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### **E-SPORTS BROADCASTS AS A NEW FORMAT IN JOURNALISM**

Over the past five years, eSports traditionally considered to be just the greatest passion for video games, from a class for modest unification gamers in different parts of the world turned into almost a billion industry with a multi-million dollar community. Against this background, it is not surprising that media players and the media are interested in the fast-growing and popular niche. Materials about professional gaming began to appear even in non-profile editions, and broadcasts of eSport competitions were included on cable and satellite TV channels.

And therefore, it can be stated that eSports is one of the most actively developing areas of leisure in the world. At the moment, eSports, like traditional sports disciplines (football, hockey, basketball, etc.), is a rapidly expanding business, which invests a large amount of money and involves many people of different professions, including journalists.

This article analyzes the phenomenon of eSports broadcasting and its specificity: genre affiliation, characteristic features, features of appearance and commenting. Also, eSports broadcast is regarded as a journalistic product. In addition, there was described as the emergence of eSport and eSports journalism.

The scientific significance of this article lies in the fact that the study of eSport journalism is also determined by the fact that, at this moment, this area in the scientific community is practically not represented by any research, either domestic or foreign. Very superficially and uncertainly, scholars just beginning to talk about the phenomenon of "eSports", but practically nothing can be found about journalistic activities in this area.

The practical significance of the work is to show the genre affiliation of eSports broadcasts to journalism, to give an idea of this trend and to determine similarity with other directions.

The main purpose of the study is to determine the place of eSports broadcasting in the system of journalistic genres, to demonstrate the media relevance and commercial potential of this type of product.

**Key words:** eSport, eSport broadcasts, eSport journalism, video games, gamers.

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### **Киберспорттық трансляциялар журналистиканың жаңа форматы ретінде**

Соңғы бес жыл ішінде киберспорт ұғымы жай ғана компьютер ойындарын ойнау үшін жиналған адамдардың әуенінен, миллиардтаған қаржы табуға болатын, миллиондаған ойыншылардан тұратын өнеркәсіпке айналып үлгерді деп айтсақ қателеспейміз. Осы тұрғыда, БАҚ пен ірі медиа магнаттардың осы бағытқа бет бұруы таңқаларлық дүние емес. Бүгінгі күні кәсіби ойындар туралы материалдар көптеген басылымдарда жарияланып тұрады, ал киберспорттық трансляциялар болса кабельді және жерсерікті телеарналарда көрсетіледі.

Киберспорт қазіргі таңда белсенді түрде дамып келе жатқан бизнес көзінің біріне айналды. Сондықтан да, бұл салаға әр түрлі мамандардың (соның ішінде журналистердің) ығысуы қалыпты тренд.

Ғылыми мақалада киберспорттық трансляция феноменіне және оған тән жанрлық ерекшеліктерге сараптама жасалды, киберспорттық трансляциялар журналистік өнім ретінде қарастырылды. Сонымен қатар, мақалада киберспорт пен киберспорттық журналистиканың пайда болуы зерттелді.

Мақаланың ғылыми маңыздылығы қазіргі таңда киберспорттық журналистиканың әлі де болса отандық және шетелдік ғалымдармен дұрыстап зерттелмеуінен айқындалады. Киберспорт туралы енді ғана сөз қозғала бастағанымен, оның журналистік қырына ешкім назар аударар емес.

Мақаланың тәжірибелік маңызы – киберспорттық трансляциялардың журналистиканың жаңа жанры, жаңа форматы ретінде көрсету және айқындау, оның журналистиканың басқа да бағыттарымен ұқсастығын саралау.

Зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты – киберспорттық трансляциялардың журналистика жанрлар жүйесіндегі орнын анықтау, оның журналистиканың жаңа түрі ретіндегі өзектілігі мен коммерциялық әлеуетін көрсету.

**Түйін сөздер:** киберспорт, киберспорттық трансляциялар, киберспорттық журналистика, видео ойындар, ойыншылар.

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### Киберспортивные трансляции как новый формат в журналистике

За последние пять лет киберспорт, традиционно считавшийся просто увлечением видеоиграми для скромных игроков, объединившихся в разных частях мира, превратился в миллиардную индустрию с многомиллионным сообществом. На этом фоне неудивительно, что медиумагнаты и СМИ заинтересованы в быстро растущей и популярной нише. Материалы о профессиональных играх стали появляться даже в непрофильных изданиях, а трансляции соревнований по киберспорту были включены на кабельных и спутниковых телеканалах.

И поэтому можно смело заявлять, что киберспорт является одним из наиболее активно развивающимся направлением досуга в мире. В настоящее время киберспорт, как и традиционные спортивные дисциплины (футбол, хоккей, баскетбол и т.д.), является быстро прогрессирующим бизнесом, который вкладывает большие средства и привлекает множество людей разных профессий, включая и журналистов.

Основная цель исследования – определить место киберспортивных трансляций в системе журналистских жанров, продемонстрировать актуальность и коммерческий потенциал «нового» вида журналистики.

В данной статье анализируется феномен киберспортивных трансляций и их специфика, а именно: жанровая принадлежность, характерные черты, особенности появления и комментирования. Также, киберспортивные трансляции рассматриваются как журналистский продукт. Вдобавок, в статье описаны появление киберспорта и киберспортивная журналистика.

Научная значимость данной статьи заключается в том, что изучение киберспортивной журналистики в данный момент практически не представлено какими-либо исследованиями, как отечественными, так и зарубежными в научном сообществе. Очень поверхностно и неуверенно только начинают говорить о феномене «киберспорта», но практически ничего нельзя найти о журналистской деятельности в этой области.

Практическая значимость работы – показать жанровую принадлежность киберспортивных трансляций к журналистике, охарактеризовать как новый формат и определить сходство с другими направлениями.

**Ключевые слова:** киберспорт, киберспортивные трансляции, киберспортивная журналистика, видеоигры, игроки.

### Introduction

The video game industry has a rich history, originating almost from the appearance of the very first computing systems and personal computers. Even outdated technologies of the last century allowed several players to interact with each other in the game, being together at the same computer or console. With the development of Internet technology and the emergence of high-speed networks, video games have stepped beyond the threshold of individual entertainment and created a whole layer of

genres, oriented to the interaction of many players online, in real time.

Even in the very first online video games, gamers were already given the opportunity to play against their own kind. Such a system later received the generic term “PVR” or “player versus player”. In some games, RVR was only one of many possibilities and components, in some it formed the basis of the whole game process. It is from the second type of games that a new type of electronic hobbies, called “eSports”, was finally formed (Yaskevich, 2017).

Over time, the audience of electronic entertainment in general, and e-sports events in particular, has grown exponentially. All signs of “high sport” were formed: from the whole mass of “simple players” who perceive a certain game more as entertainment, a group of “professionals” was formed, which mastered the mechanics of this game perfectly. The appearance of tournaments or other events in this game has generated cyber sports teams, with their participants, coaches, and even sponsors. The audience of “ordinary players”, in turn, formed the spectators and fans who follow cyber-sports events. Thus, in the gaming industry there are two very important things. Firstly, this is a media event – some kind of e-sports event, and secondly, an audience that represents both spectators and fans, as well as interested people like sponsors and organizers. Where these two elements exist, one cannot do without the third. People who will cover these events, comment on the gameplay, experts who will provide analytics, correspondents who will provide material on the game and players to the audience, in a word – journalists.

In the gaming industry, the field of journalism has been formed for a very long time, in all its forms, from printed materials to television programs and Internet portals. Game journalism is closely following the announcements and the development of new games, gives its assessment of the product to the reader or viewer, reports on some updates in the field of electronic products. However, the traditional game journalism, oddly enough, practically does not cover eSports events.

Therefore, we come to the main topic of our research – eSports broadcasts. It is necessary to figure out whether they can be called a journalistic product, and their performers – journalists. However, the scope of eSports is incredibly complex and multifaceted. In different countries, eSports is at different stages of development, and the material itself can vary greatly depending on the genre of e-sports discipline.

### Material and methods

The study is aimed at the method of qualitative observation in order to study perspectives of development and becoming as genre of journalism of eSport broadcasting.

During the study, the following methods were used: problem-thematic analysis of the platforms that formed the empirical basis of the study, to determine the topics covered; functional analysis of identified broadcasting; a content analysis of media platforms as Youtube and Twitch, which allowed identifying the problem math of gaming journalism;

comparative analysis of print and online publications, allowing to determine the development trends of gaming journalism.

These characteristics made it possible to determine the effectiveness of the e-sport journalism, their thematic focus, which helped to reveal the peculiarities of the problem and the functional diversity of the game of journalism in modern media space.

### Literature review

The degree of knowledge to determine quite problematic, because of its completely new subspecies of traditional sports journalism. The basis of the work was taken by foreign authors. K. Jonasson and J. Thiborg in their works identified this sport as progressively developing and showed the influence of e-sport on the future of video games (Jonasson, Thiborg, 2010). Also, M. Wagner described the scientific relevance of eSports (Wagner, 2006). K. Guillen and D. Tennat identified the main problems of development in this area (Gillen, 2005, Tennant, 2009), as well as D. Amrich and B.J. Harris has been studying modern trends in gaming journalism (Amrich, 2012, Harris, 2014).

Among Russian authors, V. Vikulov highlighted the following characteristics of eSport journalism: multi-media media history, extensive use of information technology techniques (meaningful, structural-compositional, speech, paralinguistic), the use of convergent journalism formats (Data-journalism, LongRead, Crowdsourcing, Stream, Sensor journalism), video content takes up most of eSports journalism, eSports materials are integrated with multi-media elements to increase contact with the audience and enhance visual series, the rapid growth of the audience and commercial potential (Vikulov, 2017). K. Govorun paid special attention to the concept of the game press (Govorun, 2013); V. Tarmaeva considered the relationship between computer games and game journalism (Tarmaeva, 2015); K. Oreshkin studied the differences between Western and Russian game journalism (Oreshkin, 2010), N. Arsenyev, I. Varnavsky, E. Zakirov focused on the modern state of game journalism (Arsenyev, 2012, Varnavskiy, 2006, Zakiro, 2012).

### The phenomenon of eSports in journalism

In Western scientific literature, the concept of eSports is accepted. to designate the term “eSports” (electronic sport). For the first time like the term was used in 1999 in a press release based on the Online Gamers Association, as a comparison with traditional sports (Wagner, 2006).

There are a lot of term concepts of “eSports” on the Internet. In particular, one of them is: eSports is game competitions (mental and physical) using

computer technology where computer simulates virtual space within which competition occurs. In another Variant it can be argued that eSports is a sport where people play computer games professionally, but there are eSports organizations that are not limited to teams. For example, Natus Vincere is a symbiosis of a football club and marketing agency. ESport has all the same elements as professional sports (Karpenko, 2015).

Today, eSports is officially recognized in many countries (China, South Korea, Mongolia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Maldives, Iran, Egypt, Arab Emirates, South Africa, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Russia, USA), including in Kazakhstan since 2018. Competitions which are held in the framework of various professional e-sports leagues, which attract more and more attention.

ESport is one of the fastest growing species of modern sport. The number of fans around the world is not inferior to the number of lovers of the most popular types of traditional sports competitions. An example would be the “phenomenon” in 2014 when the broadcast of the finals of the World e-sports championship of the discipline of League of Legends (LoL) was viewed by 32 million people, which exceeded the number of spectators for the 2014 Stanley Cup finals. Whereas the audience of the NBA finals that same year was only 26.3 million people, and the World Series of the Main Baseball League (MLB) – 14.9 million people (Risco, 2014)

It is said that eSports has become massive movement uniting millions of people regardless of their nationality, age and citizenship, and it is clear that every year its ranks will only multiply as the park grows personal computers. One way or another, now measures are being taken to include computer sports in the program Olympic Games. The only problem is that the power modern gaming computers are

constantly increasing, and computer games after this change, new hits appear on the game a market that is gradually crowding out old games (Evgan, 2016).

A great place in the process of eSports is eSports sponsored events leading global brands, such as: Coca-Cola, Red Bull, American Express, Intel and Samsung. Due to this, the so-called competitive gaming, e-sport has turned into a real business, so recognized that participants are eligible to apply for a US P-1 visa, This type of visa for a long time was issued only by professional athletes and artists (Campbell, 2013).

The main factors contributing to the growth of eSports are the popularity of new platforms for watching computer games, a new business model. However, the most important features relate to creating and the growth of new platforms, primarily online broadcast platforms, like Twitch.tv where viewers can watch professional competition players live almost daily. It can be like small battles, as well as full-fledged competitions full command composition. New platforms destroy the framework that previously limited the experience of gaming, not allowing to follow the games of other players. They attracted more people to the eSports community at the same time allowed two-way interaction in their space. For example, online streaming platforms like Twitch.tv, which Amazon.com bought last year for 970 million dollars (Macmillan, 2014) always stimulated, as professional players as well as the audience, coming together and interact to improve the service. Professional players can make money from advertising revenue, paid subscription to broadcast as well as fan donations.

Thereby, making money from playing computer games has become an achievable goal. For on-line viewers, e-sports is made available. No fans one must even be especially advanced in one game or another. They can just watch the computer broadcast, just like a sports competition, and enjoy it.



According to SuperData Research Esports grows to a \$1.6B industry this year and shows no signs of slowing down. Global esports revenue will grow 26% by 2020 as it attracts a more mainstream audience. This increase will be fueled by a viewership projected to grow 12% each year and a swelling number of third-party investments (Superdata Research, 2017).

Thus, computer sports in the 21st century evolved from “Marginal” classes in real sports. Having received an independent branch in the industry of sports entertainment. ESport events attract millions of fans and are broadcast, almost by federal channels. In the “virtual world” there are heroes: star players, commentators, legends. These trends have become prerequisites for the emergence of eSport journalism.

ESport journalism is professional socially significant activities of people in the collection, processing and presentation of actual eSports information through various channels of mass communication (print, radio, TV, Internet), using an established system of genres. Like sports journalism, data journalism, sensory journalism and other kinds of concepts, this is primarily journalism, which has its distinctive features and certain characteristics of media content (Bychkova, 2013).

Firstly, eSport journalism belongs to recreational journalism, since the topic “ESport” itself, having a game start, is entertaining (Bychkova, 2013).

Secondly, eSport journalism continues the vector of convergent journalism formats (Kachkaeva, 2010) and at the same time is a fundamentally new phenomenon, as it appeared in the process of merging several factors: convergence in the sphere of technology (networks, terminals); market and services; convergence in collection, production and presentation of information, convergence of genres and forms.

In other words, eSport journalism was born in the process of how information and computer technologies developed and merged, the gaming market was formed. We can say that it has become one of the branches of the evolution of journalism, a phenomenon that has absorbed all the trends of the Internet environment and journalistic activities. In fact, the first mention of e-sports in the media was still December 7, 1972 – an article by journalist Stewart Brand in Rolling Stone magazine about the first SPACEWAR tournament, which was attended by 25 people (Vikulov, 2017).

In 1981, Arnie Katz and Bill Kunkel founded the world’s first video journal dedicated to video games, which marked the beginning of game (eSport)

journalism. In 1983, the TV show “That’s Incredible!” ABC/3 three professional arcade players fought for the title of national video game champion (Vikulov, 2017). Starting from the 2000s, in many countries, twenty-four-hour e-sports-oriented channels began to open: in South Korea – OnGameNet (OGN) and MBC Game (Borowy, 2012); in Germany – GIGA Television, in Britain – satellite channel XLeague.tv and many others.

The rise in popularity of e-sports and multiplayer gaming has increased the number of Internet portals that specialize in streaming gaming videos. Now, besides Twitch.TV, whose monthly audience for 2015 the year amounted to 100 million unique viewers, 1.5 million of which were themselves stream measures (Borowy, 2012), new portals appear – Yahoo eSports, YouTube Gaming, VyRT. The interest in the eSports of such major players in the media market, like ESPN, Eurosport, TV 2, 2 + 2, Match TV and many others speak about its commercial appeal.

The eSport arena on the media market is competitive. Interest from major brands and sponsors that contribute to the influx money to the industry (the market volume for 2016 is estimated at \$ 892 million) (SuperData Research, 2016) as well as the intensive growth of global and Russian audience contribute to the development eSports journalism.

The features of eSports broadcasting

One of the main success factors eSports events is increasing audience and growing market every year. Not surprisingly, the fast-growing niche became interested largest media. Outstanding Player Materials eSports scene, about the biggest gaming tournaments began to appear in non-core publications, and broadcast eSports competitions were not broadcast online only, but cable and satellite channels such as MatchTV (Russia), CNN, HLN, TBS, TNT (USA). (Shendiyapina, 2017).

It should be noted that the precursors of online broadcasts are live and streaming video. Live Broadcast is live reporting on the radio, television or online (Harcup, 2014). At the end of the twentieth century Internet widespread and accessible to ordinary users, and the media begin to rapidly master a new platform for distribution information.

Due to the Internet and the movement of direct transmissions to the network, there is such a thing as streaming video – the technology of buffering and compression data, allowing the broadcast of multimedia content over the Internet in real time. With using computer networks compressed data is easy delivered due to their small size.

Today, there are many Internet services allowing the user to create own video broadcasts, for example, Twitch.tv, Hitbox.tv, YouTube Gaming, GoodGame.ru and others. After them the emergence has become noticeable the predominance of streams gaming themes caused by the increasing popularity of video games and eSports the concept of “stream”, which is used when broadcast eSport disciplines directly related with the concept of “streaming video”. Stream means the sequence of video and audio, streamable by the user data (Hotshowlife.com).

To cover the events of the cyber sports world began in 2007, on the Garena forum. Such broadcasts were collected large, for those times, the audience, and with each month this number has increased due to the program WaaaghTV Client. This program was intended for watching the then popular game of Warcraft III. Games on WaaaghTV could be watched in real time (Proplay.ru).

Currently the leading platform for eSports broadcast is Twitch.tv. In the end 2016 Russian social network VKontakte launched own platform for broadcasting games. Also, there are platforms such as Hitbox.tv, YouTube Gaming, GoodGame.ru, Cybergame.tv, BIGO Live Connector.

Since 2009, eSport coverage events moved to a new level. On large tournaments appeared interviewers, commentators and reporters who in the future have become major actors of all events in the world of eSports.

Commenting on a cyber-match is the main way to cover any event. Overall, the process is similar to commenting on any sporting event. A couple of commentators talk about everything that happens on the screens. The main difference is that commentators communicate with their audience via online chat that any platform has for the stream. Commenting can take place as in official form and in the form of informal communication with chat and discuss what is happening in the game.

ESports commentators are indicated by the special term “shoutkaster”. There are two types of commentators. The first type is “play-by-play” (give a detailed report on everything that happens on the playing field) and “colorcaster” (from English color – color; provide analytical information) (Gresham, 2017).

The interview is a popular genre in the process of covering eSport events. More often the entire interview is taken from team captains, coaches and event organizers. Interviews can be worn as informative as well as entertaining – the interviewer may hold blitz surveys interviews with the captains of the teams who will fight in the final. The lead role

is also popular. The lead must represent the teams before they go on stage public interest, to carry out draws and to work in every way with the audience.

In addition, to commenting on the match, one of the most important features of eSports broadcasts are studio analytics. For the first time such a studio appeared in the 2012 year in the studio there are several people, most often leading and former professional players. At pre-match analytics includes a comparison of rivals, analysis of the game plan from each team, analysis of what can occur in the game and the forecast of the final result. Post-analytics includes debugging team errors. or individual player, discussion of key events match. Speech by commentators and analysts abounds terms and statistics. They also dialogical in view of the fact that at the table of analysts are 3-4 people. In addition to its main work studio analysts entertains online viewers in between matches this happens through communication with online chat or twitter, contests. Analysts answer questions, tell their personal stories eSport experience. Analytics Studio is interactive (Shendypina, 2017).

ESport as an official sport is inevitable pop computer games, the development of the Internet and modern the era of homo ludens (Volkova, 2014). ESports develops fast at a pace like no other sport in the world. For several years he has turned from a hobby a small number of players in professional sports, officially recognized by many countries of the world where players called cyber sportsmen. For tournament victories sporting categories are awarded and cups are awarded. ESport broadcasts are having an audience and the commercial potential of product journalism in their creation is attended by journalistic professional’s specialization, and the distribution channel is Internet and television.

Based on the dynamics of the media market, the annual increasing audience size and growing interest investors can argue that eSports and eSports broadcast is a trend in the economy and in sports journalism.

### Results and Discussion

The study proposed a working definition of the concept of eSport broadcasting, formulated on the basis of the analysis of eSport broadcasts, attracting the attention of a multi-million dollar audience. ESports broadcast is an video game competition through video over the Internet in real time from the scene of the event, accompanied by expert commentary.

After researching eSport broadcast there is no doubt that it is a journalistic product and cyberspace events are media occasion. Those responsible

for creating this product can rightfully be called by reporters. The basis for this conclusion was the undoubted similarity eSports broadcast with traditional sports journalism. In eSports broadcasts there is a media event that is necessary to highlight, there is a specialist – a journalist who will deal with this, as well as target audience. The study also showed novelty and the relevance of e-sports theme. This is a recent, but already the powerful development of the sphere continues to progress and gain popularity among the wider audience

### Conclusion

In connection with the development of the phenomenon called eSport, modern journalism

has been enriched by another trend with certain characteristics of media content. Despite the fact that this direction is still in its infancy, it becomes necessary to scientifically comprehend it. It is important to identify ways to study it. ESports on the media market is competitive. Interest from major brands and sponsors who contribute to the flow of money into the industry, as well as the intensive growth of global and Russian audience contribute to the development of eSport journalism.

There are new media and online resources dedicated to professional gaming. ESports broadcasts are embedded in the content sports channels and go to the cinema screens. ESport and its translations become a trend both in journalism and in the economy.

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