaming community has been growing and ever-evolving. This also includes an audience

that likes to watch streamers and content creators play games. Streaming has become a new way for audiences to consume content and has gained a lot of traction in the recent past. People develop connections with their favourite streamers and this makes them more prone to try games that the streamers are playing.

Shared:

Riot Games has a significant social media presence with accounts on platforms like Twitter, Instagram and TikTok. They are most active on Twitter and Instagram with 2.7 million and 1.1 million followers respectively on each platform.

Riot talks about their upcoming events and what updates are coming to the game. They also post content shared by streamers and content creators playing their games. They promote fan art and cosplays on their Twitter as well. They post similar content on Instagram, but the content is more focused towards an audio/visual medium.

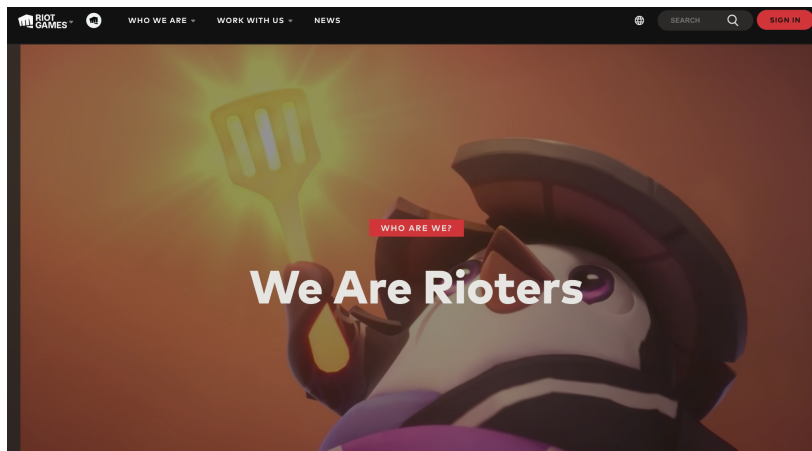


Riot Games also has separate communities on Reddit for each of their games where players and fans share everything from game moments to cosplays and fan art, bugs and known in-game issues to ranting about bad teammates. The developers of the games are also actively involved in these communities, taking in suggestions, answering questions and acting as a two-way medium between the company and the players.

The shared media strategies help Riot Games build a stronger community for its players and fans. Players benefit from being part of the community by building friendly relationships with other players and fans. This also helps people find gaming partners and also engage in conversation.

Owned:

Riot Games has multiple websites dedicated to their games and also their own communities. On each of these websites are separate sections that have information about the games, news and game leaderboards. They also have a separate section, which talks about each game's lore, characters, equipment, abilities and more.



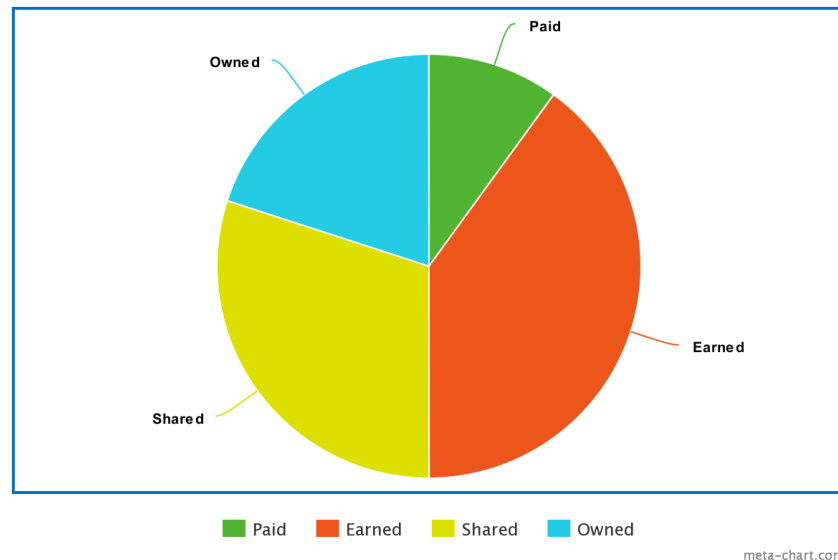
On their community websites, they share news about upcoming events, esports tournaments, fan art, cosplays, wallpapers and compilation videos. They also have sections where they post stories of their developers which helps put faces behind the people

making the games. They also have a tech blog where they talk about the behind-the-scenes process of making the games, the coding process behind fixing bugs and designing characters. These blog posts are made by individual developers and people working behind the scenes.

It is effective for Riot to have multiple websites as it helps players get a personalized experience and also connect with the company and the people that run it. Riot is also helping build a community and an inclusive experience for its employees which is necessary for them to feel a part of the community.

PESO Evaluation

Riot Games gains a significant amount of attention through its shared and earned media. These are also the most effective media for the company. Riot Games' strength lies in its community and it's the community that has helped boost Riot's presence across all its platforms.



Game companies have seldom taken the help of advertising to boost their player base. The same is the case with Riot Games. Games earn the attention of potential players through word of mouth and through influencer marketing. These are two very effective methods since the gaming community is tightly knit. A lot of games are played with friends and others are not. Gaming is an experience and hence, word of mouth is super effective. Players **will** tell their friends about good games and that brings in more people.

Streamers and professional players are also an effective way for gaming companies to bring in more players because people can watch someone play a game and be enticed to try it themselves.

The marketing strategy for game companies is to give the players an experience and these strategies do exactly that.

Riot Games lacks a little on the owned media aspect of marketing because there isn't any proper two-way communication between the developers and the players. There is no direct way that the players can discuss problems they're facing in terms of in-game toxicity (other players being rude or saying obscene things and hackers), bugs, significant issues affecting the game and general concerns. What we would do differently is to give Riot its own forum that connects players to people that can raise player concerns to the developers.

Conclusion

In order to create a cohesive and efficient marketing strategy, Riot Games employs a comprehensive PESO strategy that incorporates all four components – paid, earned, shared and owned media.

Their use of paid media through advertising campaigns, sponsorships, and partnerships helps to reach new audiences. Earned media, such as press coverage, social media mentions and influencers helps increase credibility and build trust with their audience. Shared media, through social media platforms and community engagement, helps create a sense of community and customer loyalty. Finally, owned media, including dedicated websites, mobile apps, and email newsletters, provides a personalized experience for their players, increasing customer satisfaction.

Resources

<https://www.riotgames.com/en>

<https://twitter.com/riotgames>

<https://www.instagram.com/riotgames/>

<https://www.facebook.com/RiotGames/>

<https://technology.riotgames.com/>

<https://digiday.com/marketing/trading-paid-media-for-social-first-inside-riot-games-and-we-are-socials-wild-rift-campaign/>