

Enriching the Experience: Content Analysis on the Twitter Usage of Professional Esports Athletes

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The thesis studied the Twitter usage of 50 professional esports athletes by means of a content analysis of the 19-21 tweets on the athletes' Twitter frontpages, 1014 tweets in total. The athletes' tweets were categorised into a primary category as well as a secondary and tertiary category, when applicable. The research questions were: 1. How do the most followed esports athletes employ Twitter in terms of the main properties in their tweets? 2. In addition to the main property, what additional features do the athletes' tweets contain? 3. What are the differences and similarities in the emphases of the athletes' tweets' main properties and additional features, when examined by game of the athlete?

The results showed that the category that the tweets were annotated most frequently into in the primary categorisation was INFORMATION SHARING, indicating that the athletes' tweets' main property was most often to share information on topics related to esports. The second most frequent primary category was ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, signalling that the athletes did at times post tweets with esports-related photos, videos or humorous language as the most prominent property in the tweet. The third most frequently occurring category was DIVERSION, demonstrating that the athletes did post tweets that were unlinked to their status as professional athletes. PROMOTIONAL category was the fourth most frequent. Thus, the athletes employed Twitter also in promoting for their own and their teams' financial gain by tweeting sponsored material. The two categories with the least tweets were INTERACTIVITY and FANSHIP, indicating that the athletes relatively rarely asked direct esports-related questions or commented on competing athletes and teams as the main property in their tweet.

The three most frequent categories in the secondary and tertiary categorisations were ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, PROMOTIONAL and INFORMATION SHARING. The result showed that that the athletes were prone to include photos, videos and humorous language as a feature in their tweets. The athletes relatively often used promotional aspects in the form of mentioning and tagging esports professionals, events as well as their own teammates in their tweets. Information was a common feature even when it was not the main property of the tweet or when the information was unrelated to esports.

There were statistically significant differences in the categorisation results, when compared in groups based on the game played professionally by the athlete (*Call of Duty*, *Fortnite*, *League of Legends*, *Counter-Strike* and *Dota 2* as the games in the study). The only category where there were no statistically significant differences across categorisations was PROMOTIONAL, in terms of which the tweets did not differ enough across games for the differences to be statistically significant.

Key words: Twitter, social media, celebrity, esports, games, content analysis, categories

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1. Introduction

Esports, very shortly described, refers to electronic gaming that is done in a competitive manner, with the possibility of viewing the competition (more precise definitions are provided in section 2.1.1.). Esports requires individuals that play separately or in teams versus other individuals; the individuals that triumph most in matches of high calibre have the opportunity of pursuing the field professionally.

The present study sets its focus on the said individuals, top professional esports athletes, and on the way that they use the social media platform Twitter. The context of why Twitter usage is an important constituent in an esports athlete's profession and how the usage influences societies at large need to be clarified at first.

For an esports professional athlete, succeeding in esports matches and tournaments is the undoubted key in prospering in one's career and thus gaining and maintaining a place in a team. Success in the arenas is nevertheless only a part of the required equation to have a long-lasting professional career: what is also needed are the side activities of, in some cases, streaming gaming content on platforms such as Twitch, but also tending to a fanbase in social media, by posting content that suits the fanbase's interests.

Social media activities such as collecting and maintaining a substantial social media follower number may be a crucial advantage for an esports professional athlete: with an extensive following, the athlete may attract more attention from media, strengthen their status as one of the leading athletes in their game as well as attract more notable sponsors. Attracting high-profile sponsors for the athlete and their team is likely to translate, for instance, to access to superior gaming equipment, training facilities as well as coaching services, and help bring financial stability and thereby the opportunity to continue for a longer duration even during a less fruitful period tournament-wise. A well-maintained public image may also aid the athlete in attracting interest from competing esports teams and hence influence the athlete's future career in a very practical, profound manner in the highly competitive industry that is esports.

Because of the fickle, unforgiving and fast-to-spread nature of social media, a misstep in one's social conduct or a badly maintained social media image for a longer duration works in the opposite direction (as discussed for instance in Colapinto and Benecchi 2014, *passim*) and may lead to losing one's team, sponsors and even mark the end of the individual's career. As the active career of an esports athlete tends to be

relatively short even in the best of cases, a fanbase that is well catered to is even more pivotal after retirement if, as many other retired esports athletes, pursuing a career as a full-time Twitch streamer of gaming content.

When shifting the focus from one individual athlete to the professional esports athletes' social media behaviour as a whole, the impact that they have on the general public becomes quite immense: they are very much at the helm of influencing the perception of esports of the general public, whether occasional viewers of the athletes' social media profiles, esports fans or aspiring players of the esports scene. Over the scope of 'just' esports, the esports athletes, as a kind of a celebrity, affect the millions of followers viewing the social media content, be it text, photo or video: the content influences the attitudes, behaviour and, for instance, consumption of promoted products of the followers; in cases of strong identification of oneself as a fan of the athlete, the impact becomes especially powerful. As seen here, how the esports athletes choose to use their spotlight is imperative on both a personal as well as on a societal level.

Among the most important social media platforms for esports athletes is Twitter. Teams may even require the esports athlete to possess a Twitter account, even if it is the sole social media profile of the athlete. The following that esports athletes have in Twitter alone is quite substantial: the fifty athletes that are considered in the present study have a combined following number of 26 million, of which more than two million followers is attributed to the most followed active esports athlete. The numbers, however, do not yet include the occasional viewers seeing the athletes' tweets without pressing the 'Follow' button, but give a ballpark idea of how high the actual numbers of everyone reached by the athletes' tweets can in reality be and contribute to the notion of how high therefore the impact of their chosen usage style of the social media platform is.

The study at hand seeks to investigate how esports athletes use Twitter in terms of the types of content that the athletes post on their Twitter account. The analysis incorporates the 19-21 latest tweets on the Twitter frontpages of the 50 professional esports athletes who present the five most Twitter followed esports games and furthermore are the most followed, currently active athletes in their game. Via content analysis and categories adapted from earlier Twitter studies, the present study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How do the most followed esports athletes employ Twitter in terms of the main properties in their tweets?
2. In addition to the main property, what additional features do the athletes' tweets contain?
3. What are the differences and similarities in the emphases of the athletes' tweets' main properties and additional features, when examined by game of the athlete?

The main properties of tweets are investigated by means of a categorisation of tweets into a primary category. The additional features are explored by a categorisation into secondary and tertiary categories, when applicable.

The reason for including a comparison by game in the study helps in investigating possible variance within the data, plausibly stemming in part from reasons to do with the athletes' game as an esports game with its distinct ecosystem, and with differences caused by factors such as the time period of data collection in relation to, for instance, noteworthy tournaments.

The discussion of the results incorporates a deeper look into the category that was found to be the most frequently occurring primary category across the five games, namely INFORMATION SHARING, by means of dissecting the category into types of tweets inside the category in order to better grasp the varying forms of the usage of the information-oriented tweets with the differences between games. To gain a point of comparison, the study contrasts its results with a previous content analysis on Twitter usage, on athletes of traditional sports (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell 2010) with contemplation on possible reasons for the found differences.

The study begins with a theoretical overview of the relevant subjects on esports and Twitter as well as presentation of the earlier mentioned Twitter study as chapter 2. The study proceeds with a thorough description of material and methods utilised in the study in chapter 3 and is followed by the results of the categorisations in chapter 4 as well as a discussion thereof in chapter 5. Lastly, a conclusion with the main findings is provided for the reader as chapter 6.

2. Esports and Twitter

The theoretical part of the present study, chapter 2, involves topics related to esports and Twitter, in a way that is partly intertwined and therefore assembled under a shared chapter

for both central topics. The first part, namely 2.1., will be devoted to esports and the second, 2.2., to Twitter.

2.1. Esports

The section on esports begins with an introduction into the topic in terms of defining esports, extent of impact and future prospects. The status of esports as a sport or not is briefly discussed as well, as it is a matter debated among scholars of the esports field and is a relevant subject matter also in the current study. An outline on the five esports games in the study is presented next in 2.1.2. The last part of the current section, 2.1.3., sheds light to the role that professional esports athletes ‘play’ as a type of celebrity in social media, such as Twitter, Twitch, Instagram and YouTube.

2.1.1. Esports: past, present and future

Esports, the official spelling of the word suggested by the Associated Press style guide since 2017 (Easton 2017; also referred to by the alternative spellings *e-sports* and *eSports*) is a portmanteau word combining *electronic* and *sports*. It is a concept that fuses together elements of gaming and of sports, and there is debate between academics on whether it is to be considered a sport or not. Wagner (2006, 439) defines ‘esports’ as “an area of sport activities in which people develop and train mental or physical abilities in the use of information and communication technologies”. The definition has been criticised by Hamari and Sjöblom (2017, 212) for being quite broad and unspecific in terms of how to interpret it as well as how to distinguish between the limit cases of esports and sports. Hamari and Sjöblom (2017, 23) suggest a definition from a different viewpoint, with the central usage of electronic features of esports as a manner of distinguishing esports as a concept of its own: they see esports as “a form of sports where the primary aspects of the sport are facilitated by electronic systems; the input of players and teams as well as the output of the eSports system are mediated by human-computer interfaces.” As seen here, both of the above definitions consider esports as a subordinate concept to ‘sports’.

Esports, as it is in its present-day form, is a highly institutionalised industry, with tournaments, leagues and championships organised at fixed time intervals dependent on the esports game in question and its particular ecosystem. Ecosystem in esports refers to factors such as the relevant actors in the esports game as well as league and tournament structures and business models (cf. Carrillo Vera and Aguado Terrón 2019, *passim*). For

more on institutionalisation in esports, cf. Abanazir 2019; for the history of esports, cf. Borowy and Jin 2013, Billings and Hou 2019 and Finch et al. 2020.

Regardless of the specific parameters of the esports ecosystem, certain elements are always present and the terms representing them have particular meanings when used inside esports contexts: such essential concepts include *team*, as well as *player*, when used of a professional athlete rather than someone who simply plays for leisure (the present study chooses to use *athlete* to make the division more overt). In the case of *team* in esports, the word may refer to either a large organisation typically hosting line-ups in several game titles, or alternatively a roster of a particular game, similarly referred to as *team*. In both cases, the name of the *team* is the same, for example *Ninjas in Pyjamas*, *Team Liquid* or *FaZe Clan* among hundreds, even thousands of other teams. Concepts such as *league* and *tournament* may have slightly varying perimeters depending on the esports game; the differences will be under consideration when discussing the five games in the study in 2.1.3.

The numbers of esports estimations and future prospects surrounding esports have remained in a state of growth for several years and are predicted to stay so: the estimated number of the global esports viewer audience, consisting of occasional viewers as well as “esports enthusiasts” was 495 million for 2020 and an estimated 646 million for 2023 (Newzoo 2020). A vast number of games are already played as esports, even if many with a lower exposure and participant number, whilst new games join in as competitively played esports games and new game organisations arrange competitive events. Many of the games with a longer esports history have already reached a status where the esports elements are rather institutionalised with regularly arranged, prestigious, fixed tournaments as in *Counter-Strike* and annual championships as in *Dota 2* or alternatively leagues as in the case of *League of Legends* and *Call of Duty*, while others are yet in the process of taking form, notably *Valorant*, a game published in 2020, with its first notable esports tournament announced in the autumn on 2020 (Rozelle 2020).

Esports is very much a ‘spectator sport’, a concept described by Gusfield (2000, 1) about traditional sports such as football, basketball, tennis and baseball as “professionalized, athletic event performed before mass audiences in modern stadiums or observed on radio or television and reported in the press” (the same connection between spectator sports and esports also noted in Shaw et al. 2019, 75). In the case of esports, the emphasis is on the *spectator* element, regardless of whether considering esports a ‘sport’ or not. As Shaw et al. (2019, 75) note, esports not only is viewable on television and

internet in the form of tournaments and matches, but also in the more private sense of esports athletes being able to stream their own personal gameplay to viewers quite effortlessly both for the athlete and the viewer:

“[c]ombined with a microphone and a webcam, spectators can see the face of the gamer, providing unparalleled access for fans (as well as critics, opponents) to their favourite esports players. Some streams, such as twitch.tv, even enable chat rooms so that the players can respond to spectators”.

The usage of the spectator element in such a private, close manner can contribute to a feeling of intimacy, a parasocial relationship and an increased identification as a fan of the athlete. Similar effects can be reached also in the case of Twitter, as, there also, the viewer can see texts, photos and videos posted by the athlete (often also video clips of the athlete’s Twitch stream) and respond by commenting – the difference being the asynchronic nature of the content production, while on Twitch, for instance, the content can be spectated either live or as a recorded stream.

Due to the relative newness and rapid growth of esports, numerous aspects related to it are, for now, understudied (as noted for instance in Hamari and Sjöblom 2017, 213-214). Esports studies related to language and discourse have been comparably rare, but there have nevertheless been studies analysing esports media discourses (Boguslavskaya, Sharakhina and Tomaščíková 2020) and on esports player team discourse via on-screen conversations during matches (Ståhl and Rusk 2020). The lack of esports-related studies may improve in the future, as a global, interdisciplinary Esports Research Network (ERN) was established in July 2020 to cater to the need for more academic research on esports (Jylhä 2020). The gathering of a research network especially devoted to fostering esports topics will hopefully help in providing answers to esports-related knowledge gaps, as the present study, for its part, attempts to do.

The question whether esports is a sport or not is relevant to briefly in the present study, as the results of the current study are later compared with those of a study on Twitter usage of athletes of traditional sports (Hambrick et al. 2010, *passim*; discussed in 2.2.3. and compared to the present study’s results in 5.4.).

One of the key differences between traditional sports and esports is the relationship between the fan and the professional athlete, as explained by Finch et al.: “Unlike traditional sports, the casual fans and professional players in eSports compete uniquely on the same platform. In eSports, an individual can be both a fan and a participant. This scenario creates a unique social bond between casual gamers and

professionals.”(Finch et al. 2020, x). The description showcases the possibility for a very active role by the esports fan, to the extent of potentially becoming a rival or a teammate of the athlete in the future.

A milestone in esports as potentially being considered as a sport was reached in 2017, with the International Olympic Committee stating that “Competitive "eSports" could be considered as a sporting activity, and the players involved prepare and train with an intensity which may be comparable to athletes in traditional sports” (IOC 2017). Nevertheless, roadblocks remain in the way of esports becoming, for instance, an Olympic sport, due to factors such as violence in popular esports game titles and physical inactivity of the athletes. Finch et al. (2020, xi) give a further reason for problematic stances on esports: “The eSports business model differs from traditional sports, as games are the exclusive property of publishers. This has led to a lack of an independent and recognized global eSports governing body to manage compliance, rules and regulations. This can be a barrier for the recognition of eSports by traditional sport governing bodies”. As a radical change into the business models and ownerships of esports games and organisations is an unlikely development, the inclusion of esports as an actual Olympic game is improbable for the near future.

As a further distinction from traditional sport, esports is by its nature an umbrella term containing many different genres of games with distinct features in their position as esports games rather than a single sport. Various esports game types will be discussed next, via explaining the esports games in the present study.

2.1.2. Esports games in the present study

If a game contains a competitive element and the gameplay can be viewed by others, it can conceivably be played as an esports game. Nevertheless, certain game genres are more prone to become esports games and already have a long history as being ones: such are, for instance, first-person shooter (FPS), multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA), sports games, real-time strategy (RTS), fighting games and card games. Between different games as esports, there can be differences in factors such as if the game is played midst solo competitors or between teams of several athletes, if the game has a league or rather is played in tournaments and if the game has annual championships. As the present study contains athletes of the five most Twitter-followed games, the games in question, namely *Call of Duty*, *Fortnite*, *League of Legends*, *Counter-Strike* and *Dota 2* will formulate the focus of this section.

Before moving on to a closer look at each game, a combined table, Table 1, is presented to ease the introduction and comparison of the games in the study.

Table 1. Games in the present study

Game (full name of version used in esports in 2020)	<i>Call of Duty: Modern Warfare</i>	<i>Fortnite</i>	<i>League of Legends</i>	<i>Counter-Strike: Global Offensive</i>	<i>Dota 2</i>
Game type	first-person shooter (FPS)	third-person shooter (TPS)	multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA)	first-person shooter (FPS)	multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA)
Team size	5 vs 5 players	solo, duo or squad vs 1-100 players	5 vs 5 players	5 vs 5 players	5 vs 5 players
Launch year (game/esports game)	2003 / 2010	2017 / 2018	2009 / 2011	1999 / 2001	2013 / 2011
Main basis as an esports game (league- or tournament-based system)	league	tournament	league and tournament	tournament	tournament

The first game discussed individually, *Call of Duty*, is one of the two first-person shooter (FPS) games in the study as is played in teams of five. The first version of the game was released in 2003, but a new version release follows annually. It has been played as an esports game since 2010 and in early 2020, the version that was used in esports circumstances was the 2019 version *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare*.

The main esports competition for *Call of Duty* in 2020 was the Call of Duty League (CDL) that was launched in its present form in January 2020, only two months before the data collection of the present study on 2 March 2020, by Activision Blizzard. The current league system is a franchise-based professional league, with twelve teams as permanent members. The teams represent ten different cities in North America and two in Europe (London and Paris) with tournament weekends in the host cities throughout the season. All of the athletes in the study were members of the said city-based teams and, furthermore, all of the ten athletes represented teams based in the USA. The ten athletes have a history of previous success in *Call of Duty* tournaments and championships (cf. Esports Earnings 2020 and Lopez 2020) and have hence gained a place on a league team. The athlete age limit of the Call of Duty League is 18 years (Activision 2019), affecting the age structure available for athletes in the game.

Fortnite is a third-person shooter game and additionally a Battle Royale game, where the simultaneous player count inside one game can be up to one hundred concurrent players fighting to be the last one (or last ones, in team modes) left alive. It differs from the other four games in terms of the length of its history both as a game and as an esports game: as visible in Table 1, *Fortnite* is the youngest game with game launch in 2017 and beginning of its esports history in the following year of 2018. It is exceptionally popular among young players, which shows in choices such as setting the age limit for game tournament eligibility at 13 years for major tournaments such as Fortnite World Cup and DreamHack (The Fortnite Team 2019 and DreamHack 2020) in comparison to the 18 years requirement in *Call of Duty*. In terms of playing the game leisurely, the official PEGI age limit of the game is 12 years (PEGI 2018), but the actual ages of the youngest players are plausibly much less. Carter et al. (2020, 454) note on “*Fortnite’s* unusual popularity with children aged 8-12” and Gil et al. (2019, 2), based on a questionnaire on the game, “conclude that, in a high percentage, there are players who play this game below the recommended age”.

Due to the newness of the *Fortnite* as an esports game, the competition traditions are yet as not much established as in the games with a longer esports history; for instance, a championship of the game, known as Fortnite World Cup, has as of yet been organised only once, in 2019. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, a 2020 World Cup did not take place. The structure of the World Cup, as with *Fortnite* tournaments in general, is composed of open qualifiers leading to finals; one may enter a ‘solo’ competition individually and/or ‘duo’ competition for player pairs competing together (*Fortnite* competitions may also contain competitions for ‘squads’ of players for larger player groups, but the World Cup 2019 did not include such a competition category).

While the *Fortnite* athletes in the study do have a team that they have a contract with, they are not part of a roster for their esports game in a similar sense than the athletes of the other games in the study but rather play single-handedly or with temporary pairs. Furthermore, whilst the athletes in the other esports games have some sense of certainty due to the acquired status that they have (in league-based games even a base salary in their contract and in tournament games a privileged access to professional leagues with their team), a *Fortnite* athlete must fight their way similarly as any other open qualifier partaker to victory and so to begin ‘from scratch’ in each tournament.

League of Legends is one of the two multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) games in the study, and as four of the five games in the study, is played in teams

of five versus another team of five, one opposing team per match. The team is played in prominent leagues as well as tournaments, with the annual World Championship each autumn as the most prestigious tournament. The league system comprises of multiple separate leagues (with ten teams competing per league) based on regions, with North America, Europe, South Korea and China as the most prominent league regions. Unlike in *Call of Duty*'s league system, *League of Legends* leagues are not franchise-based, but employ a 'promotion and relegation' system, in which teams have to succeed in the league in order to stay on and access to the leagues is based on high performance by the team (unlike in the Call of Duty League, where the teams have paid a fee for a permanent place in the league). George and Sherrick (2019, 54) explain the merits and shortcomings of a promotion and relegation league in that they "can bring a fair model for up-and-coming teams and a fresh look for fans each year but brings in less money from owners and investors because of the lack of security". That is to say that the athletes on a *League of Legends* team have less security and less, if any, guaranteed salary than athletes in a franchise-based league like in *Call of Duty*.

Counter-Strike has an exceptionally long history both as a game series and as an esports game, as visible in Table 1: it has been played as an esports game since 2001. Like *Call of Duty*, *Counter-Strike* is a first-person shooter (FPS) game. The version of the game played as an esports game in 2020 was *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive*, a game version originally published in 2012 and therefore already with a relatively long tradition as an esports game version, which is noticeable also in that the esports game is often referred simply by 'CS:GO' in esports contexts.

Counter-Strike is played in tournaments of different 'tiers', with S-Tier tournaments as the most important ones for top professional teams. Of the S-Tier tournaments, the Major Championships (shortened as 'Majors'), held biannually, are the defining, high-prestige championships. The Major qualification ranking system changed in April 2020, but the previous system still in operation in March 2020 allowed a mixture of previous top-scoring teams ('Legends'), lower-scoring top teams ('Returning Challengers') and new teams with high performance in qualifier tournaments ('New Challengers') to battle for the championship; 24 teams in all. Instead of allowing teams as such, the *Counter-Strike* rules focus on the performance of the individuals on the team per se: the rules dictate that the majority of the roster (3 of the 5 players) must be the same players as in the previous tournaments to be eligible for a spot at the Majors (cf. Starladder

Berlin 2019 Rulebook, 11), strengthening the team contract negotiation capacities of the esports athletes of *Counter-Strike*.

Dota 2, which has its base in a 2003 game called *Defence of the Ancients* (DotA; no longer an acronym in the case of *Dota 2*) and is the second multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game in the study. Many of the surface-level features of *Dota 2* and *League of Legends* are, in fact, quite similar, such as the principal ideas that the five players in a team must choose their roles and playable characters before the match begins and that the purpose of the game is to destroy the opposing team's home base, viewed on a map aerially, and thus win the match. In terms of game age, *Dota 2* is slightly younger than *League of Legends*, which was launched in 2009: *Dota 2* was first presented in a promotional competitive event during a gaming fair in 2011 (thus beginning its esports history), two years prior to the actual release of the game in 2013. The game is owned by Valve, which is the same game studio as in the quite different game *Counter-Strike*.

As an esports game, *Dota 2* and *Counter-Strike* have a somewhat similar tournament-based system, presumably due to the same owner. Whereas *Counter-Strike* has two Majors per year, *Dota 2* has one annual championship tournament, with the name The International and a Dota Pro Circuit consisting of tournaments leading to the main event. The teams qualified to compete in The International are comprised of twelve teams that have scored the highest in the Dota Pro Circuit and six from regional (continent-based) qualifier playoffs (Jack 2019). The *Dota 2* player roster changes are even stricter than in *Counter-Strike*: every player roster change causes loss of points (20-60%) in the total game standings (ibid.), thus securing the players' roster positions for entire seasons at a time.

2.1.3. Esports professional athletes as celebrities in social media

The concept *esports professional athlete* may be evaluated based on multiple criteria: by level of success in tournaments, by belonging to a professional esports team, by financial gain from matches, or, quite simply, by a personal assessment of oneself as a professional athlete. The concept is separate from other types of esports professionals, which include such subtypes as esports professional content creators, coaches, analysts and casters among many more; what sets the athletes apart is the active participation in playing a game in esports contexts competitively for financial gain and success. In a sense, the athletes are the most necessary constituent in esports, while many other occupations are supplementary. In the context of this study, all of the athletes in the data were, during the

time of data collection (2 March 2020), verifiably esports professional athletes in that they were members of a game roster of a professional esports team and actively partook in tournaments in their respective game.

The professional esports athletes, as a type of esports influencer, can be considered as a kind of a traditional celebrity rather than a social media celebrity or microcelebrity, as the reason for the celebrity status stems from elsewhere than from social media. Thereby, their status as a celebrity is established before creating the social media account, while the fame may naturally increase due to successful social media usage. To understand the usage of social media by the esports athletes, a brief introduction into celebrity usage of the internet is in order.

Giles (2018, 77-78), building on previous research (Jenkins 2006, *passim* and Marshall 2010, *passim*), divides the integration of mainstream celebrities into the internet and into social media into three general stages that took place between mid-1990s and 2010: “the emergence of online fan communities” that “began to exert considerable pressure on the entertainment industry because of fan activism”, “the emergence of social networking” that “gave individuals a platform not only for communicating with fans but also taking direct control of their image” and, as the third stage, quite aptly, the arrival of Twitter. According to Giles (*ibid.*), Twitter “stripped away all the image-building materials of those earlier networks” and enabled celebrities to “pass opinion and poke fun at anything they chose without needing the intermediary assistance of a press interview or management statement”.

As the stages illustrate, the relationship between fans and celebrities is influential and the dependence of the celebrities on their audience is vast. As Giles (*ibid.*) also notes, the ability of social media to allow celebrities to directly address their audience comes with “the burden of responsibility”. Colapinto and Benecchi (2014, 224) note that “unintentional disruptions occurring on a Twitter page can be easily witnessed, preserved and ultimately exposed”. Both Giles (2018, 83-84) as well as Colapinto and Benecchi (2014, *passim*) give an example of an Olympic athlete, Evan Lysacek, whose Twitter usage caused a PR emergency and loss of fans, when one misstep in the form of a single tweet spiralled into the problems, partly due to the mismanaged responses by the athlete to the criticised tweet and lack of taking responsibility for one’s misjudgement. As Giles (2018, 84) puts it, “Lysacek’s initial attempted cover-up and eventual apology reflect the seriousness, which such ‘faux pas’ or slips of the mask are now taken in the digital era”. Similar situations would be conceivable with the esports athletes as well.

In the case of any celebrity, the status of the person as a celebrity is, by its nature, dependent on the adoration or at least the interest and attention of the public. An important part of the public of today are the social media users, who are thus as an entity in charge of raising individuals to a celebrity status, maintaining the position or, when needed, stripping the individual from the prestigious standing. In the sense described above, all celebrities can be said to have a dependence on their audience. In order to cater to the “E Audience” (Altheide 2002, *passim*) of the online sphere, the celebrities, as regular social media users, employ their “digital selves” (Zhao 2005, *passim*), which can lead to a polished, idealised presentation of oneself in online contexts. Indeed, the social media profiles of celebrities reflect their conceptions of their digital selves rather than who they genuinely are and their authentic stances and opinions. It is naturally possible that celebrities, in this case esports athletes, have additional private social media accounts under a pseudonym or otherwise hidden from the general public for instance by strict privacy settings; in such cases they have a freer space without fan access to discuss matters freely with their actual circles of acquaintances. In the present study, nevertheless, the Twitter accounts of the esports athletes are the athletes’ public profiles with unlimited access and therefore mirror their notions of their digital selves rather than actual personae.

It should be noted that it is naturally possible to be an esports athlete and not have a Twitter account – or any social media accounts whatsoever – but it may, in such cases, prove more difficult to stay in the focus of the limelight, and to keep one’s sponsors contented. As said, it can be a requirement from the athlete’s team to have a Twitter account; naturally, the athlete’s tweets must be approvable by the team as well as by the followers and the sponsors. When analysing the athlete’s tweets, it needs also to be noted that the teams may counsel and direct their own athletes in Twitter usage and thereby affect the contents of the tweets to a varied extent from no involvement to a unified social media strategy. Piskorski defines such strategies as “how businesses... can leverage social platforms for competitive advantage” (2014, 4). Such matters unfortunately cannot be assessed with the present data.

2.2. Twitter

As will be seen when describing the esports athletes in the data in 3.1.2. as well as in discussing an average Twitter user and an average esports fan in 2.2.2., the portrayals indicate that most active esports athletes as well as a probable majority of their followers

belong to broad age groups referred to as ‘digital natives’ (coined by Prensky 2001, *passim*), pointing to a large proportion of the generation as having grown up surrounded by technology and the internet and therefore viewing them as natural parts of society. Social media platforms have also existed for a major proportion of especially the esports athletes’ lives, Twitter as one of them. The following sections are devoted to Twitter, with discussion first on the history of Twitter and its position as a social media platform. The second part on Twitter, section 2.2.2. shifts the focus onto following esports athletes on Twitter and to the mixture of a parasocial and a two-way relationship between the athlete and the follower. The section ends with the introduction of a previous study on Twitter, by Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell in 2010, which will serve both as a basis for the content analysis categories in the current study and as a comparison point under section 5.4. in Discussion.

2.2.1. Twitter: past, present and future

Murthy (2018, 25) describes Twitter as “a microblogging technology which is specifically designed to broadcast short but regular bursts of content to particularly large audiences well beyond a user’s direct social network”. The original idea of Twitter circled around the notion of statuses of people, that is to say what they reported to be doing at a given point in time, broadcast by use of SMS messages (Siles 2013, 6-7), but, as in the case of Facebook, the ‘status updates’, called ‘tweets’ in Twitter, have evolved to focus mostly on, as in Murthy’s definition, ‘content’ rather than the whereabouts and current actions of the person posting the tweet. Additionally, the ability of using SMS messages to tweet, which was the original reason for the need for brevity in the tweets (Twitter Developer 2021) was eliminated in 2020 (Kastrenakes 2020) and so the current Twitter relies solely on mobile app and website usage.

As with the other central main social media platforms, Twitter has evolved in terms of also many of its other central usability features than focus of statuses and SMS ability after its original launch in 2006. In many ways, Twitter has become more similar to social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram with new features that have been added to each or many of the platforms in recent years: for instance, the usage of direct messaging is intrinsic in many platforms including Twitter, hashtags as originally only a feature on Twitter are usable also in Facebook and Instagram, and comments and “likes” for posts are centrally used in all of the three listed platforms. A feature that continues to distinguish Twitter is the maximum length of tweets: while Instagram and

Facebook both allow statuses with tens of thousands of characters (Instagram allows more than 20 000 characters, Facebook more than 60 000), Twitter allows a maximum of 280 characters (including hashtags but excluding photos and videos). The Twitter character limit has been increased only once, as until 2017 the limit was 140 characters. As explained by Twitter Product Manager Aliza Rosen and Senior Software Engineer Ikuhiro Ihara: “Twitter is about brevity...Tweets get right to the point with the information or thoughts that matter. That is something we will never change” (Rosen and Ihara 2017).

Linguistically oriented studies on Twitter have been manifold, including for example studies on discourse styles of celebrities (Page 2012), functions of hashtags (Wikström 2014), athletes' Twitter usage during competitions (Tovares 2020) and several on the language in Donald Trump's tweets (for instance Clarke and Grieve 2019).

Whilst Facebook has incorporated the ability to create pages for celebrities and companies for interested users to follow, the main focus of the social media platform is to foster actual, mutual relationships. Murthy (2018, 21) explains the difference between Facebook and Twitter in that “[f]rom the perspective of social relations, Facebook involves bidirectional relations...On Twitter, one can unidirectionally follow someone”. A similar contrast is drawn in Boyd, Golder and Lotan (2010, 2) by depicting that in Twitter “profiles are connected through an underlying articulated network”, where “participants can link to (“follow”) others and see their tweets, but the other user need not reciprocate”. As a result, Twitter fosters the option of following interesting individuals, especially celebrities of various fields, in addition to people familiar from one’s own surroundings. In this regard, Twitter resembles Instagram, where it is also very common practice to follow celebrities as well as social media influencers famous for their social media presence, per se.

The notion that Twitter is often a place to one-sidedly follow interesting individuals without a requirement to be an active participant in the conversation (in the sense of tweeting to humour one’s own followers and to comment on the tweets of those followed), is strengthened by Twitter usage statistics: in a study conducted in the USA, the largest Twitter market, found that “[t]he 10% of users who are most active in terms of tweeting are responsible for 80% of all tweets created by U.S. users” (Wojcik and Hughes 2019). In that sense, then, Twitter has a general structure of those that actively post tweets and those that rather choose to stay more passive, but still act as an audience for the information provided in the public-information-oriented platform. In the case of

the esports athletes in the study, all of the athletes are relatively active Twitter users (with variation in the level of activity, as discussed in section 3.1.3.), a factor that has plausibly contributed to the high follower numbers that the athletes have contributed. Next under discussion will be features present in the relationship of the follower and followed, when the followed is a professional esports athlete.

2.2.2. Following esports athletes on Twitter

Whilst the strong linkages between social media audiences and celebrities have been discussed in 2.1.4., the two-way street nature of social media should gain special attention: even between two ordinary Twitter users, the material posted on a Twitter account is influenced by the feedback it receives; similarly, the esports athletes do not write their tweets in a void. It is reasonable to assume that a tweet's comments, likes and retweets by the followers, i.e. the digital prosumption (production and consumption, as used by Beer and Burrow 2010, *passim* and Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010, *passim*) relationship between the athlete and the follower, influence the future Twitter behaviour of the athlete. As noted by Childs (2016, 262), "[s]peakers in online interactions... are constantly adjusting, refining and honing their "online speech" in an effort to communicate in a way that they feel is stylistically appropriate for the conversational situation". The athlete is, indeed, dependent on their followers and fanbase in a different manner from the relationship between two ordinary Twitter users and thus the feedback from the followers, as a whole, is not to be ignored.

As already discussed in 2.1.2. when comparing esports and traditional sports, the relationship between a fan and a professional esports athlete is unique in its nature if compared to, for instance, celebrities that are athletes of traditional sports, with the fans being able to compete on the same platform as the athletes. While no data are available on the issue yet, it is reasonable to assume that a large number of the Twitter followers of professional athletes are fans of the athlete, their team and/or esports in general, and often also gamers themselves and potentially also aspiring esports professionals. Naturally, many individuals involved in the esports industry in a professional manner – be it as an athlete, a promotor, a content creator or one of the other various esports professions – also follow the accounts of the athletes on Twitter. Conclusively, it is possible to claim that a person following esports Twitter accounts is in some manner either actively involved in or otherwise interested in esports, often to the extent of fandom.

Especially in cases of fans of the athlete as their Twitter followers, the relationship between the fan and the athlete may take on nuances affecting the communication from the fan's point of view that play into the comments sent to the athlete, namely nuances due to the "parasocial relationship" (Horton and Wohl 1956, *passim*) between the follower and the athlete. As explained by Chung and Cho (2017, 482), parasocial relationships "arise when individuals are repeatedly exposed to a media persona, and the individuals develop a sense of intimacy, perceived friendship, and identification with the celebrity". In the case of esports athletes, the follower may even receive replies from their idol, if the athlete has chosen to participate in the conversation under their tweet directly. Amid Twitter followers, the athlete may also have actual friends and colleagues with whom the relationship is in fact on a social rather than parasocial level. The sense of a parasocial connection may be stronger for a fan, if the athlete provides information on their personal life, opinions and feelings, as well as if they tend to interact with the followers. The matter will be returned to in chapter 5. Discussion, as the analysis of the present study investigates the provision of such information especially via the categories of INFORMATION SHARING, DIVERSION and INTERACTIVITY for tweets high on supporting the development of a parasocial relationship between the athlete and the follower.

While there are no data available on the average Twitter account that follows an esports athlete, *per se*, certain statistics can help shed light on the matter: namely, data on average Twitter users and average esports fans. In the case of the average Twitter user, data from July 2020 disclose that the most prominent age groups of Twitter users were 25-34-year-old, followed by the age brackets of 18-24-year-old and 35-49-year-old users (Kemp 2020). Of all of the users, 65% were male and 35% were female (when measured on a binary scale with no other options) and the areas with most Twitter users were USA and Japan (*ibid.*).

In the case of average esports fans, studies set the average age of a person watching esports at varying numbers and with alternating levels of precision: in 2018, Merwin et al. (2018, 6) calculated that 79% of the people watching esports were less than 35 years of age and a global survey (Kemp 2019) stated that the age brackets with the largest proportion of people viewing esports was 16-24 year olds and 25-34 year olds. In terms of gender distribution of esports watchers, the global average of female viewers of 2019 was 22% (Gough 2020). In terms of region distribution of esports fans, Asia accounted for over a half of the distribution of fans worldwide (Hedlund et al. 2021, 75).

Based on the data on average Twitter users and esports fans, it may be estimated that a large part of the followers of the esports athletes in the study are within an age range of approximately 16-34 years and that there may be more a larger percentage of male than female followers (while the matter cannot be said with much certainty). Region-wise average estimates are difficult to formulate, as they are often influenced by matters such as the home countries of the athletes and the teams in addition to the statistics listed above. All in all, the total follower bases of the athletes, as well as the more active proportion commenting on the athletes' tweets and thus having a larger impact on future tweeting behaviour, are likely to be diversified groups comprised of followers with different expectations in regard to the tweeted content by the athletes.

2.2.3. Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell on sport athlete's Twitter usage

The section at hand consists of the introduction of a relevant study that will be returned to in Discussion, section 5.4. The study to be introduced, by Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell in 2010 (henceforth referred to as the Hambrick et al. study), analysed the usage of Twitter by traditional sport athletes and is therefore linked to the study at hand; additionally, the categorisation in the present study has been adapted from the aforementioned study.

The study by Hambrick et al. investigated the Twitter usage of professional athletes competing in an array of different sports: American football, basketball, tennis and auto racing among others (Hambrick et al. 2010, 459). The study was conducted in 2010, at a time when Twitter was yet quite novel (four years after Twitter's launch in 2006) and many of the features now present in Twitter were not yet a part of the tweeting feature arsenal. For instance, the maximum character count for a tweet was 140, half of the current maximum length of 280 characters. The differences between the Twitter conditions of 2010 and 2020 and the consequences for the differences in study arrangements will be further discussed in 3.2.2. in Methods and 5.4. in Discussion.

The Hambrick et al. study examined the Twitter frontpages of 101 sport athletes, 1962 tweets in all. The study utilised content analysis and annotated the tweets into six categories, similarly as in the present study. The Hambrick et al. categories were, as follows: Interactivity, Diversion, Information sharing, Content, Promotional and Fanship (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460-461). The study found that the largest proportion of the tweets were analysed as belonging to the Interactivity category, with Diversion as the second most prominent category, followed by Information sharing, Content and, on the

lowest tweet number percentages, Promotional and Fanship (Hambrick et al. 2010, 461-462).

In addition to the main results, the study also analysed the Twitter frontpages based on two groupings: the number of followers that the athlete had and the number of tweets that the athlete had posted after joining the social media network, split into three categories in both cases. In terms of the groupings of traditional sport athletes into three follower number-based groups, the study noted a tendency with the least followed athletes: the athletes with the least followers had a high number of tweets (44%) that fell into the category of Interactivity; however, also the least followed group had the same category as the most frequent category (34%), leaving only the middle group with a somewhat smaller percentage (29%) (Hambrick et al. 2010, 462). Such results are not surprising, as Interactivity was the overall most frequent category of the study (Hambrick et al. 2010, 461). As for the grouping based on overall numbers of posts by the athlete, the difference in numbers in Interactivity was more noteworthy: the group of athletes with most tweets since joining Twitter tweeted 62% Interactivity-category tweets, while the middle group as well as the group with the smallest total number of tweets had only 26% and 27% of tweets in the said category. The result may be, then, thought to indicate that the athletes that tweeted the most (while only considered in total numbers, not in temporal frequency of tweeting) were also the most interactive in their Twitter usage, as all replies to other Twitter users appeared in the frontpage of the account writing the tweet in the Twitter of 2010 (which it did not in the Twitter of 2020).

The Hambrick et al. study will be returned to in 3.2.2. of Methods, as the categories of the current study draw upon the Hambrick et al. categories, and also in 5.4. under Discussion, as the results of the two studies, Hambrick et al. and the present, will be compared and reflected upon.

3. Material and Methods

The present section is divided into two main parts: one with aspects related to the material in the study, namely 3.1. and one with issues to do with methods, described under 3.2.

3.1. Material

The section at hand describes the data under analysis, namely the Twitter frontpages of the 50 esports athletes in the study. The section begins with discussing the features related to frontpages in Twitter in 3.1.1. and continues with relevant details on the selection and

description of the included professional esports athletes in 3.1.2. Factors influencing the data are discussed in 3.1.3. and as the last part in the section, 3.1.4., ethical issues related to the usage of social media data.

3.1.1. Frontpages in Twitter

The Twitter frontpage of an account is a separate part of Twitter than, for instance, the newsfeed that contains new tweets by a mixture of followed accounts or the direct message folder page with the private messages that an account has received from other Twitter users. Any account holder on Twitter can look up any public profile frontpage on Twitter.

Frontpages of accounts show the latest tweets by the account, in order or newness (the latest tweet is the first on the page, followed by earlier tweets). The tweets can be original material by the account or retweets of previous tweets (either own or by others), with or without comments on the retweeted content. Before the latest tweets, the account may have a ‘pinned’ tweet that stays on top of the other tweets until changed or unpinned. The pinned tweet is likely to carry more value in the eyes of the account holder than regular tweets, as they wish to showcase it; in the case of an esports athlete, a typical pinned tweet is a development in their career, for instance an announcement on joining their current team or on winning a major tournament. For instance, Kyle ‘Mongraal’ Jackson informed his Twitter followers on him joining a new team by tweeting “Joined @FaZeClan #FaZeUp” (tweet 1, 7 July 2019) and chose to pin the tweet.

While the pinned tweet is not completely equivalent with a regular, run-of-the-mill tweet, the pinned tweets were chosen to be included in the present study. The choice of including the pinned tweet was justified by the ground that leaving the tweets out of the study would have unbalanced the data, as a large proportion of the athletes used the pinning function, while others did not. If pinned tweets were not included, the proportions of tweets of 20 by average would have skewed in the direction of athletes that did not use the pinning function (as all of the athletes with a pinned tweet would only have had 19 tweets in the analysis). Furthermore, the pinned tweet is a central part of what the viewers of the profile see when visiting the frontpage of the athlete, and therefore an integral part of the viewing experience that the impression on the athlete is based on.

It should also be noted that in addition to what is seen by the viewer when entering the account frontpage, the frontpage in question also covers other ‘tabs’: ‘Tweets & replies’, ‘Media’, ‘Likes’. Whilst the aforementioned tabs are available, the tab that is

already visible without any further clicking is the default tab of ‘Tweets’. The data of the study at hand considers the first tweets that were on the esports athletes’ frontpages on 2 March 2020, in the tab ‘Tweets’.

The main reasons for the choice of ‘Tweets’ instead of other tabs are twofold: firstly, the comparability of the data and secondly, the magnitude of exposure of the data. It is quite feasible that the esports athletes’ level of activeness in utilizing functions such as replying to other Twitter users (which would be visible in the tab ‘Tweets & replies’, as a combination of own tweets and replies to others), distributing media content in tweets (in the ‘Media’ tab as sole source for collection, while also with other tweets in the main ‘Tweets’ tab) and liking posts by other accounts (only visible as the only content in the designated ‘Likes’ tab, without any own tweets) varies considerably between the esports athletes. For instance, the 20 latest pieces of content on ‘Tweets & replies’ of the most networking-oriented esports athletes might comprise single-handedly of 20 reply comments under other users’ tweets, whilst many might not use the Twitter as socially and only have their own tweets in the ‘Tweets & replies’ tab. The vast difference in the ratio of own tweet versus reply would lessen the comparability of the data, as the reply comments tend to differ from actual, self-supporting tweets in terms of versatility: reply comments ostensibly have a tendency towards concentrating on commenting on a single matter in the commented tweet or part of conversation, whereas tweets often have many aspects, as they are what begins the conversations. In terms of length, the reply comments are ostensibly often relatively short; an emoji or a meme picture without own text as the very shortest forms. Tweets may be as short, but, in the data at hand, they with very few exceptions were not. Therefore, only the actual tweets are considered as the analysed data.

In addition to the prerequisite of comparability of the data, the other pivotal reason for the selection of the ‘Tweets’ tab as the source of data concerns the magnitude of exposure of the data. When a Twitter user enters the account frontpage, the ‘Tweets’ tab is already visible without any further clicks or tab changes. While there are no data available on the matter per se, it is reasonable to assume that only a smaller number of Twitter users visiting the account open and view the other tabs, whereas every person is automatically exposed to the content on the ‘Tweets’ tab. Therefore, the content of, for instance, ‘Tweets & replies’ gains much less visibility than ‘Tweets’ and is therefore of lesser impact in terms of the Twitter portrayal of the esports athlete at large. As said, the Twitter social media persona of the athlete is important to the athletes themselves in

gaining and losing followers, engaging users as potential fans of the athlete, satisfying the requirements of sponsors, and also societally, in affecting the opinions and consumer behaviour of Twitter users. It can thus be said that the 'Tweets' tab is the most prominent account frontpage tab in influencing the listed large-scale matters. Therefore, it is the most justifiable option for the data to include in the present study.

Besides the differences in the esports athletes' Twitter usage in terms of level of activity in replying to other users' tweets, the Twitter usage may also alternate in how largely the athlete uses the retweet option that is inherent in Twitter. Some of the athletes in the data heavily favour retweeting material originally posted by other accounts, be it by their own team, by other professionals in the esports field, by fans or by other types of Twitter accounts. Correspondingly, some athletes completely opt out of the retweet option and exclusively tweet original material. The current data ranged between 0%-85% as the percentage of retweets of all of the tweets; that is to say, the athlete with most retweets had 17 retweets in their total of 20 latest tweets. A more thorough inspection on the retweets versus original tweets can be done by considering the markings next to the individual tweets of the athletes in Appendix II, as the aspect is provided in the annotation throughout the data.

Due to the high numbers of retweets in some cases and the popularity in using retweeting as a type of tweet in many cases, the retweets were not excluded from the data. As with selecting 'Tweets' over other tabs such as 'Tweets & replies', the study covers what the Twitter users see on the athletes' accounts' frontpages, in this case namely material that is either original or retweeted tweets. The retweets, as original tweets as well, represent conscious choices by the Twitter account holder to convey information, entertainment, promotional messages and so forth to their Twitter audience and to so build their Twitter persona. Naturally, what is included in retweeted material is important, but so is what is not spread forward: omission in retweeting speaks as loudly as refraining from topics with original tweets. In many senses, then, retweets are a valid form of data in the context of the current study.

3.1.2. Esports athletes

The esports athletes in the data comprise the 10 most Twitter followed athletes in their esports game, in the 5 most Twitter followed esports game, hence amounting to 50 athletes. The vast amount was selected in hopes of so strengthening the representativeness of the study, both in selecting 10 athletes per each game and 5 games. The analysis of

results included test on statistical significances (cf. sections 3.2.4. and 4.2.4.) that found significant results especially between two games. In a considerably smaller amount of data, or in having left out one of the two said games, similar results might not have been discovered. Additionally, the tendency of many of the athletes in using retweets as well as original tweets (as discussed already in 3.1.1.) would have made it more difficult to find suitable examples of particular kinds of tweets with a considerably smaller dataset. For reasons discussed in 3.1.4., the examples quoted in the thesis are drawn only from original tweets by the athletes themselves.

The follower numbers that the athlete selection bases on reflect the situation as it was on the date of data collection, 2 March 2020. The list of athletes in the study does not equal to the 50 most Twitter followed esports athletes straightforwardly: such a list would have a less balanced distribution between the games, as some games had more than 10 athletes with a considerable Twitter follower number, whereas other games had only a few very followed athletes and the other athletes had a lower Twitter follower number (while still more than 100 000 followers in case of the lowest follower numbers in the data). Furthermore, there were a couple of esports athletes with a sizeable Twitter follower number, but with no other substantially followed athletes in the same game. The athletes in question do not, then, represent the 5 most Twitter followed games, as combined from the total numbers of the 10 most followed athletes of the game. In order to have a balanced set of data, with possibility to compare results between games, the above described data set of 50 athletes was opted for.

The athlete selection contained certain attributes as preconditions for including or excluding athletes: at the time of data collection on 2 March 2020, the athlete had to be actively partaking in professional-level tournaments or a league instead of being already retired from playing the game, and the athlete had to be a member of a professional esports team instead of being a ‘free agent’, as many esports athletes are especially prior retirement. Naturally, teamless athletes are not able to partake in professional leagues and in tournaments of multi-player team games. With retired athletes and teamless athletes, the content tweeted is likely to differ greatly from the material tweeted by active athletes, as the aforementioned groups do not have information to provide on the competitive esports scene from the point of view of a participant. To maintain and improve their Twitter follower base, they may strategise their Twitter usage by providing streaming content on their skilful gameplay, analyse esports matches from a non-participating expert’s point of view, make humorous general entertainment videos

or simply provide information and opinions on everyday matters that they encounter. While the strategic content choices of former esports superstars with a continuing Twitter follower base may be worth studying, the current study chooses to focus on currently active esports athletes.

The athletes were collected by a meticulous examination into the Twitter follower numbers of all athletes in player rosters of all such esports teams that competed in professional-level tournaments and leagues. In order to ensure the inclusion of all valid athletes, the athlete lists were cross-checked with various listings of esports athletes and teams, in terms of winning rates and accomplishments, financial success as well as popularity among fans (extensive listings where fans could nominate and vote for their favourite athletes and teams) and news articles on noteworthy athletes. After the thorough search, the athletes with the most Twitter followers per game were determined and the frontpages of their Twitter accounts were printed for analysis. The frontpages that were available to be printed from Twitter contained 19-21 tweets, hence the small differences in the number of tweets per athlete.

A full list of the 50 athletes in the study can be viewed in Appendix I. Central overall attributes of the esports athletes in the data will, however, be discussed next.

As for the sex of the athletes, the data had no variation: all of the 50 most Twitter followed esports athletes on 2 March 2020 were male. The lack of female athletes in the data is unsurprising, as the full player rosters of the teams present in the data contain very few female athletes, and of the very few, the female athletes are on the rosters of less Twitter followed games than the 5 most followed; namely games such as *StarCraft II* and *Heartstone* (for a list of the top 100 female players, cf. Esports Earnings n.d.). Naturally, there are female players who play the 5 most popular esports games, but on less notable esports teams, with much smaller Twitter follower counts and hence outside the scope of the present study. The esports community is often criticised for issues such as male toxicity, cyber-bullying towards female gamers and esports players (for instance Uszkoreit 2018, passim) and of male dominance (Kim 2017, passim); the total absence of female players on the most notable team rosters in the most popular games and the lack of female players that have a substantial Twitter follower number do not aid in creating a more equal-opportunity impression on the criticised matters.

The ages of the athletes in the study ranged between 15 and 30, with 23.58 as the average age for an athlete. When considering the athletes' age distribution in the

five different games, as done in Figure 1, a clear difference in the age distribution is notable with regard to *Fortnite* as opposed to the other games in the study: only one athlete was 25 years old, whereas all of the other *Fortnite* athletes belonged to an age group of 15-22 years. In the four other games, only a small minority of the athletes were 21 or 22 years old and none were younger, with the average age between 24 and 26. In *Fortnite*, the average age of an athlete during the time of data collection was 18.

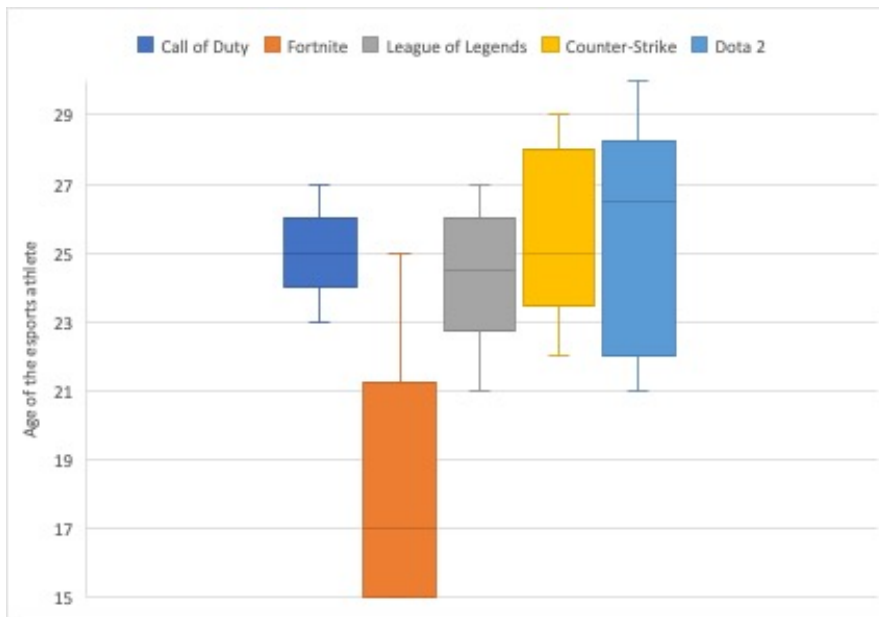


Figure 1. Age distributions of the ten most followed athletes by game

In terms of the esports athletes' nationalities, as visible in Figure 1, the continents of North America and Europe were most dominant (with 42%, 21 athletes and 38%, 19 athletes respectively). Asia and South America each amounted to 6%, that is to say 3 athletes per continent, as nationalities of the most followed athletes. The remaining 8% was composed of the four athletes that had a dual citizenship, with two distinct continents in each of the cases. The countries of the athletes with dual citizenships were located on the continents of Asia, Europe and North America and therefore did not bring new continents onto the nationality composition of the athletes in the study. On a closer level than continent-wise, the athletes in the study were from 21 different countries.

The only country that was present among lists of ten most followed esports athletes in each of the games was USA. The presence of USA in all five games may be related to factors such as the overall popularity of Twitter in USA, combined with the large population of the country in question, leading quite naturally to large Twitter following numbers for their domestic esports athletes.

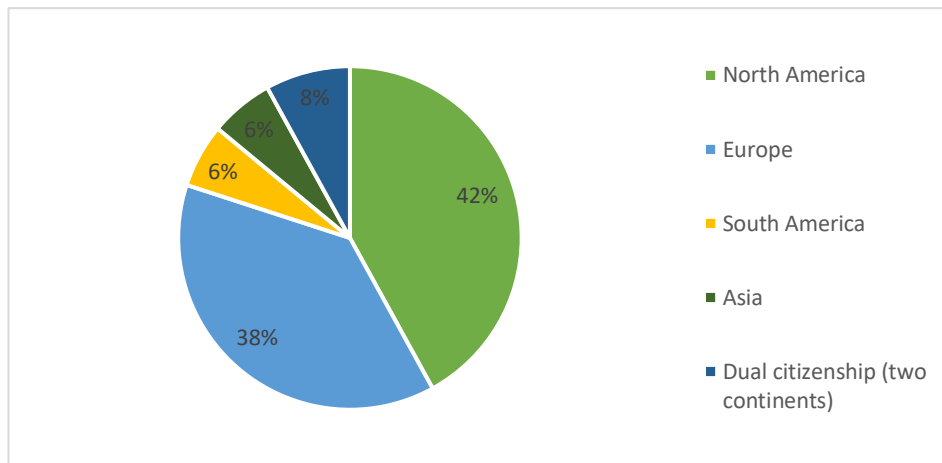


Figure 2. Nationality distribution of the fifty esports athletes by continent

In consideration of possible common social media strategies (as mentioned in section 2.1.3) throughout athletes in the same teams within games and even across different games, the number of esports teams requires discussion. In the current study, there were a total of 21 teams, some of which competed on top level only in a particular esports game, whereas some of which had rosters in multiple games. The teams to have rosters across games had athletes in a maximum of three games in the data. Within a game, a maximum of four athletes belonged to the same team (namely *FaZe Clan* in *Fortnite*). All in all, the team with the most athletes representing it at the time of data collection was *FaZe Clan*, with seven athletes presenting it across three games. Thus, there was no one team with a very notable influence on the overall result in the data, but rather a mixture of 21 teams contributed to the esports athlete Twitter usage results.

3.1.3. Factors influencing the data

The data of the study were affected by the circumstances, as they by necessity always are. One of the most influential aspects was the chosen time period. It is reasonable to assume that the athletes' tweeting behaviour is affected by whether the athlete's game is in season or off season and, during season, whether a major tournament is yet to begin, ongoing or already over. Such matters, in terms of INFORMATION SHARING and how its usage was affected by the temporal vicinity of game season is discussed in section 5.2.

The time period covered by the data on the frontpage tweets varied quite considerably between the various esports athletes depending on the frequency of their Twitter usage: the shortest time periods in the data was five days, the longest was more than two years. Naturally, the tweeting frequency affects the quality of the tweets: the

athletes that tweet several times a day, may sometimes tweet several tweets on the same subject as a continued commentary on a topic central on that day, for instance on how a tournament is progressing for the athlete's team or on new features in an update to the athlete's game. Athletes with months between tweets may be more prone not to continue the earlier discussion more relevant at the previous time.

Large world events can naturally also influence the tweeted data, especially if the world events affect the athletes as individuals or as professional athletes and therefore experience a greater urge to comment on the topic. The data in the present study were drawn in a relatively 'normal' situation universally, when compared to, for instance, the global situations in subsequent parts of 2020. An issue later affecting the esports industry tremendously, namely the covid-19 pandemic, was in its beginning stages in the athlete's countries – by 2 March 2020, the date of the data collection, only a few mentions of the virus outbreak appear in the tweets of the data. Similarly, no large-scale political developments (e.g. elections, movements in response to injustices) were especially topical at the time period of data collection and therefore did not require the athletes to take a stance or choose to remain neutral. As such, the data set can be seen as relatively typical of its sort, in that it represents a quite ordinary situation in general.

As changes take place quite rapidly in esports ecosystems and the average active career of an esports professional athlete is relatively brief due to the abundant competitiveness of the field (as calculated by Ward and Harmon (2019, 1005), “only about 20% of players have careers of even 2 years”), the data are very much affected by the data collection time period also in terms of who the fifty athletes to be included, in fact, are. For instance, a new athlete may gain a considerable follower number rapidly following a major win in some esports - for instance in *Fortnite* one has the opportunity to rise to stardom quite unpredictably, if they manage to win a championship or another top-tier tournament. Because *Fortnite* can be won alone or as a duo, there are less athletes to 'divide' the acquired place in the spotlight with. In the other games in the study, *Call of Duty*, *League of Legends*, *Counter-Strike* and *Dota 2*, one needs to secure a place on a professional team in order to participate in the competition scene and therefore long and steady evidence of skills precedes the team roster contract. Especially in *League of Legends* and *Call of Duty* one win, despite how magnificent, does not add up to much, as the games are played in professional leagues lasting several months before the overall winning team is announced. Hence, in other games than *Fortnite* changes in the most popular athletes may take place at a relatively slower, but still rather rapid, pace.

In contrast to the rising star athletes, the more seasoned, still active athletes may have gathered a loyal fanbase over time and therefore have a followership that is more resilient to drawbacks, such as lack of success in a particular tournament. However, an athlete that has had a long active career may be more likely to retire than a newcomer. Of the athletes in the data, a few announced their retirement shortly after the data collection; such a decision is likely to have brewed for a while and therefore the content of their Twitter frontpage has presumably been affected by the upcoming resolution. Furthermore, the content may have reflected their future plans: whether they have planned to pursue a career as, for instance, a gameplay streamer, an esports analyst or as an internet celebrity may all lead to quite diverse usages of Twitter in preparation to the retirement announcement. The data at hand contained such athletes that shortly after the data collection went on to pursue the above-mentioned diverse career options. Additionally, there were some esports athletes that had only very recently (less than a month before the data collection) retired and therefore could not be included in the study. The rapidity of changes in the esports athlete careers are emphasised by such matters and help to explain why the athletes in the study would be partly other individuals, if a similar study were to be conducted at a different point in time.

Further aspects influencing the data, such as Twitter features available, the responses by Twitter followers as well as the athlete's background will be returned to in chapter 5, Discussion. Next under consideration will be factors that have to be considered in any academic work on usage of social media data: addressing ethical concerns.

3.1.4. Ethical considerations on usage of social media data

As the data used in the present study consist of data derived from social media and authored by individuals for usage inside the social media platform, namely Twitter, certain ethical considerations need to be discussed.

The present study acknowledges that the tweets analysed in the current study are creations most typically by the original poster of the tweet in question (while the authorship unfortunately cannot be assessed), with possible material such as pictures or videos, where the creator of the material may be a different person (in uses of copyrighted material, see Twitter Fair Use Policy in Twitter Help Center 2021 – in possible cases of copyright infringement, the present study does not contribute to such issues and therefore takes a neutral stance). The study recognises Twitter's rights in the content and uses the material accordingly (for the Twitter rules for academic research

usage, see Twitter Developer 2020 as well as Hamblock 2020). No actual tweets are copied as such into the present work directly from Twitter; examples in the form of text are drawn and presented with mention of the author. The full data of the study is attached to the study as Appendix II, but with only descriptions of the tweets by the author of the present study, without inclusion of the actual tweets.

The study recognises that it is important to use full tweets in order to provide the entity of the authored work and not take anything out of its original context and make claims based on fragments rather than entities. However, the present study, at times, uses parts of tweets to highlight a feature present in the tweet and to give the parts as examples of features of the categories used in the study (categories explained in 3.2.2.). The use of parts of tweets as examples is necessary, as tweets may be quite long at times and contain multiple features irrelevant to the example discussed. Nevertheless, no claims are made based on only parts of tweets, as the actual analysis in the study is always based on the tweet as a whole, with the inclusion of any media belonging to it.

All of the data are available online on Twitter and is hence viewable in its full context (including commentary on the tweet by the athlete as well as by other Twitter users) by any interested party with a Twitter account. When giving examples, the study has provided the reader with not only the name of the author as well as the esports player name, but also the date of the tweet in order to enable the online examination of the tweet. Additionally, the number of the tweet (numbers 1-21) has been provided in order to enable the reader to check the full description of the tweet in question in the Appendix II.

The present study bases its analysis on bulks of data rather than making claims based on individual tweets. While there are examples from individual athletes, the claims on Twitter usage are drawn from the whole set of total data or from the whole set of data representing a particular primary category or a game; the Twitter usage of a particular athlete is not singled out and, for instance, in any way criticised. The study does not, in any way, attempt to bring any denigration on any of the esports athletes in the study.

As said, the data are available online in public profiles (as opposed to private profiles also available on Twitter, in addition to the default public setting) viewable by any Twitter user. The Twitter profiles are the athletes' profiles in their professional athlete status, as can be interpreted from the texts that they write in their profile description (for instance the name of their current team, the game that they play professionally, possible championships acquired and so forth) and by the common

practice of using the player name as the Twitter account name rather than the actual birthname of the athlete. The athletes have hundreds of thousands or millions of followers and are so available of a large reach of their tweets to an extent different from an ‘ordinary’ Twitter user, who may have a smaller audience in mind for their tweeted content. It is reasonable to assume that the athletes write their tweets with the Twitter account’s followers in mind and are thus aware of their general expected audience. The athletes’ tweets are available for retweeting and the athletes can thus be assumed to have some grasp of their tweets being viewed by an even larger audience than their own followers.

The accounts in the study can assuredly be considered as being genuinely by the athletes rather than fake profiles: all of the accounts are checked by Twitter to make sure that they are by the athlete and not cases of catfishing (that is to say using social media accounts under false identities). As explained by Twitter:

The blue verified badge on Twitter lets people know that an account of public interest is authentic. The badge appears next to the name on an account’s profile and next to the account name in search results. ... An account may be verified if it is determined to be an account of public interest. Typically this includes accounts maintained by users in music, acting, fashion, government, politics, religion, journalism, media, sports, business, and other key interest areas. (Twitter Help Center 2020)

All of the accounts in the study contain the described blue badge authenticating the account as by the esports athletes themselves.

The data analysed in the study contain the tweets found on the frontpage of the athletes and therefore, due to reasons explained in 3.1.1., a combination of original tweets as well as retweets of material by others, retweeted by the esports athletes. The retweeted materials are public (as they could not be retweeted or even viewed otherwise) and are utilised in the study’s statistics. The examples provided in this paper, however, are from original tweets by the athletes and therefore no actual text from the other accounts is reprinted in this paper.

The study recognises a possible ethical issue in terms of potential changes that have taken place on the athletes’ Twitter frontpages after the data were collected on 2 March 2020: it is naturally possible that tweets have later been deleted or altered after the data collection. The same issue involves both the tweets possibly deleted by the esports athlete and, in the case of retweets, deleted by the original account posting the tweet (in which case the retweets disappear as well). Due to the large amount of data,

checking the full list 1014 tweets for possible alterations or deletions has not been feasible. Naturally, deletions of tweets can be done at any point in time and therefore the Twitter data in the study can alter even after the present study has been finalised. The study recognises the ethical issue described and portrays the Twitter frontpages in the form in which they were viewable on 2 March 2020.

3.2. Methods

The section at hand begins with positioning the study as a content analysis in 3.2.1., followed by descriptions of the categories used for the said content analysis in 3.2.2. and discussions on issues related to the categorisation process itself in 3.2.3. As the study employed IBM SPSS Statistics analysis in order to explore the statistically significant differences in the results of the categorisations by game, SPSS analysis is the subject of a section of its own, 3.2.4. The majority of the data in the present study was annotated once prior to the actual annotation and the results of the earlier annotation are therefore compared with the study's results as the last section, 3.3.

3.2.1. Content analysis

The study employs content analysis as a method, in the form of categorising data into six categories. Therefore, content analysis as a method requires discussion. The current section explains content analysis with a focus on how it is employed in the present study.

As quite broadly explained by Elo and Kyngäs (2008, 107), "[c]ontent analysis is a method that may be used with either qualitative or quantitative data and in an inductive or deductive way." Early, narrow definitions of content analysis concentrated on the quantitative aspects of the analysis method with sole focus on the manifest (what is overtly viewable in the content) rather than the latent content (what can be inferred from the content). A notable example of such a definition is Berelson (1952, 18) defining content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of manifest content of communication"; such definitions have been described as referring to *basic content analysis* (Drisko and Maschi 2016, 3). The branches of content analysis have later been enriched to include qualitative aspects into the analysis as well as to incorporate the analysis of the latent content, for instance in the form of *interpretive content analysis*, which is the branch employed in the present study. Interpretive content analysis is "a method for latent content analysis and other more complex coding tasks" (Ahuvia 2001, 141) when "researchers go beyond quantifying the

most straightforward denotative elements in a text” Ahuvia (2001, 139). In Ahuvia’s definition of content analysis, the term in general quite suitably refers to “methodologies that code text into categories and then count the frequencies of occurrences within each category” (ibid.), as is precisely what is done in the present study.

In terms of the inductive and deductive distinction, as well as abductive, referring to “a movement back and forth between inductive and deductive approaches” (Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman 2017, 3), the present study is deductive in the sense that it employs categories based on previous research, namely the Hambrick et al. study (2010), as well as its precedent origin categories in Seo and Green (2008) and Clavio (2008). However, the categories have not been applied without necessary consideration of the current data, and the current categories have been modified as a response to how the data in the present study behave. In a sense, then, the study is not purely of a deductive approach.

In any content analysis, certain criteria have to be applied in order to verify the good quality of the study. In the case of interpretive content analysis, such include “the reliability and validity of the analytic processes” (Drisko and Maschi 2016, 5). Furthermore, “[i]nterpretive content analyses seek to be systematic and transparent” (ibid.). In order to further internal and external reliability, the study has applied the same consistent set of criteria for categorisations throughout the data; the study has pursued transparency in order to enable the repetition of the study to as high a degree as possible. Ahuvia (2001, 144-145) suggest further measures to enhance the reliability of an interpretive content analysis in the process of “connotative coding” of the data into its latent form, namely the descriptions of the tweets that the categorisation is based on: expertise in the field of the data and cooperation of several individuals in the coding process. Due to the position of the current study as a Master’s thesis, certain limitations to the proposed expertise and cooperation apply, as the analysis as well as the categorisation process is done by only one individual and the author is unable to provide a professional level of expertise in the matter, while a certain level of immersion in the data was established via close examination of the data for several months.

3.2.2. Categories in primary, secondary and tertiary usage

The categories used in the content analysis of the present study are derived from the Hambrick et al. study (2010), which has been described in section 2.3.1. The categories, while similar in many parts, have been modified for the present study due to factors

caused by differences in the Twitter usage features of 2010 and 2020 (i.e. the years of the Hambrick et al. study and the current study). The categories in Hambrick and in this study will be described next, with explanations for modifications that were needed for the content analysis of the study at hand.

The Hambrick et al. study used categories that have their base in two earlier studies, namely Seo and Green (2008) and Clavio (2008). In the case of Seo and Green, Hambrick et al. used the categories of “Content”, “Fanship” and “Promotional” (name in Seo and Green 2008: “Economic”) as a basis (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460); the mentioned categories are three of the “10 dimensions of motivation” of visitors on sports webpages (Seo and Green 2008, 82). From Clavio (2008), Hambrick et al. put to use the categories of “Interactivity”, “Diversion” “Information sharing” (name in Clavio 2008: “Information gathering”) (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460) of Clavio’s four “dimensions of gratification” in their study on college message boards on athletics topics (Clavio 2008, viii). The fourth of Clavio’s dimensions, “Argumentation”, is incorporated in Hambrick into the category of Fanship, which is to say that the Hambrick category of Fanship is a combination of both a dimension of Seo and Green (2008) as well as of Clavio (2008) (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460).

There were six categories in the content analysis of the Hambrick et al. study: Interactivity, Diversion, Information sharing, Content, Fanship and Promotional (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460). Of the aforementioned categories, those that were quite directly translatable into the current study were Diversion, Information sharing and Promotional. The other three categories, Interactivity, Content and Fanship, needed some modifications in order to be usable in the Twitter data of 2020.

Diversion as a category in the Hambrick et al. study referred to “non-sports-related information provided by professional athletes” and consisted of “any athlete tweets with a non-sports message, whether they discussed friends and families or other personal interests such as video games, music, and fashion” (2010, 460). Information sharing in Hambrick et al. translated into “insight into an athlete’s teammates, team, or sport, such as details about practices and training sessions or recent competitive events and results” (ibid.). Promotional was “publicly regarding sponsorships, upcoming games, and related promotions such as discounted tickets or giveaways” (ibid.). All of the above could be employed as they were, naturally with the change from sports into esports in the category definitions. A closer definition of each category in the present study is provided further below, distinctly for usage as a primary versus secondary or tertiary category.

As mentioned, the three categories that required modification from the Hambrick et al. study usage were Interactivity, Content and Fanship. In the case of Interactivity, the changes needed were quite considerable due to the differences in the Twitter features of 2010 as opposed to those of 2020.

The Hambrick et al. study used the category of Interactivity for “professional athlete’s direct communication with fellow athletes and fans” in the form of “conversations athletes have with other Twitter users via direct messages or responses to posted tweets” (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460). In the Twitter of 2020, the way that replying to tweets was done was in a substantially different manner than in 2010: in 2010 all of the replies to other users appeared on the frontpage of the Twitter account writing the reply. The way to reply was to start one’s tweet with the username of the other account (beginning with the @-sign in order to tag the account in the tweet; the convention is described further in Honeycutt and Herring 2009, 2, 5-6) and then write the reply. In 2020, all of the replies and comments appeared under the tweet that was commented, grouped with all of the other comments on the tweet (the comments can be viewed by clicking the tweet open and thus viewing all of the, in the athletes tweets often hundreds, comments on the tweet). Therefore, the main frontpage of an account writing the tweet was no longer the place to find the replies. Even with comments to own tweets, the account’s comments appear only midst the other comments and are thus not similarly highlighted as they were on the frontpages of 2010.

As in 2010 replies were on the athletes’ frontpages, the Hambrick et al. study could use the category of Interactivity to refer to all of the data of replies and messages directed at particular Twitter users. The present study could not use the category similarly due to the Twitter alterations described above, but rather considered such interactive features that were overtly viewable for the other Twitter users on the athletes’ frontpages: such features included questions and comments directly addressed to other Twitter users (whether an individual or anyone seeing the tweet), otherwise prompting other Twitter users to be active (for instance to send photos to the athlete, follow other Twitter users) as well as taking part in social media challenges (for example in the form of retweeting popular hashtags). Additionally, retweeting content by fans and other ‘regular’ Twitter users (as opposed to other professionals and teams, whose tweets were retweeted by the athletes frequently) was seen as a form of INTERACTIVITY, as it was considered a form of using Twitter interactively in choosing to spread information by an account otherwise with small social media reach.

In the Hambrick et al. study's usage of Content, the category comprised of "links to pictures, videos, and other Web sites such as an athlete's blog or a team's official Web site" (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460). At the time period of the Hambrick et al. study it was not yet possible to add photos or videos directly into Twitter, as posting tweets with pictures only became possible in 2011 (Dorsey 2011) and tweets with videos in 2015 (Bulava 2015). In 2020 it was possible to add media content in the form of pictures, videos and GIF animations in addition to the text on the tweet. Consequently, a very large proportion of tweets in the present study's data contained media in the tweet and therefore simply inserting all such data into the category of Content was not considered as very purposeful. Rather, the content of the tweet as a whole, that is to say the entity formed by the text and the possible media in the tweet, was examined in terms of its content (including what was, for example, the content of a video) and then ascribed to the most appropriate category.

As the Hambrick et al. category of Content could not be employed identically in the Twitter of 2020, the category was altered somewhat: in cases where the picture, video or GIF animation was the main focus of the whole tweet instead of, for instance, possible informational or promotional value, the tweet was classified in the category of Content. The name of the category was altered in order to bring forth the main focus of the category in the current study: the category of Content was renamed ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT to bring forth the entertainment value that the tweets in the category possessed with media usage without main focus on providing information, but rather to, as said, entertain (cf. Dobni 2008, 5 and *passim* for "a conceptual model of entertainment value"). Quite surprisingly, the Hambrick et al. study did not contain a category distinctly devoted to entertainment, while the category of Content can be thought to have been closest to such material. The current study's category of ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT was, in a sense, somewhat broader, as all tweets with the main focus in providing entertainment were incorporated into the category – in addition to the already mentioned usage of esports-related pictures, videos and GIF animations, the usage of the category in the present study comprised humorous language in the forms of jokes and other informal language, even swear words at times, if used in a humorous manner.

Fanship, as the third category to differ from the Hambrick et al. usage, was explained in Hambrick et al. as "when athletes discuss sports other than their own teams and teammates" with the specification of encompassing "athlete tweets with either positive or negative comments about players and teams other than their own" (Hambrick

et al. 2010, 460). Here, the alteration made to the category of FANSHIP is quite miniscule: the category included all discussions on athletes other than own teammates, but not outside the athletes' own sport of esports. For instance, comments on athletes or teams on traditional sports such as boxing and basketball (both tweeted about by the esports athletes in the data) were annotated as belonging to the category of DIVERSION instead.

As an overall remark on all of the primary categories in the present study, it should be noted that a line was drawn between topics completely outside the scope of esports and/or the athlete as a professional esports athlete and topics within the said scope. Topics that were unconnected to the status that the athletes have as esports professionals (for instance information on unlinked private opinions and jokes about general topics) were always categorised as DIVERSION. The requirement for the content to be somehow linked to esports was a prerequisite for the tweets to be categorised as INFORMATION SHARING, INTERACTIVITY, ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT or FANSHIP rather than DIVERSION. The tweets placed in the category of PROMOTIONAL were assessed differently, as promotional aspects, as such, suggested a linkage to the athlete as a professional esports athlete with sponsors, and therefore the tweets were placed in the PROMOTIONAL category even with no actual references to esports in the text or media of the tweet (an example of such a case in the data would be an athlete promoting their shampoo in collaboration with a shampoo manufacturer).

In the Hambrick et al. study the categorisation took place in a one-fold categorisation, with each tweet assigned one category. A similar process is undertaken in the primary categorisation of this study. However, the study at hand continued to scrutinise the data on a deeper level: in addition to the primary category, the tweets were assigned two further categories, a secondary and tertiary one, when features additional to the main focus of the tweet occurred in the tweet. In cases where the main category of the tweet was the only feature in the tweet, this secondary and tertiary categorisation did not take place. The reason for this threefold choice was to deepen the analysis of the tweets, as many of the tweets in the data were quite long and contained features of more than one category. The categories used in this study are explained below in both their usage as a primary category (the most prominent, main focus of the tweet) and as a secondary and tertiary category (other features that the tweet contains in addition to the main focus).

The categories of the present study are written in small capital letters (for instance 'INFORMATION SHARING') throughout the thesis to distinguish from references to

the categories in the Hambrick et al. study (written as they were written in their study, for example ‘Information sharing’).

Explanations of the six categories in the primary categorisation:

INTERACTIVITY: esports-related prompts for interaction, e.g. direct questions for followers, part-takings in social media challenges, retweets of fans’ shows of support

DIVERSION: anything utterly unrelated to esports, e.g. general opinions and interests, personal life information, holiday greetings

INFORMATION SHARING: esports-related information, e.g. match results, insights into game tactics, feelings about own performance, information on new Twitch streams

ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT: esports-related tweets with the main focus to entertain (and not to, for instance, inform of anything in particular), e.g. videos, photos, memes, humorous language

FANSHIP: comments of an esports player or a team other than one’s own as the focus of the tweet, may be a positive, neutral or negative mention

PROMOTIONAL: tweets promoting something, often a product, service, person or event that the athlete is financially linked to

Explanations of the six categories in the secondary and tertiary categorisations:

INTERACTIVITY: the tweet contains less direct interactive elements; not necessarily esports-related prompts for interaction

DIVERSION: the tweet is somehow linked to esports, but strays to other issues

INFORMATION SHARING: information content with a focus of the tweet other than to simply inform; not necessarily esports-related information

ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT: any content that contains videos, photos or humorous language, not necessarily esports-related entertaining material

FANSHIP: mentions of the said competing players/teams, but not as the tweet's main focus

PROMOTIONAL: promoting something without a probable financial link to the object of promoting / promotional aspect is very low and not the main focus of the tweet

3.2.3. Categorisation process

The actual categorisation of the tweets in the data was conducted with the help of Microsoft Office Excel. Each of the 1014 tweets were placed under the respective athlete and each athlete under their esports game of choice. The content on the tweets was described and the tweet was annotated into the most appropriate primary category, as well as to secondary and tertiary categories, when applicable. Each tweet was additionally marked as 'retweeted material' (R) or as 'original material by the account' (O). The tweets were considered as R in cases when the athlete did not add anything to the tweet; if the athlete added their own text to the tweet, the tweet was seen as original material containing embedded content (in the form of the retweet) and hence marked as O. In the case of the PROMOTIONAL category, it was further clarified what the object of promotion was and, in the description of the tweet, whether a potential object of promotion (for instance a tournament) was specified or even tagged or hashtagged in the tweet; similarly, in potential cases of FANSHIP, whether a competing team or athlete was specified or tagged in the tweet.

An example of an annotation of a tweet is provided below in Table 2. The described and annotated tweet is by the athlete Marcelo 'coldzera' David David tweeted "Preparation done! IEM Katowice kicks off tomorrow!" and provided a link to his own Instagram account's short video of him playing his own game on a laptop computer (tweet 6, 23 Feb 2020). The tweet had the same text also in Portuguese.

Table 2. Example of a tweet description and annotation

Description of tweet	Primary category	Secondary category	Tertiary category	Original material/ retweet (O/R)
information on preparation for tournament (specified, not tagged) having been done and on tournament beginning the next day + Instagram link to own short video of athlete playing	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	PROMOTIONAL (own Instagram account, tournament)	O

Here, the text “Preparation done!” is described as “information on preparation for tournament having been done” and “IEM Katowice kicks off tomorrow!” is written as “tournament beginning the next day”. The link to Instagram with the link’s content is described as “Instagram link to own short video of athlete playing”. The phrase “(specified, not tagged)” further defines the level of specificity in the mention of tournament: whether the athlete mentions the tournament by name (he does) and whether the tournament’s Twitter account is tagged in the tweet (it is not). Additionally, there could be the tournament’s hashtags mentioned in the tweet, but in the above case there is not.

The tweet is annotated as primarily INFORMATION SHARING due to esports-related information in the tweet (that the preparation has been done and that the tournament begins the next day). The video of the athlete playing on a laptop is only a couple of second in length and does not, for instance, have any commentary from the athlete on it, or showing of gameplay tactics. Due to the video, the tweet is considered as having an ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT nuance, as were all tweets that contained a photo, video or humorous language. As the tweet contains a link to the athlete’s Instagram account, the tweet is seen to have a PROMOTIONAL nuance as well. Because the tournament is specified, a PROMOTIONAL aspect applies there as well. Both in the case of the Instagram account and the tournament, the promoted entity and the athlete are not likely to be in a straightforwardly financial relationship, where the object of promotion would be, for instance, a product, event or service by a sponsor and posting of the tweet

would bring financial gain for the athlete or his team. Thus, PROMOTIONAL is not the primary category of the tweet, but a more subtle feature of a secondary / tertiary kind.

The categorisation of the tweets was done in a consistent manner throughout the process, with the same guiding principles for the whole data. There were, naturally, cases where four or more categories would have been applicable (often with a prevalent primary category, but three or more ‘nuances’ to be classified as secondary and tertiary categories). Such instances were particularly likely to occur with longer tweets containing also multimedia content, as more complex and diverse content often lead to more nuances. In such cases, the secondary and tertiary categories were determined based on how prominently the category was present in the tweet.

Among the more difficult cases in terms of categorising tweets was a very often occurring type of tweet: when the athletes provided links to their own Twitch streams due to either having already uploaded content to their stream or at the time of posting the tweet beginning a live stream. The tweet, in such cases, consisted of a relatively short text on the streamed content (shortest description were of only one word descriptions, whilst others explained the idea of the particular stream more). The strongest category in such cases was seen to be INFORMATION SHARING, as the athlete was seen to provide information on the availability on new content and since the streamed content itself was most often of the athlete playing his own game and thus providing insight into professional-level game tactics. As for the secondary and tertiary categories, ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT and PROMOTIONAL were selected throughout the data. ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT was employed because of the nature of the Twitch stream, which was a video, which, in addition to informational merits also contained entertainment value through the ability to watch the gameplay. PROMOTIONAL, in its secondary/tertiary sense, was seen as the other relevant nuance, as the athlete was seen to be tweeting also to promote his own Twitch stream, which, at times, could additionally include mentions of sponsors on the athlete’s Twitch account page or in the video stream (while none in the tweet directly and therefore not as PROMOTIONAL in the primary sense).

3.2.4. IBM SPSS Statistics analysis

In addition to the annotation of the data by categorisation, the data were subjected to further tests using the IBM SPSS Statistics software. The reason for such tests was to further support the results of the study by verifying which of the findings in categorisations between games are statistically significant. The IBM SPSS tests that were

used were the Kruskal-Wallis test as well as the post hoc tests that were performed after each Kruskal-Wallis test. A Kruskal-Wallis test is applicable in data such as the data in this study, i.e. non-parametric, which refers to “[s]tatistics that do not depend on the data having a normal distribution, but which still impose assumptions on data distribution, such as the requirement that variances be equal across group”(Larson-Hall 2016, 479). The Kruskal-Wallis test compares variables that are dependent and independent, in this case the ratios of tweet categories of the athletes and the games played professionally by them.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted by comparing the numbers of the athletes’ tweet category distributions separately in the primary, secondary and tertiary categorisations (thus in three Kruskal-Wallis tests) and the games of the athletes and thereby identifying when to reject the null hypothesis due to low enough, statistically significant p-values ($p < 0.05$). Of the comparisons with statistically significant results, a further pairwise post hoc test was carried out in order to pinpoint the games between which the significant difference existed.

While Kruskal-Wallis was a suitable test for analysing data without a normal distribution as in the case of the present study, it should, however, be noted that the test in question has been criticised for quite sparsely producing a result that is statistically significant, that is to say that the Kruskal-Wallis test is “conservative in rejecting the null hypothesis” (Bargagliotti and Greenwell 2015, 534 and in passim; the same notion in Spurrier 2003, 691 as well as de Vries and Chandon 2007, 291). The issue mentioned should be taken into account when considering the results of the SPSS statistical significance test.

In order to strengthen the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test, the study employs the Bonferroni adjustment that further puts the individual hypotheses through multiple tests to confirm significances in the data. In reporting the SPSS results, then, the significance has been reaffirmed via the Bonferroni adjustment, when not otherwise stated. Similarly as the Kruskal-Wallis test, the Bonferroni adjustment has been criticised for being conservative (Larson-Hall 2016, 376; Eichstaedt, Kovatch and Maroof 2013, passim), and for regarding significant results as non-significant (Perneger 1998, 1236). In the case of the Bonferroni adjustment, then, a similar critical evaluation should be kept in mind when considering the significance of the results.

3.3. Comparison of the study's results with an earlier annotation in the study

When the analysis for the paper at hand was first begun, an annotation was conducted with a categorisation into only one category per tweet, whilst the same analysis was later conducted with a three-fold categorisation into primary and, when applicable, secondary and tertiary categories. The data of the previous annotation consisted of a total of 39 athletes, in contrast to the current number of 50 athletes. The material contained the same data per athlete (the Twitter frontpages from the same time period) as it currently does. The vast majority of the athletes in the first annotation were in the second annotation as well, with the exception of a few exclusions (in order to only include ten athletes per game). While the first annotation is not directly comparable with the present annotation, it does provide a comparison point to some extent: similar findings in results may be considered to reinforce the reliability of the results of the study.

Table 3. Results of a first annotation with onefold categorisation, 39 athletes

INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL	Total tweets
56	122	350	146	15	105	794
7,05 %	15,37 %	44,08 %	18,39 %	1,89 %	13,22 %	100 %

Table 4. Results of the current threefold categorisation, 50 athletes, primary categorisation

INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL	Total tweets
68	127	496	155	64	105	1015
6,70%	12,51%	48,87 %	15,27 %	6,31 %	10,34 %	100 %

As seen in Tables 3 and 4 above, the first annotation results exhibit roughly similar results as in the primary categorisation of the current annotation, with each percentage at the same ten percent level in each. Additionally, the order of the categories in frequency of occurrences is the same in both: INFORMATION SHARING as the most frequent, followed by ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, DIVERSION, PROMOTIONAL and, as the categories with the lowest frequency, INTERACTIVITY ad FANSHIP. The similarity in the results of both of the annotations in the study demonstrates, for its part, that the annotations have been done in a repeatable, consistent manner.

4. Results

In this chapter, the results of the analysis will be discussed, first with the results of the total data in terms of the primary as well as the secondary and tertiary categorisations, then similarly by game, with attention also to the IBM SPSS Statistics results.

4.1. Results of the categorisations

This section will begin with presenting the results of the primary categorisation, then the secondary and tertiary categorisations. Total numbers and percentages combined from all of the three categorisations will also be presented, followed by a comparison of the categorisation results.

4.1.1. Results of the primary categorisation of the tweets

The present study found that, of the 1014 tweets in the study, the largest proportion of tweets fell into the primary category of INFORMATION SHARING, which was the most common category by far with 495 tweets, accounting for 48.82% of the tweets in primary usage. The other frequently occurring categories in the primary categorisation were, in order of total number of tweets ascribed to the category, ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT (155 tweets, 15.29%), DIVERSION (127 tweets, 12.52%) and PROMOTIONAL (105 tweets, 10.36%). In comparison, a much lesser proportion of the tweets in the study fell primarily into the categories of INTERACTIVITY (68 tweets, 6.71%) and FANSHIP (64 tweets, 6.31%). Figure 3 below depicts the proportions of the primary tweets per category and especially illustrates the prominence of the INFORMATION SHARING category.

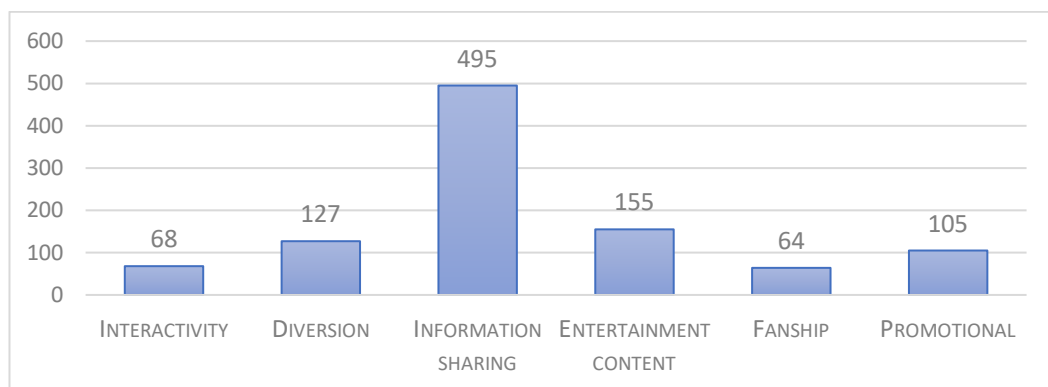


Figure 3. Primary categorisation results in numbers of tweets per category

4.1.2. Results of the secondary and tertiary categorisations of the tweets

In the case of the supplementary categorisation into categories other than the tweets' primary categories, i.e. the tweets' secondary and tertiary categorisations as a

combination, a total of 1564 instances of categorisation were applied to the tweets. In these supplementary categorisations, the most instances of tweet categorisation fell into the category of ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT with a combined total of 579 instances of categorisation, thus amounting to 37.02% of all categorisations in secondary and tertiary positions, as portrayed in Figure 4. The two other frequently occurring categories in this categorisation were PROMOTIONAL (388 instances of categorisation, 24.81%) and INFORMATION SHARING (302 instances, 19.31%). Likewise as in the primary categorisation, only a small quantity of the tweets contained features attributed to INTERACTIVITY (130 instances, 8.31%) as well as to FANSHIP (114 instances, 7.29%). However, as a central contrast to the primary categorisation, the category with the least instances of categorisation secondarily and tertiarily was DIVERSION with mere 51 instances amounting to 3.26%.

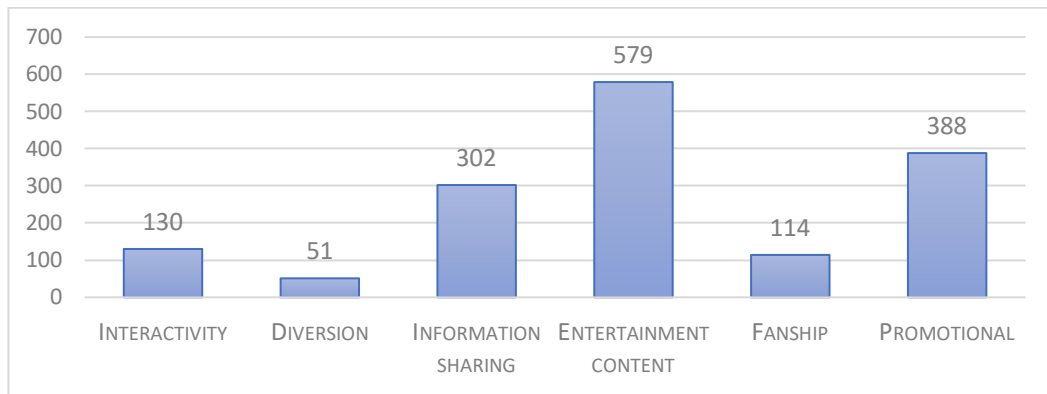


Figure 4. Secondary and tertiary categorisation results in numbers of tweets per category

4.1.3. Results of the total numbers of the assigned tweet categories for all three categorisations (primary, secondary and tertiary)

As a combination of the primary, secondary and tertiary categorisations of the tweets and so as the more whole composition of the tweet, the total number of instances of categorisation was 2578 instances (consisting of the 1014 for the primary and 1564 for the secondary and tertiary categorisations). In the combined result of the whole set of the tweets' components, the overall most prominent category was, as in the primary categorisation, INFORMATION SHARING (797 instances, 30.92%), very closely followed by ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT (734 instances, 28.47%) and, as the third common category, PROMOTIONAL with 493 instances and 19,12%. In all, the least frequent categories were INTERACTIVITY (198 instances, 7.68%) and, with precisely as many instances of each, DIVERSION and FANSHIP (both with 178 instances, 6.90%).

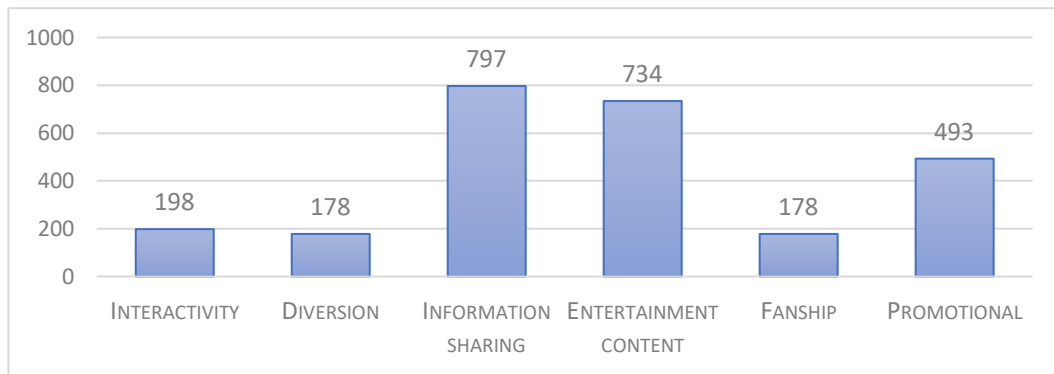


Figure 5. Total categorisation results in numbers of tweets per category

4.1.4. Comparison of the categorisation results

While in the primary categorisation INFORMATION SHARING accounted for nearly a half of the total with 48.82%, analyses of other sets of categorisations (secondary, tertiary and total) did not reveal as dominant singular categories. Throughout the categorisations, three categories received a considerable amount of the classifications: INFORMATION SHARING, ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT and PROMOTIONAL. Similarly, two categories received a low percentage of mentions: INTERACTIVITY and FANSHIP. A key difference between the analyses was the relatively high percentage of DIVERSION in primary categorisation, 12.52%, while in the secondary and tertiary combination DIVERSION was only present in 3.26% of the data; in the primary categorisation, DIVERSION was the third most frequent category for the tweets, whilst in secondary and tertiary it was the least frequent category.

Table 5. Combined table of the numbers and percentages of the categorisations

Distribution of categories	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL	Total
primary	68 (6.71%)	127 (12.52%)	495 (48.82%)	155 (15.29%)	64 (6.31%)	105 (10.36%)	1014
secondary	87	32	156	348	82	246	951
tertiary	43	19	146	231	32	142	613
secondary + tertiary	130 (8.31%)	51 (3.26%)	302 (19.31%)	579 (37.02%)	114 (7.29%)	388 (24.81%)	1564
total mentions (primary + secondary + tertiary)	198 (7.68%)	178 (6.9%)	797 (30.92%)	734 (28.47%)	178 (6.9%)	493 (19.12%)	2578

4.2. Results by game of the esports athlete

In this section on results by game played professionally by the esports athlete, similarly as above, the primary results will be considered first, followed by the secondary and tertiary categorisation results. As a last part of the section, a summary of the results will be provided as well as further explanation of the results of the categorisation by game.

4.2.1. Results by game of the esports athlete, primary categories

When comparing the athlete's tweets in the primary categorisation in terms of the game that the athlete plays professionally (five games in total: *Call of Duty*, *Fortnite*, *League of Legends*, *Counter-Strike* and *Dota 2*), it is noticeable that the percentages of tweets assigned to the categories varied considerably between the games (see Tables 6 and 7 and Figure 6 below). The largest range of variation was in INFORMATION SHARING, with a range of 27.34 percentage points between the highest (61.00%) and the lowest (33.66%) percentage assigned to the primary category. Despite the extensiveness of the range of variation, INFORMATION SHARING remained the most frequently occurring category in both cases. While there was fluctuation between the most frequent primary categories between the five games, INFORMATION SHARING dominated as the most common category in all games.

ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT was the second most frequently occurring category in four of the five games (*Call of Duty* as the only exception) and constituted over ten per cent of the tweets in all games (with a range of variation between 11.39% and 20.20%).

The tweet percentages assigned to DIVERSION differed considerably between the five games: in three games (*Call of Duty*, *Fortnite* and *League of Legends*) DIVERSION reached relatively high per cent numbers from 11.33% (*League of Legends*) to as high as 26.24% (*Call of Duty*). In contrast, DIVERSION was among the categories with the very fewest occurrences in two of the games, *Dota 2* (6.47%) and *Counter-Strike* (4.93%).

PROMOTIONAL percentages were the highest in *Call of Duty*, with 18.32 % of tweets and thus as the third most frequently occurring category in the game. In *League of Legends*, PROMOTIONAL was similarly the third most frequent category with 13.79 % of all tweets. In the other three games, a smaller percentage of tweets fell into the PROMOTIONAL category, especially in the case of *Fortnite*, where the athletes posted tweets with a primary promotional aspect in only 4.85 % of the tweets and the category

was thus the second-to-last category in terms of primary category frequencies of the game.

In the case of the category of INTERACTIVITY, four of the games produced results that put the primary category in the least or second to least frequently occurring category, with percentages ranging from as low as 2.99% (*Dota 2*) to 7.39% (*League of Legends*). However, among the esports athletes of the game *Fortnite*, INTERACTIVITY was the fourth most frequent category, with 10.68 per cent of the tweets representing the category in question.

Table 6. Primary categorisation in numbers and percentages by the esports athletes' game

Primary categorisations by game	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL	Total
<i>Call of Duty</i>	14	53	68	23	7	37	202
	6.93%	26.24%	33.66%	11.39%	3.47%	18.32%	100%
<i>Fortnite</i>	22	28	104	36	6	10	206
	10.68%	13.59%	50.49%	17.48%	2.91%	4.85%	100%
<i>League of Legends</i>	15	23	80	41	16	28	203
	7.39%	11.33%	39.41%	20.20%	7.88%	13.79%	100%
<i>Counter-Strike</i>	11	10	121	29	17	15	203
	5.42%	4.93%	59.61%	14.29%	8.37%	7.39%	100%
<i>Dota 2</i>	6	13	122	26	18	15	200
	3.00%	6.50%	61.00%	13.00%	9.00%	7.50%	100%

Table 7 clarifies the extent to which the percentages of tweets assigned to the categories varied between the games, that is to say the range of variation between the highest and lowest percentages. As can be observed from the table, especially the primary percentages of INFORMATION SHARING and DIVERSION ranged considerably between the games, with a range of variation of over 20 percentage points. In FANSHIP and INTERACTIVITY, the ranges of variation were the smallest when measured in percentage points. However, the percentages were also relatively small throughout the games in the said categories.

Table 7. Range of variation in the mean percentages of primary categorisations by the esports athletes' game

	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
Highest value	10.68%	26.24%	61.00%	20.20%	8.96%	18.32%
Lowest value	3.00%	4.93%	33.66%	11.39%	2.91%	4.85%
Range of variation	7.68 percentage points	21.31 percentage points	27.34 percentage points	8.81 percentage points	6.04 percentage points	13.46 percentage points

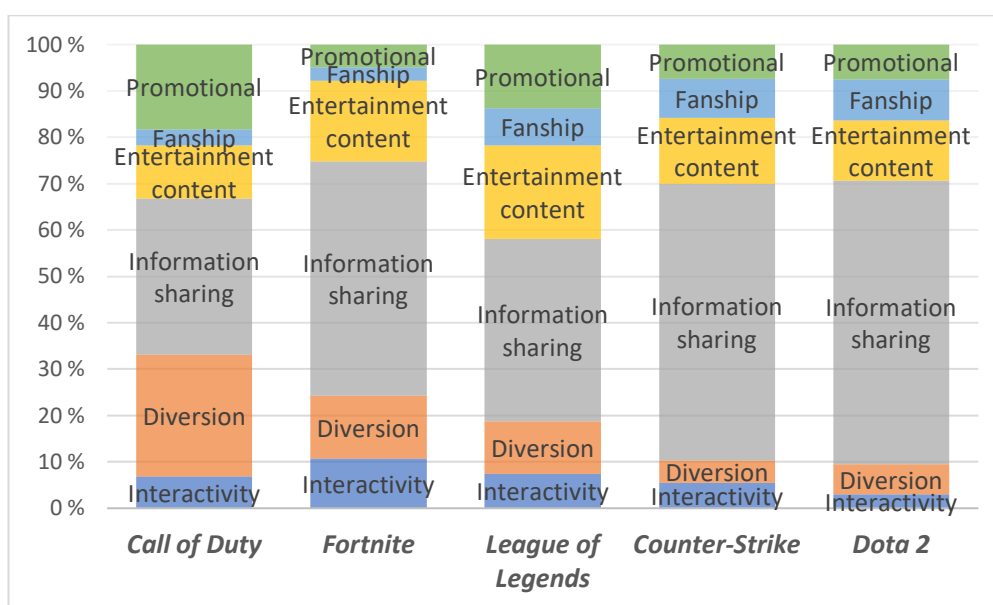


Figure 6. Primary categorisation in percentages by the esports athletes' game

Figure 6 illustrates the emphases in the category usages in the five games in the study. It is noteworthy that the games *Counter-Strike* and *Dota 2* had a very similar distribution of primary categories. Whereas INFORMATION SHARING dominated as the most frequently occurring category in all of the games, the figure also shows how in *Call of Duty* the particularly high levels of DIVERSION and PROMOTIONAL were close to the amount of INFORMATION SHARING, which was less dominant in *Call of Duty* than in the other games.

In terms of IBM SPSS Statistics results, the Kruskal-Wallis test demonstrated that there were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) differences between games in INFORMATION SHARING as well as in DIVERSION. In the other primary categories, the null hypothesis could not be rejected due to a higher p-value than 0.05. In INFORMATION SHARING, the post hoc test revealed that the statistically significant difference was between the games *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike*. In the case of Diversion, the difference was similarly between *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike*.

Possible explanations for the found differences between the different games' athletes' primary categorisations will be discussed under sections 5.2. and 5.3. in Discussion.

4.2.2. Results by game of the esports athlete, secondary and tertiary categories

In addition to the primary categorisation, the secondary and tertiary categorisations bring to the analysis the opportunity of showcasing the more subtle differences between the tweets in the five games. As with the primary categories per game, the study found fluctuation between the most frequently occurring categories, but nonetheless was able to pinpoint the most frequently occurring secondary and tertiary categories: ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT in first place in all but one (*Dota 2*, where PROMOTIONAL was slightly more frequent), PROMOTIONAL and INFORMATION SHARING. INTERACTIVITY as a secondary and tertiary feature was low, as in primary categorisation, with slightly higher percentages in two games (*Fortnite* 11,36% and *Dota 2* 10,97%). FANSHIP gained a low percentage of instances as in primary categorisation, with one exception: in *Counter-Strike*, FANSHIP was a secondary or tertiary feature in 14,47% of the tweets. DIVERSION received the lowest percentages of category assignment in all games in the secondary and tertiary categorisation.

Table 8. Primary, secondary and tertiary percentages, by the esports athletes' game

<i>Call of Duty</i>	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
primary percentages	6.93%	26.24%	33.66%	11.39%	3.47%	18.32%
secondary + tertiary percentages	6.99%	2.13%	24.32%	44.68%	5.47%	16.41%
<i>Fortnite</i>	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
primary percentages	10.68%	13.59%	50.49%	17.48%	2.91%	4.85%
secondary+tertiary percentages	11.36%	3.79%	17.35%	35.65%	5.36%	26.50%
<i>League of Legends</i>	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
primary percentages	7.39%	11.33%	39.41%	20.20%	7.88%	13.79%
secondary+tertiary percentages	6.58%	5.59%	20.07%	42.11%	5.59%	20.07%
<i>Counter-Strike</i>	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
primary percentages	5.42%	4.93%	59.61%	14.29%	8.37%	7.39%
secondary+tertiary percentages	5.59%	2.96%	16.78%	30.59%	14.47%	29.61%
<i>Dota 2</i>	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
primary percentages	3.00%	6.50%	61.00%	13.00%	9.00%	7.50%
secondary+tertiary percentages	10.97%	1.94%	17.74%	31.61%	5.81%	31.94%

0-9.99%	10-19.99%	20-29.99%	30-39.99%	40-49.99%	50-59.99%	over 60%

Table 9. Range of variation in the mean percentages of secondary and tertiary categorisations by the esports athletes' game

	INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
Highest value	11.36%	5.59%	24.32%	44.68%	14.47%	31.94%
Lowest value	5.59%	1.94%	16.78%	30.59%	5.36%	16.41%
Range of variation	5.77 percentage points	3.65 percentage points	7.54 percentage points	14.09 percentage points	9.11 percentage points	15.53 percentage points

As for the range of variation between the games, the ranges of per cents were somewhat smaller than in the primary categorisation. While the mean range of variation was 14.14 percentage points in the primary categorisation, the mean range for the secondary and tertiary analysis was 9.28 percentage points. As visible in Table 9, the largest ranges of variation were in the percentages of the highest and lowest values of PROMOTIONAL and ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT. DIVERSION as a secondary and tertiary category was low throughout the games and thus had a small range of variation of 3.65 percentage points.

In terms of IBM SPSS Statistics results, the Kruskal-Wallis test demonstrated that there were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) differences between the games in the category of ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT. In the other categories of the secondary and tertiary categorisation, the null hypothesis could not be rejected due to a higher p-value than 0.05. In ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, the post hoc test revealed that the statistically significant difference was between the games *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike* (the same games that showed a statistically significant difference also in the primary categorisation, in the categories of INFORMATION SHARING and DIVERSION).

4.2.3. Results by game of the esports athlete, summary and explanation of results of the three categorisations

INFORMATION SHARING was, throughout the games, the most frequently occurring category in the primary categorisation, with high percentages in each game. As the percentage was high, INFORMATION SHARING was already assigned as the category of a large amount of the tweets in the primary sense and therefore the usage of the category was already excluded in the secondary and tertiary senses for a large proportion of the tweets. Nevertheless, INFORMATION SHARING was detected as a feature of the tweet in 16.78%-24.32% of secondary and tertiary classifications. Hence, it was very often the main focus of the tweet to spread information regarding esports and the athlete as a professional esports player, whilst a large proportion of tweets contained information, on esports as well as other topics, that was supplementary to the main function of the tweet. An example of a primary INFORMATION SHARING tweet is Yiliang ‘Doublelift’ Peng tweeting “fk we lost because I was stuck underground all game, tomorrow I will rise above the soil and blossom” (tweet 10, 24 Feb 2020). Information is provided as a secondary feature to FANSHIP in Kuro ‘KuroKy’ Salehi Takhasomi listing the merits of a competing athlete Johan ‘N0tail’ Sundstein: “4 Majors 1 TI 2 Truesights Legend n0tail” (tweet 20, 17 Jan 2019).

In the case of **ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT**, the primary categorisation percentage values ranged from 11.39% to 20.20% and were therefore among the more frequently occurring tweet categories. For the secondary and tertiary categorisation, however, the percentages were considerably higher with values from 30.59% to 44.68%. **ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT** was the most frequently occurring category in the second and tertiary categorisation in four of the games (and very close to the most frequent in the fifth game, *Dota 2*). The result shows that the esports athletes in the study did post pictures, videos and memes as well as humorous comments, related to esports and the athlete as an esports professional, that had the main function of entertaining the audience i.e. the followers. While they did post such tweets, it was by far more common to have another category as the main focus (especially often this was **INFORMATION SHARING** or **PROMOTIONAL**) and use photos or videos to convey the message in the tweet rather than focusing mainly on the entertainment value that the addition of media provided. Similarly, usage of informal, humorous language took place often and was most often a way of commenting on subjects rather than simply joking in order to entertain. For instance, Seung Hoon ‘Huni’ Heo tweeted “Was not the best game but I still take that I had no death :)” (tweet 15, 28 Jan 2020) and so used a humorous tone and an emoji in reflecting on match performance.

In material utterly unrelated to esports and therefore classified primarily under **DIVERSION**, **ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT** was a typical secondary or tertiary feature, with the material often presented in a humorous tone and/or with the incorporation of media in the tweet. James ‘Clayster’ Eubanks, for instance, tweeted on the spread of the covid-19 virus and ended his tweet with “I’m callin it, ZOMBIES SOON!” (tweet 20, 28 Feb 2020).

While the category of **PROMOTIONAL** received 4.85%-18.32% of the tweets as the primary category, the percentage numbers of the second and tertiary analysis were generally considerably higher: 16.41%-31.94%. The result highlights the difference between the promotional aspect as a main character versus as a feature: **PROMOTIONAL** in primary categorisation was a straightforward property signalling a financial relationship between the esports athlete and the object of advertisement, while **PROMOTIONAL** in the secondary and tertiary categories was one without probable financial gain for the athlete in return for the advertisement. A very obvious promotion of the primary kind is exemplified by Marcelo ‘coldzera’ David tweeting “Always good to stay healthy with @prozis while I’m practicing” with the sponsor tagged, with a link to the sponsor’s

webstore, a discount code, a link to an Instagram picture of the athlete holding the sponsored product (a food supplement) and hashtags of the sponsor (tweet 11, 9 Feb 2020). A promotional aspect of the secondary kind can be observed in Kenny ‘kennyS’ Schrub tweeting with tagging of the tournament organisers “Props to @ESLCS for a great event despite the circumstances, they still managed to deliver perfect” in addition to other comments on the tournament (tweet 2, 1 March 2020).

Whereas a straight-cut financial relationship, such as in advertisements of sponsorship materials, was observable more strongly in only two of the five games (*Call of Duty* and *League of Legends*), a frequently occurring promotional secondary or tertiary nuance was detected throughout all of the games in the above-mentioned percentages. It is of interest to point out that the games with a small primary percentage of the PROMOTIONAL kind had the highest percentages in the secondary and tertiary categorisation of PROMOTIONAL, and, similarly, the games with higher numbers of straightforward promotional tweets had smaller percentages of nonfinancial promotional content.

As mentioned on **DIVERSION** in section 4.5.1., the primary percentages for the said category varied considerably, from as high as 26.24% to 4.93%. The outcome indicates that the athletes in games with higher DIVERSION tweets, *Call of Duty* in particular, commented on many issues outside their status as professional esports players, while athletes in other games, especially *Counter-Strike* with the lowest DIVERSION rate, focused more strictly on esports-related topics. In all of the games, the secondary and tertiary DIVERSION occurrences were very scarce (5.59%-1.94%), signalling that, when discussing topics on esports, the athletes typically stayed strictly on topic rather than meandered into additional topics on the side. An example of primary DIVERSION is Turner ‘Tfue’ Tenney tweeting “I just got my wisdom teeth out and they won’t let me drive home” (tweet 18, 25 February 2020). In a tweet by Kenny ‘kennyS’ Schrub, the DIVERSION is secondary to INFORMATION SHARING, when he first expresses disappointment for no audience being allowed into an esports tournament and goes on to comment also that “I was dreaming about seeing my favorite football team in Champions League and when it is about to happen, no crowd, me really unlucko” (tweet 1, 2 March 2020). Here, the tweet discusses both a topic related to esports (the tournament with no audience) and a topic unrelated to esports (a football competition with no audience).

As one of the least frequently occurring categories in all categorisations, **INTERACTIVITY** received approximately one tenth of the classifications in maximum

(10.68% in *Fortnite* in primary and 10.97% in *Dota 2* in secondary + tertiary categorisation) and less in other games. It is noteworthy that in four of the games, the numbers of primary versus secondary and tertiary numbers were very similar to each other in INTERACTIVITY (with less than a per cent points difference in each game, the smallest difference being in *Call of Duty* with primary 6.93%, secondary + tertiary 6.99%). The indication here is that the athletes, while not very prone to interact on their Twitter frontpage in the data, were typically as likely to interact directly as the main focus of the tweet, for instance ask direct questions from the followers, as to supplement their tweets with interactive elements, such as questions with a promotional aspect.

Many of the athletes were as interactive in asking direct questions from the followers on topics somehow related to esports (in which case INTERACTIVITY was the appropriate category) as in asking questions utterly outside the scope of esports (with DIVERSION, then, as the primary category and Interactivity as a secondary category) and the games therefore had similar INTERACTIVITY results in the different categorisations. Primary INTERACTIVITY is exemplified by Danny ‘Dubs’ Walsh asking his followers on an update to his own game, *Fortnite*: “Wait so in the update what’s all added to comp?” (tweet 12, 20 Feb 2020). A question unrelated to esports, by an athlete in the same game, is Cody ‘Clix’ Conrod asking “yo what class r u in rn” (tweet 11, 26 Feb 2020) and thereby interacting with his followers on a DIVERSION topic, what school class they have going on at the moment.

The only game not to have almost identical percentages in the primary versus secondary and tertiary categorisation was *Dota 2*, which had the very lowest percentage of primary tweets of only 3.00%, but yet had a relatively higher number of secondary + tertiary mentions, 10.97%. The indication in *Dota 2*’s case is that the athletes did not engage directly in conversations on their Twitter frontpage but quite rarely, while they were more prone to, for instance, provide information on an esports subject and, as a side note, thank followers for their support. Such a tweet is for instance Ludwig ‘zai’ Wählberg announcing that it is time for the first Major tournament in *Dota 2* and writing “Thx for kind & nice words” (tweet 3, 27 Jan 2019) and so thanking his Twitter followers for their interactions towards him.

Overall, **FANSHIP** was the category to receive the least amount of even single slightly higher percentages assigned to it (with only one example of a percentage of more than ten per cent: 14.47% in *Counter-Strike* in the secondary + tertiary categorisation). As all of the percentages of the category in all games were quite low, so

were the percentage differences between primary versus secondary and tertiary categorisations of each game. However, there were two emphases to be found: a lower percentage of primary mentions with a higher percentage of secondary and tertiary percentages, and vice versa. The former situation was detectable in the cases of *Call of Duty*, *Fortnite* and *Counter-Strike*. In the aforementioned games, the athletes tended to mention the competing players or teams as a side note of the main focus of the tweet, for example in providing match results and tagging the competing team in the tweet. For instance, Olof Kajbjer ‘olofmeister’ Gustafsson tweeted “Lost 2-1 to NaVi, felt like we could have won that one! Playing Renegades tomorrow night.” (tweet 7, 24 Feb 2020) and thus mentioned two competing teams (without tagging them) in addition to providing information on matches.

In *League of Legends* and *Dota 2*, with the opposite distribution of a higher percentage of primary mentions and a lower percentage of secondary and tertiary percentages, the competing player or team tended to be mentioned as the very focus of the tweet. In such cases, the tweet’s main idea was, for instance, on commenting on the performance of a competing player, often in a praising tone. Henrik ‘Froggen’ Hansen gave praise to a competing team’s player by tweeting that “im a jiizuke fan” (tweet 5, 23 Feb 2020) and so declaring himself as a fan of the player in a tweet particularly overtly of the primary FANSHIP kind.

4.2.4. Comparison of the IBM SPSS Statistics results

As noted earlier, there were statistically significant results in the categories of INFORMATION SHARING and DIVERSION in the primary categorisation, and in ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT in the secondary and tertiary categorisations. In each of the said cases, the statistically significant difference was between the games of *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike*.

When it came to the total numbers of the categorisations when compared by game, the SPSS analysis revealed more statistically significant differences than in the separate categorisation distributions: in the total numbers, a statistical significance was found in four of the six tweet categories. According to the Kruskal-Wallis test, there were significant differences between games in the total numbers of INTERACTIVITY, DIVERSION, ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT and FANSHIP. The two categories where the null hypothesis could not be rejected were INFORMATION SHARING and PROMOTIONAL,

indicating that the total differences between athletes' games in terms of the said two categories did not differ enough between games to be statistically significant.

In INTERACTIVITY, the post hoc test specified that the significant difference was between the Twitter usage of athletes in games *Fortnite* and *Counter-Strike*. In ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, the difference was between *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike* as well as between *League of Legends* and *Counter-Strike*. In the case of FANSHIP, the difference was between *Fortnite* and *Counter-Strike* as well as *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike*. Therefore, the statistical difference, throughout the categorisations, was between *Counter-Strike* and another game, most often *Call of Duty*. The only game not mentioned in the pairwise statistics was *Dota 2*, which, as visible in Figure 6, was quite similar to *Counter-Strike* in its category distribution and hence dissimilar than the other games in many of the categories, while not dissimilar enough for a statistical significance. The reasons as to why *Counter-Strike* had a statistically significant difference in many of the categories stems plausibly from many reasons, such as the nearness of important tournaments or the lack of such, as will be discussed in the next chapter, Discussion.

In the case of DIVERSION, the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated differences between games ($p < 0.05$), but a closer look via the post hoc test did not find significant differences between any two game-based groups pairwise; the reason for such a result may be due to various reasons. For instance, the result can stem from that the games played by the athletes had a weak effect globally in the case of DIVERSION (the p-value of DIVERSION in the Kruskal-Wallis test was 0.048 and thus close to the significance limit of 0.05). Without the Bonferroni correction and its adjusted significance (Bonferroni correction discussed in 3.2.4.), the unadjusted p-values were below 0.05 in pairwise comparisons between *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike* as well as between *Call of Duty* and *Dota 2*, giving some insight into possible emphases in the overall significant, pairwise insignificant results; containing similar tendencies as the other, statistically significant results.

5. Discussion

In this chapter, the results of the study will be discussed, with provision of possible reasons for the category frequency differences as well as differences between the results by game. The results of the total data in the three categorisations will be considered first in 5.1., followed by a further scrutiny into different types of tweets inside the most frequent category, INFORMATION SHARING, in the five games in 5.2., followed by

discussions on the results by game in terms of categories with statistically significant results as 5.3. Next, the results will be contrasted with results of the earlier study on the Twitter usage of traditional sports athletes in 2010, namely the Hambrick et al. study in 5.4. Lastly, ideas for further studies are presented in section 5.5.

5.1. Discussion on the results of the primary, secondary and tertiary categorisations

The results of the present study suggest that the most followed esports athletes use Twitter with the main purpose of informing followers on topics regarding esports, their personal career, opinions on esports as well as their skills and status as professional esports players. In their choice to focus to tweet content that is dense in esports-related information, the athletes demonstrate that they are aware of the main reason for their substantial Twitter following, which is, naturally, their high performance, success and fame in esports contexts and the professional status supplied by the success. Thus, they provide the Twitter followers with content and information that, most often, does not stray from esports, but that enhances and broadens the experience of the follower interested in (and, for a large proportion, already watching) esports. For the followers yet not as acquainted with esports or the esports game in question, the information density helps the follower in gaining access to an understanding of the issue. As the athletes often share information that is from their own point of view, the information provides a ‘backstage pass’ to the feelings and thoughts of the athlete, creating an impression of intimacy and attachment towards the athlete. The information, thus, motivates the follower to engage in esports more as well as, even, to identify oneself as a fan of the followed athlete.

It should be noted that the athletes seem to use Twitter in a way that is more directed to fans and esports-acquainted individuals rather than directing their message to esports novices trying to grasp the ecosystem of an esports game; that is to say that the athletes share information that is provisional in augmenting the esports experience, with the principal source of information located elsewhere and already familiarised with by the expected followers. Such a choice in Twitter usage is visible in using Twitter in a way that leaves some of the contexts of tweets fully unexplained and thus undecipherable without the required background knowledge. Such tweets are exemplified by otherwise obscure tweets referencing a tournament situation (for instance Søren ‘Bjergsen’ Bjerg tweeting “I’m a tank oink oink”, tweet 8, 9 Feb 2020, and so referencing his game’s characters after match; Ludwig ‘zai’ Wåhlberg posting a smiley face after tournament success, tweet 10, 15 April 2018) and remarking on changes in their professional career

(exemplified by Danny ‘Dubs’ Walsh’s long public apology, discussing his usage of a racial slur during a live stream, without actually stating what had happened, tweet 2, 29 Feb 2020). There are, naturally, information-oriented tweets in the data that do not require such levels of acquaintance with the topic to be understood and can be read by more casual friends of the esports scene.

As INFORMATION SHARING emerged from the annotation as such a prominent category, an own section is devoted to a closer scrutiny into the types of tweets containing esports information; such division is presented in section 5.2.

In conveying the esports information to the followers, the athletes very often make use of entertaining aspects, such as videos, photos, memes and humorous language. In presenting the information in an entertaining way, the athletes can be seen to provide escapism to the followers as well as make the information easily consumable for the followers. The choice strengthens the likelihood of keeping the followers interested and eager for more material and thus maintaining the current followers’ followership and helping to attract new ones as well. Additionally, the athletes enrich their Twitter account by occasionally posting esports-related content with the main function of entertaining, such as photos, videos or humour without a notable informative value, quite possibly to lighten the mixture of the athlete’s Twitter feed.

In posting tweets with humorous language, the level of how easily detectable the humorous remark is and thus how likely for the followers to interpret the tweet as containing humour may vary much. The data of the study contained humorous language that was overtly marked as to be taken humorously: the athletes often used various emojis expressing laughter and phrases such as *lol*, meaning *laughing out loud*. As one of the functions of *lol*, Uygur-Distexhe (2012, 400) mentions "to underline the comic or ironic aspect of a comment". An example of such easily detectable humorous language is Syed ‘Sumail’ Hassan tweeting “End me lol” (tweet 6, 23 Aug 2019) after a loss in a tournament. Less easily detectable humorous language, but also marked as humorous by emoji usage, is a sarcastic tweet by the same athlete: “thanks for this new game mode i love to update my dota 2 game every 30 minutes :)” (Syed ‘Sumail’ Hassan, tweet 18, 19 Dec 2018, emoji as in original).

In addition to the information and entertainment content posted by the athletes on esports topics, the results of the study show that athletes do also post tweets that are wholly unlinked to their status as esports professionals, albeit such choices, as a whole, are much rarer than on-topic content. The inclusion of DIVERSION-style tweets

may be considered as helping in bringing forth the personality and personal preferences of the athlete, presenting their Twitter usage as more relaxed, approachable as well as intimate and relatable, whilst similar effects are also reached with the esports-related information on own feelings and experiences. The sense of intimacy is particularly high in private life tweets such as the one by Kyle ‘Mongraal’ Jackson, where he informs his followers of the death of his family’s dog and writes “my whole family is devastated. Pretty much my whole life I’ve had her so this really hurts. RIP Bella” and a heart emoji, with a photo of the family dog (tweet 14, 20 Feb 2020).

The athletes, based on the results, seem aware of the requirement to maintain the DIVERSION content on a low enough level in order to cater to their Twitter audience: tweeting occasionally on unrelated issues may work to increase the intimacy between the follower and the followed, but a too large density of such topics may alienate fans and other esports enthusiasts looking for esports insights instead of general topics found easily elsewhere. An esports athlete tweeting more than moderate amounts of general likes and dislikes may, instead of welcomed intimacy in the parasocial relationship, be considered run-of-the-mill and the Twitter account mismanaged. As said, the athletes of the study did not lapse into such pitfalls in any of the fifty cases, but rather kept the ratio of unrelated content reasonable.

As important as a reasonable proportion in off-topic tweets is the proportion of promotional tweets, as such in a too large density can likewise drive away Twitter followers. The results of the study show that the athletes do indeed employ Twitter in promoting products, events and services that they or their teams are financially linked to in a straightforward manner (that is to say via sponsorship contracts and other collaborations), but not with a particularly high percentage. The athlete Oleksandr ‘s1mple0’ Kostylov promotes a gaming processor by tweeting “s1mple love @AMRyzen” (where the tagged account is of the gaming processor manufacturer) and including a photo of the athlete with the gaming processor (tweet 19, 14 Feb 2020).

Much more prevalently, the athletes tweet content that has promotional nuances, in two ways: promoting without probable direct financial gain for the athlete themselves and promoting with a very weak promotional aspect (where the object promoted is only mentioned as a small side note). The results indicate that, in addition to promoting objects because of probable ‘necessity’ to do so due to sponsorship contracts, the athletes employ the opportunity of mentioning other individuals, where credit is due (photographers, streamers, interviewers as well as own teammates) and often mention

tournaments in close temporal proximity as well as, for instance, share links to their own other social media (in tweets with information and insights already on Twitter).

Such secondary and tertiary mentions may work in the favour of the athletes in more complex ways than straightforward promotion: naming and tagging other professionals and events of the esports field, as with professionals in any business, aids the connections that the athlete is able to establish and thus may affect future collaboration options. For example, Kyle ‘Bugha’ Giersdorf expressed his gratitude after an esports content creator had aided him with a username issue: “Thanks to @AimDomYT for helping me secure Bugha on epic. Give him a follow & check out what he’s up to” (tweet 13, 18 Feb 2020). A less prominent secondary promotion is visible for instance in Jacky ‘Stewie2K’ Yip tweeting “IEM Katowice Media day”, a link to a photo on his Instagram account and tagging the photographer of the photo (tweet 10, 23 Feb 2020) – here, he is promoting the tournament, his own Instagram account as well as a photographer, all as a tertiary feature (ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT and INFORMATION SHARING as the primary and secondary category).

While not analysed in the study per se, it was noted that the athletes included hashtags in their tweets relatively rarely, and when they did, the hashtags were mostly used in association with promotional elements, be it primary promotion or secondary and tertiary promotion. That is to say that the hashtags were usually ones used by the sponsors for their products (in primary promotion) or were either the athletes’ teams’ hashtags or esports tournaments’ hashtags (secondary and tertiary promotion). A sponsored product hashtag is included in Thomas ‘ZooMaa’ Papatatto’s tweet on an energy drink manufacturer: “Drinking @GameFuel and shooting beams, you know the vibes. #gamefuelpartner” (tweet 13, 27 Feb 2020). The athlete’s own team’s hashtag is a part of the tweet in Dmitri ‘Mitr0’ van de Vrie writing “Joined @TeamLiquid #LetsGoLiquid” and the team’s logo (tweet 1, 22 Jan 2020). A tournament’s hashtag is employed by Christopher ‘GeT_RiGhT’ Alesund in commenting on a tournament and finishing by saying “Let’s enjoy the final and see who’ll become the winner #IEMKatowice” (tweet 4, 2 March 2020).

Zappavigna (2014a, 139) has described the usage of hashtags to function “as a form of metadata labelling the topic of the post so that it can be found by others” and Zappavigna and Martin (2018, 5) that “hashtags... have been seen as significant to construing opinion and sentiment in social media discourse”. The hashtags in the data, as exemplified above, are more promotionally oriented in nature than the more

conversational and informational functions attainable by hashtag usage. The only exceptions in the data were four tweets by *Fortnite* athletes giving their opinion on a topical issue in their game, namely the usage of C4 explosives in the game. Three of the athletes tweeted "#VAULTC4" (for example Timothy 'Bizzle' Miller, tweet 8), with *vaulting* referring to making the explosives unavailable. One athlete, Turner 'Tfue' Tenney, tweeted instead "#BUFFC4" (tweet 8, 29 Feb 2020), with *buffing* referring to improving the explosives. Therefore, the athletes partook in a conversation in a hashtag usage manner closer to the functions as described by Zappavigna as well as Zappavigna and Martin. Additionally, they used their influence as esports professionals (especially Turner 'Tfue' Tenney with close to 3 million followers) to help urge the game developers to address the issue. Similar usage of hashtags was not found elsewhere in the data. The four hashtag tweets by the *Fortnite* athletes were the only usages of hashtags in the data that were not associated with PROMOTIONAL tweets. Rather, the tweets in questions belonged to the category of INTERACTIVITY.

As mentioned already in section 3.2.2., the athletes may or may not use Twitter in interacting with other particular users such as other esports professionals or with regular users contacting the athletes; usage of the described kind cannot be assessed with the present data. Nevertheless, the results show that the athletes do sometimes choose to showcase interactions for the large audience (i.e. all of the viewers of the tweet) otherwise only visible to a small audience, in two forms: in retweeting tweets originally made by fans and other 'regular' Twitter users with small follower numbers (and thus with a smaller range with their tweets) and in tagging another account, most typically the game's own organisation, in a tweet with a question for the target account. For instance, Olof Kajbjer 'olofmeister' Gustafsson asked a question from the Counter-Strike Professional Players' Association: "Are agents skins going to be allowed at the major or no? @CSPPAgg can you give an answer?" (tweet 16. 7 Feb 2020).

Additionally, the athletes show their awareness and appreciation of the follower base by once in a while asking the followers to engage in conversation with the athlete by asking them direct questions (esports-related and on general topics). Henrik 'Froggen' Hansen began an esports-related conversation by tweeting "anyone else missing brutalizer? :/" and a picture of a former playable item in the athletes' game (tweet 2, 28 Feb 2020). A general topic conversation was initiated by William 'Meteos' Hartman in humorously asking "Does cheese change flavour when it's melted?" and a clickable poll for the other users to vote on the subject (tweet 17, 9 Feb 2020) – here, naturally

DIVERSION as the primary and ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT as the tertiary category are present in addition to the secondary INTERACTIVITY.

As noted, the interactions portrayed are showcased for all of the Twitter public to see. Especially in terms of one-on-one conversations, such as are had in tagging another account in a tweet and asking a question, could quite effortlessly be had privately with the direct message (DM) function of Twitter – and quite certainly most usually are, if the purpose is simply to ask a question. In choosing to rather have the conversation ‘in front of’ an audience, the emphasis rests more heavily on the athlete’s action in asking the question than on the possible answer by the ‘recipient’ account, while simultaneously publicly pressuring the recipient to respond (in comparison to a private question). Zappavigna (2014b, 36-37) takes a similar stance as the current study on the emphasis resting more heavily on the account asking the question than on the target account in stating that “[t]here is little social expectation that users reply to a given micropost, and even where a direct address is made to a particular user, the obligation to reply is relatively weak”. As the ‘recipients’ of such tweets in the athletes’ cases are, in all of the instances in the data, either the athletes’ games’ organisations or other esports athletes, the athletes can be said to employ such usage of INTERACTIVITY tweets in highlighting their active role in matters related to their own game, in publicly criticising their game or esports regulations and in showing comradeship between the athlete and a colleague. All such behaviour may help to increase the view of the athlete as an influential participant dynamically affecting their own game’s esports scene.

The results also showed that the athletes occasionally mention competing esports athletes in their tweets and may even use the tagging function that directs the follower to the other athlete’s Twitter frontpage. Similarly as in the display of comradeship portrayed in INTERACTIVITY usage in asking a fellow athlete a question (in which case a FANSHIP nuance would be present, if the athlete competes in another team than one’s own), any discussion in a positive or neutral tone is employable in the athlete strengthening the followers’ notions of the athlete’s good sportsmanship as well as appreciation of one’s colleagues. The data did not contain any mentions of competing athletes in a particularly negative manner and thus the usage as described above applies to all FANSHIP examples in the study.

The mentions of other athletes ranged from neutral comments on match reports with the competing team specified (in such a case FANSHIP was secondary or tertiary and INFORMATION SHARING the primary category) to tweets consisting of high

appraisals of a competing athlete and their skills, with the athlete or team in question possibly tagged in the tweet – tweets of such calibre were rare, but present in the data (for example Epitacio ‘TACO’ de Melo tweeting “Fnatic looking good. I like to watch the CS they play!”, tweet 16, 23 Feb 2020, and Artour ‘Arteezy’ Babaev praising his competitor by simply tweeting “Miracle bossssssSsss”, tweet 2, 23 Feb 2020). Praising other athletes in such a candid manner may contribute to a positive image of the athlete posting the tweet (as well as the image of the athlete praised) and consequently add to the admiration and attachment of fans towards the athlete, as well as the gratitude of the competing athlete receiving such non-mandatory praise.

The ways in which the athletes mentioned the competing teams and athletes varied between longer contemplations on the competitor in full sentences to very short ways of complimenting and congratulating the opponent. The short compliments were often expressed by specific acronyms that are associated with esports contexts (as well as more general gaming and internet contexts): *gg* (*good game*), *wp* (*well played*), the combination of the two as *ggwp* (*good game, well played*) and *gl* (*good luck*). When the acronyms were used, another team was typically mentioned in the tweet and thus FANSHIP was present in the tweet containing one of the acronyms. As an example is Gabriel 'falleN' Toledo tweeting "Impressive @natusvincere wp Sick finals tomorrow gl both" (tweet 2, 29 Feb 2020).

5.2. Further scrutiny into INFORMATION SHARING in primary categorisation

As INFORMATION SHARING was so dominant in the primary categorisation of the tweets with 48.82% of all tweets ascribed to the category, a further scrutiny is in order to what types of tweets the INFORMATION SHARING category primarily consisted of and to what extent. Additionally, the differences in the tweets belonging to INFORMATION SHARING between athletes of different games deserve comparison not possible without a further division. The current section will focus on presenting and discussing a division of the main types of tweets inside the category of INFORMATION SHARING.

As explained in 3.2.2., INFORMATION SHARING as a primary category contained all tweets with the primary focus on providing information on esports-related issues, for instance match results, insights into game tactics, feelings about own performance as well as information on new updates to athletes’ Twitch streams. To gain a better understanding of how much the athletes focused on providing different kinds of information, the data annotations were revisited, by means of looking at the descriptions

for tweets and assigning further sub-types, when applicable. In a part of the tweets, the information provided was of a very specific kind, not easily annotated to a larger grouping; in such cases, the INFORMATION SHARING tweets were labelled into ‘Miscellaneous types of INFORMATION SHARING outside the scope of the above types’, as visible in Table 10 below. 65 tweets of the total 495 INFORMATION SHARING tweets fell into Miscellaneous tweets.

Table 10. Types of INFORMATION SHARING in primary categorisation

INFORMATION SHARING	Total tweets	<i>Call of Duty</i>	<i>Fortnite</i>	<i>League of Legends</i>	<i>Counter-Strike</i>	<i>Dota 2</i>
Comments on matches and tournaments from an insider's point of view	213	19	18	34	89	53
Links to own Twitch stream due to updating it	95	22	28	20	7	18
Comments on own game from an expert's point of view (on e.g. game updates, problems or as an esports game e.g. rule changes)	53	4	25	6	4	14
Announcements on major changes in own and/or team's careers	27	1	3	6	3	14
General insights into playing esports professionally (in interviews and tweets)	24	3	0	5	6	10
Own gameplay videos showcasing tactics	18	5	13	0	0	0
Miscellaneous types of Information sharing outside the scope of the above types	65	14	17	9	12	13
Total tweets in Information sharing (primary categorisation)	495	68	104	80	121	122

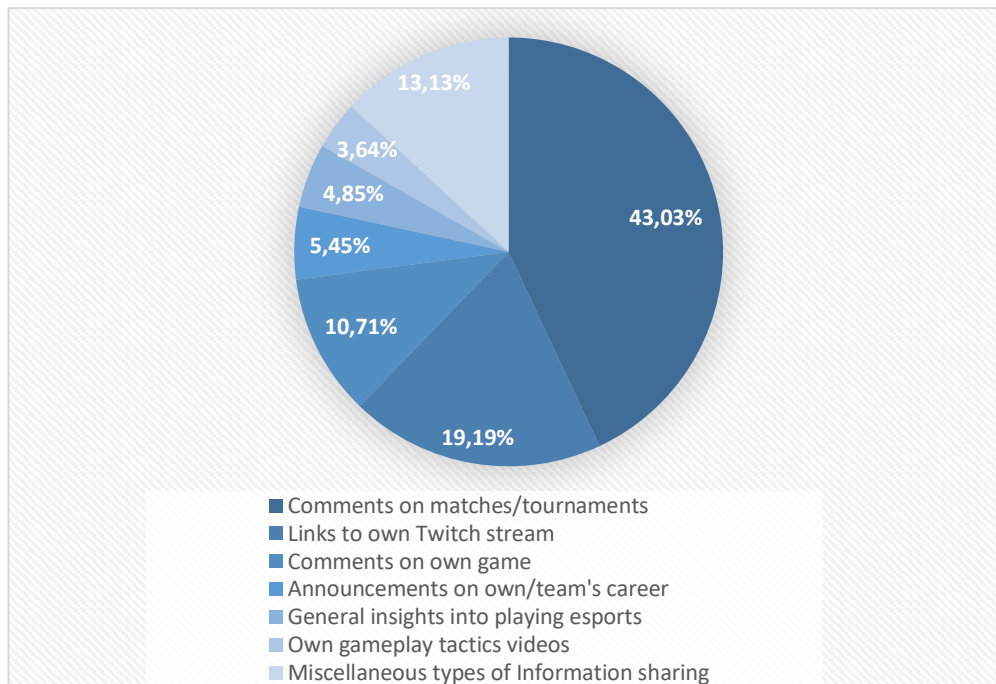


Figure 7. Percentages in types of INFORMATION SHARING, primary categorisation

As presented in Table 10 and Figure 7, the overall most frequent type of an INFORMATION SHARING tweet was providing insider insights into tournaments and matches, with 213 of the 495 tweets, amounting to 43.03%. What the type in question included were own match results, evaluations of own and own team’s performance, insight into own attitude towards matches to come and so forth. For instance, Tarik ‘tarik’ Celik tweeted during a tournament “Devastating loss... wish I could have done more. Was a tough first event but we still have a chance to qualify through the showdown.” (tweet 15, 17 Feb 2020). Athletes in *Counter-Strike* commented on tournaments most (89 tweets), *Dota 2* athletes also quite many times (53 tweets), followed by *League of Legends* (34 tweets) and, as the two games with least comments on tournaments, *Call of Duty* (19 tweets) and *Fortnite* (18 tweets).

The high percentage of comments on tournaments as well as the differences in its frequency between games is likely to be considerably affected by the time period of the data as well as by the length of the time span of the data.

For the time period of the data, the temporal proximity of notable tournaments is inclined to affect how many comments there are to make on the subject, as the subject is topical when major matches are near – when there are no tournaments to report on, any information on tournaments is either retrospective contemplation on past matches or forethought of future matches. In *Counter-Strike*, one of the year’s largest events, IEM Katowice, took place during the time period of the collected data and had 7

of the study's 10 *Counter-Strike* athletes' teams as qualified participants, leading to a high frequency of information on matches and tournaments. For all of the *League of Legends* athletes, their leagues were in mid-season, leading to a moderate frequency of tournament-related information, as the more crucial matches have still been quite far away in early March, when the data were collected, similarly in as in *Call of Duty* (while it should be noted that in *League of Legends* tournament-related information was provided in 34 tweets, whereas in *Call of Duty* in a smaller number of 19 tweets despite the similar situation of leagues in mid-season; not a large difference, but a difference nevertheless). In the case of *Fortnite*, the athletes of the game expressed overt wishes for the game developer Epic Games to announce a new World Cup, but as such an announcement did not take place during the time frame of the data collection, the *Fortnite* athletes had very little possibilities to report on tournaments.

In terms of time spans of the data, a longer time span and thus a less dense tweeting frequency naturally enable more tournaments to take place during the time span of the twenty or so latest tweets and therefore provide more opportunity for inclusion of tweets on match performance in the data. In the case of *Dota 2*, the time span of the data was particularly long, with several athletes (six of the ten athletes) with time spans of 1.5-2 years for the circa twenty latest tweets (while many other athletes in the data had only a few days as time span for the tweets on the frontpage). In *Dota 2*, the main championship, The International, takes place annually (in the summer and so temporally quite far away from the data collection in early March) and there are therefore longer periods of time with only less essential possibilities for victories. As so many of the *Dota 2* athletes tweeted only seldom, the data in the case of the game still consisted quite largely of INFORMATION SHARING in the form of comments on tournaments (53 tweets on tournaments of the 122 tweets categorised as INFORMATION SHARING).

In the scope of the current study it was not possible to assess whether the athletes were more prone to share information on tournament performance, if the athlete or team had succeeded or failed to succeed. However, in times of ultimate success of winning major championships, even athletes normally without tournament-related content may not miss the opportunity to tweet on the success.

The differences between games in comments on tournaments may naturally also reflect larger social media strategies of the athletes or, for example, eagerness to continue pursue one's career as an esports athlete: athletes that are in the beginning phases of their breakthrough as top esports athletes and/or are otherwise highly motivated to win

in tournaments may be prone to tweet on tournament results more. Similarly, the Twitter usage of more seasoned athletes that are contemplating life after retirement may reflect their future plans and thus be less dense with tournament content (length of an esports professional athlete's career discussed more in 3.1.3.). Such distinctions between athletes in different career phases might be more visible, however, in a comparison of individual athletes instead of between games, as each of the games in the study contained athletes in different phases of their career.

The numbers of links to own Twitch streams did not vary much between the different games, other than there were a slightly smaller number of such tweets in *Counter-Strike* as in the other games (7 tweets as opposed to 18-28 in the other games). Such matters are quite naturally affected by simply that not all esports athletes have a Twitch stream, while having a stream may be more essential in some games. Especially beneficial is having a Twitch stream in the case of *Fortnite*, where there is less stability and security in future financial gain due to the open-to-all tournament structure (cf. section 2.1.3.) and an active Twitch stream with sponsor logos may be essential for monetary reasons as well as in keeping hold of one's popularity, especially when there is a lack of championships. In fact, *Fortnite* had the highest number of tweets on links to own Twitch streams, with 28 such tweets altogether.

As mentioned in 3.2.3., the tweets with links to own Twitch streams varied in respect to how much text, and how clearly related to the contents of the actual Twitch stream, the tweet contained in addition to the Twitch link. For example, Matthew 'FormaL' Piper tweeted very shortly and clearly "Stream is on" with a Twitch link (tweet 4, 29 Feb 2020). Nate 'Nate Hill' Hill had a more cryptic way of writing about his Twitch links: "Never sold a bag but look like Pablo in a photo" and a Twitch link (tweet 11, 22 Feb 2020). Peter 'ppd' Dager had one of the longest texts to accompany a Twitch link: "gonna try playing dota underlords for a bit since season 1 is official out, enjoyed this game a bit in beta but haven't played in a while" (tweet 15, 25 Feb 2020).

In the case of comments on own game from an expert's point of view, game changes – as well as lack of game changes – affected the variation between the games: *Fortnite* and *Dota 2* stood out with more tweets on such subjects. As discussed in section 2.1.3., *Fortnite* is a much younger (esports) game than the other studied games and the *Fortnite* athletes struggled with gameplay problems maybe stemming from the hick-ups yet unfixed at the time of data collection. Timothy 'Bizzle' Miller listed problems in a tweet: "Fortnite rn is like reliving a nightmare... Double heavys, C4, Minigun, Tommy

Gun, Crazy Server Lag” (tweet 18, 26 Feb 2020). *Dota 2* athletes were faced with a change into the criteria for team inclusion into the game’s championship The International and were thus commenting on the subject. As the other games did not have such topical game-related issues at the time of data collection, such matters were discussed in few tweets.

As visible in table 10, *Dota 2* had an only slightly bigger number than the other games in announcements on major career changes (14 tweets, while 1-6 in other games) and in general interview-style insights into their professional player status (10 tweets, 0-6 in other games). As mentioned, *Dota 2* athletes had the longest average time spans in their tweets, even stretching 1.5–2 years, and had a high percentage of INFORMATION SHARING tweets in general. Due to sparse style of tweeting and the long time span that followed from it, there were quite probably more major career changes as well as interviews in the scope of the twenty latest tweets, affecting the larger concentration of such tweeted content. Kuro ‘KuroKy’ Salehi Takhasomi, a *Dota 2* athlete, wrote about an upcoming career change: “A small update from us: We will announce our new organisation before the next Major/Minor qualifiers, the team stays the same. Thank you for your patience” (tweet 12, 27 Oct 2019).

Athletes in only two games, *Fortnite* and *Call of Duty*, shared videos on Twitter showcasing the athletes’ own gameplay tactics, whereas the athletes in the other three games did not share such videos. The reasons for the difference are difficult to estimate, other than to point out the similarity in the game genres of the two games, first-person shooter and third-person shooter, which may be easier to show one’s personal gameplay skills in (as opposed to the multiplayer online battle arena, which may be thought of as more team-collaboration-oriented, especially versus the single player mode in *Fortnite*). *Counter-Strike* athletes, also playing a first-person shooter game, did not, however, share such videos. It should be noted that the games in which athletes did post gameplay tactics videos, that is *Call of Duty* and *Fortnite*, were also the games in which athletes tweeted most links to their Twitch stream, where such videos were also viewable; it may be, then, that the athletes in the said games, on average, had a social media strategy focused on gameplay video streaming rather than tournament success (where the two teams had the lowest numbers of tweets), possibly revealing the future plans for many of the said games’ top athletes.

As a closer look into the largest category of INFORMATION SHARING has been the focus of the present section, the next section 5.3. will revolve around the other

categories in the study, with reasons and contemplation on the differences between games. The focus will be on the categories that showed statistically significant differences between games and on the games with the said significant difference.

5.3. Discussion on statistically significant differences in results between games

The results of the study, as presented in chapter 4, showed that ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT had statistically significant differences between the athletes' tweets in the games *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike* as well as *League of Legends* and *Counter-Strike*. In *Call of Duty* and in *League of Legends*, the percentages of ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT were relatively higher (only in the secondary and tertiary categorisations in the case of *Call of Duty*; in primary as well as secondary and tertiary categorisations in *League of Legends*). In the *Counter-Strike*, the percentages of the category were relatively lower throughout the categorisations, indicating that the athletes in the game in question did not post as many photos, videos and humorous comments in their tweets than their colleagues especially in *League of Legends* and *Call of Duty*.

The particularly higher percentages of ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT in *League of Legends* was most probably the sum of many factors, among which that the data of the game contained one athlete (Martin 'Rekkles' Larsson) that had a creative Twitter usage style: he tweeted almost solely photos of himself, with a very short text that varied between holiday greetings, match results and emojis as reactions to match outcomes or no text at all. Therefore, all of his tweets had either primary ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT or the category in question as secondary and tertiary, contributing thus to the frequencies of the category.

The results of the study show that the primary category of DIVERSION was the highest with the athletes of *Call of Duty* (26.24 %). The same game's athletes' tweets also had the lowest percentage of INFORMATION SHARING (33.66 %) in its primary sense. The significant difference in both the primary categories of DIVERSION and INFORMATION SHARING was between *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike*.

The other games than *Call of Duty* in the study did not have percentages as close to each other in terms of the INFORMATION SHARING – DIVERSION ratio (not a clear-cut juxtaposition of category usage, but very roughly equal to information on esports topics versus information on topics unrelated to esports). The *Call of Duty* athletes in the data tweeted relatively often about issues related to their personal lives (for example Ian

‘Crimsix’ Porter tweeting “She said yes!!! I love her so much” after a marriage proposal, tweet 1, 10 May 2019) and about personal interests and preferences (for instance Damon ‘Karma’ Barlow tweeting “Gem cutter is the strangest movie I’ve ever watched lmaooo and its’ not even over yet”, tweet 9, 25 Feb 2020).

As with the athletes’ tweets in the game of *Counter-Strike* primary DIVERSION was particularly low (4.93 %) and INFORMATION SHARING high (59.61 %), one possible explanation contributing to the differences, as in the cases of many of the categories, is the temporal nearness of tournaments (as discussed in 5.2). During a busy season, tweeting on completely unrelated topics is less likely due to available other content.

In addition to the impact of being in mid-season of their league, the athletes in *Call of Duty* may have reasons to do with the Call of Duty League system that show in their overall tweeting topic choices: on a level unavailable in the other esports games in the study, the *Call of Duty* athletes have security brought by the franchise-league system with teams having permanent places in the league even in unsuccessful times. As success of their team in matches is thus less vital for the athletes’ careers than in the other games (in addition to the effects of the long seasons and so less pressure per match), the athletes may be less enthusiastic to solely discuss esports matters. Also due to the league system, all of the athletes that have gained a spot on a team are quite seasoned (cf. section 2.1.3. and Esports Earnings 2020) and consequently all of the ten *Call of Duty* athletes in the data were quite advanced in their careers during the time of data collection. As discussed in 3.1.3., the motivation of more seasoned athletes to discuss esports topics may be smaller than with younger, aspiring athletes in the early phases in their career.

The results of the study revealed that INTERACTIVITY was the highest in *Fortnite* and lowest in *Counter-Strike*, in terms of the total numbers (11.09% and 5.52%, respectively). There was a statistically significant difference between the athletes’ tweets in the two games.

In the case of *Fortnite*, almost all of the primary INTERACTIVITY tweets were esports-related prompts directed at engaging with followers, in the form of asking direct questions (for instance Kyle ‘Mongraal’ Jackson tweeting “Should I just stay up for the update”, tweet 17, 19 Feb 2020) or, for example, urging followers to retweet a particular tweet by the athlete (for example Turner ‘Tfue’ Tenney tweeting “RT if you want another VLOG today”, tweet 5, 3 March 2020). The types of INTERACTIVITY typical to *Fortnite* were thus rather tweets directed at interactive behaviour with followers in

general than INTERACTIVITY in its other forms and directions, that is to say spreading information by retweeting content by fans or contacting a particular Twitter user via a tweet.

In *Fortnite*, approximately half of the secondary and tertiary INTERACTIVITY occurrences were classified as DIVERSION in the primary categorisation, signalling that the *Fortnite* athletes employed interactive elements both related to as well as unrelated to esports.

The reasons to why *Fortnite* athletes directly engaged their followers to converse more than the athletes in other games may naturally arise from many reasons, among which is, once again, the fact that *Fortnite* athletes did not have a major tournament to inform about during the time of data collection and had therefore ‘space’ for other topics to discuss and enquire fans about. As explained in section 3.1.2., the athletes in *Fortnite* had a much lower average age than the athletes in the other games; the younger age may potentially contribute to differences in Twitter usage, as may the likely younger age of an average follower of the game (discussed in section 2.1.3.), albeit such matters cannot be ascertained with the current data.

The results of FANSHIP showed significant differences in the total numbers of all categorisations, between the athletes in *Fortnite* and *Counter-Strike* as well as *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike*. *Call of Duty* and *Fortnite* athletes’ tweets were less frequently categorised as having FANSHIP main foci or nuances as parts of the tweets (4.71% and 4.40%, respectively). Contrariwise, the athletes’ tweets in *Counter-Strike* were the most frequent to contain mentions of competing athletes as a part of the tweet (12.03%).

As mentioned, *Counter-Strike* was the game with athletes posting most tweets on tournaments comments (89 tweets, compared to 18-53 tweets in the other games, cf. table 10). The athletes in *Counter-Strike* were prone to discuss the tournaments in a manner that incorporated the competing team’s name in the tweet, thus partly explaining the game’s high secondary and tertiary FANSHIP numbers. Marcelo ‘coldzera’ David, a *Counter-Strike* athlete, tweeted “Another 2-0 win against @TeamLiquid and we secured Seed1 on groups here at @BLASTPremier thx for cheering for us guys!” (tweet 20, 2 March 2020).

In the case of any category, the primary category reflected the main focus of the tweet and thus for a tweet labelled as FANSHIP the very centre of the tweet revolved around a competing athlete or team, with other features potentially present in the tweet

but not in as pronounced position. The present data did contain athletes of the three games with higher primary FANSHIP praising competing athletes and declarations of being their fans (for example Henrik ‘Froggen’ Hansen in his tweet “im a jiizuke fan”, tweet 5, 23 Feb 2020). A similar superlative level of praise in tweets was not present in the data of the two games with the least FANSHIP tweets, *Call of Duty* and *Fortnite*, whereas the athletes in the games in question did, for instance, congratulate teams that had won matches, as did athletes in the other games.

One possible contributing reason for the slightly lower level of FANSHIP in *Call of Duty* and *Fortnite* could be newness versus long tradition: in the case of *Call of Duty*, the teams and the league system were brand new at the time of data collection, as discussed in section 2.1.3. The newness may have set more of the focus on own new team instead of discussion on competitors, even while the athletes of the game were all already seasoned. In the case of *Fortnite*, a long esports tradition was unattainable in another manner: the game is as of yet young as an esports game, as are the athletes, relatively still early in their careers despite the already attained level of success. Furthermore, due to the ‘open qualifier’ structure of *Fortnite* as an esports game, the set of competitors is not in any way as fixed as it is in the other games, similarly as the athlete does not have invariable teammates but rather operates independently. The athlete does not necessarily have one opponent to mention, as the game structure enables up to a hundred players per match.

In contrast, especially the oldest esports game *Counter-Strike*, as well as *League of Legends* and *Dota 2*, which also had more FANSHIP tweets than *Call of Duty* and *Fortnite*, had long esports traditions without new systems launched in close temporal vicinity to the data collection and have established teams that compete in the professional scene. The athletes gave praising remarks mostly on former teammates now in competing teams, at times expressing nostalgia on the shared history. Thus, athletes already with a career of considerable length and with a familiar, relatively stable situation in their game may be more prone to shift focus also on to their long-standing colleagues than athletes newer to the industry or faced with new circumstances. The *Counter-Strike* athlete Jacky ‘Stewie2K’ Yip tweeted on a former teammate, now in another team: “@coldzera One of the most dedicated & hardest workers I’ve played with. Glad to see you happier with where you are now. Hope we play again in Katowice” and included a photo of the athlete and the now competing athlete meeting each other in a tournament (tweet 17, 4 Feb 2020).

The results discussed in the present and the preceding section indicate that there may be differences in the ways that the esports athletes use Twitter that stem from the time period of data: especially the temporal proximity of important tournaments may steer the tweeted content into tweeting more densely on tournament-related topics, such as comments on the tournaments, appraisals of competing athletes, as well as motivate athletes otherwise with a sparse tweeting density to tweet. The lack of tournaments or other essential events in close temporal proximity may increase the relative tweeting frequencies of tweets of other types and thus give more room to tweeting on topics of general interest to the athletes, promoting sponsors' products and engaging followers in discussions. However, it is not possible to conclude which differences in Twitter usage arise from the time period in relation to esports events and which rather reflect differences in the athletes' Twitter usage in general, as the data of the study only covered one time period of a varying length. Another, contrastive study with similar perimeters but another time of the year could shed light on the level of influence of the time period versus the general tweeting style.

5.4. Comparisons with the Hambrick et al. study

In comparing the results of the current study and the Hambrick et al. study of 2010 (explained in section 2.2.3.), the most comparable results may be thought to be the main results of the Hambrick et al. study (as the present study did not analyse other similar results, i.e. Twitter usage in relation to the athletes' follower numbers or in relation to the athletes' total numbers of tweets) and the primary categorisation of the present study. The reason for the comparability of the primary categorisation is due to the fact the Hambrick et al. study did not consider such nuances of tweets that are analysed in the secondary and tertiary categorisations and that consequently appear in the total numbers of the categorisations as well. The main findings of the Hambrick et al. study and of the primary categorisation of the current study are listed in the tables below, in percentages and in numbers.

Table 11. Comparison of the main results of the (primary) categorisations in the Hambrick et al. study (2010) and the present study

Main results of the categorisation in the Hambrick et al. study (2010)					
Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Content	Fanship	Promotional
34% (671)	28% (545)	15% (298)	13% (254)	5% (92)	5% (102)
Main results of the primary categorisation in the present study					
INTERACTIVITY	DIVERSION	INFORMATION SHARING	ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT	FANSHIP	PROMOTIONAL
6.71% (68)	12.52% (127)	48.82% (495)	15.29% (155)	6.31% (64)	10.36% (105)

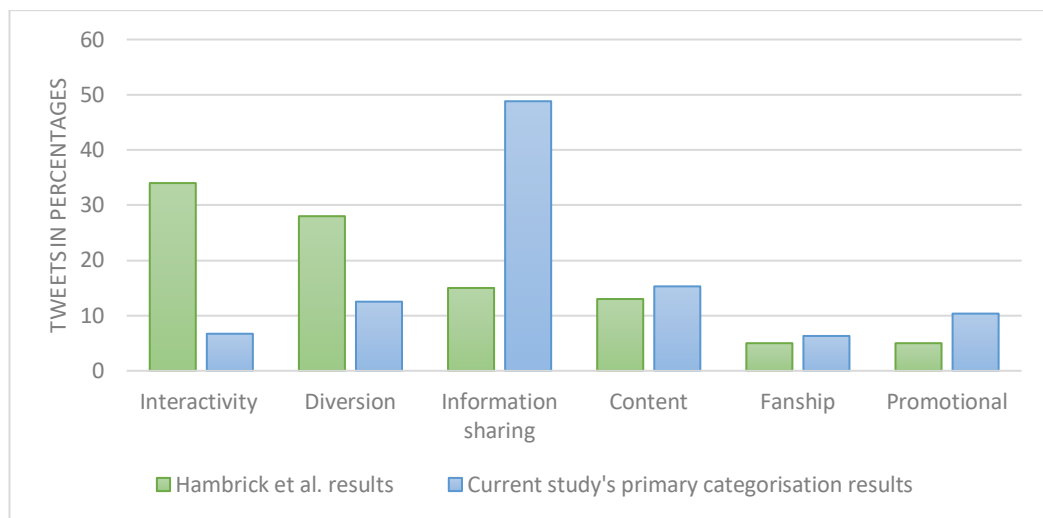


Figure 8. Comparison of the Hambrick et al. (2010) results and the current study's primary categorisation results, in percentages by category

As seen in Table 11, Figure 8 and briefly mentioned in section 2.2.3., Interactivity was the most frequently occurring category in the Hambrick et al. study, with 34% of all tweets, according to Hambrick et al. “indicating that athletes use Twitter as a medium for direct interpersonal communication with friends and fans” (Hambrick et al. 2010: 461). Quite differently, the category of INTERACTIVITY in the present study was the category with second to least tweets, 6.71%. The difference between the results cannot, however, be considered too straightforwardly, for instance to indicate that the esports athlete of 2020 used Twitter in a less interpersonal way than the traditional sport athletes of 2010. It may, nonetheless, mean that in 2010 it was easier to showcase one’s interactivity in Twitter to the large audience i.e. people seeing the account’s tweets.

As mentioned in sections 2.2.3. as well as 3.2.2., in 2010 all of the replies to other users appeared on the frontpage of the Twitter account writing the reply (the way to reply was to start one's tweet with an @-sign and the username of the other account and then write the reply), whilst in 2020 all of the replies and comments appeared under the tweet that was commented, with all of the other comments on the tweet. As in 2010 replies were on the athletes' frontpages, the Hambrick study could use their category of Interactivity for "professional athlete's direct communication with fellow athletes and fans" in the form of "conversations athletes have with other Twitter users via direct messages or responses to posted tweets" (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460). As more thoroughly explained in section 3.2.2., the replies in 2020 only appeared as explained above.

In the Hambrick et al. study, as replies as a form of interpersonality were more accessible by the viewers of the Twitter account and quite showcased in 2010, it may be that some of the athletes in the 2010 data had solely replies on their frontpage, if they were active in conversing with other Twitter users. Whether singular athletes in the Hambrick et al. study only had replies on their frontpage and thus increased the overall percentage of Interactivity is unknown, as data on the level of individual athletes in the Hambrick et al. study are unavailable. Similar levels of interactivity may have applied to some of the esports athletes in the current study; however, due to the difference in the Twitter features, such forms of interpersonal activity were undeterminable from the data available on the frontpage.

What constituted the present study's INTERACTIVITY percentage of 6.71% in the present study were esports-related direct questions for people viewing the tweet, part-takings in social media challenges as well as retweets of fan's shows of support. Of these, only direct question for followers are mentioned in the Hambrick et al. study, in the sense of "direct communication with fellow athletes and fans" in the description of Interactivity as a category (Hambrick et al. 2010, 460). Part-takings in social media challenges may have been less common in 2010, due to the developmental phase in the conventions of social media (for instance, not as common practice yet to use hashtags to group challenge participations under the same topic, not possible to add pictures or video often needed in such challenges, as well as the more restrictive 140 character limit).

For the case of retweeting fan's shows of support as a type of Interactivity in the Hambrick study, there is no mention of such, as there is no mention of retweeting in any form. In the data of the present study, retweeting is such a prevalent practice (more discussion on the popularity of retweeting in section 3.1.1.) that it had to be considered

as parallel to original tweets by the esports athletes – retweets were categorised similarly as original tweets, with focus on what the content on the tweet was and categorisation annotated in respect to that instead of focusing simply on the form.

While Hambrick et al. makes no mention of retweeting, the feature was already available in 2010 (Paßmann 2019, 5, Stone 2009) in addition to the older form of signifying a retweet by adding ‘RT’ and the username of the Twitter account retweeted in the tweet (different variations of the older, quite versatile retweet conventions discussed in boyd, Golder and Lotan 2010, *passim*). As the Hambrick et al. study does not mention retweeting, the study does not take a stance on how to approach the matter and how to categorise such tweets; it is unknown whether the data in the study contained retweets, while it seems unlikely for the data to have been completely void of such form of Twitter usage.

The current data, with a large magnitude of retweets (both with additional commentary by the esports athlete and without, cf. 3.1.1.) can in a way be seen as filled with interactive actions, albeit it is not so visible in the actual INTERACTIVITY percentage: all retweeting can be analysed as being a form of interpersonal conduct in its very nature of forwarding content made by other Twitter users. boyd, Golder and Lotan (2010, 1) view “the practice of retweeting as a way by which participants can be “in a conversation”” and argue that “[s]preading tweets is not simply to get messages out to new audiences, but also to validate and engage with others”. Therefore, the usage of Twitter by the esports athletes may be viewed as quite interactive indeed, as it was also in the Hambrick et al. study.

As can be seen in Table 11, Diversion was the second most frequent category in the Hambrick et al. study with 28% of the tweets ascribed to it, explained in the Hambrick et al. study by noting that the traditional sport athletes “engage in non-sport-related activities and frequently tweet about those activities, discussing everything from what they ate for dinner to what movies they want to see”(2010, 461). The study also noted a difference between the athletes’ own Twitter usage and the image portrayed by the “mainstream sport communications”: “[r]ather than sanitized, impersonal communications about the latest game filtered through a team’s public relations department, professional athletes’ tweets tend to be more direct and address topics beyond sport” (Hambrick et al. 2010, 463).

The present study had a lower percentage of DIVERSION tweets, 12.52% of all tweets in the primary category, indicating that the esports athletes of 2020 may have

diverged less from the topic of their own field than the traditional sports athletes of 2010. It is naturally possible that the Twitter usage of the esports athletes may have been less ‘free’ than that of the Hambrick et al. athletes, due to reasons such as the 2010 novelty of social media and hence less established expectations on what to tweet about, teams’ social media strategies (which may yet have been less developed in 2010) and the 2010 smaller number of Twitter accounts overall and therefore followed accounts may have been less compartmentalised in terms of ‘themed’ accounts based on subject of interest.

In terms of Diversion in the Hambrick et al. study and the category definition differences between the two studies, it should be noted that, contrary to the category division in the present study, the Hambrick et al. study did not distinguish between whether a tweet was sport-related or not for it to be annotated into the categories of Interactivity or Content in addition to Diversion. The present study opted to use its category of DIVERSION, when no linkage to esports or the athlete’s status as a professional esports athlete was present (as described to further detail in section 3.2.2.). It is then quite probable that the percentage of Diversion tweets in the Hambrick et al. study would have been considerably higher, if such tweets that did not contain any references to sports but were ascribed to Interactivity and Content would have fallen into Diversion instead, widening the difference between the results of the present study and the Hambrick et al. study ever so much more in terms of Diversion.

When it comes to the category of Information sharing, the Tables 11 and 12 show the large contrast in results between the Hambrick et al. study and the present study: in Hambrick et al. the category of Information sharing received 15% of tweet classifications (2010, 461) and the tweets in the present study were categorised into the primary INFORMATION SHARING category in almost half of the instances, with 48.82% of the tweets. The Hambrick et al. study stated that “[o]ne might assume that professional athletes would tweet most often about what has increased their stature in the public’s eye – the sports they place”, but that “athletes in the current study were inclined to tweet more frequently about nonsport subjects” (2010, 465). The situation in the present study is, contrarywise, as Hambrick et al. noted as the likely assumption: that the 2020 esports athletes, indeed, tweeted most about the subject of their livelihood.

The reasons for the vast differences are most probably manifold, with factors such as the smaller number of Twitter accounts in the Twitter of 2010 still in process of forming its usage conventions, leading to a less compartmentalised usage of Twitter and therefore less need to stay on topic (the same issue as discussed in the case

of Hambrick et al.'s higher number of Diversion, but for opposite reasons). Additionally, the tweet character limit of 140 may have left for less room for providing information than the higher 280 characters available in 2020; the bigger number of characters available for tweets may enable and even encourage more thorough ponderings on, for instance, one's tournament performance without less worry of running out of space. When it came to esports information such as providing match results as well as thoughts before and after tournaments, one of the explanations is simply that tweeting in 2020 was more effortless, as the athletes were likely to have smart phones with Twitter applications within reach constantly and, as they are esports athletes, they had access to computers when training as well as during matches and breaks. Without the other reasons provided for concentrating on esports-related content, such readiness to tweet could amount to high numbers in DIVERSION-style tweets on the esports athletes' everyday experiences.

In percentages, the category of Content in the Hambrick et al. study and ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT in the present study were quite close: Content with 13% and ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT with 15.29% of all tweets in the studies. Nevertheless, it should be recalled that the definitions for the categories differed in some respects between the studies. According to the Hambrick et al. study's category usage, Content referred to "links to pictures, videos, and other Web sites such as an athlete's blog or a team's official Web site" (2010, 460) and was thus applied to incorporate all such tweets and nothing outside of the scope described. The present study opted to use the category, in its primary sense, as tweets with esports-related content such as photos, videos or humorous language and therefore entertaining followers as the objective of posting the tweet rather than sharing information (the differences explained more thoroughly in section 3.2.2.).

Due to the different usage of the category, the Hambrick et al. study deduced that "athletes used Twitter to direct readers to personal pictures, Web sites, and blogs located elsewhere on the Internet" (2010, 461) and that "[u]sing links to other sites, athletes can extend the interaction with their followers – pulling them in with a quick sentence or two and inviting them to continue the "conversation" via other applications" (2010, 465). In the present study, the ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT tweets did not necessarily direct the users away from Twitter, as the media could be inserted into Twitter and the "conversation" could be had under the tweet in question, as in 2020 it was possible to interact by liking the tweet and commenting below it. Naturally, the 2020 data included links to YouTube and the athletes' Twitch stream, but in such cases the actual content in the videos (whether information, entertainment, diversion or promotion) was assessed in

deciding the most appropriate category rather than the simple act of including a link in the tweet as a basis for category selection.

As stated earlier in section 3.2.2., the Hambrick et al. study did not address the issue of where to categorise tweets with entertainment as the main purpose (although the study does mention that Diversion-style tweets may entertain followers; 2010, 464). Such a choice widens the gap between the usage of the categories of Content and ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, as in the present study, entertainment as an aspect of the tweet was at the very core of the category.

In addition to the differences in categorisation principles, other reasons may help to explain the results with their similar numbers at first glance, but quite large differences in reality. In Content, all links to pictures, videos and websites were included; adding all esports athletes' tweets with such media content, also those unrelated to esports, into ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT would have resulted in the most frequently occurring category by far. Among the reasons for why there were so much less tweets with links to pictures, videos or websites in 2010 as opposed to tweets including such content in Twitter in 2020 were evident rationale as that it may be more motivating to add content directly to Twitter than to provide links to the same material. Furthermore, the technological advances in the ten years' time have eased the addition of pictures and videos into online destinations, as pictures and videos often are effortlessly in the device Twitter is used with, if not even the very device that the media content is produced with; video files no longer take up too large a space in devices.

Factors such as the 2010 tweet character limit and the lack of ability to add the media files directly into Twitter may have also influenced the usage of Content versus ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT in that because of the length of the link, there was not much room to include other features in the tweet. The 180 characters needed to include the link as well, for instance, a username of another Twitter account, if the tweet had a double function as a reply and sharing a link to the other user. The Hambrick et al. study does not clarify how such cases of reply+link would have been classified, under Interactivity or Content. In 2020, the 280 characters available were not diminished by the inclusion of media content and a large proportion of tweets were enriched by visual elements. Due to the possibility of lengthier tweets, many tweets had a complex structure incorporating nuances of several categories besides the picture or video. As a consequence, the primary category of the multimedia tweet was often other than ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, with

the category in question always a secondary or tertiary category and only primary if no more emphasised categories were present.

In the usage of Fanship, the two studies produced quite similar percentages: 5% of the tweets in the Hambrick et al. study and 6.31% in the present study's FANSHIP category. According to Hambrick et al., the result indicated that "athletes did not spend much time communicating about sports other than their own" (2010, 462). Here, the inclusion of various sports instead of competing athletes and teams in the athletes' own sport is accentuated, whilst the Hambrick et al. study more accurately included "sports other than their own teams and teammates" in their category definition, be it inside the same sport or not (2010, 460). In the present study, the category of FANSHIP had a narrower scope of only including positive, neutral and negative mentions of other athletes and teams than their own, but inside esports nevertheless (as mentions of entirely different sports were viewed as a form of DIVERSION). As a result, the 6.31% of FANSHIP in the current study consists of esports athletes discussing their competitors, athletes that are more or less in parallel position in regard to them. The 5% of the Hambrick et al. study sport athletes, at least to a part (the ratio of mentions of own sport's athletes versus other sport's athletes is unspecified in the study), is comprised of mentions of athletes with no dimension of veritable competition between the mentioned and mentioning athlete.

Due to the inclusion of also mentions of athletes in other sports in the Hambrick et al. category of Fanship, the position of the athlete towards the discussed athlete or team may be of a fan towards an idol – also due to the inclusion of athletes in less known sports (what the study called "other sports", such as "mixed martial arts" (2010, 459)) with a small number of Twitter followers, as opposed to famous athletes with more than a million followers. Furthermore, as it was not required that the commented-upon athlete represent the same sport as the athlete posting the tweet, the athlete did not have to have a professional status in understanding the sport commented on, reinforcing the position of rather a fan and an idol than of two peers in some of the Hambrick et al. cases of Fanship. In the context of the present study, all FANSHIP tweets were examples of putting a competing athlete in the main focus of a tweet, with professional-level comprehension of the esports game played by the tweeting athlete. Most often the competing athlete was discussed in a positive manner, even with praise of the competitor (that can naturally be even to the extent of idolisation, despite the more equal standing). Even if the Fanship category had its differences in the two studies, the following Hambrick et al. notion applies to both cases: "Fanship tweets also present a

positive message to sport consumers – a message that not all professional athletes are focused solely on their own careers, but, like their fans, also respect other skilled and talented players and readily express such respect” (2010, 466).

The usage of Promotional as a category was among the most effortlessly translatable from the Hambrick et al. usage into the present study (for further explanation on the category, see section 3.2.2.). As seen in Table 11, the percentage of Promotional tweets in the Hambrick et al. study was 5%, interpreted in the study as that “athletes did not devote much communication to promoting or publicizing upcoming sport-related events and activities” (2010, 461) and that “[t]he limited number of such tweets represents an underutilized opportunity for sports organizations seeking to achieve marketing objectives through online social media” (2010, 466). In the present study, tweets were categorised as PROMOTIONAL in the case of 10.36% of tweets annotated as PROMOTIONAL in its primary, straightforward sense. Due to the similar usage of the category, the result can then be said to indicate that there were more tweets with promotional nature in the present data than in the 2010 data.

The larger percentage of PROMOTIONAL tweets in the present study may stem from multiple reasons, among which is the development of social media in the ten years in between the studies and, with respect to it, the development of social media strategies by professional teams and sponsors in capitalising on the possibilities. As esports is still a relatively new phenomenon, it has grown with sponsorships as always an essential component – as many sponsors have both traditional sport and esports teams and athletes under their sponsorship, both fields have been affected by the developing sponsor collaborations.

A part of the development of social media has also been the growing numbers of its usage and thus a greater opportunity for sponsors to gain visibility in the social platforms: in 2010, the number of monthly active Twitter users rose from 30 to 54 million; in early 2020, the corresponding numbers fluctuated between 326 and 353 million (Iqbal 2020). Similarly (while it should be noted that the athlete selection in the Hambrick et al. study did not base on follower numbers), the average number of followers in the Hambrick et al. study was 168 035 followers with over a million as the highest count, but a third of the athletes with less than 4 000 followers (2010, 462). In the present study, the average number of followers was 527 280, with 2.8 million as the highest count and the athlete with the very least followers had 143 000 followers. The statistics indicate the overall exponential rise of Twitter user numbers between 2010 and 2020, but also

provide further grounds for the differences in the Promotional percentages between the two studies: as the esports athletes in the present study all have a substantially large follower base and are ‘well known’ as popular professional athletes, they may also on average attract more sponsors and thus post more PROMOTIONAL tweets as a consequence of the collaborations.

In addition to the differences seen in the results of the two studies and the possible explanations provided above, there are many further possible rationale that may attribute to the differences in the two studies’ results. Such include the differences between the Twitter usage of traditional sport athletes and of esports athletes. The athletes in the Hambrick et al. study were, in a sense, more varied as a group, as they presented different sports (nine sports that are specified and a group titled as “other sports”, 2010, 459). The athletes in the present study are all within the single sphere of ‘esports’, whilst it, as ‘sports’, is an umbrella concept, with inclusion of five different games in the present study, all with their own ecosystems.

A related reason causing differences between the two studies is a quite natural one: who the athletes actually are, and on a higher level of data, what the group of athletes is composed of in terms of age, background culture and gender of the athletes and how the factors may influence their expectations of preferred tweeting style. Studies have shown that for instance vocabulary choices in tweets can have correlations with age (Nguyen, Gravel, Trieschnigg and Meder 2013) as well as gender (Bamman, Eisenstein and Schnoebelen 2014), when examined in very large amounts of data rather than on the level of individuals. Such factors of the athletes are not specified in Hambrick et al., other than that the study contained both female and male athletes (not stated explicitly, but interpretable from the mentions of famous female athletes in the data, 2010, *passim*). As discussed in section 3.1.2., all of the athletes in the present study were male. Further information on the Hambrick et al. athletes, such as the ages and background cultures of the athletes has not been provided in the study and cannot therefore be contrasted. For such matters in the present study, see section 3.1.2 as well as Appendix I.

A further factor that was a probable source for causing overall differences between the two studies’ results was the differences in criteria for inclusion of athletes in the study: in the case of the Hambrick et al. study, the athlete selection was based on a “stratified random sampling” (Hambrick et al. 2010, 459). In the present study, the selection of athletes is based on including all such currently active professional esports athletes that represented the 10 most Twitter-followed athletes in their game, in the 10

esports games with the largest Twitter following numbers (when combined from the 10 most followed athletes' follower numbers). Therefore, the present study only concentrated to investigate 'successful' Twitter usage in the sense that the esports athletes in the study had managed to gather and maintain a sizeable follower number in Twitter (more contemplation on reasons for a sizeable Twitter following in sections 2.1.3. and 3.1.3.). Hambrick et al. studied the usage of Twitter by the athletes with a broader dispersion, without the requirement of 'successful' usage follower-wise and therefore the centre of attention was slightly different. Whereas the scope of the Hambrick et al. study included a randomised sample, the current study opted to include the entire set fitting the criteria into the analysis.

5.5. Ideas on further studies on similar topics

Further studies on similar topics as the current one could be conducted by employing a similar content analysis, in the form of, for instance, a study comparing the Twitter follower numbers and seeing whether there is a correlation between follower number quantities and the most frequent tweet categories of the athletes. Such an examination was carried out in the Hambrick et al. study on traditional sport athletes (cf. section 2.2.3.), as well as a comparison of tweet categories with total numbers of tweets posted by the athletes. Such a study could bring forth the aspect of how general tweeting activeness and frequency relate to usage of the tweet categories. Naturally, the total numbers of tweets, as well as the follower numbers, may be connected to how long the athlete has been a professional athlete and therefore how far along they are in their career, a factor that may plausibly affect their tweeting behaviour. In the case of the suggested further studies, the athlete selection should have its basis in different criteria than in the current study; the study at hand only concentrated on the usage of Twitter by the most followed esports athletes that have thus employed Twitter in a successful manner in terms of gaining and maintaining a substantial follower base.

As the present study set its focus on Twitter, a similar content analysis could be conducted on the esports athletes that are most followed in other social media platforms (for instance Facebook, Instagram, Renren, VKontakte) and then contrasted with the present results. Alternatively, a content analysis could also focus on a same group of esports athletes across platforms. Such a study would give insight into how the athletes diversify their social media usage and to what extent the posted content is identical or

similar across platforms. The said research framework could provide information into how the athletes' preconceived notions about Twitter and other platforms may affect the tweeting behaviour in contrast to other platforms and for instance their expected audiences.

As a final idea on a further study is a similar content analysis as conducted here, but on the most followed professional esports teams instead of individual athletes and on how they employ Twitter. A comparison of the main foci as well as other central features found in the teams' tweets could be contrasted with the athletes' results in terms of the distribution of categories and on whether or not the teams' results indicate different emphases in categories. The contrastive study could furthermore uncover larger social media strategies shared by a team and its athletes, when applicable.

6. Conclusion

The present study investigated the Twitter usage of the most followed professional esports athletes by a means of a content analysis of the tweets into a primary category, as well as a secondary and tertiary category, when applicable. The study also compared the results of the categorisation in groups based on the game played professionally by the athlete. In the last section of the thesis, the research questions of the study are answered based on the results of the study, one question at a time.

1. How do the most followed esports athletes employ Twitter in terms of the main properties in their tweets?

The main property of the tweet, that is to say the category that the tweet was annotated into in the primary categorisation, was most often the category of INFORMATION SHARING, with 48.82% of all tweets. The athletes' main usage of the social media platform's tweets, then, was to share information on topics related to esports, whether in the form of insights into own team's tournament performance, informing the followers on new streams on their Twitch account or expert comments on one's own game. The second most frequent primary category was ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT with 15.29% of all tweets, indicating that the athletes did at times post tweets with esports-related photos, videos or humorous language as the most prominent feature in the tweet. The third most frequently occurring category was DIVERSION with 12.52% of tweets, demonstrating that the athletes did post tweets that were unlinked to their status as professional athletes, such as personal opinions on general topics and information on their private life.

PROMOTIONAL aspects were the main property in 10.36% of the tweets signalling that the athletes employed Twitter also in promoting for own and their teams' financial gain by tweeting sponsored material.

The two categories with least tweets assigned to them were INTERACTIVITY with 6.71% and FANSHIP with 6.31% of all tweets. Thus, the athletes relatively rarely asked direct esports-related questions or partook in esports-related social media challenges in their tweets. Similarly, the athletes infrequently commented on competing athletes and teams as the main property in their tweet.

2. In addition to the main property, what additional features do the athletes' tweets contain?

The most frequent category in the combined numbers of the secondary and tertiary categorisations was ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT with 37.02%. The result indicates that the athletes were prone to include photos, videos and humorous language as a feature in their tweets. The category that occurred the second most often was PROMOTIONAL with 24.81%. The indication here is that the athletes often used promotional aspects in the form of mentioning and tagging esports professionals, events as well as their own teammates in their tweets without straightforward financial benefits for themselves. INFORMATION SHARING was the third category that was relatively recurrent with 19.31%, which signals that sharing information was a common feature even when it was not the main property of the tweet, or when the information was unrelated to esports.

Comparatively more seldom, did the athletes' tweets contain nuances of INTERACTIVITY (8.31%), such as questions on topics unrelated to esports, or FANSHIP (7.29%), in the form of mentions of their competitors as a side note. The category that was the rarest to occur in the secondary and tertiary categorisation was DIVERSION with only 3.26%, signalling that when discussing esports issues, the athletes did not often stray from the topic.

3. What are the differences and similarities in the emphases of the athletes' tweets' main properties and additional features, when examined by game of the athlete?

There were statistically significant differences in the categorisation results, when compared in groups based on the game played professionally by the athlete. In terms of the categories of INFORMATION SHARING and DIVERSION, the significant difference was in the primary categorisation and between the games *Call of Duty* and

Counter-Strike. In *Call of Duty*, the percentage of primary INFORMATION SHARING was 33.66% and DIVERSION 26.24% of the tweets and in *Counter-Strike* 59.61% and 4.93%, respectively. In the data, then, the athletes of *Counter-Strike* tweeted more tweets focusing on esports-related information, whereas the athletes in *Call of Duty* focused relatively more on topics unrelated to esports.

In the case of ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, there were significant differences in the combination of secondary and tertiary categorisation results as well as in the total numbers of all categorisations. In the secondary and tertiary results, the difference was between *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike* and in the total numbers, between *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike* as well as *League of Legends* and *Counter-Strike*. *Call of Duty* and *League of Legends* both had relatively higher percentages of ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT (32.02% and 33.33% in the total numbers) and *Counter-Strike* a somewhat lower total percentage (24.06%). The result indicates that the athletes in *Call of Duty* and *League of Legends* were more prone to include photos, videos and humorous language as parts of their tweets as the athletes in *Counter-Strike*, who used the aforementioned features less.

In INTERACTIVITY, the significant difference was in the total numbers of *Fortnite* and *Counter-Strike*, with 11.09% for *Fortnite* and 5.52% for *Counter-Strike*. Thus, *Fortnite* athletes engaged more with their followers for instance in the sense of asking their followers direct questions, both on topics related to and unrelated to esports, than the athletes with *Counter-Strike* as their professionally played game.

In the total numbers of FANSHIP, the significant result was between athletes in *Fortnite* and *Counter-Strike* as well as *Call of Duty* and *Counter-Strike*. Whereas *Fortnite* and *Call of Duty* athletes' tweets had lower total FANSHIP percentages of 4.40% and 4.71%, the *Counter-Strike* total percentage was relatively higher, 12.03%. The result signals that the *Counter-Strike* athletes more frequently mentioned competing teams and athletes as a part of their tweets, whether as an additional feature or as the main property of the tweet, than athletes of *Call of Duty* and *Fortnite*.

The only category where there were no statistically significant results in any of the categorisations was the category of PROMOTIONAL. Thus, the promotional aspects in the athletes' tweets, both in terms of straightforward promotions of sponsored material or more indirect promotional elements without probable financial gain for the athlete, the tweets did not differ enough across games for the differences to be statistically significant.

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Appendix I List of esports athletes in the study

Call of Duty

	On-screen name	Actual name of the athlete	Number of Twitter followers	Team	Age	Sex	Country
1	scump	Seth Abner	2.12 millions	Chicago Huntsmen	24	male	USA
2	FormaL	Matthew Piper	865 thousands	Chicago Huntsmen	25	male	USA
3	Crimsix	Ian Porter	833 thousands	Dallas Empire	26	male	USA
4	Clayster	James Eubanks	715 thousands	Dallas Empire	27	male	USA
5	MBoZe	Marcus Blanks	684 thousands	Chicago Huntsmen	24	male	USA
6	Karma	Damon Barlow	646 thousands	Seattle Surge	26	male	USA
7	Attach	Dillon Price	399 thousands	New York Subliners	23	male	USA
8	ZooMaa	Thomas Paparatto	360 thousands	New York Subliners	24	male	Italy
9	JKap	Jordan Kaplan	330 thousands	OpTic Gaming	25	male	USA
10	Aches	Patrick Price	305 thousands	LA Guerrillas	25	male	USA

Fortnite

	On-screen name	Actual name of the athlete	Number of Twitter followers	Team	Age	Sex	Country
1	Tfue	Turner Tenney	2.84 millions	FaZe Clan	22	male	USA
2	Mongraal	Kyle Jackson	742 thousands	FaZe Clan	15	male	UK
3	Bugha	Kyle Giersdorf	702 thousands	Sentinels	17	male	USA
4	benjyfishy	Benjy David Fish	499 thousands	NRG Esports	16	male	UK
5	MrSavage	Martin Foss Andersen	457 thousands	100 Thieves	15	male	Norway
6	Clix	Cody Conrod	433 thousands	Misfits Gaming	15	male	USA
7	Mitr0	Dmitri van de Vrie	382 thousands	Team Liquid	17	male	Netherlands
8	Nate Hill	Nate Hill	356 thousands	FaZe Clan	25	male	USA
9	Dubs	Danny Walsh	285 thousands	FaZe Clan	17	male	USA
10	Bizzle	Timothy Miller	277 thousands	Ghost Gaming	21	male	USA

League of Legends

	On-screen name	Actual name of the athlete	Number of Twitter followers	Team	Age	Sex	Country
1	Bjergsen	Soren Bjerg	1.35 millions	TSM	24	male	Denmark
2	Doublelift	Yiliang Peng	939 thousands	Team Liquid	26	male	USA
3	WildTurtle	Jason Tran	439 thousands	FlyQuest	25	male	Canada
4	Rekkles	Martin Larsson	410 thousands	Fnatic	23	male	Sweden
5	Meteos	William Hartman	359 thousands	100 Thieves	26	male	USA
6	aphromoo	Zaqueri Black	337 thousands	Team Dignitas	27	male	USA
7	Froggen	Henrik Hansen	272 thousands	Team Dignitas	26	male	Denmark
8	Faker	Lee Sang-hyeok	271 thousands	T1	23	male	South Korea
9	Perkz	Luka Perkovic	241 thousands	G2 Esports	21	male	Croatia
10	Huni	Seung Hoon Heo	205 thousands	Team Dignitas	22	male	South Korea

Counter-Strike

	On-screen name	Actual name of the athlete	Number of Twitter followers	Team	Age	Sex	Country
1	falleN	Gabriel Toledo	918 thousands	Made in Brazil MIBR	28	male	Brazil
2	coldzera	Marcelo David	551 thousands	FaZe Clan	25	male	Brazil
3	kennyS	Kenny Schrub	455 thousands	G2 Esports	24	male	France
4	TACO	Epitacio de Melo	433 thousands	Made in Brazil MIBR	25	male	Brazil
5	olofmeister	Olof Kajbjerg Gustafsson	401 thousands	FaZe Clan	28	male	Sweden
6	Stewie2K	Jacky Yip	371 thousands	Team Liquid	22	male	USA
7	sImpleO	Oleksandr Kostylyev	360 thousands	Natus Vincere	22	male	Ukraine
8	GeT RiGhT	Christopher Alesund	344 thousands	Team Dignitas	29	male	Sweden
9	rain	Håvard Nygaard	325 thousands	FaZe Clan	25	male	Norway
10	tarik	Tarik Celik	321 thousands	Evil Geniuses	24	male	Turkey, USA

Dota 2

	On-screen name	Actual name of the athlete	Number of Twitter followers	Team	Age	Sex	Country
1	Arteezy	Artour Babaev	669 thousands	Evil Geniuses	23	male	Uzbekistan, Canada
2	Dendi	Danil Ishutin	474 thousands	Team Lithium, B8	30	male	Ukraine
3	Puppey	Clement Ivanov	255 thousands	Team Secret	29	male	Estonia
4	KuroKy	Kuro Salehi Takhasomi	247 thousands	Team Nigma	27	male	Iran, Germany
5	N0tail	Johan Sundstein	233 thousands	OG	26	male	Denmark
6	Miracle-	Amer Al-Barkawi	232 thousands	Team Nigma	22	male	Jordan, Poland
7	Sumail	Syed Sumail Hassan	225 thousands	OG	21	male	Pakistan
8	s4	Gustav Magnusson	186 thousands	Evil Geniuses	27	male	Sweden
9	ppd	Peter Dager	168 thousands	Ninjas in Pyjamas	28	male	USA
10	zai	Ludwig Wählberg	143 thousands	Team Secret	22	male	Sweden

Appendix II Descriptions and annotations of all tweets

= tweet number

1st = primary category of the tweet

2nd = secondary category of the tweet (if applicable)

3rd = tertiary category of the tweet (if applicable)

o/r = original material by the account (O) or a retweet (R)

Call of Duty

Athlete 1: Seth 'scump' Abner					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
2	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
3	humorous video compilation with memes on a much earlier mistake during stream (not specified whose stream), humorous headline	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
4	humorous video on the athlete's cat lying on the athlete's chair	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
5	video on a situation where athlete playing well in a match long ago	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
6	announcing that the athlete's team has a rechargeable hand warmer manufacturer as a new sponsor + link to buy hand warmers	Promotional (hand warmer manufacturer)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
7	praising athlete's own team's owner team + retweet of the owner team's tweet on owner team reaching over 1 million followers on Instagram	Information sharing	Promotional (own team's owner team and their Instagram account)	Entertainment content	O
8	congratulating competing winning team for their match victory (unspecified), complimenting the players, all players and manager of the competing team tagged	Fanship	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
9	congratulating a competing winning team for their victory (not tagged, specified by part of the team's name), comment on own performance during several games (not specified)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
10	congratulating a competing losing team (not tagged, specified by part of the team's name), announcing match results, analysing own performance during the day, comment on own attitude towards upcoming matches	Information sharing	Fanship		O
11	comment on how a match (unspecified) went, complimenting competing losing team, information on upcoming match (competing team specified by part of the team's name, not specified)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
12	general comment on own attitude towards the day's matches (unspecified), slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
13	humorous video on the athlete playing the athlete's own game online and winning, screaming and laughing	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
14	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
15	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	humorous video on the athlete playing the athlete's own game online and winning, screaming and laughing, with comical music playing	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
17	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
18	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
19	humorous video on the athlete playing the athlete's own game online and winning, laughing and joking, with comical music playing, humorous text with comments on game tactics	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
20	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 2: Matthew 'Formal' Piper					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r

1	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
2	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
3	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
4	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
5	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
6	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
7	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
8	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
9	announcing that the athlete's team has a rechargeable hand warmer manufacturer as a new sponsor + link to buy hand warmers	Promotional (hand warmer manufacturer)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
10	analysing own performance during match weekend (matches unspecified), commenting on own team and on attitude towards upcoming tournaments (unspecified)	Information sharing			O
11	a short comment on own performance in recent matches (unspecified) starting to get better, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
12	asking tournament audience (specified by city of tournament, not tagged) to get loud on championship day	Information sharing	Interactivity	Promotional (tournament)	O
13	announcing that it is championship tournament day (unspecified), own attitude towards upcoming matches, slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	O
14	complimenting a competing losing team (team not tagged, specified by team's acronym), announcing match results and that own team will be progressing to next phase in the tournament (unspecified)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
15	analysing own team's performance in tournament (unspecified) so far, attitude towards upcoming match (competing team specified by acronym, not tagged), complimenting competing losing team (not tagged, specified by part of team's name)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
16	announcing that it is a match day (unspecified)	Information sharing			O
17	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
18	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
19	retweet of teammate's tweet on a humorous video on the teammate playing the athlete's own game online and winning, laughing and joking, with comical music playing, humorous text with comments on game tactics	Entertainment content	Promotional (own teammate)	Information sharing	R
20	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 3: Ian 'Crimsix' Porter					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	informing followers on a private life matter (girlfriend accepting marriage proposal) + pictures of athlete and girlfriend	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
2	promoting an apparel manufacturer's hoodie (athlete has no apparent financial ties with the manufacturer, athlete's text refers to an anime character in a TV series that the athlete mentions enjoying, hoodie has picture of an anime character) + mention of anime series (not tagged), apparel manufacturer tagged + picture of hoodie and a link to apparel manufacturer's web store's page on the hoodie	Diversions	Promotional (anime TV series, apparel manufacturer)	Entertainment content	O
3	announcing that it will soon be time for a tournament (not tagged, city of tournament specified), humorous tweet on hoping not to catch a new virus (covid-19)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O

4	retweet of team's tweet on a set of photos of the athlete and teammates all wearing the team's jersey, with text on a soon approaching tournament (not tagged, specified by tournament city)	Entertainment content	Promotional (team apparel, own teammates, tournament)	Information sharing	R
5	retweet of a computer hardware manufacturer's tweet on a competition to win gaming monitor, in collaboration with the athlete's team's owning team (tagged), with mention of an eSports tournament (hashtagged) + picture of the gaming monitor and a link to the competition	Promotional (computer hardware manufacturer, eSports tournament, athlete's team's owning team)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
6	short humorous video on athlete playing the athlete's game with a player from a competing team (player specified and tagged), humorous text on the situation	Entertainment content	Fanship	Information sharing	O
7	link to town Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Information sharing	O
8	humorous comment on a situation in a practice match with a competing team (specified, not tagged), asking followers who they think (from own or competing team) pranked the athlete's team, also own teammate mentioned (by nickname from player name, not tagged)	Interactivity	Fanship	Entertainment content	O
9	retweet of team's tweet on announcing that challenger passes to compete in a tournament are available for the team's home series + link to buy a challenger pass for one's own team and a picture with details on the pass and on the challenger tournament	Promotional (home series tournament, challenger passes)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
10	informing that has not slept much on the previous night, because was watching a TV series, complimenting the quality of the TV series	Diversions	Promotional (TV series)	Information sharing	O
11	retweet of a poster of the athlete made by the athlete's girlfriend, humorous, own team tagged	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Promotional (own team)	O
12	expressing excitement on a new season of a TV series, with a gif animation from the series, hashtag of TV series	Diversions	Entertainment content	Promotional (TV series)	O
13	link to town Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
14	retweet of a fan's tweet on a show of support for the team in form of a getting a tattoo of the team's logo on their arm + photo of the tattoo	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
15	informing that has moved to a new house and that it was a difficult process	Diversions	Information sharing		O
16	retweet of athlete's team's owner's tweet on further information on the prize pool for a challenger's event during the team's tournament event, promise to soon provide more information	Information sharing	Promotional (challenger's passes, tournament)		R
17	retweet of athlete's team's owner's tweet on hosting a challenger's event during the team's tournament event, with information on the challenger pass prices, prize pools for winners and on when available for purchase + picture of athlete's team's logo, athlete's team's account tagged	Promotional (challenger passes, tournament, own team)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
18	link to a video on a new car model tested by professional Formula 1 drivers, no apparent link to the athlete	Diversions	Entertainment content	Promotional (car manufacturer, professional F1 drivers)	O
19	link to town Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
20	retweet of a fan's (who is a graphic designer) compiled Twitter header picture of pictures of the athlete	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
21	humorous tweet on doing well in the statistics of a previous tournament (specified by host city), with a mention of the winning team + a humorous meme picture	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
Athlete 4: James 'Clayster' Eubanks					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	comment and retweet on athlete's team's commercial video on the athlete and on the reasons for him continuing to play at his point in career, with current team, with theatrical music and athlete talking	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	O
2	picture of a situation in game during online practise match, humorous tone	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O

3	comment on situation in athlete's own game, playing for practise, slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
4	asking followers whether they know what a former player in athlete's game from many year ago is currently up to + retweet of another old professional player's picture of old game score boards	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
5	opinion on an old professional player in athlete's game, slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
6	retweet of a competing team's player's picture of a humorous picture of a joke made by another competing team	Entertainment content	Fanship	Information sharing	R
7	opinion on a matter related to people aspiring to become professional players in games before the games are released	Information sharing			O
8	comment on a previous picture of a competing team's player's father lashing out, athlete expressing amusement, a player from the competing team specified and tagged	Fanship	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
9	humorous picture of a screenshot of a competing team's player's father lashing out and giving the competing team's players derogatory descriptions and nicknames on competing team's Instagram page, athlete expressing amusement	Entertainment content	Fanship	Information sharing	O
10	comment on previous year's championships (unspecified) on a match situation where team made a tactical decision + link to the match video on athlete's own game's league's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own game's league's YouTube account)	O
11	expressing amusement about a sports Twitter account's video on university students grieving a restaurant chain closing its restaurant, humorous	Diversion	Entertainment content	Promotional (sports Twitter account, restaurant chain)	O
12	humorous comment on a situation in trying to decide the winner in an eSports game (not the athlete's own game), retweet of a tweet on the situation by a content creator of the eSport game in question + screenshot pictures of a player's discussion on the game situation, humorous	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (eSports content creator)	O
13	telling what concert is going to go to in the same evening, with artists tagged	Diversion	Promotional (music artists)	Information sharing	O
14	retweet of athlete's wife's tweet on the food that she has prepared for them + photo of the food	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
15	retweet of team's tweet on a set of photos of the athlete and teammates all wearing the team's jersey, with text on a soon approaching tournament (not tagged, specified by tournament city)	Entertainment content	Promotional (team apparel, own teammates, tournament)	Information sharing	R
16	retweet of athlete's wife's tweet of loving the athlete + pictures of the athlete	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
17	link to athlete's own Instagram account's picture of the athlete's dog sleeping, with a link to the dog's Instagram account	Diversion	Entertainment content	Promotional (athlete's own Instagram account, the athlete's dog's Instagram account)	O
18	wondering if team will be able to participate in an upcoming event + retweet of athlete's game's publisher's tweet on the publisher asking its employees not to attend a game developer conference due to covid-19 concerns	Information sharing			O
19	retweet of a computer hardware manufacturer's tweet on a competition to win gaming monitor, in collaboration with the athlete's team's owning team (tagged), with mention of an eSports tournament (hashtagged) + picture of the gaming monitor and a link to the competition	Promotional (computer hardware manufacturer, eSports tournament, athlete's team's owning team)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
20	comment on a new virus outbreak spreading (covid-19), humorous prediction	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
21	expressing surprise after hearing of a challenger's event to be held (while the challenger's events are typically organised in collaboration with the league of the game and take place in conjunction with the professional league matches)	Information sharing			O
Athlete 5: Marcus 'MBoZe' Blanks					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r

1	informing that has made a new video on own YouTube account, on presenting the athlete's girlfriend, both wearing clothes by the athlete's apparel brand	Diversion	Entertainment content	Promotional (own apparel brand, own YouTube account)	O
2	promoting own apparel + retweet of a tweet by own apparel brand with information on new clothes being soon available, picture of a sweater and link to the web store of the apparel brand	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
3	retweet of a tweet by own apparel brand with information on new clothes being soon available, picture of a sweater and link to the web store of the apparel brand	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
4	retweet of a fan's photo of athlete's apparel brand's sweater	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
5	retweet of a fan's photo of athlete's apparel brand's sweater	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
6	retweet of a fan's photo of athlete's apparel brand's sweater, with the fan pledging loyalty and asking help for mix-up in the apparel order	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Interactivity	Entertainment content	R
7	photo of athlete's own apparel brand's new T-shirts	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
8	promoting own apparel + retweet of a tweet by own apparel brand with information on new clothes being soon available, picture of a sweater and link to the web store of the apparel brand	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
9	promising to follow Twitter accounts that spread the word on athlete's apparel brand's new clothing	Interactivity	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Information sharing	O
10	retweet of a tweet by own apparel brand with information on new clothes being soon available, picture of a sweater and link to the web store of the apparel brand	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
11	recommending that people sign up for the athlete's apparel brand's newsletter + link to the web store	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
12	retweet of a fan's photo of the fan wearing the athlete's apparel brand's sweater	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
13	comment and retweet of a fan's photo of the fan wearing the athlete's apparel brand's sweater	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
14	retweet of a tweet by a competing team's manager in a photo with a man (unexplained and not tagged) that is wearing the athlete's apparel brand's hoodie, competing team's logo in the background	Fanship	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	R
15	retweet of a fan's photo of the fan wearing the athlete's apparel brand's sweater	Promotional (own apparel brand)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
16	general comment on everyone wanting to have some money	Diversion	Information sharing		O
17	congratulating a friend for buying a restaurant of a restaurant chain + retweet of the friend's tweet with a photo	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
18	retweet of a friend's tweet about buying a restaurant of a restaurant chain + photo	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
19	retweet of a humorous video of a radio casting gone wrong, unrelated to eSports or the athlete	Diversion	Entertainment content		R
20	asking people if the plan to watch a YouTube podcast, unrelated to eSports, expressing emotions about the podcast	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 6: Damon 'Karma' Barlow					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	comment on playing the athlete's game for fun, informing the developer of the game (specified and tagged) of problems with queuing to play the game	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
2	humorous comment and video of a situation in the athlete's game, playing for fun with a friend	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
3	comment on a problem with the playable features of the athlete's game, slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
4	comment on a problem with the playable features of the athlete's game, slightly humorous tone + humorous meme picture	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
5	comment on player changes of a competing team (not specified, new players specified, not tagged)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
6	retweet of an eSports content creator Twitter account's tweet on a video of a match situation where athlete doing well and	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (content)	R

	winning (tournament hashtagged, athlete tagged, own team hashtagged)			creator, tournament, own team)	
7	retweet of a doctor's tweet on instructions to avoid catching a virus (at the beginning of the covid-19 outbreak) + picture of further advice	Diversions	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
8	retweet of an eSports statistics Twitter account's tweet on the leader boards of an online tournament in the athlete's game, athlete in second place + picture of the statistics	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (statistics account, online tournament)	R
9	comment on a movie, humorous tone, unrelated to eSports	Diversions	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
10	retweet of girlfriend's photo of the girlfriend, their daughter and their cat	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
11	comment on playing a casino game with a teammate (specified by initials) and a famous actor, humorous comment on the situation	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
12	comment on playing a casino game with a teammate (specified by initials) and a famous actor, humorous comment on the situation	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
13	retweet of a video on a professional basketball player kindly joking about a dead basketball player	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
14	retweet of a content creator's humorous, edited video on two competing teams (one of which specified and tagged, the other one not) during a tournament (unspecified), the voice comments of the players is fake, an eSports news site tagged	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional (content creator, eSports news site)	R
15	comment on a boxing match, humorous tone + gif animation of a boxer	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
16	comment on a boxing match, humorous tone, unrelated to eSports	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
17	asking followers for updates on a boxing match, comment on how it has gone so far	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
18	retweet of an eSports coaching company's tweet on the athlete's team (tagged) visiting an athlete development centre (tagged), hashtag of athlete's team + photos of athlete's teammates (athlete not with them) at the centre	Promotional (eSports coaching company, athlete development centre, own teammates)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
19	comment on an upcoming boxing match + gif animation of a boxer	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
20	predicting the winner of a match between two competing teams (one of the two specified by part of the name, the other one not, neither one tagged), own team not in tournament	Fanship	Information sharing		O
Athlete 7: Dillon 'Attach' Price					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	retweet of the athlete's mother's tweet on thanking the athlete's team for a T-shirt with the athlete's logo + photos of the athlete's mom wearing the team's apparel	Promotional (own team's apparel)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
2	contemplating on own reasons to play the athlete's own game, expressing gratitude for support from fans	Information sharing			O
3	a screenshot picture of a match situation years ago, where athlete was playing poorly, humorous text	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
4	photo of the athlete holding stacks of boxes of energy drink, informing what will be doing next, energy drink hashtagged	Promotional (energy drink)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
5	thanking teammate (tagged) for his new apparel + video of athlete trying own the outfit	Promotional (teammate's apparel, teammate)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
6	humorous video on the athlete informing that he has been chosen as one of the most attractive men on eSports of his game	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
7	feelings about not playing in a match (host city of the tournament specified), expressing happiness for the winning, competing team (specified, not tagged), expressing excitement over next tournament (host city specified) + photos of the athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
8	feelings about watching a match (tournament unspecified) between two competing teams' players that are twin brothers compete against each other	Fanship	Information sharing		O
9	retweet of teammate's tweet on humorous photos of the athlete with his teammates	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammates)		R

10	video of the athlete with a fan, showing fan's tattoos on team's logos, athlete praising the fan, fan's Twitter account tagged in tweet	Information sharing	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
11	asking followers what the best version of the athlete's game is	Interactivity	Entertainment content		O
12	video on athlete playing with a competing team's player (specified, not tagged), joking about holding a boxing match when they meet next	Entertainment content	Fanship	Information sharing	O
13	asking followers what the best weapon in the athlete's game is	Interactivity	Entertainment content		O
14	expressing grief and surprise over the death of a rap artist	Diversions	Information sharing		O
15	video of an intense moment in a match game situation	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
16	video of an unfortunate situation in a match game situation (mic of the athlete had been muted)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
17	video on a match situation showcasing the athlete's game tactics, humorous text, competing team specified by part of name (not tagged)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
18	video on a practice match situation showcasing the athlete's game tactics	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
19	wishing happy Valentine's Day to the athlete's girlfriend (tagged) + photo of the athlete and girlfriend	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
20	telling everyone seeing the tweet that he loves them	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O

Athlete 8: Thomas 'ZooMaa' Papparatto

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	general humorous comment on trying to play the athlete's game	Entertainment content			O
2	comment on athlete's change in mood after teammate (specified by first name, not tagged) getting a juice (specified, not tagged) from a store for the athlete	Diversions	Entertainment content	Promotional (juice, teammate)	O
3	retweet of an aspiring content creator's tweet on a humorous thought with regard to the athlete (mentally linking the athlete with an unrelated hashtag)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Promotional (content creator)	R
4	humorous tweet on accidentally being kicked out from the athlete's game by game server + screenshot picture of the error message	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
5	link to own Twitch due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
6	general thought on everyone being beautiful ('you' as reference to everyone seeing the tweet)	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
7	retweet of a competing team's player praising the athlete (tagged) and saying that will wear the athlete's apparel for own stream later + photo of the athlete's apparel	Promotional (own apparel, competing player's Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	Fanship	R
8	retweet of athlete's team's video on athlete playing well in a match situation (unspecified), hashtag of own team	Information sharing	Entertainment content		R
9	photos of athlete wearing his own apparel, photographer tagged	Promotional (own apparel, photographer)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
10	recommending buying the athlete's apparel + link to the webstore and a retweet of teammate's tweet on a video of the teammate wearing the athlete's apparel, praising the apparel	Promotional (own apparel, apparel webstore, own teammate)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
11	retweet of teammate's tweet on a video of the teammate wearing the athlete's apparel, praising the apparel	Promotional (own apparel, own teammate)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
12	thanking game controller manufacturer (specified and tagged) for game controllers, praising the manufacturer, code to get a discount of the controller's price + picture of the controllers	Promotional (game controller manufacturer)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
13	saying that the athlete is drinking an energy drink, with hashtag on being a partner of the energy drink manufacturer + photo of the athlete and an energy drink can	Promotional (energy drink)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
14	retweet of a competing team's player's girlfriend's photo on praising the athlete's apparel, athlete's apparel in photo, competing team's player specified, not tagged	Promotional (own apparel)	Entertainment content	Fanship	R
15	informing that has a collection of apparel out in collaboration with the team's host company collective (tagged) + link to the	Promotional (own apparel,	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O

	webstore selling the apparel + photos of athlete wearing apparel	webstore, own team's company collective)			
16	retweet of an aspiring streamer's tweet on praising the athlete's apparel, with a retweet of athlete' team's company collective's photos of athlete wearing apparel	Promotional (own apparel)	Interactivity	Entertainment content	R
17	retweet of own team's company collective's tweet on the athlete's apparel being available for purchase, with link to the webstore and photos of the athlete wearing the apparel	Promotional (own apparel, webstore, own team's company collective)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
18	retweet of an eSports creative strategist's tweet on purchasing the athlete's apparel, athlete and athlete's team's company collective tagged + screenshot picture of the apparel purchase	Promotional (own apparel, own team's company collective, creative strategist)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
19	retweet of an aspiring streamer's tweet on praising the athlete's apparel, athlete and athlete's team's company collective tagged, link to webstore + screenshot picture of apparel purchase at webstore	Promotional (own apparel, own team's company collective, webstore, streamer)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R

Athlete 9: Jordan 'JKap' Kaplan

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	informing that will be representing a team (specified and tagged) for the coming season, insight into what will be focusing on as a team + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
2	humorous tweet on a photo of the athlete looking tired	Entertainment content			O
3	humorous tweet on how late the athlete is awake, prompting for others to respond	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
4	humorous comment and gif animation on thinking that a famous painter had lived in the Middle Ages instead of the 20th century	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
5	humorous comment and picture on a kitchen sponge	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
6	prompting followers to retweet if currently unable to sleep (as the athlete is)	Interactivity	Diversions	Entertainment content	O
7	humorous comment on the athlete's game by a teammate (specified and tagged)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (own teammate)	O
8	comment on a location of a short video of a view in a big city	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
9	prompting followers to retweet if currently unable to sleep (as the athlete is)	Interactivity	Diversions	Entertainment content	O
10	quoting a meme video, unrelated to eSports	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
11	asking followers why they are awake	Interactivity	Diversions	Entertainment content	O
12	retweet of a humorous video unrelated to eSports	Diversions	Entertainment content		R
13	asking followers if they are awake	Interactivity	Diversions	Entertainment content	O
14	video of athlete explaining how using eye vitamins has helped him with eye strain due to gaming + discount code to buy eye vitamins, eye vitamin manufacturer tagged	Promotional (eye vitamin manufacturer)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
15	humorous tweet on how late the athlete is awake, prompting for others to respond	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
16	retweet of a restaurant review video by a competing team's player (restaurant specified, competing team tagged)	Diversions	Fanship	Entertainment content	R
17	informing of a problem in athlete's game, playing for practice, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
18	humorous comment and video on bowling, unrelated to eSports	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
19	asking followers if they are awake	Interactivity	Diversions	Entertainment content	O
20	informing that has had to use a lot of game controllers since has started gaming	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
21	saying that passed a model (tagged) on the street and did not talk to her, humorous tone	Diversions	Entertainment content		O

Athlete 10: Patrick 'Aches' Price

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	informing that has been waiting for a car for five years and the car is now on his way, saying that it is the first big purchase of his life and that it would not be possible without the followers, giving the car details, car manufacturer tagged + photos of the car	Diversions	Entertainment content	Promotional (car manufacturer)	O
2	humorous TikTok meme video on a wife's salary and a stay-at-home husband, not related to eSports	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
3	retweet of a gaming lifestyle brand's tweet on the athlete's own team's apparel being available for purchase, own team tagged and hashtagged, link to buy the apparel from the gaming lifestyle brand's webstore + photo of models wearing the apparel	Promotional (own team's apparel, gaming lifestyle brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
4	asking followers for advice on how to change the colour of a text on screen (clan tag colour) in athlete's own game, expressing annoyance	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
5	opinion on another game's than the athlete's own prospects and potential as an eSports game, slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
6	retweet of own team's tweet on a video to be released later on the team's player's interviews on the past weeks + short video clip from the video with a teammate reflecting on the past weeks	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team, own teammate)	R
7	commenting on rule changes in the athlete's own game + retweet of the athlete's game's league's tweet on rule changes coming to effect	Information sharing			O
8	retweet of team's tweet on team's home series matches against a competing team (specified and tagged), giving the dates and the location (not tagged) of the event + link to purchase tickets + short video on the event details	Promotional (home series matches)	Entertainment content	Fanship	R
9	commenting on an issue with regard to a popular viral video (whether it is acceptable to recline one's seat in an airplane)	Diversions	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
10	commenting on an issue with regard to a popular viral video (whether it is acceptable to recline one's seat in an airplane), expressing own views on general politeness	Diversions	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
11	humorous comment on needing a fast food chain's dessert product (specified) and getting one	Diversions	Entertainment content	Promotional (fast food chain)	O
12	asking followers if a further detail changes their views on an issue with regard to a popular viral video (reclining a seat in an airplane)	Diversions	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
13	humorously asking who verified the main coach (specified and tagged) of the athlete's own team, can be taken rhetorically or as a direct question to followers	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
14	saying that has slept for a long time after a flight from a tournament location (host city specified)	Diversions	Information sharing		O
15	saying that wants to play a yet unreleased game (once released, became an eSports game)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Diversions	O
16	saying that just woke up	Diversions			O
17	expressing surprise for a free upgrade to business class in an airplane + photo of the athlete sitting in airplane	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
18	evaluating own performance in a tournament (unspecified), saying that will fly back to home city soon	Information sharing	Diversions		O
19	humorous comment on playing own game with a teammate and the general manager of the athlete's own team, both tagged	Entertainment content	Promotional (own teammate, own team's manager)	Interactivity	O
20	reflecting on own team's performance during the weekend's matches (unspecified), expressing excitement over being back in own home city, complimenting competing teams (specified by abbreviations, not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O

Fortnite

Athlete 1: Turner 'Tfue' Tenney					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	link to athlete's own webstore selling his apparel	Promotional (own apparel)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
2	prompting followers to go wish happy birthday to the athlete's friend (a streamer, specified and tagged), humorous tone	Diversions	Interactivity	Promotional (streamer)	O
3	link to athlete's own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O

4	link to a new vlog on the athlete's YouTube account, vlogging about getting his wisdom teeth taken out, humorous music + photo of athlete with a bloody mouth after the surgery	Diversion	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube account)	O
5	prompting followers to retweet if they want a new vlog	Interactivity	Promotional (own YouTube account)	Entertainment content	O
6	link to athlete's own Twitch stream due to updating it, humorous text	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
7	photos of the athlete, humorous text	Entertainment content			O
8	Tweeting a hashtag to take part in conversation on requested game feature (urging the game developers to improve the game)	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
9	link to athlete's own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
10	humorous tweet on drinking coffee, unrelated to eSports	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
11	informing that is not feeling well enough to stream	Information sharing	Diversion		O
12	retweet of friend's (a streamer) video on screaming because of frustrations with athlete's game	Entertainment content	Promotional (streamer)	Information sharing	R
13	informing that will be streaming after gym	Information sharing	Diversion	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	O
14	retweet of a streamer thanking the athlete for a stream session (unspecified whether on athlete's or streamer's Twitch stream, no link) in athlete's game	Information sharing	Interactivity	Promotional (streamer)	R
15	link to athlete's own Twitch stream due to updating it, humorous text	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	retweet of a friend (player in same game) asking the athlete to collaborate with him on an in-game event in the athlete's game + picture of the in-game event	Interactivity	Promotional (in-game event, eSports player)	Entertainment content	R
17	humorous tweet on the athlete having had wisdom teeth surgery + photos of the teeth and athlete's face after surgery	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
18	humorous comment on having had wisdom teeth surgery	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
19	link to athlete's own Twitch stream due to updating it, humorous text	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
20	retweet of a YouTube celebrity's humorous edited video on the athlete trying to use a crossbow unsuccessfully	Entertainment content	Diversion	Promotional (YouTube celebrity)	R
21	prompting followers to retweet if they want a new vlog	Interactivity	Promotional (own YouTube account)	Entertainment content	O

Athlete 2: Kyle 'Mongraal' Jackson

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	informing that has joined a team (specified, tagged and hashtagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (own team)		O
2	photo of the athlete (self-taken by own phone with a mirror)	Entertainment content			O
3	short video of a philosophical thought spoken by the athlete, no picture except of a wall	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
4	childhood photo of athlete, with a wordplay on athlete's player name as text	Entertainment content	Diversion	Information sharing	O
5	correcting a spelling error in earlier tweet, humorous tone	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
6	asking followers for information on good computer mouse pads	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
7	humorous comment and a video from a TikTok account (account visible in video), video has to do with athlete's own game's tactics (shared as a joke, as the tactic is well-known)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (TikTok account)	O
8	expressing excitement over an in-game event in the athlete's game, asking who should be the third player for a trio team with the athlete and another eSports player (tagged) + picture of the in-game event	Interactivity	Promotional (in-game event, eSports player)	Entertainment content	O

9	retweet of a content creator's tweet directed at the athlete's game's champion series on wanting to start the season, humorous tone	Entertainment content	Promotional (own game's champion series, content creator)	Interactivity	R
10	prompting followers to like and retweet the athlete's tweet and promising to follow some of the followers in return	Interactivity	Entertainment content		O
11	informing that is planning to take part in all future events in the athlete's game, expressing excitement over having watched a past event	Information sharing	Promotional (eSports event)		O
12	apologising to every person that the athlete has flamed before and saying 'i love you' to each such person, saying that will behave better in the future	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
13	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, playing on own stream with another player (specified, not tagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream, eSports player)	Entertainment content	O
14	informing that the athlete's family's dog has died, expressing sadness + photo of the dog	Diversions	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
15	informing of new features in the athlete's own game, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own game)	O
16	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, expressing excitement over a new feature in athlete's own game	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream, own game)	Entertainment content	O
17	asking (may be seen as rhetorical or an actual question to followers) whether should stay awake until athlete's own game update is released	Interactivity	Promotional (own game)	Information sharing	O
18	feelings on anticipating a new update to the athlete's own game	Information sharing	Promotional (own game)		O
19	humorous photo (athlete flipping the finger) as a response to an earlier photo by another player (not tagged, but visible in the messages) in the same conversation thread	Diversions	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
20	video on athlete showing own game tactics with music playing (no talk), link to video on own YouTube account (editor of the video and music artist credited)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube account, video editor, music artist)	O

Athlete 3: Kyle 'Bugha' Giersdorf

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	commenting on winning a championship (unspecified)	Information sharing			O
2	tweeting a hashtag to take part in conversation on requested game feature (urging the game developers to improve the game)	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
3	retweet of another player's tweet on problems with the athlete's own game loading	Information sharing	Interactivity		R
4	retweet of a content creator's video on a game situation with the athlete and another player (tagged)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (content creator, eSports player)	R
5	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
6	informing that does not know what to stream in athlete's own game on own Twitch stream next, explaining what has already done and problems with the game	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)		O
7	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
8	retweet of an athlete's own game's news account's tweet on a new in-game character look + picture of the new look	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own game's news account, own game)	R
9	promoting own creator code for battle pass purchases (the athlete receives monetary support for usage of code; the buyer gets additional in-game items for the usage of the code)	Promotional (own creator code in athlete's own game)	Information sharing	Interactivity	O
10	expressing preference of a choosable in-game feature (appearance of playable characters, does not affect playing the game) of the athlete's game	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Interactivity	O

11	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
12	humorous comment on a situation in the athlete's game, playing for practice, humorous + screenshot picture of the situation	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
13	thanking a content creator (tagged) for helping with an issue with the athlete's username, prompting followers to follow the content creator + gif animation of a person thanking	Information sharing	Promotional (content creator)	Entertainment content	O
14	retweet of team's video on promoting own team in another eSport game, after they won a championship	Promotional (own team, another eSport game)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
15	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
17	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
18	retweet of a content creator's tweet on a fundraiser for himself, to pay living expenses + picture of the content creator's house and a link to the fundraiser	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
19	asking followers a humorous comment on a topic unrelated to eSports (talking to a dog)	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
20	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
21	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 4: Benjy David 'benjyfishy' Fish					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	listing athlete's social media accounts + picture of a fish (as reference to own player name)	Information sharing	Promotional (own social media accounts)	Entertainment content	O
2	expressing delight after watching a new video by a group of YouTube content creators (specified, not tagged, no link to video)	Diversions	Promotional (YouTube content creators)		O
3	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
4	announcing that the athlete's video on tournament (specified, not tagged) semi-finals is out, with link to video on own YouTube channel, with insight into how the semi-final matches went and the athlete's creator code as well as actual gameplay of the matches	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube channel, own creator code, tournament)	O
5	wishing 'good morning' to all gamers	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
6	predicting a world cup announcement to come in three days, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
7	humorous short video on a situation in the athlete's game, humorous text on the situation	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
8	opinion on a matter related to game tactics of the athlete's own game + short video on a game situation	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
9	wishing 'good morning'	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
10	asking followers what they would call an in-game object + picture of in-game object	Interactivity	Entertainment content		O
11	asking followers if they are experiencing the same problem as he is in athlete's own game	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
12	saying that needs an announcement from own game's championship series (series' account tagged), humorous tone	Information sharing	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
13	humorous video on the athlete playing a video game (not the athlete's own game) well as a small child	Diversions	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
14	announcing that is back in own country, expressing excitement over playing own game	Information sharing			O
15	informing that the athlete's mother has made a Twitter account (tagged), prompting followers to follow her	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O

16	informing that will return to own country after a tournament (unspecified), thanking everyone for hospitality, expressing excitement for the next tournament (unspecified)	Information sharing			O
17	retweet of the athlete's team's tweet on team's account reaching over 1 million followers on Instagram + picture of the team	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's Instagram account)	Information sharing	R
18	remark on seeing a child in expensive shoes, humorous tone	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
19	expressing disappointment over an amusement park (amusement park chain specified, not tagged) closing early	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
20	opinion on how the scores are counted at a tournament (specified, not tagged)	Information sharing			O
21	expressing joy after being able to make a good score at a tournament (unspecified), informing of how the athlete's mental focus changed between matches + picture of the tournament's results	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	O

Athlete 5: Martin 'MrSavage' Foss Andersen

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
2	humorous remark on athlete's own game tactics, with a humorous gif video	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
3	naming the maker of the gif video in earlier tweet, content creator tagged	Information sharing	Promotional (content creator)	Diversion	O
4	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
5	saying that hopes that the watchers enjoyed the athlete's long Twitch stream, informing that will take a break before next stream + photo of petting a cat	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Diversion	O
6	1 tweeting a hashtag to take part in conversation on requested game feature (urging the game developers to improve the game)	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
7	meme picture of a competing player looking stunned	Entertainment content	Fanship		O
8	meme picture of a competing player looking stunned	Entertainment content	Fanship		O
9	retweet of a competing player's tweet on humorous meme picture with the athlete's face and two mobile payment company's logos (one of which tagged in text of tweet)	Entertainment content	Promotional (mobile payment company, eSports player)	Information sharing	R
10	informing that is suffering from jetlag, expressing disappointment over it	Diversion	Information sharing		O
11	expressing excitement over being at home with cat + photo of athlete and his cat	Entertainment content	Diversion	Information sharing	O
12	informing that has arrived back in own country and that is tired	Information sharing	Diversion		O
13	saying that is bored on an airplane and asking followers if they want him to answer their questions (followers reply by asking and the athlete gives them answers) + photo of the athlete in an airplane	Interactivity	Entertainment content		O
14	humorously expressing frustration over travelling	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
15	expressing amazement over a drawing of the athlete by an aspiring artist (not tagged or specified other than on drawing)	Entertainment content	Promotional (artist)	Interactivity	O
16	informing that is heading back to home country and is looking forward to seeing his cats + photo of athlete	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Diversion	O
17	thanking a jewellery brand (tagged) for giving the athlete a gold necklace + photo of the necklace and of the athlete wearing the necklace	Promotional (jewellery brand)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
18	retweet of team's owner's tweet on a photo of the team owner, a trophy (unspecified) and the athlete standing next to the team's logo	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	Information sharing	R
19	informing that has changed his profile picture for the first time in a long time	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Diversion	O
20	comment on and retweet of a competing player's tweet on an opinion on the scoring system in a tournament (specified, not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
21	expressing happiness after hard work, after succeeding in a tournament (unspecified)	Information sharing			O

Athlete 6: Cody 'Clix' Conrod

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	video of athlete playing well in a match (unspecified)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
2	humorously prompting followers to send naked pictures + photo of an adolescent boy (unspecified)	Diversions	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
3	humorous edited meme video on the athlete's game's new season launch	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
4	asking followers a philosophical question unrelated to eSports (the colour of a mirror)	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
5	commenting on a new feature (remote explosives) in the athlete's game, telling others to react to the feature in the same way as him	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
6	opinion on a new feature (remote explosives) in the athlete's own game	Information sharing			O
7	informing that has a new video out on showing the athlete's settings for own game as well as gameplay and the athlete's creator code + picture from game and a link to the video on athlete's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube account, own creator code)	O
8	informing that will be making a long stream on Twitch on the same day (no timetable or link provided)	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)		O
9	commenting on a new feature (remote explosives) in the athlete's game, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
10	telling followers to eat beef, humorous tone	Diversions	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
11	asking followers what class they have going on at the moment	Diversions	Interactivity		O
12	commenting on the winning chances of two competing players in the athlete's game (players specified, not tagged)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
13	informing that was outplayed from competition (not specified) + video of the athlete playing and losing	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
14	informing that is doing well in the athlete's own game, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
15	informing that an in-game feature of the athlete's game has returned and he is using it	Information sharing			O
16	informing that has similar problems with the athlete's game as a competing player + retweet of the competing player's tweet on the issues	Information sharing	Fanship	Interactivity	O
17	video on the athlete's game tactics with gameplay + own creator code, picture of the game and a link to the athlete's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube account, own creator code)	O
18	asking followers what feature of the athlete's own game the athlete should focus his stream on the same evening, poll with two choices	Interactivity	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
19	comment on a feature available for the athlete's own game (stretched resolution), humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
20	expressing excitement over streaming later on the same day, providing an approximate starting time for the stream (no link provided)	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)		O
Athlete 7: Dmitri 'Mitr0' van de Vrie					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	informing that has joined a team (specified, tagged and hashtagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (own team)		O
2	retweet of team's tweet on new team apparel in collaboration with an animation studio + photo of athlete and teammates wearing team hoodies and T-shirts and link to the team's webstore selling the apparel and hashtag of the apparel collection	Promotional (team apparel, animation studio, own team)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
3	saying 'hello'	Interactivity	Diversions	Entertainment content	O
4	humorous short video on the athlete playing and joking	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
5	announcing the winning comment on the athlete's earlier tweet on temporarily changing his in-game name to the most liked comment on his tweet + picture of the player's avatar with the new name, the account that made the comment tagged	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
6	informing that has a new video out on highlights of him playing with music in the background (no talk), with own creator code and name of video editor + link to the video on athlete's own YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube account, own creator code, video editor)	O

7	informing the followers of the resolution that he uses when playing on his YouTube video	Information sharing			O
8	announcing that will be temporarily changing his in-game name to the most liked comment on his tweet	Interactivity	Entertainment content		O
9	expressing sadness over a former professional player not being able to play (after banned for lifetime by the game's organisation four months earlier) + picture of the banned player's avatar	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
10	humorous short video on a game situation with two competing players (both specified and tagged)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Fanship	O
11	humorous very short video on a game situation	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
12	comment on a play made in the athlete's own game, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
13	retweet of a competing player's tweet on a humorous meme video in reference to a situation in a game, the athlete tagged	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Fanship	R
14	opinion on the colour settings of the athlete's game, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
15	promoting own creator code (the athlete receives monetary support for usage of code; the buyer gets additional in-game items for the usage of the code)	Promotional (own creator code in athlete's own game)	Information sharing		O
16	thanking a computer optimisation service (specified and tagged) for helping the athlete's game run smoother, praising the service	Promotional (computer optimisation service)	Information sharing		O
17	humorous prediction on an ideal way to announce a world cup for the athlete's game, a competing player mentioned (specified, not tagged)	Entertainment content	Fanship	Information sharing	O
18	informing that has a new video out on highlights of him playing with music in the background (no talk), with own creator code and name of video editor + link to the video on athlete's own YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube account, own creator code, video editor)	O
19	retweet of a competing player expressing excitement over anticipating playing as a duo with the athlete (tagged) again	Information sharing	Fanship		R
20	humorous tweet on a competing player (tagged) participating in a tournament (specified), prompting followers to retweet his tweet as a prank on them	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Fanship	O
Athlete 8: Nate 'Nate Hill' Hill					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	informing that has won a bidding war on his dream house, because the seller listened to his stream, where he told how much he wanted the house, expressing gratitude over the athlete's career, thanking everyone	Diversions	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
2	informing that is currently moving to a new house, expressing gratitude over own career and appreciation over followers, promising to soon stream again + photo of athlete with a moving van	Diversions	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
3	providing information on the timetable for a meet and greet (unspecified), promising to take photos with fans and to give signatures	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
4	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, playing with fans live at a meet and greet at a gaming lifestyle company (tagged and hashtagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream, event, gaming lifestyle company)	Entertainment content	O
5	informing that is at a free meet and greet with a content creator (specified and tagged) at a gaming lifestyle company (specified, tagged and hashtagged), giving the timetable and prompting followers to come + short video of the athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (event, content creator, gaming lifestyle company)	O
6	humorous comment directed for the official Twitter account of the athlete's game	Entertainment content	Interactivity		O
7	photo of the athlete dressed to look like a playable character in his game	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
8	informing that will be at a meet and greet event, where will be talking to fans and playing the athlete's game with them, event free of charge (but the athlete gives a link to buy tickets, so they may have originally had a price), playing with a content creator (specified and tagged) at a gaming lifestyle company	Promotional (event, content creator, gaming)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O

	(specified, tagged and hashtagged) + link to buy tickets at a ticket website and a picture of the content creator	lifestyle company, ticket website)			
9	informing that a sponsor (men's shaving blade manufacturer) has run out of products in a special series in collaboration with the athlete and other professional players (unspecified) and Twitch (in the campaign, a person who bought the special products received Twitch bits that can be used to cheer on the player doing their Twitch streams) + retweet of the blade manufacturer informing that they are sold out and a picture of the shaving products	Information sharing	Promotional (men's shaving blade manufacturer, Twitch)	Entertainment content	O
10	short video on a game situation with the athlete winning, humorous text, creator code showing in the video	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own creator code)	O
11	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, humorous text	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
12	humorous tweet on how much a playable character in the athlete's game looks like the athlete, with a picture of the character as a giant statue in the game, with athlete thanking the game (official account tagged) for adding a statue that looks like him in the game	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Promotional (own game)	O
13	commenting on new features in the athlete's game, thanking the game (official account tagged) for the features	Information sharing	Interactivity	Promotional (own game)	O
14	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, humorous text	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
15	short video on a game situation with the athlete winning, creator code showing in the video	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own creator code)	O
16	informing that has a new website + retweet of team's tweet on a video with teammates holding challenges for the athlete to complete to unlock a surprise, which is the new website + link to the website, own team (tagged) and a sponsor (web development platform, tagged) thanked as providers of the website	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team, own teammates, own website, web development platform)	O
17	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, humorous text	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
18	informing that has partnered with a men's shaving blade manufacturer (specified, tagged and hashtagged), expressing excitement, informing that will talk about the blade manufacturer's campaign on the athlete's Twitch stream, providing timetable for the special stream	Promotional (men's shaving blade manufacturer, own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
19	own humorous TikTok video (own TikTok username provided) on how it feels to wait for a message from someone you like, humorous text with a mention of a content creator (specified and tagged)	Diversion	Entertainment content	Promotional (own TikTok account, content creator)	O
20	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, playing own game and another game than the athlete's own with four of members of the athlete's own team (in the athlete's own game) and a streamer, players and the streamer tagged	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream, players in own team, streamer)	Entertainment content	O
21	commenting on a game mode in the athlete's game, expressing excitement + video on the athlete playing in the mode, creator code showing in the video	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own creator code)	O
Athlete 9: Danny 'Dubs' Walsh					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	expressing excitement over doing well in a tournament (unspecified), announcing own results and total prize money won, expressing anticipation over future tournaments (unspecified), thanking athlete's own game (official account tagged) for the opportunity	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
2	expressing regret and sadness over using an offensive word (a racial slur, did not realise that the word got caught on a live stream; the athlete was suspended from team for a month), apologising to everyone offended	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
3	expressing excitement over new features (remote explosives) in the athlete's own game, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
4	informing that is back in home city, expressing excitement over playing the athlete's own game with new added features +	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O

	photo taken through an airplane window, of a sunset on an airport				
5	retweet of team's tweet of two photos of the athlete on motorcycles, wearing the team's hoodies	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's apparel)		R
6	retweet of a competing team's players tweet on asking the athlete's own game (official account tagged) to keep a feature in the game, explaining why loves the feature	Information sharing	Interactivity		R
7	cheering for a competing team's player (specified and tagged) to win a tournament (unspecified), athlete already out of competition, humorous tone	Fanship	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
8	informing that there are loading problems in the athlete's own game during a tournament (specified by an acronym, not tagged), the game's official account tagged, humorous tone	Information sharing	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
9	informing that had a problem in the athlete's own game during a tournament (unspecified)	Information sharing			O
10	asking (not specified whom) whether a feature in the athlete's own game is back, expressing excitement	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
11	thanking a bean bag manufacturer (specified, tagged and hashtagged) for a bean bag in collaboration with own team, complimenting the product + video of the athlete's dog enjoying the bean bag, athlete laughing	Promotional (bean bag manufacturer, own team)	Entertainment content		O
12	asking followers what features are added to the athlete's own game in an update	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
13	informing that will have a new video on YouTube (no link provided), saying that the video is good	Information sharing	Promotional (own YouTube account)	Entertainment content	O
14	explaining how in the athlete's own opinion the athlete's own game would ideally function in tournaments (unspecified)	Information sharing			O
15	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	informing that will be playing practice matches with one other professional player from a competing team, a streamer from own team and good non-pro players on a competing team's Discord channel + retweet of the competing team's players tweet on the practice matches	Information sharing	Promotional (eSports player, streamer, another team's Discord channel)	Fanship	O
17	retweet of a competing team's player's (also owner of another eSports team) tweet on telling people to join a game on the Discord channel of the team that he owns + link to the Discord channel	Fanship	Promotional (another team's Discord channel)	Information sharing	R
18	humorous tweet on game tactics + screenshot picture of the athlete's game	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
19	asking followers whether they like the types of videos that he is currently doing, with an example of another type of possible video + video clip of the athlete's gameplay tactics with music (no talk)	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
20	informing that will have a new video on YouTube (no link provided), saying that the video is good	Information sharing	Promotional (own YouTube account)	Entertainment content	O
21	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O

Athlete 10: Timothy 'Bizzle' Miller

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	retweet of a competing team's manager's humorous video of another competing team's player (specified and tagged) acting silly in a game, not the athlete's own game	Entertainment content	Fanship		R
2	humorous video on a game situation, humorous text directed at a competing team's player (specified and tagged)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Fanship	O
3	retweet of a competing team's streamer's video on joking around in the athlete's game with two streamers (tagged) and another competing team's player (tagged)	Entertainment content	Fanship		R
4	short video on a strange game situation, humorously asking a multimillionaire entrepreneur for an explanation on what happened	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
5	retweet of a former player from athlete's team's (currently teamless) gameplay video of him showing his gameplay tactics with music playing and a few comments, otherwise no talk	Interactivity	Fanship	Entertainment content	R

6	comment on another eSport game team's (specified, not tagged) success in a tournament (specified by host city)	Fanship	Information sharing	Diversion	O
7	wondering what it means that the athlete's own game's official account (not tagged) deleted a world cup announcement, can be taken as a direct question	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
8	tweeting a hashtag to take part in conversation on requested game feature (urging the game developers to improve the game)	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
9	retweet of own team's tweet on a YouTube video of the athlete's team's experience and interviews at a tournament (specified, not tagged), with the athlete coming in at second place + link to the video on the team's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's YouTube account, tournament)	R
10	retweet of a streamer's tweet on a gameplay video situation showing a problem with the athlete's own game's mechanics	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (streamer)	R
11	retweet of a content creator's tweet on a gameplay video situation showing a problem with the athlete's own game's mechanics	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (content creator)	R
12	retweet of a streamer's tweet on a gameplay video situation showing a problem with the athlete's own game's mechanics	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (streamer)	R
13	retweet of a competing team's player's tweet on a video of another competing player making an obvious point about the athlete's own game	Fanship	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
14	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
15	a competing team's player's video on a humorous situation in the athlete's game + link to the video on the competing player's Twitch account	Fanship	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
16	retweet of a competing team's player's humorous tweet on him singing badly	Diversion	Entertainment content	Fanship	R
17	retweet of an aspiring streamer's tweet on a humorous comparison of the opinions of the athlete and a streamer (tagged) on updates to the athlete's own game, from different points of view (streamer vs professional player)	Information sharing	Interactivity	Entertainment content	R
18	opinions on updates to the athlete's own game and problems with it	Information sharing			O
19	retweet of the athlete's own team's video on the athlete coming in at second place in a tournament (hashtagged)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	R
20	retweet of a competing team's player's opinion on players in the athlete's own game, humorous tone	Entertainment content	Fanship	Interactivity	R

League of Legends

Athlete 1: Søren 'Bjergsen' Bjerg					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	listing athlete's social media accounts	Information sharing	Promotional (own social media accounts)		O
2	announcing that team has failed to succeed in a tournament, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
3	retweet of team's tweet on a pencil painting of the athlete, by a fan (athlete and fan's accounts tagged)	Interactivity	Entertainment content		R
4	promoting a sandwich restaurant chain (tagged), giving a discount link for 1-month free membership + picture of sandwiches	Promotional (sandwich restaurant chain)	Diversion	Entertainment content	O
5	retweet of team's tweet on a new video being out, on athlete and teammate's interviews and insights and on team in a tournament + picture of the video and link to the video on team's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (team's YouTube account)	R
6	informing that it's the athlete's birthday and his new age, happy face emoji	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
7	retweet of team's tweet on a new video being out, on athlete and teammate's interviews and insights and on team in a tournament + short piece of the video and link to the video on team's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (team's YouTube account)	R
8	humorous tweet on doing well in a match, match and tournament unspecified	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
9	reflecting on team's current shape and future performance	Information sharing			O
10	informing that has been ill, reflecting on team's performance and future	Information sharing			O

11	retweet of team's tweet on a commercial video of a partnership beginning between team and energy drink manufacturer	Promotional (energy drink)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
12	announcing team's giveaway of computer hardware products by a sponsor, link to competition + picture of athlete and computer hardware	Promotional (computer hardware)	Entertainment content		O
13	retweet of team's tweet on an interview with athlete and a competing team's lead player (both tagged, competing team tagged) + short clip from video and link to video on team's YouTube account	Fanship	Entertainment content	Promotional (team's YouTube account)	R
14	informing that was ill during an interview and apologising for voice problems, retweet of a player profile interview video of the athlete by the game's eSports organisation, video sponsored by a game developer and a car manufacturer + link to video on game's eSports organisations' YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (game's eSports organisation's YouTube account, game developer, car manufacturer)	O
15	promoting athlete's team's new jersey shirt, announcing a giveaway of the jersey by posting a comment as a reply to the tweet + gif picture of the athlete and teammates wearing the jersey	Promotional (team's apparel)	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
16	retweet of team's tweet on a giveaway of team's hat and tickets to a match (specified), link to competition on team's Discord channel + picture of the giveaway details and hats	Promotional (own game's championships, team's apparel, team's Discord channel)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
17	retweet of team's tweet on an interview with athlete and a competing team's player (athlete tagged, player or his team not tagged, as do not have a Twitter account) + short clip from video and link to video on team's YouTube account	Fanship	Entertainment content	Promotional (team's YouTube account)	R
18	retweet of team's tweet on a giveaway of computer hardware products by a sponsor and team's own merchandise + link to competition and picture of the giveaway products and a 'happy holidays' text	Promotional (computer hardware, team's merchandise)	Entertainment content		R
19	retweet of team's tweet on computer hardware (tagged) from one of team's sponsors, with comments on team's players using the product and a link to a technology retailer (also tagged) + video of CEO of team explaining the benefits of the product	Promotional (computer hardware, technology retailer)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
20	commenting on the cuteness of a dog, retweet of an eSports media photographer's photo of a competing team's dog being petted by athlete (athlete and competing team tagged), competing team's merchandise showing in picture, photo credits to a player from the competing team	Entertainment content	Diversions	Fanship	O
21	retweet of team's tweet on computer hardware (tagged) deals on Cyber Monday, a discount code to the hardware manufacturer's web shop + link to it and a humorous picture of athlete and teammate with computer hardware	Promotional (computer hardware)	Entertainment content		R
Athlete 2: Yiliang 'Doublelift' Peng					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	informing that won't be able to attend a tournament due to being ill, announcing that a supporting teammate will take over for him (teammate tagged), asking fans to support him	Information sharing	Promotional (teammate)		O
2	informing that has missed a practise match for the first time since a tournament long ago	Information sharing			O
3	informing that it is the last chance to enter a competition to win athlete's jersey from team and a gift card to a sandwich restaurant chain (tagged) + link to enter competition and a picture of the athlete and the jersey	Promotional (team apparel, sandwich restaurant chain)	Entertainment content		O
4	humorous meme on users of a content creator website	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
5	a short humorous clip from own Twitch stream video	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Twitch stream)		O
6	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
7	informing that will be streaming on Twitch the whole day the next day with the content of answering questions from fans, timetable for beginning the stream	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)		O
8	providing statistics on progress in own team's performance (match and tournament unspecified), slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O

9	a meme picture of a Pokémon, as on own reaction to championship standings of own team	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Diversion	O
10	reflecting on own performance during a match (unspecified), future predictions, humorous word choices	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
11	humorous comment on new profile picture of a Pokémon, context unclarified	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
12	humorous comment on forgetting to eat breakfast	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
13	short humorous video on own game situation, circus music playing	Entertainment content			O
14	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
15	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	humorous comment on a situation in the game, retweet of a streamer's thoughts on motivation to play professionally	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (streamer)	O
17	humorous meme picture on Asian parenthood in the US, asking followers for similar situations	Diversion	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
18	retweet of team's pictures of computer wallpapers with athlete and teammates, link to download wallpaper free of charge, picture credits to a professional graphic artist	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (own team, graphic artist)	R
19	picture of athlete with a streamer and girlfriend (CEO of team) about to overcome fear of rollercoasters	Entertainment content	Diversion	Promotional (streamer)	O
20	feelings after winning a match (not specified), humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
Athlete 3: Jason 'WildTurtle' Tran					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	humorous picture of the athlete wearing a funny hat	Entertainment content	Diversion		O
2	retweet of team's tweet on a charity match with a competing team, with both teams donating money to help the environment + picture on the match with timetable and a retweet of the competing team's tweet on the same match	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	R
3	retweet of team's tweet on the first episode of an interview YouTube show, with the athlete and a teammate as interviewed guests (both tagged) and a freelance commentator (tagged) as the host, + link to the video on team's YouTube channel and a picture of the athlete, teammate and host	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (freelance commentator, team's YouTube channel)	R
4	retweet of team's tweet on a picture of the athlete in team's new jersey	Promotional (team's apparel)	Entertainment content		R
5	retweet of a content creator's competition in collaboration with a dating app for gamers, prize headphones + pictures of headphones and content creator wearing headphones	Promotional (content creator, dating app, headphones)	Diversion	Entertainment content	R
6	retweet of a text by a player without a team, on the personal frustration of being left teamless	Fanship	Information sharing	Interactivity	R
7	retweet of a teammate's tweet on joining athlete's team and on thanking the former team (tagged) and future predictions in the new team + picture of teammate	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	R
8	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
9	retweet of eSports interviewer's humorous video on many players of athlete's game, includes the athlete	Entertainment content	Fanship	Information sharing	R
10	retweet of team's tweet on team women's sports apparel being soon out, timetable for launch, link to team's web shop + picture of a woman in team's sports apparel	Promotional (team's apparel)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
11	retweet of team's tweet on a new player (tagged) joining athlete's team and another player (tagged) being traded + picture of new player	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	R
12	information that will be making a Twitch stream with a charity (Red Nose Day), a link to learn more about the cause + a link to athlete's Twitch stream and photo of athlete wearing a red novelty nose	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (charity, own Twitch stream)	O
13	complimenting a competing team (specified, not tagged), expressing excitement on seeing a match between two competing teams (specified, not tagged)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
14	general comment on gaming, humorous tone	Entertainment content	Diversion		O
15	retweet of teammate expressing excitement over winning a match (unspecified), cursing	Information sharing	Entertainment content		R

16	picture of athlete holding a puppy	Entertainment content	Diversion		O
17	retweet of an eSports blog writer's article on the high quality of the athlete's team's vlogs, with interview of team and the team's vice president (tagged) + link to the article on an eSports website and a picture of the team with the writer's quote on the vlogs from the article	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's vlogs, blog writer, eSports website)	R
18	retweet of a teammate's tweet on feelings after making it to playoffs (unspecified), reflecting on progress and on future	Information sharing	Promotional (teammate)		R
19	humorous poll for followers to click on, playful with the athlete's player name	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Diversion	O
20	retweet of an interviewer's tweet on the athlete appearing on the next episode of the interviewer's show (athlete tagged, show hashtagged, another interviewer tagged), asking people to send questions + humorous gif animation of a turtle	Interactivity	Promotional (interviewers, show)	Entertainment content	R
21	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O

Athlete 4: Martin 'Rekkles' Larsson

#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	photo of athlete smiling, hearts in the colours of own team as the only text	Entertainment content			O
2	photo of athlete smiling, the beginning year ('2020') as the only text (posted on New Year's Eve)	Entertainment content			O
3	photo of athlete in a match (unspecified), with the text 'lo siento' (=I'm sorry in Spanish) as only text, after losing a match	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
4	photo of athlete smiling and hugging a teammate after winning a match (unspecified), emoji (hugging) as only text	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
5	photo of athlete wearing a shirt with athlete's own logo on it, link to the team's webstore, to athlete' own shirt, as the only text	Promotional (own team's apparel)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
6	photo of athlete holding a trophy after winning a tournament (unspecified), an emoji (gold medal) as the only text	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
7	photo of athlete looking serious, hearts in the colours of own team as the only text	Entertainment content			O
8	photo of athlete looking serious, hearts in the colours of own team as the only text	Entertainment content			O
9	photo of athlete smiling in formal clothes, with 'H N Y' (= Happy New Year) as the only text (posted on New Year's Eve)	Entertainment content	Diversion	Interactivity	O
10	photo of athlete smiling in formal clothes before a Christmas tree, with 'M C' (= Merry Christmas) as the only text (posted on Christmas Eve)	Entertainment content	Diversion	Interactivity	O
11	listing athlete's social media accounts + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Promotional (own social media accounts)	Entertainment content	O
12	photo of athlete holding a trophy after winning a tournament (unspecified), an emoji (gold medal) as the only text	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
13	photo of athlete holding a trophy after winning a tournament (unspecified), an emoji (gold medal) as the only text	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
14	complimenting competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), tournament specified by hashtag of tournament acronym, announcing that finals are to be played next, emojis of hearts in team's colours + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
15	complimenting competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), tournament specified by hashtag of tournament acronym, final score of the match, emojis of hearts in team's colours + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
16	complimenting competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), tournament specified by hashtag of tournament acronym, final score of the match, emojis of hearts in team's colours + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
17	complimenting competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), tournament specified by hashtag of tournament acronym, final score of the match, emojis of hearts in team's colours + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
18	complimenting competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), tournament specified by hashtag of tournament acronym, final score of the match, emojis of hearts in team's colours + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
19	complimenting competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), tournament specified by hashtag of tournament acronym, final score of the match, emojis of hearts in team's colours + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O

20	complimenting competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), tournament specified by hashtag of tournament acronym, final score of the match, emojis of hearts in team's colours, apologizing for not playing better + photo of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
Athlete 5: William 'Meteos' Hartman					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	commenting on a tv series, wishing for more of the series, unrelated to eSports	Diversion	Entertainment content	Promotional (tv series)	O
2	commenting on own team's performance in recent matches (unspecified), insight into mindset for future matches, complimenting competing winning team (specified, not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
3	informing that will be playing a match on the same day, competing team specified, not tagged, tournament not specified	Information sharing	Fanship		O
4	commenting on a playable character's available appearances in athlete's own game, slightly humorous	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
5	commenting on the characteristics of the athlete's own game, with ideas on how to improve the game	Information sharing			O
6	commenting on the characteristics of and problems with the athlete's own game, with ideas on how to improve the game	Information sharing			O
7	humorous question on a future technological dystopian idea for followers to answer, unrelated to eSports	Diversion	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
8	feelings about appearing on a YouTube talk show (host tagged) where discusses future plans and mindset on playing the game + dealing with success, recommending listening to it, athlete's game's league's tweet on the show tagged with a link to the video on YouTube on game's league's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (YouTube talk show, host, game's league's YouTube account)	O
9	retweet of athlete's game's league's tweet on a YouTube talk show with the athlete as a guest, host and athlete tagged, with a link to the video on game's league's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (YouTube talk show, host, game's league's YouTube account)	R
10	general advice on living in a healthy way, unrelated to eSports	Diversion	Information sharing		O
11	informing that there are new appearances available for two of athlete's game's playable characters, expressing excitement over how the appearances look, retweet of game's league's first-look video on the characters	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
12	feelings about own team's performance in recent matches (unspecified), thoughts on future priorities for the team	Information sharing			O
13	opinion on own game's characteristics and problems with them	Information sharing			O
14	comment on a player from a competing team playing on a playable character of the game, slightly humorous tone	Fanship	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
15	humorous question for followers on a matter unrelated to eSports	Diversion	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
16	comment on a matter related to changes to athlete's game's playable character selection options and possible problems with them	Information sharing			O
17	humorous question for followers on a matter unrelated to eSports, with a poll for followers to answer	Diversion	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
18	information on appearing as an analyst for a match between two competing teams (specified, not tagged), recommending for followers to watch (match number specified, tournament unspecified; no link provided)	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (match in an unspecified tournament)	O
19	feelings after winning a match against a competing team (specified by acronym, not tagged, tournament not specified), feelings about progress at the moment	Information sharing	Fanship		O
20	humorous comment on athlete's own situation in a match (unspecified)	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
Athlete 6: Zaqueri 'aphromoo' Black					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	retweet of a gaming content creator's video of athlete and content creator playing athlete's game for fun + link to the video on content creator's YouTube account	Entertainment content	Promotional (content creator's YouTube account)	Information sharing	R

2	asking the followers for advice on a problem related to the athlete's game not working, describing the problem, expressing tiredness	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
3	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
4	retweet of teammate's picture of his in-game items, humorous tone	Entertainment content	Information sharing		R
5	photo of athlete pointing at a logo of a sponsor (network operator) on his team shirt, with the network operator's slogan and hashtag as text	Promotional (network operator)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
6	comment and retweet of athlete's team's tweet of a picture of athlete's fans (children) holding a team shirt with the athlete's name on it	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's apparel)	O
7	informing that the athlete's father has begun playing online (not the athlete's own game) and is doing well in it + screenshot of a game situation	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
8	retweet of team's tweet of photos of the athlete and his teammates, each in their team shirts	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's apparel)		R
9	expressing amusement over having played a game with a friend (content creator) + retweet of the content creator's tweet with a short video of them playing the game and laughing (no link to a longer video), humorous tone	Entertainment content	Promotional (content creator)	Information sharing	O
10	retweet of a teammate's short video of a game situation, humorous tone with a comment on playable character's abilities	Entertainment content	Information sharing		R
11	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
12	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
13	retweet of team's tweet on a video of a humorous game situation between athlete and a player from a competing team playing a charity match, both laughing (no link to a longer video of the match, competing player not specified other than in text on video)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Fanship	R
14	recommending followers to watch a charity match between athlete and a competing team's player (specified and tagged), sponsored by a car manufacturer (tagged and hashtagged) + link to the car manufacturer's eSports Twitch stream	Promotional (car manufacturer's Twitch stream)	Fanship	Entertainment content	O
15	retweet of the athlete's team's tweet on the team returning to have a team in athlete's game, with the team's hashtag + picture of the athlete and teammates and their spring match schedule	Information sharing	Entertainment content		R
16	retweet of a drawn picture of a dead rap artist, in honour of him	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
17	retweet of team's tweet on a new player joining athlete's team + short video introducing the player	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	R
18	informing that has joined a team + retweet of team's tweet on him joining and a short introductory video	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
19	wishing happy thanksgiving	Diversion	Interactivity		O
20	asking followers for opinions on whether or not to get a game console (unrelated to eSport or athlete's own game)	Diversion	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 7: Henrik 'Froggen' Hansen					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	general comment on improving oneself	Diversion	Information sharing		O
2	asking followers if they miss a former game item in athlete's game + photo of the item	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
3	wishing good morning to all gamers	Diversion	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
4	retweet of team's photos of athlete and his teammates in their everyday clothes in a city	Entertainment content			R
5	declaring being a fan of a player from a competing team (player specified, not tagged, team not specified)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
6	complimenting a competing losing team (specified and tagged) after a match (unspecified)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
7	wishing happy birthday to a teammate (specified and tagged)	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	Diversion	O
8	declaring that it is the athlete's own birthday	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
9	a crown emoji and a frog emoji (latter as a reference to own player name), not referring to a match victory as any not played close to the date	Diversion	Entertainment content		O

10	informing that has returned to going to a gym after a break, with the athlete's weight now and before the break	Diversion	Information sharing		O
11	complimenting a competing winning team (specified and tagged) after a match (unspecified)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
12	retweet of team's photos of athlete and his teammates in their everyday clothes in a city	Entertainment content			R
13	complimenting a competing losing team (specified and tagged) after a match (unspecified)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
14	retweet of an eSport news site's tweet on an eSports analyst's video on athlete's history with former team's success and failure + link to the video on eSports news site's YouTube account	Information sharing	Promotional (analyst, news site's YouTube account)	Entertainment content	R
15	humorous comment on people playing athlete's own game, asking what the future will bring (can be taken as an actual question or rhetorically)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Interactivity	O
16	wishing good morning to all gamers	Diversion	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
17	photo of a broken keyboard after a match, no text	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
18	comment on and retweet of a fan's emoji combination of the athlete and a playable character in his game (emojis: crown, frog, ball, clock), humorous tone	Interactivity	Entertainment content		O
19	promoting the team's jersey and team's web store + link to web store and a photo of athlete wearing team shirt	Promotional (own team's apparel and web store)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
20	feelings at the beginning of a match (unspecified), humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
Athlete 8: Lee 'Faker' Sang-hyeok					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	retweet of team's tweet on a video on athlete and an eSports streamer (specified and tagged) playing arcade games + link to the video on team's website	Entertainment content	Promotional (streamer, own team's website)	Diversion	R
2	retweet of team's tweet on a video of the athlete visiting the headquarters of a sponsor (sports apparel manufacturer) and talking about their importance to sports in general and about the new sponsorship + link to the video on team's website	Promotional (sports apparel manufacturer, own team's website)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
3	retweet of team's tweet on a video of the athlete and a streamer visiting an eccentric hamburger restaurant + link to the video on team's YouTube account	Promotional (restaurant, streamer)	Diversion	Entertainment content	R
4	retweet of team announcing new sponsor (sports apparel manufacturer, tagged) + picture of the logos of athlete's team and sponsor	Promotional (sports apparel manufacturer)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
5	wishing happy new year, with a humorous photo of athlete's shoes with spilled sauce on them	Entertainment content	Diversion	Interactivity	O
6	retweet of team's tweet on a video of the athlete meeting the lead player (specified, not tagged) of a competing team, calling both the athlete and the player 'living legends' + link to the video on the team's YouTube account	Fanship	Entertainment content	Promotional (team's YouTube account)	R
7	wishing early happy new year (posted in mid-December) + set of photos with the athlete in an anime costume	Entertainment content	Diversion	Interactivity	O
8	retweet of team's tweet on a charity fundraiser to play with the athlete and a retired basketball player (both specified and tagged) for a donation + link to the fundraiser page	Promotional (charity fundraiser)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
9	retweet of team's tweet on asking followers which in-game character the athlete should choose to play with on a charity livestream (charity account tagged) + link to the poll + photo of athlete	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Promotional (charity livestream)	R
10	photo of the athlete with penguins	Entertainment content			O
11	video of penguins (probably filmed by the athlete, as tweet 10 is of him with them)	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
12	retweet of a retired basketball player the athlete's game announcing that the athlete will be playing on his livestream for charity to help rebuild after a hurricane	Promotional (charity livestream)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
13	retweet of an eSports tournament organisation's tweet on an athlete's team's player from another game (player tagged) playing against challengers in an event, where the winning challenger wins gaming hardware (e.g. Gaming headphones) + picture advertising the event with photo of the player	Promotional (gaming event, athlete's team's player from another game, tournament organiser,	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R

		gaming hardware)			
14	retweet of a short teaser video for an upcoming longer video of the team, context unspecified	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (team's upcoming video)	R
15	a humorous photoshopped picture of the athlete with a trophy, on the date of actually winning the trophy	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
16	set of photos of the athlete wearing a watch and holding a golden astronaut statue (on the anniversary of the first moon landing), photos taken by a magazine, watch manufacturer and magazine tagged, watch models hashtagged	Promotional (watch manufacturer, magazine)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
17	a tweet with only a dot (full stop sign; possibly a tweet made by mistake)	Diversion			O
18	recommending people to come watch the final tournament in athlete's game (specified by part of the tournament's name, not tagged)	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	Interactivity	O
19	photo of teammates sleeping, athlete not in photo	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammates)		O
20	retweet of team's tweet on an interview video of the athlete meeting a player from a competing team during a tournament (hashtagged), player and competing team tagged + link to video on team's YouTube account	Fanship	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament, own team's YouTube account)	R
Athlete 9: Luka 'Perkz' Perkovic					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	commenting on a tournament (not specified) where athlete's own team not participating, asking if a competing team's player (specified and tagged) was the problem in that team not succeeding in that tournament	Fanship	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
2	quoting a playable character in athlete's own game (unexplained, but understood by followers as a reference to the character), slightly humorous tone	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
3	commenting on own performance after a match (unspecified), slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
4	retweet of team's tweet on team's voice commentary video from the matches of a league week (specified, league of athlete's game tagged), humorous video with players commenting and laughing, athlete highlighted and tagged in tweet + link to the video on team's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's YouTube account, league of own game)	R
5	retweet of a fan's drawing of the athlete	Interactivity	Entertainment content		R
6	promising not to pick a bad playable character in athlete's game during the coming week, slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
7	retweet of a comment by a follower on a discussion between the athlete, another player from a competing team and their followers on the athlete having the upper hand in a match situation (unspecified), competing player not specified in the comment, slightly humorous tone	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
8	humorous comment on a match (unspecified) between two competing teams (one of which identified with a pun of the name, otherwise unspecified)	Fanship	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
9	informing that has got a new Discord channel for fans to follow streams, recommending to join the community + link to the channel	Information sharing	Promotional (own Discord channel)	Entertainment content	O
10	remarking humorously on teammate's inability to play certain playable characters in athlete's game, so the athlete has to play them, onomatopoeic sound	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
11	retweet of team's tweet on a new collection of athlete's own team's apparel + commercial video and a link to the team's web store	Promotional (own team's apparel and web store)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
12	retweet of a fan's tweet on trying to get the athlete's team to have a national Croatian team jersey in the team's web store (the athlete and the fan are Croatians), the athlete, team manager and the team tagged, comment on noticing team's computer hardware in association with a computer manufacturer (specified and tagged) being available in fan's local store (unspecified)	Interactivity	Promotional (computer hardware manufacturer)	Entertainment content	R
13	retweet of team's tweet on team's voice commentary video from the matches of a league week (specified, league of athlete's game tagged), humorous video with players commenting and laughing + link to the video on team's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's YouTube account, league of own game)	R

14	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it + informing that is playing with a teammate (specified and tagged) in the new stream	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream, own teammate)	Entertainment content	O
15	retweet of a fan's tweet on trying to get the athlete's team to have a national Croatian team jersey in the team's web store (the athlete and the fan are Croatians), the athlete, team manager and the team tagged	Interactivity	Information sharing		R
16	retweet of a fan's drawing of the athlete and a teammate (both tagged), asking for certain in-game playable character choices for their next game, complimenting the players and wishing luck in future matches	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	R
17	retweet of team's tweet on team's voice commentary video from the matches of a league week (specified, league not tagged), humorous video with players commenting, fan and analyst reactions, memes + link to the video on team's YouTube account	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's YouTube account)	R
18	announcing the athlete's team's match results of the week, humorous comment on own future career	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
19	humorously copying a competing team's player's tweet with a few changes and so taking part and highlighting the competing player's conversation	Interactivity	Fanship	Entertainment content	O
20	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it + informing that is playing with a teammate (specified and tagged) in the new stream	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream, own teammate)	Entertainment content	O

Athlete 10: Seung Hoon 'Huni' Heo

#	Description of tweet	1st	2st	3rd	o/r
1	telling two competing teams (specified and tagged) to watch out, because the athlete is coming to compete against them	Fanship	Information sharing	Interactivity	O
2	complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged) after a match (unspecified), saying that it is the athlete's own former team	Fanship	Information sharing		O
3	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
4	asking followers if they enjoyed the athlete's choice of a playable character in a match (unspecified)	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
5	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
6	complimenting a competing winning team (specified and tagged) playing well in a match, saying that athlete and his team's performance was not good, reflecting on future attitude and performance	Fanship	Information sharing		O
7	humorously commenting on own team on leader boards (current standing in first place) + photo of the leader boards	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
8	humorously commenting on what playable character will be using in a match (unspecified)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
9	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
10	promoting own team jersey available for purchase in own team's webstore (own team tagged, link to own team's webstore provided) + advertisement picture of the athlete wearing the team jersey and the webstore link showing	Promotional (own team's apparel, own team, own team's webstore)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
11	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
12	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
13	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
14	saying that loves a network operator (a sponsor of the team, specified and tagged) + photo of athlete wearing a shirt with the network operator's name	Promotional (network operator)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
15	humorously informing that own team has won the matches (unspecified) of the day	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
16	reflecting on a previous match (unspecified) and athlete's own performance in it, slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O

17	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
18	promoting own team jersey available for purchase in own team's webstore (own team tagged and hashtagged, link to own team's webstore provided) + photo of the athlete wearing the team jersey, a sponsor's (network operator) name showing in large print in the foreground of the photo	Promotional (own team's apparel, own team, own team's webstore, network operator)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
19	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
20	retweet of team's tweet on congratulating the athlete on his birthday (athlete tagged) + photo of the athlete	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Diversion	R
21	holiday greetings (Christmas) + wishing happy birthday to oneself, humorous tone	Diversion	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O

Counter-Strike

Athlete 1: Gabriel 'falleN' Toledo					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
2	complimenting a competing team (specified and tagged) for tournament victory (tournament unspecified), wishing good luck to both teams in final match, expressing excitement	Fanship	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	O
3	commenting humorously on a situation in game, retweet of game's official account's humorous comment	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
4	complimenting two competing teams (specified and tagged) for great matches (tournament unspecified)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
5	thanking fans after meeting them at a gaming eyewear manufacturer's (specified and tagged) stand during a tournament (specified and hashtagged) + video of meeting fans at stand	Promotional (gaming eyewear manufacturer, tournament)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
6	retweet of team's competition to create a video of showing team fandom, main prize having one's name in team's tournament jersey (tournament named) + picture with fans and jersey	Promotional (own team, tournament)	Interactivity	Entertainment content	R
7	retweet of competition of athlete's gaming merchandise account, prizes gaming hardware for tagging friends + picture of prizes	Promotional (athlete's gaming merchandise)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
8	feelings and opinions on audience not being able to attend tournament due to virus outbreak (at the beginning of covid-19 outbreak) + retweet of eSports streamer commenting on the situation and a humorous picture by a fan	Information sharing	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
9	thoughts about professional gaming and about focusing on an upcoming tournament (specified and tagged) + picture of athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	O
10	congratulating a winning athlete (specified and tagged), opinion on overall performance of and congratulations to a competing team (specified and tagged)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
11	retweet of a fan explaining meeting the athlete and expressing excitement, gratitude and love of the athlete + pictures of the athlete and fan	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
12	thanking everyone for support, commenting on own team's performance in a tournament (unspecified), giving results of matches with a victory and a loss (competing teams in matches specified and tagged), wishing luck to a competing team (specified, but not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
13	retweet of a fan's humorous picture and text on the athlete in a tournament (unspecified)	Fanship	Entertainment content		R
14	retweet of professional eSports photographer's photos of Brazilian fans cheering in the audience during a tournament (specified and hashtagged)	Entertainment content	Promotional (photographer, tournament)	Information sharing	R
15	retweet of teammate complimenting a competing team (specified, not tagged) after a match (unspecified), informing that another match versus another team (specified and tagged) will be played soon	Fanship	Information sharing		R

16	comment and retweet of an eSport content company's match situation video of competing team's (specified and tagged) commentary during match, comment on a competing player (specified and tagged)	Fanship	Entertainment content	Promotional (eSports content company)	O
17	retweet of athlete's gaming merchandise's partner, a competing team's player, expressing excitement over receiving athlete's gaming hardware (eSports headphones), thanking the athlete and sharing a coupon code for the web shop + picture of headphones	Promotional (athlete's gaming merchandise)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
18	announcing that a tournament (specified and tagged) is beginning, asking to join the team's games, giving the starting time of first match + picture of the team	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
19	comment and retweet of eSports tournament organiser's tweet on added feature to online matches, link to further information	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament organiser)		O
20	a video of a match situation with the athlete winning (tournament unspecified), humorous comment with a hashtag mention of a shampoo that the athlete advertises	Entertainment content	Promotional (shampoo)	Information sharing	O
Athlete 2: Marcelo 'coldzera' David					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	listing athlete's social media accounts	Information sharing	Promotional (own social media accounts)		O
2	link to athlete's own Instagram picture of the athlete in Europe (having "free time", because team dropped out of tournament)	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)	Information sharing	O
3	information on being out of the tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged), insight into and feelings about own team's performance, thanking fans for support + Instagram link to own picture of athlete disappointed	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)	O
4	Instagram link to athlete smiling in host city of a tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged)	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)	Information sharing	O
5	complimenting a competing team (specified, not tagged), announcing next game's competing team (specified, not tagged)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
6	information on preparation for tournament (specified, not tagged) having been done and on tournament beginning the next day + Instagram link to own short video of athlete playing	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account, tournament)	O
7	information on leaving for a bootcamp to prepare for a tournament (specified, not tagged) and on the areas focused on before the tournament + Instagram link to own picture of athlete with a suitcase	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)	O
8	congratulating a competing team (specified, tagged; also each player of the team tagged) for qualifying for a tournament (specified, not tagged), advice on how to keep motivated	Fanship	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
9	information on new episode of own vlog on own team's experience in tournament (specified, not tagged) being out, vlog also includes two interviews with the athlete, asking followers to like and subscribe to own YouTube account + link to own vlog in YouTube	Information sharing	Promotional (own YouTube channel, tournament)	Entertainment content	O
10	information on new episode of own vlog on own team's experience in tournament (specified, not tagged) being out, vlog also includes two interviews with the athlete, asking followers to like and subscribe to own YouTube account + link to own vlog in YouTube (same content as in tweet no. 9, but in Portuguese)	Information sharing	Promotional (own YouTube channel, tournament)	Entertainment content	O
11	promoting a food supplement (specified and tagged), discount code for the web shop + link to athlete's own Instagram picture with athlete and food supplement + hashtags with food supplement's slogans	Promotional (food supplement, own Instagram account)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
12	information on new interview video of the athlete being out on athlete's YouTube channel, link to the video	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube channel)	O
13	wishing good luck to own team's players in another eSports game (team specified, not tagged), giving advice on how to stay focused + hashtag of team	Promotional (own team in another eSports game)	Fanship	Information sharing	O

14	wishing good luck to own team's players in another eSports game (players specified and tagged) , giving advice on how to stay focused + hashtag of team	Promotional (own team in another eSports game)	Fanship	Interactivity	O
15	information on new episode of own vlog on own team's experience in tournament (specified, not tagged) being out, vlog also includes narration by the athlete (video not linked)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube channel)	O
16	information on new episode of own vlog on own team's experience in tournament (specified, not tagged) being out, vlog also includes narration by the athlete + link to video on YouTube	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube channel)	O
17	thoughts on how to progress as a professional player + Instagram link to own picture of athlete playing in a tournament (host city specified, tournament unspecified)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
18	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
19	information on winning against a competing team (specified and tagged) in a tournament (specified and tagged), thanking fans for support + Instagram link to own picture of team	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account, tournament)	O
20	information on winning against a competing team (specified and tagged) in a tournament (specified and tagged), thanking fans for support + photo of athlete celebrating	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
21	information on qualifying for a tournament (specified, not tagged), thoughts on how the year has gone so far for the team + Instagram link to own photo of athlete celebrating	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)	O

Athlete 3: Kenny 'kennys' Schrub

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	expressing disappointment over no audience being able to partake in tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged) as well as football league being cancelled due to virus outbreak	Information sharing	Diversion		O
2	thanking tournament organisers (organisation specified and tagged, also lead organiser tagged) for well-organised event despite of circumstances, thanking everyone	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament organisers)		O
3	evaluating own team's performance in tournament (unspecified), promising to do better in the future, congratulating and complimenting competing team (specified and tagged) for victory	Information sharing	Fanship		O
4	asking followers to also follow teammate (specified and tagged) with much less followers	Interactivity	Information sharing	Promotional (own teammate)	O
5	humorous comment on a match situation, athlete as the active player in the situation + retweet of an eSports content creating account's tweet of short video on the situation	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (eSports content creating Twitter account)	O
6	announcing that athlete's team has made it to the finals of a tournament (specified and tagged) after winning against competing team (specified and tagged), thanking everyone for support	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		O
7	retweet of gif video of athlete signing his name on camera screen, tournament hashtagged	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)		R
8	retweet of team informing that the players' voice comments from a previous tournament (specified and tagged) are available on team's YouTube account, mention of upcoming tournament (specified and tagged) + humorous video clip from the voice comments	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament, team's YouTube channel)	R
9	retweet of short video of players from two competing teams (specified and tagged) shaking hands, own team not in the video, announcer promoting the tournament (tournament also hashtagged), link to official webpage showing live feed of matches	Fanship	Promotional (tournament, tournament's webpage live feed)	Entertainment content	R
10	retweet of eSports news site's interview of athlete, with a professional eSports interviewer (specified and tagged) during a tournament (specified and hashtagged) on how athlete overcame depression with help of eSports and team (specified and tagged), interview presented by an in-game inventory trading website	Information sharing	Promotional (eSports news site, eSports interviewer, tournament, in-game inventory trading website)	Entertainment content	R

11	retweet of girlfriend's link to her Twitch stream due to updating it, girlfriend playing other game (not an eSport) than the athlete's game	Diversion	Promotional (girlfriend's Twitch stream)		R
12	feelings and comments on tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged) to be played without audience due to covid-19 concerns (at the beginning of the virus outbreak) + link to the announcement on game organisation's official website	Information sharing			O
13	expressing excitement after winning a match and advancing to semi-finals (host city specified, tournament not tagged), announcing the day of next match, complimenting a competing game after winning against them (sharing also the final score of the match), thanking everyone for support	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	O
14	retweet of teammate informing his followers of a change in his Twitter username	Information sharing	Promotional (own teammate)		R
15	retweet of tournament stage manager's video on athlete's team (team tagged as well as players individually) qualifying for main stage at a tournament (specified and hashtagged), complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged), short video on the winning moment and on team's players hugging and high-fiving	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	R
16	expressing excitement over being in specific tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged) for the first time, expressing love for own team, complimenting losing team and evaluating both own and competing team's performances in match, insight into next aim	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	O
17	comment and retweet of team's humorous TikTok video on the warm relationship between the athlete and a teammate	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
18	commenting on update to the game from own point of view	Information sharing			O
19	information over winning a match in a tournament (unspecified) with final score, announcing next match, both previous and next opponent tagged	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Fanship	O
20	retweet of team announcing that the YouTube aftermovie of the team's experience at a tournament (specified and tagged) has been released, the team as winners of the tournament + link to the video on team's YouTube account, contains humorous content as well as matches of the tournament	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament, team's YouTube channel)	R

Athlete 4: Epitacio 'TACO' de Melo

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	tweet with only a hashtag, #ROR. May be in reference to 'Road to Rio', an upcoming tournament series in athlete's game, left unclear and ambiguous, as not a widely used hashtag for anything particular (may be unclear on purpose; followers attempt to give their humorous interpretations on the meaning)	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
2	retweet of a poster made by a professional eSports designer, featuring a drawn picture of the athlete and his name, humorous reference in text	Entertainment content	Promotional (eSports designer)		R
3	comment and retweet of eSports analyst's tweet on tournament (specified, not tagged) reaching the highest ever online viewership so far, of athlete's game gaining popularity + picture of statistics	Information sharing	Promotional (eSports analyst, tournament, own game)	Entertainment content	O
4	asking a retired player (specified and tagged; not from own team) for a link to buy his merchandise (mousepads), humorous	Entertainment content	Promotional (retired player's fan merchandise)	Interactivity	O
5	retweet of a tournament (specified and tagged) organiser's announcement of the two teams (specified and tagged) competing in the tournament final match, also information on former competition statistics, athlete's own team not in the final,	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	R
6	a humorous text and a link to own Instagram account's photo of actor posing for camera	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)		O
7	retweet of team's tweet of athlete's photo with a 'wishing you a great weekend' text	Entertainment content	Diversion	Interactivity	R
8	obscure reference in Portuguese, translates as 'I will fight', unclear what referring to as no matches or news on game/team	Diversion			O
9	expressing disappointment over no audience being able to partake in tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged) due to virus outbreak (at the beginning of the covid-19 outbreak)	Information sharing			O

10	obscure tweet with 'duh' as the only text, no clear reference to be found (no previous tweets as reference, no matches, no news on game/team)	Diversion			O
11	comment and compliment on a competing team (specified, not tagged)	Fanship	Information sharing		O
12	retweet of competing team's announcement on a new coach (specified and tagged) + picture of new coach	Fanship	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
13	asking followers for a photographer in Toronto (where team at the moment)	Interactivity	Diversion	Entertainment content	O
14	retweet of an artistic photo of athlete and teammate (both tagged) during a tournament (specified, not tagged) in a Flickr photo stream of a professional eSports writer of an eSports news account	Entertainment content	Promotional (eSports writer and his Flickr photo stream, tournament, own teammate)	Information sharing	R
15	asking followers to also follow a player from a competing team (specified and tagged in a tweet in same chain)	Interactivity	Fanship	Information sharing	O
16	praising a player for a competing team (specified and tagged), wishing him good luck in the future	Fanship	Information sharing		O
17	apologising to everyone for not winning a tournament, thanking for support, complimenting winning competing team (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
18	reporting on past and future matches in tournament (unspecified), complimenting losing competing team, naming next competing team (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
19	retweet of teammate announcing that a tournament (specified and tagged) is beginning, asking to join the team's games, giving the starting time of first match + picture of the team	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
20	obscure general comment ('TIME KEEPS MOVING'), no context provided	Diversion	Entertainment content		O
21	general notion on life + link to own Instagram picture of athlete	Entertainment content	Diversion		O
Athlete 5: Olof Kajbjer 'olofmeister' Gustafsson					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	listing athlete's social media accounts	Information sharing	Promotional (own social media accounts)		O
2	announcing winning a match against a competing team (specified, not tagged) in a tournament (unspecified), announcing next competing team (specified, not tagged) + link to own Instagram picture of athlete, photo credits to a currently teamless player	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)	O
3	announcing final score of a match against a competing, losing team (specified and tagged), complimenting them, announcing next match's schedule and competing team (specified, not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	O
4	retweet of a competing team's humorous video on competing team's player (specified and tagged) joking during a tournament (specified and hashtagged)	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	R
5	announcing the final score a match during a tournament (unspecified), losing team specified and tagged, reflection on how the match went	Information sharing	Fanship		O
6	retweet of a video of a basketball player reminiscing humorously on a famous dead basketball player	Diversion	Entertainment content		R
7	announcing final score of a match against a competing winning team (specified, not tagged), comment on how the match went, announcing next match and competing team (specified, not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O
8	retweet of teammate's tweet on being done with media day and playing first match, announcing match's timetable and competing team (specified, not tagged), tournament hashtagged	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		R
9	retweet of a teammate complimenting the athlete, athlete tagged	Information sharing			R
10	information on preparing for a tournament (specified, not tagged) in the host city (specified), expressing excitement + link to own Instagram picture of athlete being interviewed	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account, tournament)	O
11	asking the game's federation to direct message the athlete in order for the athlete to contact retired athletes, slightly humorous tone	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
12	comment on a basketball match	Diversion	Entertainment content		O

13	listing four favourite games, with own game in first place (not all games are eSports games)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Diversion	O
14	retweet of game's association's tweet on a matter related to the game, association responding to athlete's earlier question	Information sharing	Interactivity		R
15	commenting on game issue related to own earlier question to the game's association	Information sharing			O
16	asking a question from game's association on a matter related to the game	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
17	announcing qualifying for a tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged) + link to own Instagram picture of own team	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account)	O
18	thanking and complimenting a tournament (specified and tagged) for everything being well organised	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		O
19	announcing winning a tournament (specified and tagged), comment on how the matches went, losing team of final match tagged	Information sharing	Fanship		O
20	announcing winning a match, losing team tagged, comment on difficult part in match	Information sharing	Fanship		O
21	thoughts on team's start of a tournament (specified, not tagged), mention of own birthday, information on next game's timetable and possible next opponent (one of two teams, both specified, not tagged), thanking for birthday wishes	Information sharing	Fanship	Interactivity	O

Athlete 6: Jacky 'Stewie2K' Yip

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	comment on no audience being allowed to partake in tournament (hashtagged) due to covid-19 concerns (at the beginning of the virus outbreak), information on a fan meeting nevertheless, retweet of team's tweet on the situation from fans' point of view and information on the unofficial fan meeting with giveaway of team jerseys + pictures of the tournament yard and team jersey	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's jersey, tournament)	O
2	humorous gif animation of a player from competing team (name not specified in text, but player recognisable as the lead player of his team), with text mention of another competing team (specified, not tagged)	Entertainment content	Fanship	Information sharing	O
3	own prediction on the winning team (a competing team, as own team already out of competition) for the tournament (not specified)	Information sharing			O
4	results of a match, competing team specified, not tagged, complimenting the competing team, commenting own team's losses with a swear word	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
5	commenting on no audience being allowed into tournament (not specified) due to covid-19 concerns (at the beginning of the virus outbreak), cursing the situation with swear words, declaring that needs the audience reactions	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
6	results of a match, competing team specified, not tagged, comment on feelings after match by an emoji (sad face), information on next game's competing team alternatives (specified, not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship	Entertainment content	O
7	link to own Instagram picture of athlete in a tournament (tournament not specified, host arena and city specified, not tagged)	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament location, own Instagram account)	Information sharing	O
8	information on qualifying for semi-finals of a tournament (not specified), results score and losing competing team (specified, not tagged) of the match, information on time of semi-finals	Information sharing	Fanship		O
9	results of a match in a tournament (not specified), competing losing team (specified by acronym, not tagged), feelings after match expressed by emoji (peace sign with fingers)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
10	link to own Instagram picture of athlete during a tournament's media day (tournament specified, not tagged), photo credit provided (a professional photographer, specified and tagged)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament, photographer, own Instagram account)	O
11	information on having completed the bootcamp for a tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged), expressing excitedness for this year's first big event and own team's future performance in it	Information sharing			O
12	information on travelling to bootcamp for a tournament (specified, not tagged; also country of bootcamp location specified), expressing intention to do Twitch streams during bootcamp (no Twitch stream link or account name provided)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament, own Twitch stream)		O

13	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, announcing intention to do a Twitch stream in bootcamp later during week	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
14	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
15	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	thanking gaming platform (that owns the team) and own team (both gaming platform and own team tagged) for a ring with team logo and the word 'champions' + 2 pictures of the ring	Promotional (gaming platform, own team)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
17	complimenting a player (specified and tagged) formerly playing in own team, now playing in competing team, wishing the player happiness and hoping to play against one another in a tournament (specified, not tagged) + picture of the athlete and the competing player in a tournament	Fanship	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
18	feelings about own team's performance after a tournament (specified and tagged), thanking the tournament, information on where flying next and on bootcamp for next tournament (host city specified) + picture of athlete in a tournament	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	O
19	comment aimed at competing team's player (specified and tagged) on a situation in a match (tournament unspecified), cursing the match with a swear word	Interactivity	Fanship	Information sharing	O
20	feelings after a match (tournament unspecified), emoji (crying face) as part of the text, match results and complimenting winning competing team (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 7: Oleksandr 's1mple0' Kostyliev					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	game results for final match of a tournament (tournament not tagged, but name of tournament partly visible in photo), own team as the winner, competing team specified and tagged, complimenting competing team + photo of the athlete with team holding the tournament's trophy (photo credit provided, a professional photographer)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament, photographer)	O
2	comment on own performance in match (zero deaths in match), slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
3	retweet of an eSports interviewer's gif animation of interviewer and athlete failing to shake hands, humorous tone, interviewer congratulating athlete's team (tagged) for tournament (specified and tagged) victory, hashtag of an eSports website	Entertainment content	Promotional (eSports interviewer, tournament, eSports website)	Information sharing	R
4	retweet of team's tweet on athlete's sneaker shoes, decorated with team and athlete's names with a marker pen, 'designed' for a tournament (specified, not tagged), jokingly asking a major sneaker manufacturer (specified and tagged) whether they wish to collaborate + picture of shoes	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Information sharing	R
5	praising a teammate (specified and tagged) for playing well in a match situation during a tournament (unspecified), retweet of eSports company's match situation video	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Promotional (teammate, eSports company)	O
6	announcing semi-final results, own team as winners, complimenting own team's performance, complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged), team's own hashtag	Information sharing	Fanship		O
7	announcing quarterfinal results, own team as winners, complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged), team's own hashtag	Information sharing	Fanship		O
8	humorous comment on a strange object in athlete's hotel floor during a tournament + picture of the object	Entertainment content	Diversion		O
9	retweet of teammate announcing match results, own team as winners, complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged), informing that will be playing in tournament arena on the next day (arena specified, tournament not tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		R
10	commenting on no audience being allowed into tournament (host arena specified, tournament not tagged) due to covid-19 concerns (at the beginning of the virus outbreak)	Information sharing			O
11	announcing that tournament (host arena specified, tournament not tagged) beginning, complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged), apologizing for own performance during match	Information sharing	Fanship		O

12	announcing match results, own team as winners, <u>complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged)</u>	Information sharing	Fanship		O
13	comment on in-game purchases during a match	Information sharing			O
14	comment on match, competing winning team specified and tagged, <u>congratulating competing team</u>	Information sharing	Fanship		O
15	announcing match results, own team as winners, competing losing team specified and tagged, announcing date of next match, next competing team specified and tagged, team's own hashtag	Information sharing	Fanship		O
16	picture of own team	Entertainment content	Promotional (own teammates)		O
17	picture of athlete as a child, text referring to tournament (tournament series specified, not tagged) <u>beginning soon</u>	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
18	asking the game's organisation for possibility of a feature returning to game, slightly humorous tone	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
19	promotional picture of athlete with a gaming processor (tagged in text)	Promotional (gaming processor)	Entertainment content		O
20	congratulating a book author for new book on eSports (author tagged) + picture of the book cover	Promotional (book)	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 8: Christopher 'GeT RiGhT' Alesund					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	picture of the athlete, link to athlete's own YouTube channel's video on athlete's most viewed Twitch clips	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube channel, own Twitch account)	Information sharing	O
2	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, playing with streamers (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream, streamers)	Entertainment content	O
3	complimenting the performance of a competing team (specified, not tagged) during a tournament (hashtagged)	Fanship	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	O
4	announcing that the final of a tournament (specified and tagged, +hashtagged) is taking place soon, teams in final specified and tagged (own team already out of competition), link to tournament organiser's Twitch account, where final match can be viewed (no audience allowed on site due to covid-19 concerns)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament, tournament organiser's Twitch account)	Entertainment content	O
5	announcing the winner of a giveaway by the athlete	Interactivity	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
6	announcing that has picked a winner for athlete's own giveaway (no sponsors involved), giving a timeframe for the winner to respond	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
7	informing that has found a website to conduct the raffle for choosing the winner of own giveaway, informing that will announce the winner later	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
8	comment on randomly picking a number to choose the winner of the giveaway	Information sharing			O
9	clarifying to followers what meant with question on randomly picking a winner for own giveaway	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
10	asking followers for a good way to pick the winner of own giveaway	Interactivity	Information sharing		O
11	expressing excitement on watching the upcoming final match of a tournament (hashtagged), competing teams for the match specified, not tagged (own team already out of competition)	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	O
12	retweet of team's tweet on team's YouTube video on visiting team's US headquarters and with comments on eSports by the athlete and his teammates, athlete and teammates tagged in text	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's YouTube channel, own teammates)	R
13	informing that entry into own giveaway ends the following day, retweet of own earlier tweet with information on recent progress and on instructions for the giveaway, prize an in-game object + picture of the object	Information sharing	Interactivity	Promotional (own game)	O
14	giving a free access key to whoever is the fastest to use it for an online game (tagged)	Diversion	Interactivity	Promotional (online game)	O
15	comment on own link to own Twitch stream, with two streamers who plays in the stream with tagged, showing love to the streamers	Promotional (streamers, own Twitch stream)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
16	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, playing with streamers (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch	Entertainment content	O

			stream, streamers)		
17	link to team's YouTube video on visiting team's US headquarters and with comments on eSports by the athlete and his teammates	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team's YouTube channel)	O
18	retweet of team's video producer's tweet on team's YouTube video being out, no link to it, team's own hashtag	Information sharing	Promotional (team's video producer, own team's YouTube video series)	Entertainment content	R
19	retweet of tournament organiser's tweet on how to approach a tournament being played without an audience due to covid-19 concerns, asking people to watch the tournament online (no link provided, tournament series tagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament's online stream)	Entertainment content	R
20	wishing a new analyst for the team welcome, retweet of team's announcement on analyst joining the team and on complimenting the analyst + picture of the analyst	Information sharing	Promotional (team's new analyst)	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 9: Håvard 'rain' Nygaard					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	informing that won a final match against a competing team (specified and tagged), announcing match results, thanking everyone working at the tournament (specified and tagged) for a well-organised event	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Fanship	O
2	announcing match results, competing losing team tagged, informing that team has qualified for final matches to be played later in spring (name of tournament and host city specified, not tagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Fanship	O
3	wishing happy birthday to a teammate (tagged) + picture of teammate	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	Diversion	O
4	comment and retweet of teammate's tweet on new team apparel being launched in collaboration with a clothing company, link to team's website, team and clothing company tagged, team's own hashtag + video of apparel	Promotional (team's apparel with clothing company)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
5	retweet of tournament organiser's humorous tweet on athlete being in tournament, athlete tagged, tournament hashtagged + picture of athlete in tournament	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	R
6	humorous comment on game server, asking people to click a deliberately erroneous link	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Diversion	O
7	announcing match results, competing losing team specified by acronym, not tagged, many emojis (sunglass face), complimenting own team, tournament unspecified	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
8	announcing match results, competing losing team specified by name of one player, not tagged, tournament unspecified	Information sharing			O
9	commenting on high level of gameplay by competing winning team (specified and tagged), reflecting on own team's performance and plans for future	Fanship	Information sharing		O
10	comment on a situation in match (unspecified), humorous tone	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
11	comment on intensity of match, slightly humorous tone, complimenting competing team (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship	Entertainment content	O
12	retweet of energy drink manufacturer's (sponsor of the team, tagged) video commercial with the team with energy drinks, team and athletes and teammates tagged	Promotional (energy drink, own teammates)	Entertainment content		R
13	announcing that own team is champion of a tournament (unspecified), many emojis (devil face)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
14	informing that will be playing the final match of a tournament (unspecified) in 15 minutes, competing team tagged	Information sharing	Fanship		O
15	announcing match results so far (competing team and tournament unspecified), complimenting own team, teammates tagged	Information sharing	Promotional (teammates)		O
16	retweet of a commentator's tweet on tournament beginning soon (tournament series tagged, host city and arena specified), information on following the athlete (tagged) and his team for the whole tournament + link to the eSport stream section of a Norwegian TV channel's website	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament series, eSports streaming website, eSports commentator)	Entertainment content	R
17	information on personal life: announcing that girlfriend has accepted marriage proposal + picture of girlfriend with ring on finger	Diversion	Entertainment content		O

18	wishing a new player welcome for joining athlete's team, retweet of team announcing the new player + humorous video on the announcement	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	O
19	informing that did not manage to win a player challenge tournament (hashtagged), but humorously mentions that won easily against a teammate (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament, teammate)	O
20	thanking a leaving teammate (tagged) for the shared years, reflecting on the years, wishing good luck in the future, heart emoji	Information sharing	Promotional (leaving teammate)	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 10: Tarik 'tarik' Celik					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	comment on people calling themselves professionals in an unreleased eSports game, humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Diversion	O
2	commenting on a final match of a tournament (unspecified) between two competing teams (one of which specified, neither one tagged; own team already out of competition), slightly humorous tone	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
3	retweet of team's tweet on a YouTube video journal with tournament footage (tournament hashtagged), player reflections from athlete, teammates and team's coach as well as a trip to a computer hardware company's store (not mentioned outside of video), teams own hashtag + link to the video on team's YouTube channel	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament, team's YouTube channel, computer hardware)	R
4	complimenting a competing player for playing well (player specified, not tagged), slightly humorous tone (light cursing)	Fanship	Information sharing	Entertainment content	O
5	comment on no audience being allowed in tournament (specified) due to covid-19 concerns, link to eSports news websites news article on the issue	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
6	reflecting on own team's bad performance during a tournament (unspecified), feelings about the lack of success, complimenting competing winning team (specified and tagged), wishing good luck to all teams (unspecified) still in tournament	Information sharing	Fanship		O
7	announcing that will soon be playing a match (tournament unspecified), competing team tagged, thoughts on importance of match	Information sharing	Fanship		O
8	announcing match results (tournament unspecified), competing winning team tagged, thoughts on own team's current situation in the tournament	Information sharing	Fanship		O
9	announcing match results (tournament unspecified), competing losing team specified, not tagged, complimenting losing team, announcing next game's schedule, competing team tagged	Information sharing	Fanship		O
10	informing that it's time to start a major tournament (unspecified), own team's hashtag	Information sharing	Promotional (own team)	Entertainment content	O
11	retweet of a computer hardware manufacturer's eSports page's tweet on a quote from the athlete, with his thoughts on the mindset on the team's last and next tournament, athlete and his team tagged, both mentioned tournaments hashtagged + picture of athlete's team	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournaments, computer hardware and computer manufacturer's eSports page, own team)	R
12	informing that has made it to the host city of a tournament (host city specified, tournament not specified), expressing excitement to play	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
13	informing that it's the athlete's birthday and his new age, party emoji	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
14	thanking tournament organisers (specified and tagged) for a well-organised event, reflecting on own team's performance and stay there, informing that will be returning to another city for a bootcamp before next tournament (host city specified, tournament not tagged)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournaments)		O
15	reflecting on own team's performance during an event (tournament not specified), thoughts on team's future prospects, complimenting winning competing team	Information sharing	Fanship		O
16	retweet of a fan's (CEO of an apparel company) humorous response to a discussion on old videos of the athlete playing + YouTube video by the athlete playing many years ago, from athlete's own YouTube channel	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Promotional (own YouTube account, apparel company)	R
17	retweet of an eSports analyst's prediction on final match results of a tournament (tournament hashtagged, competing teams specified, not tagged), athlete's own team predicted as the winner of the final match	Information sharing			R

18	information on the next match (tournament unspecified), competing team tagged, humorous tone, emoji (devil face)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	O
19	retweet of a computer hardware manufacturer's eSports page's tweet on athlete's upcoming matches in a tournament, athlete and his team tagged, tournament hashtagged, competing teams tagged (one of which will have a match with), hashtag of computer hardware manufacturer and their eSports page + picture of the athlete	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament, computer hardware and computer manufacturer's eSports page)	R
20	expressing excitement and relief after winning a match (tournament unspecified), announcing match results, complimenting competing losing team (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		O

Dota 2

Athlete 1: Artour 'Arteezy' Babaev					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	link to a cancer foundation of a friend with cancer	Diversion	Promotional (cancer foundation)	Information sharing	O
2	praise of an athlete in a competing team	Fanship	Information sharing		O
3	retweet of a teammate announcing results (team qualifying for a tournament)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		R
4	retweet of a team manager wishing a leaving teammate good luck in new team	Information sharing	Fanship		R
5	feelings after seeing the latest annual documentary on athlete's game's finals (free documentary series), own team playing, but not as the main focus	Information sharing	Promotional (free annual documentary)	Fanship	O
6	feelings on being back in homeland	Diversion	Information sharing		O
7	a 'rest in peace' message after the death of a famous basketball player	Diversion	Information sharing		O
8	retweet of a teammate's obscure message on failing in a match	Information sharing	Entertainment content		R
9	retweet of a teammate's feelings before a match + photo of team	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotion (match)	R
10	rhetorical question on a difficult game situation	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
11	comment on match situation without provided context	Information sharing	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
12	rhetorical question on a difficult game situation	Information sharing	interactivity	Entertainment content	O
13	holiday greetings (New Year)	Diversion	Interactivity		O
14	holiday greetings (Christmas)	Diversion	Interactivity		O
15	retweet of teammate's feelings after a match + future tactics + thanking fans	Information sharing	Interactivity		R
16	praise of keyboard, embedded tweet of athlete promoting the manufacturer	Promotional (keyboard manufacturer)	Information sharing		O
17	GIF animation of waving without text	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Diversion	O
18	apologizing because of a fake Twitch stream under the athlete's name, explaining how to tell the difference	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
19	commenting on a playable character in athlete's game	Information sharing			O
20	commenting on own game's update + own performance	Information sharing			O
Athlete 2: Danil 'Dendi' Ishutin					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	link to a video on athlete as an actor, founding a new team in the end of the story	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	O
2	congratulating a team of another eSport game for victory, athletes and team tagged	Fanship	Information sharing		O
3	comment on match situation without provided context	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
4	link to teammate's interview video	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	O
5	retweet of a link to teammate's interview video	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	R
6	link to own Twitch stream, request for followers to join	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
7	retweet of information on team joining a tournament + photo	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R

8	link to own Twitch stream, request for followers to join	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
9	question to followers on match starting	Interactivity	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	O
10	short video on teammate's opinion on tournament arrangements	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R
11	link to own Twitch stream, request for followers to join	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
12	question to followers on match starting	Interactivity	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	O
13	thanking tournament organisers for a good tournament + feelings after the matches + photo of team	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R
14	retweet of tournament organiser thanking and praising the team + photo gallery of fans with the team	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R
15	link to athlete's interview article + information on how the interview went + photo of athlete being interviewed	Information sharing	Promotional (website)	Entertainment content	R
16	link to video of athlete and teammate thanking fans of coming to event + explaining tactics + asking them to watch the finals	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R
17	retweet of video on tournament opening and a competing team's arrival on stage	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R
18	nostalgia on meeting former teammate (now in competing team) in a tournament + photo of the athletes shaking hands in the tournament	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R
19	link to video on tournament visual technics	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R
20	information on the length of an autograph session in a tournament + thanking the fans for coming + photo	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	R
21	retweet of another athlete's outlook on the proper mindset on playing the game	Information sharing	Fanship		R
Athlete 3: Clement 'Puppy' Ivanov					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	short video on announcing team's new roster for a game (not the athlete's own game)	Information sharing	Promotional (team)	Entertainment content	R
2	link to team's website with announcement of new roster in athlete's own game + picture of new roster	Information sharing	Promotional (team)	Entertainment content	R
3	video announcing team launching 'world's first eSports branded alcoholic beverage'	Promotional (alcoholic beverage)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
4	photo of the annual main tournament finals of the game	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	O
5	video announcing sportswear manufacturer's upcoming team apparel, with a mention of tournament	Promotional (sportswear, tournament)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
6	announcing winning an award at a tournament, congratulating competing team (with team tagged), complimenting audience	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	O
7	short video from a tournament, of an interviewer asking the team a question	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	R
8	announcing the team winning a tournament	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		O
9	thanking a tournament for giving the athlete an award, complimenting own team and competing team (tagged).	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	O
10	link to an interview video (in Russian and English) of athlete and teammate during tournament	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	R
11	video of athlete and teammate promoting their sponsor's hardware (wireless computer mice)	Promotional (computer hardware)	Entertainment content		R
12	retweet of teammate congratulating a competing team for victory (tournament unspecified)	Fanship	Information sharing		R
13	thanking tournament organisers and audience for successful tournament	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		O
14	retweet of a link to a blog post by competing team's lead player on his reasons for continuing to play the game professionally	Fanship	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
15	picture of the team holding a trophy (after winning a tournament, not specified)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
16	opinion on the latest annual documentary on athlete's game's finals (free documentary series), own team playing, but not as the main focus	Information sharing	Promotional (free annual documentary)	Fanship	O
17	retweet of team's Christmas giveaway competition, prize fan merchandise (unspecified), winning requires activity on team's Twitter account	Promotional (team's Twitter account, team's	Interactivity	Information sharing	R

		fan merchandise)			
18	feelings after a tournament, thanking audience for support, congratulating winning team	Information sharing	Fanship		O
19	link to an interview video (in Russian) of athlete and his personal life, recorded during tournament (specified)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Diversion	R
20	comment on most irritating problems with the athlete's game	Information sharing			O
Athlete 4: Kuro 'KuroKy' Salehi Takhasomi					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	thanking audience of a tournament (unspecified), congratulating competing team	Information sharing	Fanship		O
2	thanking audience of a tournament (unspecified), complimenting own and competing team	Information sharing	Fanship		O
3	apologising for own weak performance, promising to improve	Information sharing			O
4	retweet of team's feelings after a tournament, thanking audience and tournament organisers (specified) for good event + photo of team	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament organisers)	Entertainment content	R
5	saying 'thank God' in Arabic, after a successful tournament performance of team	Information sharing			O
6	picture gallery from team media day at a tournament, encouragement to watch team's match in tournament (specified)	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	R
7	picture gallery of arriving in tournament location, mention of upcoming match	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	R
8	announcing that the team has qualified for a tournament, reflecting on own performance, expressing gratefulness for fan support	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		O
9	retweet of former professional player informing of problems with updates to the game	Information sharing			R
10	commercial video on the athlete and other players founding a new team, revealing the name	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	R
11	commercial video on the athlete joining a new team, not yet revealing the name	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	O
12	congratulating a competing team for winning and also complimenting another team, announcing that will be founding a new team soon	Fanship	Information sharing	Promotional (own team)	O
13	thanking everyone after a tournament loss (unspecified, but annual championships of the game), hoping to meet again soon	Information sharing			O
14	short video of team joking about the on-screen name of a teammate	Entertainment content			O
15	holiday greetings (Eid) in Arabic	Diversion	Interactivity		O
16	thanking audience of a tournament (unspecified), congratulating competing team	Information sharing	Fanship		O
17	holiday greetings (Nowruz)	Diversion	Interactivity		O
18	announcing victory in a tournament (specified)	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		O
19	Thanking a teamless player for helping athlete's team out by acting as stand-in for a tournament (unspecified), complimenting player	Fanship	Information sharing		O
20	Listing competing team's lead player's (not tagged, but named) achievements, calling him a legend	Fanship	Information sharing		O
Athlete 5: Johan 'N0tail' Sundstein					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	promoting the mobile app of the team's official fan token partner + video of the app	Promotional (team's fan token partner)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
2	comment on a fan art painting of teammate (retweet of the official fan token partner's share, original tweet by the fan who made the painting)	Interactivity	Promotional (team's fan token partner)	Entertainment content	O
3	responding to the video commercial of the game's annual championships	Promotional (annual championships)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
4	retweet of a team player's (of another game) response to a competing team's coach joking about them with a picture	Information sharing	Entertainment content		R
5	retweet of the results of a match final in tournament (own team in another game) + picture illustrating the results	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team in another game)	R
6	feelings about watching a match between own team (in another game) and competing team in tournament	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	O
7	meme picture of team player in another game during a tournament and a Pokémon character, mention of tournament	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)		R

8	meme picture from a cartoon, text referring to teammate humorously	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
9	rhetorical question on update to game's playable character + gif animation	Information sharing	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
10	retweet of appraisal and birthday congratulations of teammate by own team + photo of teammate	Information sharing	Promotional (teammate)	Entertainment content	R
11	update on progress in game qualifiers (unspecified), wishing good luck to other teams (unspecified), insight into motivation to keep playing	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
12	retweet of update on progress in game qualifiers	Information sharing	Promotional (team)		R
13	retweet of a Twitch streamer announcing that he will begin streaming for the team and feelings after returning from a game event + link to Twitch stream	Information sharing	Promotional (team's streamer's Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	R
14	recap of feelings after attending a game event, comments on high quality of new documentary in annual documentary series on game finals, feelings about a competing team (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (free annual documentary)	O
15	picture with feelings after seeing the latest documentary of annual documentary series on game finals, link to video with athlete's and other players' reactions to watching the documentary (own team as main focus)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (free annual documentary, own team)	O
16	retweet of team coach's reply to a possible new teammate, on possibly playing for the team (not an actual discussion but rather directed to raise interest in followers - new player joined team shortly after)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	R
17	retweet of teammate (switching to team coach) expressing gratitude and nostalgia for career and team, anticipation to watch the latest annual document (reason for anticipation decipherable from the date, but not overtly specified)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (free annual documentary, own team)	R
18	picture of athlete and competing team's captain sitting together, watching the latest annual documentary, with text on their friendship and link to watch the documentary	Fanship	Promotional (free annual documentary)	Entertainment content	O
19	retweet of competing team's player's commercial video on founding a new team	Fanship	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
20	retweet of a retired player's (currently a streamer for competing team) joke on joining the team with picture as part of the joke	Entertainment content	Fanship	Interactivity	R

Athlete 6: Amer 'Miracle-' Al-Barkawi

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	retweet of teammate congratulating a competing team for second place, announcing that own team was the winner after struggles, thanking fans for support (tournament unspecified)	Fanship	Information sharing		R
2	retweet of teammate thanking audience of tournament (unspecified), congratulating competing team	Information sharing	Fanship		R
3	retweet of teammate thanking audience of tournament, congratulating competing team, thanking tournament organisers (specified)	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	R
4	retweet of team humorously announcing success in tournament progress + photo of team	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	R
5	retweet of teammate saying 'thank God' in Arabic, after a successful tournament performance of team (unspecified)	Information sharing			R
6	information on tournament progress and insight into feelings after a match, complimenting competing team, information on timetable of final match of tournament (team playing)	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (tournament)	R
7	picture gallery from team media day at a tournament, encouragement to watch team's match in tournament (specified)	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	R
8	picture gallery of arriving in tournament location, mention of upcoming match	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	R
9	holiday greetings (New Year)	Diversion	Interactivity		O
10	retweet of team's holiday greetings (New Year), request to remember the team + gif animation with a holiday greeting and the team's characters	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Diversion	R
11	retweet of team's holiday greetings (Christmas), picture with team logo and holiday greetings, information on availability of team wallpapers as a 'gift' from the team	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	Information sharing	R
12	replying humorously to a game-oriented question for followers by team's account	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Information sharing	O

13	retweet of team's account explaining the origin of the newly-founded team's name + picture of team logo, thanking followers for warm welcome	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	R
14	commercial video on the athlete and other players founding a new team, revealing the name	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	R
15	commercial video on the athlete joining a new team, not yet revealing the name	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (own team)	O
16	retweet of teammate congratulating a competing team for winning and also complimenting another team, announcing that will be founding a new team soon	Fanship	Information sharing	Promotional (own team)	R
17	retweet of team manager informing interested parties of an upcoming project (not specified, but the founding of a new team) and giving contact information for those interested in working for the good of the project	Information sharing	Interactivity		R
18	retweet of teammate sharing feelings about working for the team (when team's division for the game being shut down, team continuing for other games) and thanking team (specified and tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship		R
19	retweet of teammate thanking former team for the years spent together, wishing good luck in the future	Fanship	Information sharing		R
20	retweet of a competition in collaboration with a sponsor (sandwich restaurant chain), 'biggest fan' of the team able to meet the players and take part in eSports events full expenses paid + video explaining the competition	Promotional (sandwich restaurant chain)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	R

Athlete 7: Syed Sumail 'Sumail' Hassan

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	link to teammate's Twitch stream	Promotional (teammate's Twitch stream)	Information sharing		O
2	thanking followers for birthday wishes and expressing gratitude	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Interactivity	O
3	announcement of joining a team	Information sharing	Promotional (team)		O
4	feelings after leaving a team, wishing the former teammates good luck in future	Information sharing	Fanship		O
5	expressing strong excitement before a match (unspecified, but the annual championships of the game), naming and complimenting opposing player (tagged)	Information sharing	Fanship	Promotional (match, championships)	O
6	humorous tweet on feelings after playing badly in a match in annual championships	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
7	cheering up a player from a competing team + complimenting him	Fanship	Information sharing	Interactivity	O
8	asking fans living in tournament location for places to play basketball in (during tournament days)	Interactivity	Diversions	Entertainment content	O
9	greeting the country where he is in for tournament, i.e. informing that he has arrived there	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
10	commenting on cricket match	Diversions	Entertainment content		O
11	Complimenting player from competing team for game strategy, expressing excitement for annual championships	Fanship	Information sharing	Promotional (championships)	O
12	humorously asking teammate to do a Twitch stream	Interactivity	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate's Twitch stream)	O
13	picture from rehearsal for YouTube channel interview with athlete, teammate and interviewer (host of the YouTube channel)	Promotional (YouTube channel)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
14	Greeting for followers without further text	Interactivity	Diversions		O
15	link to portrait picture gallery of the athlete by a professional eSport photographer	Entertainment content	Promotional (photographer)		O
16	thanking followers for birthday wishes and expressing gratitude	Entertainment content	Information sharing	Interactivity	O
17	announcing tournament results of the team (tournament unspecified)	Information sharing			O
18	humorous comment on problems with update to game	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
19	announcing Twitter following number, thanking followers	Information sharing	Interactivity		O

Athlete 8: Gustav 's4' Magnusson

#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	holiday greetings (Christmas)	Diversions	Interactivity		O
2	expressing excitement over something, not stating what it is and so creating interest (may be in reference to soon after switching to another team)	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Information sharing	O

3	retweet of team announcing that the athlete and teammates will be meeting fans and training national teams for a tournament + picture of athlete	Promotional (tournament)	Information sharing	Entertainment content	R
4	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
5	new video available of video series on team behind the scenes, with interviews of players and coach preparing for tournament (unspecified), presented by a sponsor (internet provider)	Information sharing	Promotional (internet provider)	Entertainment content	O
6	information on the team being together with current roster for a year, link to video of players settling in their internet provider-sponsored training facility, video presented by the sponsor + gif animation of athlete	Promotional (internet provider)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
7	thanking tournament organisers for a tournament (tournament unspecified, but organisers specified and tagged)	Promotional (tournament organisers)	Information sharing		O
8	gif animation of the athlete cutting a prank birthday cake by teammates, from newest video of video series presented by sponsor (internet provider)	Entertainment content	Promotional (internet provider)	Information sharing	O
9	new video available of video series presented by a sponsor (internet provider), on life in sponsored training facility and moving in	Promotional (internet provider)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
10	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
11	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
12	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
13	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
14	announcing that athlete's team will be taking part in the major tournament in Sweden (athlete's homeland)	information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		O
15	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
17	link to a video of athlete's team being as commentators and jury on a competition to win a new computer, with a host (official streamer for the team), video presented and prizes provided by a sponsor (gaming processor manufacturer, streamer of the team), competition participants not from Twitter followers	Promotional (gaming processor manufacturer, streamer of the team)	Entertainment content	Information sharing	R
18	stating that the athlete feels bored (followers respond by giving ideas for activities)	Diversion	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
19	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
20	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
Athlete 9: Peter 'ppd' Dager					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	video link to the athlete's show of the athlete discussing an announcement on game's regional leagues, show sponsored by a gambling service (only mentioned in hashtag and in small text in video)	Information sharing	Promotional (gambling service, own YouTube channel)	Entertainment content	O
2	prediction on future of eSports tournament organisers and gaming, slightly humorous	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
3	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
4	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
5	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O

6	own proposal for city to host the 2021 annual championships of the game in + picture of the 'open call for host city' announcement article	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Interactivity	O
7	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
8	video link to the athlete's show of the athlete reacting to a competing team's coach's opinions on game's upcoming regional leagues, show sponsored by a gambling service (only mentioned in hashtag and in small text in video)	Information sharing	Promotional (gambling service, own YouTube channel)	Entertainment content	O
9	informing that enjoyed recording content, announcing that will be uploading the content to own YouTube channel, iTunes and Spotify soon	Information sharing	Promotional (own social media accounts)	Entertainment content	O
10	video link to the athlete's show of the athlete discussing an announcement on game's regional leagues, show sponsored by a gambling service (only mentioned in hashtag and in small text in video)	Information sharing	Promotional (gambling service, own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
11	providing context for the discussion in own Twitch stream on game's regional leagues by including the background article discussed (link to the article on game's official webpage)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
12	announcing that will be recording a video on announcement of regional leagues, feelings about the topic	Information sharing	Promotional (own social media accounts)		O
13	retweet of an article on game's official webpage, on announcement of regional leagues (soon after announcement was made)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		R
14	retweet of a job advertisement on eSports-related job opportunities (game analytics company)	Information sharing	Promotional (game analytics company)	Entertainment content	R
15	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it, explanation of attitude towards game update	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
16	link to own Twitch stream due to updating it	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)	Entertainment content	O
17	announcing that will be streaming later	Information sharing	Promotional (own Twitch stream)		O
18	comment on a playable character of the game, humorous	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
19	announcing that the first episode of own podcast available on Spotify ad iTunes, where talks about qualifier results with two other commentators (eSports-oriented streamers, tagged), no sponsors mentioned	Information sharing	Promotional (own show and social media accounts, two streamers)	Entertainment content	O
20	link to a photo on athlete's own Instagram account, of new team, with feelings after tournament (unspecified) and information on focusing on the upcoming tournament (specified)	Entertainment content	Promotional (own Instagram account, tournament)	Information sharing	O
Athlete 10: Ludwig 'zai' Wahlberg					
#	Description of tweet	1st	2nd	3rd	o/r
1	announcing winning third major tournament (unspecified), thanking followers for kind words	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
2	announcing winning second major tournament (unspecified), thanking followers for kind words	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
3	announcing winning first major tournament (unspecified), thanking followers for kind words	Information sharing	Interactivity		O
4	announcing that leaving host city of tournament, complimenting tournament organisers (specified and tagged), thanking everyone involved	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament organisers)	Entertainment content	O
5	information on motivation to play in an (unspecified) tournament humorously expressed, hoping to win an MVP (Most Valuable Player) prize and hence get a car, followers responding by voting	Entertainment content	Interactivity	Information sharing	O
6	announcing qualifying for a major tournament (with a 'laughing' emoji)	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
7	thanking the winning competing team (specified and tagged) for a good game, thanking host country of tournament	Fanship	Information sharing		O
8	retweet of own team wishing a happy birthday to a teammate (not tagged) + picture of teammate	Entertainment content	Promotional (teammate)	Diversion	R
9	retweet of team's leading player announcing victory of a tournament (specified) and complimenting team + picture of team	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Promotional (tournament)	R

10	feelings expressed with an emoji after winning a tournament (unspecified), humorous	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
11	thanking competing team (specified and tagged) for a good game and wishing them good luck in future games	Fanship	Information sharing		O
12	feelings after a rough day of tournament (unspecified)and following days, emojis used in text	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
13	feelings about problem with current game mechanics, partly expressed by emojis	Information sharing	Entertainment content		O
14	unclear expression of feelings ('woah' with no other context), may or may not refer to an update to the game announced on same date	Diversion	Entertainment content	Information sharing	O
15	feelings on lack of success in tournament expressed by a single emoji	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
16	feelings on lack of success in tournament expressed by a single emoji	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
17	asking followers for news on upcoming game (not an eSports game)	Diversion	Interactivity	Entertainment content	O
18	feelings on lack of success in tournament expressed by a single emoji	Entertainment content	Information sharing		O
19	expressing excitement for an upcoming tournament (specified), humorous	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)	Entertainment content	O
20	retweet of team manager's tweet on feelings after a rough week and excitement on upcoming tournament (specified), compliment on team, athlete moving to team's training facility	Information sharing	Promotional (tournament)		R

Appendix III Category distribution numbers per athlete

Call of Duty							
1. scump	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	1	11	5	2	1	20
Primary %	0.00%	5.00%	55.00%	25.00%	10.00 %	5.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	6	3	2	8	20
Tertiary	0	0	2	8	0	0	10
Total mentions	1	1	19	16	4	9	50
Total %	2.00%	2.00%	38.00%	32.00%	8.00%	18.00%	100%
2. Formal	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	0	18	1	0	1	20
Primary %	0.00%	0.00%	90.00%	5.00%	0.00%	5.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	0	2	2	13	18
Tertiary	0	0	2	12	0	1	15
Total mentions	1	0	20	15	2	15	53
Total %	1.89%	0.00%	37.74%	28.30%	3.77%	28.30%	100%
3.CrimSx	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	3	6	6	3	0	3	21
Primary %	14.29%	28.57%	28.57%	14.29%	0.00%	14.29%	100%
Secondary	1	0	3	8	2	7	21
Tertiary	0	0	8	6	1	3	18
Total mentions	4	6	17	17	3	13	60
Total %	6.67%	10.00%	28.33%	28.33%	5.00%	21.67%	100%
4. Clayster	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	6	8	4	1	1	21
Primary %	4.76%	28.57%	38.10%	19.05%	4.76%	4.76%	100%
Secondary	0	0	2	12	2	2	18
Tertiary	0	0	9	1	0	5	15
Total mentions	1	6	19	17	3	8	54
Total %	1.85%	11.11%	35.19%	31.48%	5.56%	14.81%	100%
5. MBoZe	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	6	0	0	1	12	20
Primary %	5.00%	30.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	60.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	2	15	0	2	20
Tertiary	5	0	9	3	0	1	18
Total mentions	7	6	11	18	1	15	58
Total %	12.07%	10.34%	18.97%	31.03%	1.72%	25.86%	100%
6. Karma	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	10	4	2	2	1	20
Primary %	5.00%	50.00%	20.00%	10.00%	10.00 %	5.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	6	12	1	0	20
Tertiary	0	0	8	3	0	3	14
Total mentions	2	10	18	17	3	4	54
Total %	3.70%	18.52%	33.33%	31.48%	5.56%	7.41%	100%
7. Attach	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	3	9	2	1	3	20
Primary %	10.00%	15.00%	45.00%	10.00%	5.00%	15.00%	100%
Secondary	2	0	2	13	1	1	19
Tertiary	1	0	4	2	2	0	9
Total mentions	5	3	15	17	4	4	48
Total %	10.42%	6.25%	31.25%	35.42%	8.33%	8.33%	100%
8. ZooMaa	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	2	2	3	0	12	19
Primary %	0.00%	10.53%	10.53%	15.79%	0.00%	63.16%	100%
Secondary	3	0	1	13	0	1	18
Tertiary	2	0	7	3	2	2	16
Total mentions	5	2	10	19	2	15	53
Total %	9.43%	3.77%	18.87%	35.85%	3.77%	28.30%	100%
9. JKap	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	5	10	3	2	0	1	21
Primary %	23.81%	47.62%	14.29%	9.52%	0.00%	4.76%	100%
Secondary	2	5	1	11	1	0	20
Tertiary	0	0	2	8	0	1	11
Total mentions	7	15	6	21	1	2	52
Total %	13.46%	28.85%	11.54%	40.38%	1.92%	3.85%	100%
10. Aches	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	9	7	1	0	2	20
Primary %	5.00%	45.00%	35.00%	5.00%	0.00%	10.00%	100%

Secondary	1	1	4	10	1	1	18
Tertiary	2	1	2	2	1	3	11
Total mentions	4	11	13	13	2	6	49
Total %	8.16%	22.45%	26.53%	26.53%	4.08%	12.24%	100%
Fortnite							
1. Tfue	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	3	5	9	3	0	1	21
Primary %	14.29%	23.81%	42.86%	14.29%	0.00%	4.76%	100%
Secondary	3	3	0	5	0	9	20
Tertiary	0	0	2	8	0	5	15
Total mentions	6	8	11	16	0	15	56
Total %	10.71%	14.29%	19.64%	28.57%	0.00%	26.79%	100%
2. Mongraal	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	5	4	7	4	0	0	20
Primary %	25.00%	20.00%	35.00%	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	0	1	4	6	0	8	19
Tertiary	2	0	3	4	0	3	12
Total mentions	7	5	14	14	0	11	51
Total %	13.73%	9.80%	27.45%	27.45%	0.00%	21.57%	100%
3. Bugha	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	2	14	2	0	2	21
Primary %	4.76%	9.52%	66.67%	9.52%	0.00%	9.52%	100%
Secondary	2	0	4	4	0	10	20
Tertiary	2	0	2	10	0	2	16
Total mentions	5	2	20	16	0	14	57
Total %	8.77%	3.51%	35.09%	28.07%	0.00%	24.56%	100%
4. benjyfishy	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	7	10	2	0	0	21
Primary %	9.52%	33.33%	47.62%	9.52%	0.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	4	0	2	8	0	4	18
Tertiary	0	0	3	6	0	2	11
Total mentions	6	7	15	16	0	6	50
Total %	12.00%	14.00%	30.00%	32.00%	0.00%	12.00%	100%
5. MrSavage	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	2	7	9	0	1	21
Primary %	9.52%	9.52%	33.33%	42.86%	0.00%	4.76%	100%
Secondary	0	2	5	4	3	6	20
Tertiary	1	4	4	2	0	0	11
Total mentions	3	8	16	15	3	7	52
Total %	5.77%	15.38%	30.77%	28.85%	5.77%	13.46%	100%
6. Clix	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	4	13	1	1	0	20
Primary %	5.00%	20.00%	65.00%	5.00%	5.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	4	0	2	8	1	3	18
Tertiary	2	0	0	3	0	2	7
Total mentions	7	4	15	12	2	5	45
Total %	15.56%	8.89%	33.33%	26.67%	4.44%	11.11%	100%
7. Mitr0	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	3	0	8	6	0	3	20
Primary %	15.00%	0.00%	40.00%	30.00%	0.00%	15.00%	100%
Secondary	1	1	6	8	2	1	19
Tertiary	0	0	3	1	4	2	10
Total mentions	4	1	17	15	6	6	49
Total %	8.16%	2.04%	34.69%	30.61%	12.24%	12.24%	100%
8. Nate Hill	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	3	13	3	0	2	21
Primary %	0.00%	14.29%	61.90%	14.29%	0.00%	9.52%	100%
Secondary	6	0	1	8	0	6	21
Tertiary	0	0	4	6	0	8	18
Total mentions	6	3	18	17	0	16	60
Total %	10.00%	5.00%	30.00%	28.33%	0.00%	26.67%	100%
9. Dubs	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	3	0	13	2	2	1	21
Primary %	14.29%	0.00%	61.90%	9.52%	9.52%	4.76%	100%
Secondary	4	0	5	3	0	7	19
Tertiary	0	0	1	7	1	0	9
Total mentions	7	0	19	12	3	8	49
Total %	14.29%	0.00%	38.78%	24.49%	6.12%	16.33%	100%
10. Bizzle	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	1	10	4	3	0	20

Primary %	10.00%	5.00%	50.00%	20.00%	15.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	3	0	2	9	4	1	19
Tertiary	2	1	2	3	2	5	15
Total mentions	7	2	14	16	9	6	54
Total %	12.96%	3.70%	25.93%	29.63%	16.67%	11.11%	100%
League of Legends							
1. Bjergsen	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	1	7	2	2	8	21
Primary %	4.76%	4.76%	33.33%	9.52%	9.52%	38.10%	100%
Secondary	1	2	2	13	0	1	19
Tertiary	0	0	3	3	1	5	12
Total mentions	2	3	12	18	3	14	52
Total %	3.85%	5.77%	23.08%	34.62%	5.77%	26.92%	100%
2. Doublelift	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	4	9	6	0	1	20
Primary %	0.00%	20.00%	45.00%	30.00%	0.00%	5.00%	100%
Secondary	0	1	3	8	0	6	18
Tertiary	1	1	0	3	0	3	8
Total mentions	1	6	12	17	0	10	46
Total %	2.17%	13.04%	26.09%	36.96%	0.00%	21.74%	100%
3. WildTurtle	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	0	10	4	2	3	21
Primary %	9.52%	0.00%	47.62%	19.05%	9.52%	14.29%	100%
Secondary	0	4	2	10	1	4	21
Tertiary	1	1	2	4	1	5	14
Total mentions	3	5	14	18	4	12	56
Total %	5.36%	8.93%	25.00%	32.14%	7.14%	21.43%	100%
4. Rekkles	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	0	11	8	0	1	20
Primary %	0.00%	0.00%	55.00%	40.00%	0.00%	5.00%	100%
Secondary	0	2	2	11	0	1	16
Tertiary	2	0	1	1	7	0	11
Total mentions	2	2	14	20	7	2	47
Total %	4.26%	4.26%	29.79%	42.55%	14.89%	4.26%	100%
5. Meteos	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	5	13	1	1	0	20
Primary %	0.00%	25.00%	65.00%	5.00%	5.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	3	7	4	0	15
Tertiary	2	0	0	2	0	4	8
Total mentions	3	5	16	10	5	4	43
Total %	6.98%	11.63%	37.21%	23.26%	11.63%	9.30%	100%
6. aphromoo	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	4	6	6	0	2	20
Primary %	10.00%	20.00%	30.00%	30.00%	0.00%	10.00%	100%
Secondary	2	0	4	7	1	6	20
Tertiary	0	0	5	5	1	2	13
Total mentions	4	4	15	18	2	10	53
Total %	7.55%	7.55%	28.30%	33.96%	3.77%	18.87%	100%
7. Froggen	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	6	2	5	4	1	20
Primary %	10.00%	30.00%	10.00%	25.00%	20.00%	5.00%	100%
Secondary	2	0	10	4	0	2	18
Tertiary	1	1	1	5	0	0	8
Total mentions	5	7	13	14	4	3	46
Total %	10.87%	15.22%	28.26%	30.43%	8.70%	6.52%	100%
8. Faker	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	2	0	7	2	8	20
Primary %	5.00%	10.00%	0.00%	35.00%	10.00%	40.00%	100%
Secondary	0	3	5	8	0	2	18
Tertiary	3	1	4	3	0	4	15
Total mentions	4	6	9	18	2	14	53
Total %	7.55%	11.32%	16.98%	33.96%	3.77%	26.42%	100%
9. Perkz	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	6	0	10	1	2	1	20

Primary %	30.00%	0.00%	50.00%	5.00%	10.00%	5.00%	100%
Secondary	2	0	2	11	1	4	20
Tertiary	0	0	4	6	0	4	14
Total mentions	8	0	16	18	3	9	54
Total %	14.81%	0.00%	29.63%	33.33%	5.56%	16.67%	100%
10. Huni	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	1	12	1	3	3	21
Primary %	4.76%	4.76%	57.14%	4.76%	14.29%	14.29%	100%
Secondary	1	0	5	7	0	8	21
Tertiary	1	1	3	10	0	0	15
Total mentions	3	2	20	18	3	11	57
Total %	5.26%	3.51%	35.09%	31.58%	5.26%	19.30%	100%
Counter-Strike							
1. falleN	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	0	5	3	6	5	20
Primary %	5.00%	0.00%	25.00%	15.00%	30.00%	25.00%	100%
Secondary	2	0	6	7	1	4	20
Tertiary	1	0	5	4	0	3	13
Total mentions	4	0	16	14	7	12	53
Total %	7.55%	0.00%	30.19%	26.42%	13.21%	22.64%	100%
2. coldzera	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	0	14	2	2	3	21
Primary %	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	9.52%	9.52%	14.29%	100%
Secondary	1	0	2	10	2	6	21
Tertiary	1	0	4	4	1	8	18
Total mentions	2	0	20	16	5	17	60
Total %	3.33%	0.00%	33.33%	26.67%	8.33%	28.33%	100%
3. kennyS	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	1	14	3	1	0	20
Primary %	5.00%	5.00%	70.00%	15.00%	5.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	0	1	3	3	3	8	18
Tertiary	0	0	0	2	1	7	10
Total mentions	1	2	17	8	5	15	48
Total %	2.08%	4.17%	35.42%	16.67%	10.42%	31.25%	100%
4. TACO	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	4	5	6	3	1	21
Primary %	9.52%	19.05%	23.81%	28.57%	14.29%	4.76%	100%
Secondary	0	3	4	2	4	5	18
Tertiary	2	0	3	4	0	1	10
Total mentions	4	7	12	12	7	7	49
Total %	8.16%	14.29%	24.49%	24.49%	14.29%	14.29%	100%
5. olofmeister	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	2	16	1	0	0	21
Primary %	9.52%	9.52%	76.19%	4.76%	0.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	2	6	7	3	19
Tertiary	1	1	0	1	0	5	8
Total mentions	4	3	18	8	7	8	48
Total %	8.33%	6.25%	37.50%	16.67%	14.58%	16.67%	100%
6. Stewie2K	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	0	14	3	1	1	20
Primary %	5.00%	0.00%	70.00%	15.00%	5.00%	5.00%	100%
Secondary	0	0	1	7	5	5	18
Tertiary	0	0	5	5	1	3	14
Total mentions	1	0	20	15	7	9	52
Total %	1.92%	0.00%	38.46%	28.85%	13.46%	17.31%	100%
7. s1mpleO	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	0	11	6	0	2	20
Primary %	5.00%	0.00%	55.00%	30.00%	0.00%	10.00%	100%
Secondary	2	1	3	3	7	2	18
Tertiary	0	0	2	2	0	2	6
Total mentions	3	1	16	11	7	6	44
Total %	6.82%	2.27%	36.36%	25.00%	15.91%	13.64%	100%

8. GeT RiGhT	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	1	13	1	2	1	20
Primary %	10.00%	5.00%	65.00%	5.00%	10.00 %	5.00%	100%
Secondary	5	0	4	2	0	8	19
Tertiary	0	0	1	9	0	5	15
Total mentions	7	1	18	12	2	14	54
Total %	12.96%	1.85%	33.33%	22.22%	3.70%	25.93%	100%
9. rain	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	1	12	4	1	2	20
Primary %	0.00%	5.00%	60.00%	20.00%	5.00%	10.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	2	7	2	7	19
Tertiary	0	2	2	3	2	2	11
Total mentions	1	3	16	14	5	11	50
Total %	2.00%	6.00%	32.00%	28.00%	10.00 %	22.00%	100%
10. tarik	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	1	17	0	1	0	20
Primary %	5.00%	5.00%	85.00%	0.00%	5.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	0	0	1	10	6	2	19
Tertiary	0	1	1	2	2	4	10
Total mentions	1	2	19	12	9	6	49
Total %	2.04%	4.08%	38.78%	24.49%	18.37 %	12.24%	100%
Dota 2							
1. Arteezy	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	5	12	1	1	1	20
Primary %	0.00%	25.00%	60.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	100%
Secondary	8	0	4	2	1	3	18
Tertiary	0	1	1	2	1	1	6
Total mentions	8	6	17	5	3	5	44
Total %	18.18%	13.64%	38.64%	11.36%	6.82%	11.36%	100%
2. Dendi	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	2	0	16	0	3	0	21
Primary %	9.52%	0.00%	76.19%	0.00%	14.29 %	0.00%	100%
Secondary	0	0	1	5	1	14	21
Tertiary	2	0	2	12	0	3	19
Total mentions	4	0	19	17	4	17	61
Total %	6.56%	0.00%	31.15%	27.87%	6.56%	27.87%	100%
3. Puppey	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	0	13	1	2	4	20
Primary %	0.00%	0.00%	65.00%	5.00%	10.00 %	20.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	4	4	3	7	19
Tertiary	0	1	2	5	1	4	13
Total mentions	1	1	19	10	6	15	52
Total %	1.92%	1.92%	36.54%	19.23%	11.54 %	28.85%	100%
4. KuroKy	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	2	12	3	3	0	20
Primary %	0.00%	10.00%	60.00%	15.00%	15.00 %	0.00%	100%
Secondary	2	0	3	2	3	5	15
Tertiary	0	0	2	1	0	3	6
Total mentions	2	2	17	6	6	8	41
Total %	4.88%	4.88%	41.46%	14.63%	14.63 %	19.51%	100%
5. N0tail	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	1	0	12	3	2	2	20
Primary %	5.00%	0.00%	60.00%	15.00%	10.00 %	10.00%	100%
Secondary	1	0	3	7	2	7	20
Tertiary	1	0	1	8	0	5	15
Total mentions	3	0	16	18	4	14	55
Total %	5.45%	0.00%	29.09%	32.73%	7.27%	25.45%	100%
6. Miracle-	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	1	10	5	3	1	20
Primary %	0.00%	5.00%	50.00%	25.00%	15.00 %	5.00%	100%
Secondary	4	0	3	5	4	3	19
Tertiary	1	1	4	0	0	7	13
Total mentions	5	2	17	10	7	11	52

Total %	9.62%	3.85%	32.69%	19.23%	13.46%	21.15%	100%
7. Sumail	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	3	1	8	3	2	2	19
Primary %	15.79%	5.26%	42.11%	15.79%	10.53%	10.53%	100%
Secondary	2	2	5	6	2	2	19
Tertiary	3	0	1	1	0	3	8
Total mentions	8	3	14	10	4	7	46
Total %	17.39%	6.52%	30.43%	21.74%	8.70%	15.22%	100%
8. s4	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	2	11	2	0	5	20
Primary %	0.00%	10.00%	55.00%	10.00%	0.00%	25.00%	100%
Secondary	3	0	2	3	0	12	20
Tertiary	0	0	6	11	0	0	17
Total mentions	3	2	19	16	0	17	57
Total %	5.26%	3.51%	33.33%	28.07%	0.00%	29.82%	100%
9. ppd	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	0	18	2	0	0	20
Primary %	0.00%	0.00%	90.00%	10.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	0	0	1	4	0	15	20
Tertiary	1	0	2	12	0	0	15
Total mentions	1	0	21	18	0	15	55
Total %	1.82%	0.00%	38.18%	32.73%	0.00%	27.27%	100%
10. zai	Interactivity	Diversion	Information sharing	Entertainment content	Fanship	Promotional	Total
Primary	0	2	10	6	2	0	20
Primary %	0.00%	10.00%	50.00%	30.00%	10.00%	0.00%	100%
Secondary	5	0	6	5	0	4	20
Tertiary	0	1	2	3	0	1	7
Total mentions	5	3	18	14	2	5	47
Total %	10.64%	6.38%	38.30%	29.79%	4.26%	10.64%	100%

Appendix IV Finnish summary

1. Johdanto

Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää tapaa, jolla e-urheilua ammatikseen pelaavat huipputason urheilijat käyttävät Twitteriä, tarkemmin ottaen heidän Twitter-profiilinsa etusivun käyttöä siellä näkyvien, tilin julkaisemien tviittien muodossa. Tutkimuksessa oli mukana viisikymmentä e-urheilijaa, jotka olivat suosituimpia omissa peleissään. Suosio mitattiin tässä tapauksessa e-urheilijoiden Twitter-seuraajamäärän perusteella: mukaan valittiin viisi e-urheilupeliä, joissa kymmenellä seuratuimmalla urheilijalla oli suurin yhteenlaskettu Twitter-seuraajamäärä: *Call of Duty*, *Fortnite*, *League of Legends*, *Counter-Strike* sekä *Dota 2*. Kustakin pelistä mukaan otettiin pelin kymmenen Twitterissä suosituinta e-urheilijaa ja kultakin pelaajalta 19-21 heidän Twitter-tilinsä viimeisintä tviittiä (tarkka määrä riippui siitä, montako tviittiä tilin etusivulle mahtui näkymään datan keräämisajankohtana 2. maaliskuuta 2020). Yhteensä tutkimuksen kohteena oli 1014 tviittiä.

Tutkimuksen esittämät kysymykset olivat:

1. Kuinka seuratuimmat e-urheilijat käyttävät Twitteriä tviittien pääasiallisten ominaisuuksien suhteen?
2. Mitä muita oheisominaisuuksia e-urheilijoiden tviiteissä on pääasiallisten ominaisuuksien lisäksi?
3. Mitä eroavaisuuksia ja samankaltaisuuksia e-urheilijoiden tviittien pääasiallisten ominaisuuksien ja oheisominaisuuksien painotuksissa on, kun urheilijoiden tviittejä tarkastellaan peleittäin?

2. E-urheilu ja Twitter

E-urheilusta on erityisesti viimeisen vuosikymmenen aikana kehittynyt ala, jonka käytännöt muistuttavat perinteisen urheilun vastaavia, ja jossa tärkeimmät turnaukset, liigat ja mestaruuskilpailut järjestetään vuodesta toiseen vakiintunein tavoin. Pelien väliset käytännöt eroavat toisistaan, muodostaen osaltaan kyseisen pelin ekosysteemin. Akateemisessa keskustelussa ei ole saavutettu yhteisymmärrystä siitä, tulisiko e-urheilua pitää urheilun muotona vaiko

pikemminkin jonakin erillisenä uudenaikaisena ilmiönä. Peliä ammatikseen pelaavien e-urheilijoiden suhde faneihinsa eroaa siitä suhteesta, joka yleensä vallitsee urheilijan ja fanin välillä: e-urheilijoiden faneilla voi olla ajoittain mahdollisuus kilpailla idoliaan vastaan ja jopa nousta varteenotettavaksi kollegaksi. Tämä ainutlaatuinen asetelma tuo oman lisänsä parasosiaaliseen vuorovaikutukseen e-urheilijan ja Twitter-seuraajan välisessä suhteessa. Kuten muidenkin julkisuuden henkilöiden tapauksessa, myös e-urheilijoilla huonosti hoidettu Twitterin käyttö voi johtaa seuraajien ja suosion menetykseen ja sitä kautta ongelmiin uralla, esimerkiksi sponsorisuhteiden tai joukkuepaikan menetyksen muodossa.

3. Materiaalit ja menetelmät

Datan analysointi toteutettiin käyttäen sisällönanalyysia. Tviitit lajiteltiin pääasiallisten ominaisuuksiensa perusteella yhteen kuudesta kategoriasta (primaariluokittelu), jonka lisäksi tviitit, joista löytyi useamman kuin yhden kategorian piirteitä, lajiteltiin vielä maksimissaan kahteen sivukategoriaan (sekundaari- ja tertiaariluokittelu). Kategoriat perustuivat aikaisempiin tutkimuksiin (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell 2010, jonka kategorioiden pohjalla olivat Clavio 2008 sekä Seo ja Green 2008). Osaa kategorioista muokattiin paremmin tämän tutkimuksen dataan ja tarpeisiin sopiviksi.

Sisällönanalyysissä käytetyt kategoriat olivat samannimiset eri luokittelussa, joskin kategorioiden määrittely vaihteli sen mukaan, oliko kyseessä primaariluokittelu vai joko sekundaari- tai tertiaariluokittelu. Analyysin kuusi kategoriaa olivat VUOROVAIKUTUS ('INTERACTIVITY'), AIHEESTA POIKKEAMINEN ('DIVERSION'), TIEDONJAKO ('INFORMATION SHARING'), VIIHDESIÄLTÖ ('ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT'), KOLLEGOJEN MAINITSEMINEN ('FANSHIP') ja MAINOSTUS ('PROMOTIONAL').

VUOROVAIKUTUS primaarikategoriana sisälsi tviitit, joissa e-urheilijat olivat vuorovaikutuksessa muiden Twitter-käyttäjien kanssa, esimerkiksi kysymällä seuraajiltaan e-urheiluaiheisen kysymyksen. Sekundaari- ja tertiaarikategoriana käytettynä tviitissä mukana oleva vuorovaikutus oli joko täysin e-urheiluun liittymätöntä tai ei muuten ollut keskeisin tviitin ominaisuus.

AIHEESTA POIKKEAMINEN oli kyseessä niiden tviittien kohdalla, jotka eivät liittyneet millään tavoin joko e-urheiluun tai urheilijan asemaan ja elämään e-urheilun ammattilaisena. Tämän kategorian tviitit olivat esimerkiksi omien mielipiteiden ja mielenkiinnon kohteiden ilmaisuja yleisluonteisista aiheista. Vastaavasti sekundaari- ja tertiaarikäytössä kyseiset tviitit sisälsivät e-urheiluun täysin liittymätöntä ainesta.

TIEDONJAKO-tviiteissä keskeisintä oli jakaa tietoa, joka liittyi tavalla tai toisella e-urheiluun tai henkilöön itseensä e-urheilijana. Tviitit tässä kategoriassa olivat esimerkiksi kommentteja oman joukkueen suoriutumisesta e-urheiluturnauksissa, ottelutuloksia tai yleisiä ajatuksia oman pelin pelaamisesta. Sekundaari- ja tertiaarikäytössä tviitit sisälsivät tietoa muuten kuin tviitin keskeisimpänä ominaisuutena tai vaihtoehtoisesti jaettu keskeinen tieto ei liittynyt e-urheiluun.

VIIHDEISÄLTÖ oli tviitin primaarikategoria silloin, kun e-urheiluaiheinen kuva, video tai humoristinen kommentti oli tviitin keskeisin ominaisuus, ilman merkittävää tietosisältöä mukana osana tviittiä. Sekundaari- ja tertiaarikategoriana kategoria oli mukana aina, kun tviitti sisälsi kuvan, videon tai huumoria, mutta tviitissä oli jokin muista kategorioista vahvemmin esillä.

KOLLEGOJEN MAINITSEMINEN sisälsi primaarikategoriana ne tviitit, joissa keskeisintä oli mainita jokin kilpaileva joukkue tai kilpailevan joukkueen pelaaja, oli sitten kommentti sävyiltään positiivinen, neutraali tai negatiivinen. Sekundaari- ja tertiaarikategoriana kyseinen kategoria oli silloin, kun joukkueen tai pelaajan mainitseminen ei ollut tviitin keskeisin ominaisuus.

MAINOSTUS primaarikategoriana tarkoitti erityyppistä mainostusta kuin sekundaari- ja tertiaarikategorian tapauksessa: primaarikäytössä kategoriaan kuuluivat kaikki ne tviitit, joissa keskeisenä asiana oli mainostaa jotakin sponsoroitua kohdetta, esimerkiksi tuotetta, tapahtumaa tai palvelua. Sekundaari- ja tertiaarikategoriana kyseessä oli ”pyyteettömämpi” mainostaminen, eli esimerkiksi henkilön, tapahtuman tai palvelun mainostaminen ilman todennäköistä taloudellista hyötyä urheilijalle itselleen.

Kokonaistulosten lisäksi eri luokittelujen tuloksia tarkasteltiin myös e-urheilijoiden edustamien pelien mukaisesti jaotellusti.

4. Tulokset

Primaariluokittelun tuloksissa yleisimmin esiintyvä kategoria oli TIEDONJAKO, johon kuuluviksi luokiteltiin 48,82 prosenttia kaikista tviiteistä. E-urheilijoiden tviiteistä suuri osa siis sisälsi pääasiallisen ominaisuutenaan e-urheiluun liittyvää tietoa. Kategoriaan kuuluvat tviitit olivat esimerkiksi oman joukkueen ottelusuoritusten arviointeja, oman Twitch-tilin uusista videosisällöistä ilmoittamisia ja omaan peliin liittyviä kommentteja asiantutijan näkökulmasta.

Primaariluokittelun toiseksi yleisimmin esiintyvä kategoria oli VIIHDESIÄLTÖ, johon luokiteltuja tviittejä oli 15,29 prosenttia tviiteistä. E-urheilijat siis silloin tällöin jakoivat kuvia ja videoita sekä kirjoittivat humoristia tviittejä, joissa ei ollut mukana merkittävää tietosisältöä ja jotka liittyivät e-urheiluun.

Kolmanneksi suurin osa tviiteistä, 12,52 prosenttia, kuului primaariluokittelun AIHEESTA POIKKEAMINEN -kategoriaan. Tutkimuksen e-urheilijat toisin sanoen julkaisivat toisinaan myös sellaisia tviittejä, joiden sisältö ei liittynyt e-urheiluun eikä urheilijoiden asemaan e-urheilun ammattilaisina. Tviiteissään urheilijat esimerkiksi jakoivat tietoa heidän yksityiselämistään sekä mielenkiinnon kohteistaan.

Neljänneksi yleisin kategoria tviittien primaarimerkityksessä oli MAINOSTUS, johon luokiteltuja tviittejä oli kaikkiaan 10,36 prosenttia tviiteistä. E-urheilijat hyödynsivät siis Twitteriä silloin tällöin myös sponsoroidun materiaalin mainostamiseen tviiteissään.

Vähiten tviittejä primaariluokittelussa luokiteltiin kategorioihin VUOROVAIKUTUS ja KOLLEGOJEN MAINITSEMINEEN, prosenttiosuuksina 6,71 ja 6,31 prosenttia. E-urheilijat toisin sanoen suhteellisen harvoin ottivat suoraan kontaktia seuraajiinsa esimerkiksi kysymällä e-urheiluaiheisia suoria kysymyksiä. Suurin piirtein yhtä harvinaista oli, että urheilijat julkaisivat tviittejä, joiden keskeisin sisältö oli mainita jokin kilpaileva joukkue tai jonkin kilpailevan joukkueen pelaaja. Kuvaillun kaltaisiakin tviittejä aineistosta toisinaan silti löytyi.

Sekundaari- ja tertiaariluokittelussa yleisin kategoria oli VIIHDESIÄLTÖ, johon kuuluvaksi luokiteltiin 37,02 prosenttia tviiteistä. Tuloksen perusteella voidaan sanoa, että e-urheilijat varsin usein liittivät tviitteihinsä mukaan kuvia ja videoita sekä käyttivät humoristista kieltä tviiteissään, ilman että se oli tviitin pääasiallinen ominaisuus.

Toisiksi yleisin tviitin oheisominaisuus oli MAINOSTUS, jonka osuus oli 24,81 prosenttia. E-urheilijat siis mainitsivat usein tviiteissään esimerkiksi e-urheilualan ammattilaisia, tapahtumia sekä omia joukkueovereitaan ilman, että urheilijalla itsellään olisi maininnan kohteeseen sponsorisuhdetta tai että maininnasta muuten olisi urheilijalle todennäköistä suoraa rahallista hyötyä.

TIEDONJAKO oli kolmanneksi yleisin tviitin oheisominaisuus: sen prosenttiosuus sekundaari- ja tertiaariluokittelussa oli yhteensä 19,31 prosenttia. Tiedon jakamisen voi todeta olleen keskeistä e-urheilijoiden tviiteissä myös silloin, kun se ei ollut tviitissä kaikkein tärkein ominaisuus tai kun tviitin aihepiiri ei liittynyt e-urheiluun.

Kuten tviittien pääasiallisten ominaisuuksien suhteenkin, VUOROVAIKUTUS ja KOLLEGOJEN MAINITSEMINEN olivat suhteellisen harvinaisia myös tviitin oheisominaisuuksina prosenttiosuuksilla 8,31 ja 7,29 prosenttia. Kaikkein harvinaisin kategoria sekundaari- ja tertiaariluokittelussa oli kuitenkin AIHEESTA POIKKEAMINEN, jonka osuus oli vain 3,26 prosenttia. Tämän voi tulkita tarkoittavan, että silloin kun urheilijoiden tviittien aiheena oli jotakin e-urheiluun liittyvää, he eivät juurikaan eksyneet puhumaan muista aiheista kyseisissä tviiteissä.

Kun kategoriointien tuloksia tarkasteltiin urheilijoiden pelaamien pelien mukaisesti jaoteltuina, esiin nousi tilastollisesti merkittäviä eroavaisuuksia eri pelien väleillä. Eroavaisuudet olivat kaikissa tapauksissa *Counter-Strike*-pelaajien tviittien ja jonkin toisen pelin (useimmiten *Call of Duty*) pelaajien tviittien välillä. *Counter-Strike*-pelaajien tviiteissä oli erityisen paljon e-urheiluaiheisen tiedon jakamiseen liittyviä tviittejä ja suhteessa vähemmän e-urheiluaiheista poikkeavia tviittejä; tulos oli päinvastainen *Call of Duty* -urheilijoiden tviiteissä. *Counter-Strike*-urheilijoiden tviiteissä oli muita vähemmän mukana kuvia, videoita ja humoristista kielenkäyttöä – vastaavasti *League of Legends* - ja *Call of Duty* -pelien urheilijat käyttivät kyseisiä elementtejä tviiteissään runsaasti.

Fortnite-pelin urheilijat olivat kaikkein aktiivisimpia aloittamaan vuorovaikutusta Twitter-seuraajiensa kanssa: he esimerkiksi kysyivät toisinaan tviiteissään kysymyksiä seuraajilta sekä e-urheiluun liittyvistä että liittymättömistä aiheista. *Counter-Strike*-urheilijoilla oli tviiteissään suhteessa vähemmän vuorovaikutukseen avoimesti pyrkiviä tviittejä.

Counter-Strike-pelaajien tviiteissä oli tyypillisempää olla mainittuna kilpailevia joukkueita ja urheilijoita joko tviitin keskeisimpänä asiana tai sivuhuomautuksena kuin niiden urheilijoiden tviiteissä, joiden peli oli joko *Call of Duty* tai *Fortnite*.

Ainoa kategoria, jossa tilastollisesti merkittäviä eroavaisuuksia ei löytynyt eri pelien välisissä jaotteluissa ollenkaan oli MAINOSTUS. Mainostamiseen liittyvien tviittien tiheys ei siis ollut merkittävästi erilaista eri pelejä pelaavien urheilijoiden tviiteissä niin sponsoroitujen kohteiden kuin ilman taloudellista hyötyä tapahtuvan mainostamisen suhteenkaan.

5. Pohdinta

Koska TIEDONJAKO oli niin ylivoimainen primaariluokittelussa, sen sisältämät tviitit jaoteltiin vielä kategorian sisällä useimmiten esiintyvien tviittityyppien mukaisesti, jotta pelien väliset erot kategorian sisällä saatiin paremmin esille. Tarkastelun perusteella tyypillisimmät kategoriaan kuuluvat tviitit olivat peleissä *Counter-Strike*, *League of Legends* ja *Dota 2* otteluihin ja turnauksiin liittyviä kommentteja sisäpiiriläisen näkökulmasta. Pelien *Call of Duty* ja *Fortnite* tiheimmin esiintyvät TIEDONJAKO-tviitit olivat linkkejä omaan Twitch-tiliin uusista videosisällöistä ja livestriimeistä ilmoittaessa. Yleistä oli myös kommentoida omaa peliä ja sen mahdollisia päivityksiä tai ongelmia, erityisesti *Fortnite*-pelin urheilijoiden tviiteissä.

Pelien välisten tilastollisesti merkittävien eroavaisuuksien syyksi arvioitiin erityisesti sitä, kuinka lähellä tiedonkeruun ajankohtaa e-urheilijoilla oli erityisen tärkeitä turnauksia. Varsinkin *Counter-Strike*-urheilijoiden tviittien suhteen turnauksen osuminen tiedonkeruun ajankohdan läheisyyteen vaikutti todennäköisesti suuresti, lisäten turnaukseen liittyvää tiedon jakamista, vähentäen muista kuin e-urheiluaiheista juttelemista ja lisäten kilpailijoiden mainitsemista osana ottelutuloksia. Vastaavasti muissa peleissä, joissa tärkeitä otteluita ei osunut datankeruun läheisyyteen, oli vähemmän syytä jakaa kuvaillun kaltaista tietoa ja sen sijaan enemmän "tilaa" käsitellä yleisiäkin mielenkiinnon kohteita. Tutkimuksen perusteella ei siis ollut mahdollista erotella, mitkä pelien välisesti jaotelluista tuloksista johtuivat datankeruun ajankohdasta ja mitkä eri pelien pelaajien eroavista painotuksista Twitterin käytössä.

Toinen asia, jonka arveltiin vaikuttavan tuloksiin, oli urheilijoiden tutkimuksessa mukana olleiden viimeisimpien tviittien ajanjakson pituuksien vaihtelu. Mukana oli urheilijoita, joilla viimeisimmät 19-21 tviittiä kattoivat lyhimmillään viiden päivän mittaisen ajanjakson ja urheilijoita, joilla vanhimmat aineistossa olleet tviitit olivat julkaistuja puolitoista vuotta aiemmin. Erityisesti *Dota 2* -urheilijoista suuri osa julkaisi tviittejä vain hyvin harvoin. Tutkimuksessa ei verrattu tviittien kategorioiden jakautumista suhteessa siihen, kuinka ajallisesti tiheää urheilijan Twitterissä julkaiseminen oli. Tulosten perusteella vaikutti kuitenkin siltä, että harvimminkin tviittaavat e-urheilijat tässä aineistossa keskittyivät varsinkin e-urheiluaiheisen tiedon jakamiseen ja julkaisivat tviittejä muista aiheista vain harvoin.

Tutkimuksen tuloksia verrattiin aikaisemman sisällönanalyysitutkimuksen tuloksiin (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell 2010). Aiemman tutkimuksen kohteena olivat eri urheilulajeja edustavien urheilijoiden tviitit vuodelta 2010. Aiemmassa tutkimuksessa ei tiettävästi ollut mukana e-urheilua edustavia urheilijoita.

Aiemman tutkimuksen ja tämän tutkimuksen kategoriat eivät olleet yhteneväiset. Syynä tähän oli erityisesti se, että Twitter vuonna 2010 ja 2020 oli käyttöominaisuuksiltaan erilainen. Erityisesti vaikutti se, että vuonna 2010 vastaukset toisten tviitteihin olivat itsenäisiä, tviitin kirjoittajan etusivulla näkyviä tviittejä. Vuonna 2020 vastaukset ja kommentit toisten julkaisuihin olivat alkuperäisen julkaisun alla näkyviä keskustelun osia. Näin ollen aiemman tutkimuksen aineistossa mukana oli paljon kyseisiä vastauksia, jotka oli suunnattu jollekin toiselle, tietylle Twitter-käyttäjälle. Suurin yksittäinen prosenttiosuus (34 prosenttia) urheilijoilla tehdyn tutkimuksen tviiteistä oli kyseisiä vastauksia muille käyttäjille (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell 2010), muodostaen tämän tutkimuksen VUOROVAIKUTUS-kategoriaa vastaavimman kategorian. Koska tässä tutkimuksessa mukana ei ollut kommentointia muiden tviitteihin, ei ollut mahdollista samoin lähtökohdin vertailla, kuinka suuresti tämän tutkimuksen e-urheilijat ja aiemman tutkimuksen urheilijat olivat vuorovaikutteisia Twitterin käytössään muiden Twitter-käyttäjien kanssa.

Urheilijoiden tviiteillä tehdyn aiemman tutkimuksen tuloksissa tiedon jakamiseen keskittyviksi luokiteltuja tviittejä oli melko vähän (15

prosenttia) suhteessa aiheesta poikkeaviin tviitteihin (28 prosenttia) (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell 2010). Tämän tutkimuksen tulos oli päinvastainen: tiedon jakamiseen keskittyviä tviittejä oli huomattavasti enemmän kuin aiheesta poikkeavia (48,82 prosenttia TIEDONJAKO ja 12,52 prosenttia AIHEESTA POIKKEAMINEN). Syiksi eroavaisuuteen arveltiin esimerkiksi Twitterin huomattavasti pienempää käyttäjämäärää vuonna 2010 kuin 2020 sekä sosiaalisen median käytön kehittyneisyyseroja. Suuremmat määrät Twitter-tilejä (ja siitä johtuva käyttäjätilien suurempi temaattisuus) sekä sosiaalisen median käytön 'asettuneisuus' vuonna 2020 nähtiin mahdollisina vaikuttimina pitäytyä suuremmissa määrin niissä aiheissa, joiden vuoksi suuri seuraajamäärä on saavutettu: tässä tapauksessa e-urheiluun liittyvissä aiheissa.

Keskeiseksi eroavaisuudeksi aiemman ja tämän tutkimuksen aineistossa todettiin se, että aiemmassa tutkimuksessa mukana oli satunnaisotannalla kerättyä myös urheilijoita, joiden seuraajamäärät olivat alhaisia, kun taas tässä tutkimuksessa valintakriteerit perustuivat korkeisiin seuraajamääriin. Toisin sanoen tämä tutkimus selvitti ainoastaan "onnistunutta" Twitterin käyttöä siinä mielessä, että kukin mukana oleva e-urheilija oli onnistunut keräämään ja ylläpitämään seuraajinaan suuren määrän Twitter-seuraajia.

6. Johtopäätökset

Tutkimuksen viimeisessä luvussa keskiössä oli palata tutkimuskysymyksiin ja vastata niihin tiivistetysti, samankaltaisesti kuin tässä lyhennelmässä on yllä tehty.