



**<blinkfire>**  
analytics

+



ESPORTS  
AWARDS

CASE STUDY

# ESPORTS AWARDS

# INTRODUCTION

The **Esports Awards** is an annual event in November that honors the global successes and achievements in esports across organizations, leagues, teams, and players.

In **November of 2017**, Blinkfire Analytics and the Esports Awards started their partnership. Halfway through Year 5, the two organizations continue to innovate across social, digital, and esports. The Esports Awards team tracks their social media channels, with a focus on their marquee event in November.

As social media has grown through the years, the Esports Awards understands that as a media company and event organizer in esports, tracking their data in real-time and reporting insights is key to continued growth and engagement.

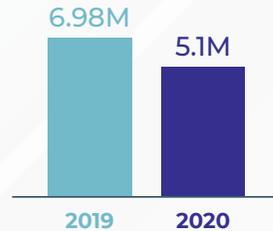


# AWARDS & EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD



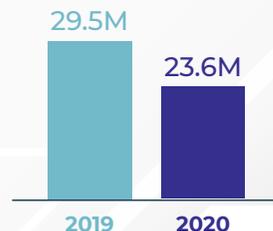
## Emmy Awards

In 2020, just **5.1 million people watched** the Primetime Emmy Awards ceremony in the United States, **down from 6.98 million the previous year.**



## The Oscars

In 2020, **roughly 23.6 million viewers** tuned into the awards ceremony. Ratings **fell sharply from 2019 when 29.5 million people watched**, amid an industry-wide decline in linear TV viewing.



## NFL Draft-A-Thon

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the NFL Draft 2020 went virtual. **Draft-A-Thon**, a fundraising campaign part of the 2020 NFL Draft, raised funds for COVID-19 relief efforts. The Draft-A-Thon was livestreamed on NFL social and digital platforms and featured live Draft coverage from April 23-25, 2020. The NFL's Twitch account created its first stream ever on Thursday, April 23, showcasing the Draft-A-Thon, hosted by Deion Sanders and Rich Eisen. **With roughly 25K subscribers, the NFL's first stream attracted 3,146 viewers.**

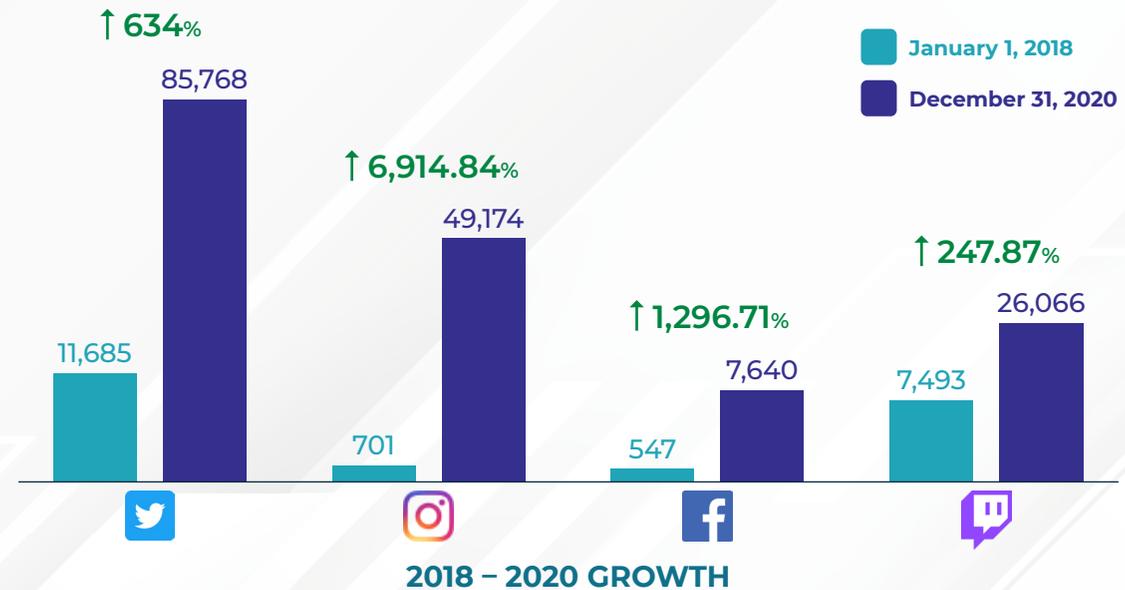
For comparison, the 2020 **Esports Awards** attracted **15.6 million viewers.**

# SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH – A View From the Top



Since 2017, Instagram has been the Esports Awards' fastest-growing social channel, with followers increasing by 6900% from November 2017 - December 31, 2020.

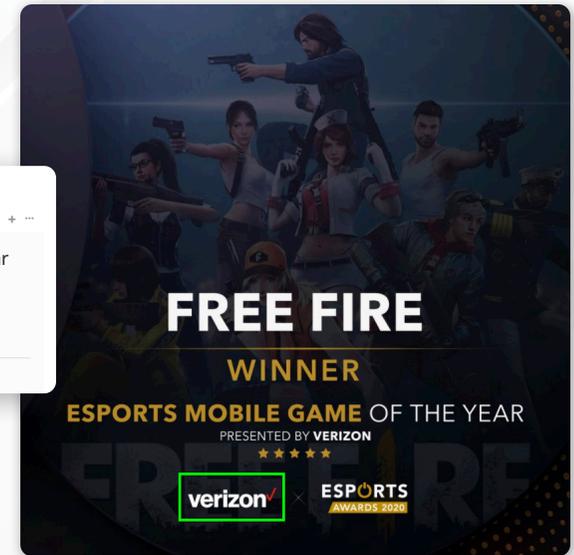
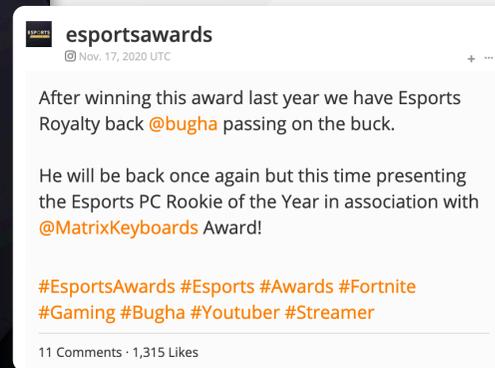
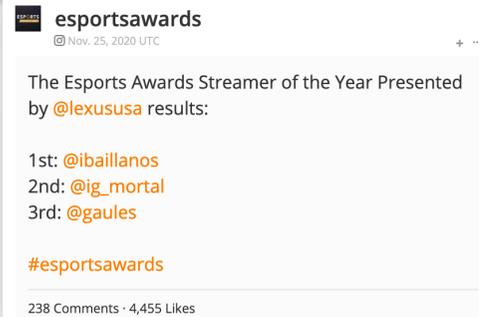
Across all networks, followers grew 100% compared to 2019.



2018 – 2020 GROWTH

# BRANDED PARTNER CONTENT

**Branded posts** (where a brand receives exposure by logo recognition, @ mention, official hashtag, or tagged content) **made up 28% of the Esports Awards' earned media value in 2018.**



**In 2020, branded posts' earned media value was 40% of total value.**

The Esports Awards built upon their current content strategy to highlight and use Blinkfire to evaluate, monitor, and track their social media and sponsorships metrics.

# ESPORTS AWARDS A TIMELINE



2017

**NOVEMBER**  
Esports Awards  
partners with  
Blinkfire Analytics



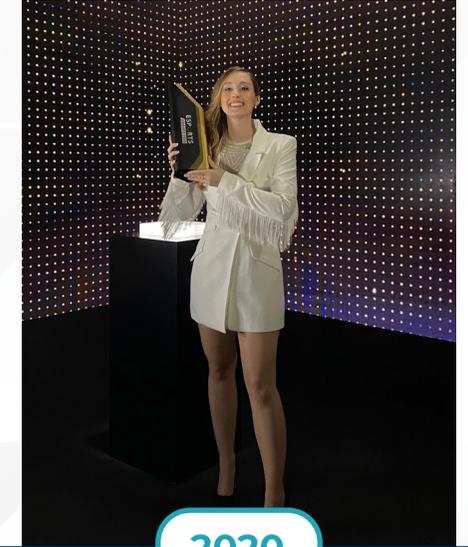
2018

Event engagement  
increased  
**27% YoY**  
Followers grew  
**315% YoY**



2019

Event engagement  
increased  
**5% YoY**  
Followers grew  
**77% YoY**



2020

Event engagement  
increased  
**66% YoY**  
Followers grew  
**82% YoY**

# ESPORTS AWARDS SPONSORED CONTENT EVOLUTION

2017



## SPONSORED CONTENT

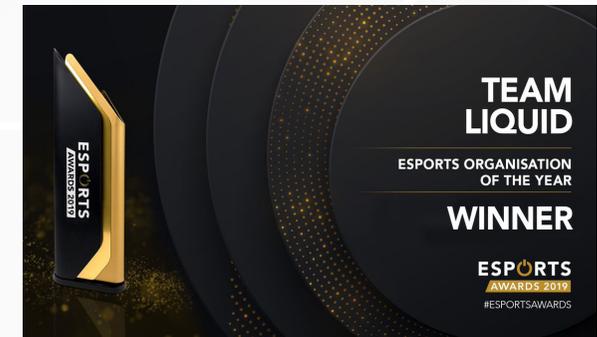
2017 was the Esports Awards' inaugural event, and NOWTV was the presenting partner.

From 2018 - 2020, the Esports Awards created specific content around winners like “Steamer of the Year” and “Esports Organization of the Year”.

2018



2019



2020

It wasn't until the 2020 awards show that the event included brand partners like Lexus on their content series. Due to the organization's time in Blinkfire, the social and digital team realized that winner announcements posted on social media garnered large engagement numbers but were unsponsored.



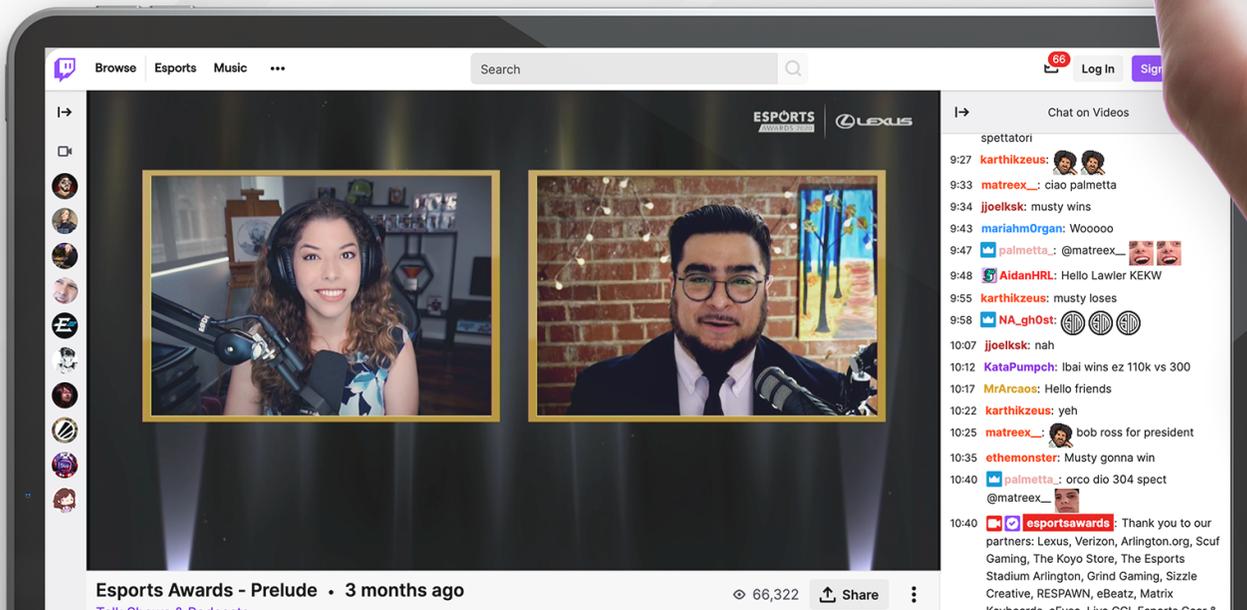
# ESPORTS AWARDS EVENT RECAP 2020

As a virtual event due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Esports Awards conducted the entire show across their social media channels. Between live viewership and video on demand, the awards amassed more than 15.6 million viewers.

The event achieved a record of 132.9 million engagements from their owned and operated channels and participants channels (like esports clubs, streamers, and brands). The Esports Awards' social media engagements increased 66% compared to 2019's event, and follower growth increased 82%.

The increase in importance and prestige of the Esports Awards through the last few years is undeniable, establishing the event as the most prestigious awards ceremony in the esports industry.

# 15.6M VIEWERS



# ESPORTS AWARDS

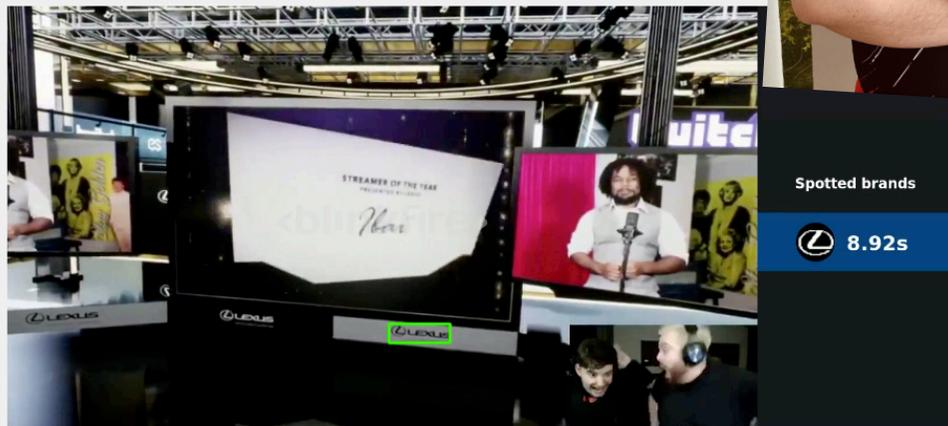
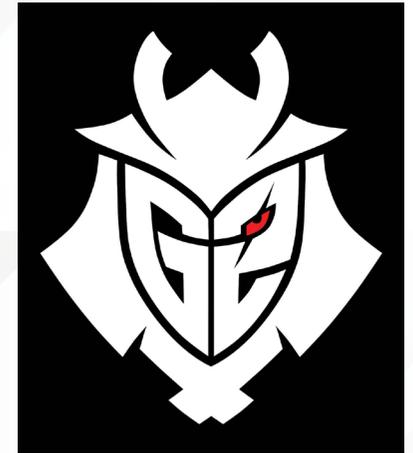
## IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

The Esports Awards has gained traction and following over the past five years coupled with the industry's enormous growth, leading to popular clubs and streamers participating. **2020 saw G2 Esports and Ibai Llanos steal the virtual show.**

**Ibai Llanos**, a Spanish streamer and former G2 Esports player turned creator, helped the Esports Awards earn viewership numbers and brand exposure for sponsors. Llanos had more than 13.2 million followers at the time of the November awards show, and his tweet accepting the "Streamer of the Year" Award had 3.4 million views. That's the power of social media.



**G2 Esports** also took home numerous awards, and with more than 3.52 million followers at the time of the event, their audience engaged with their awards-related content.



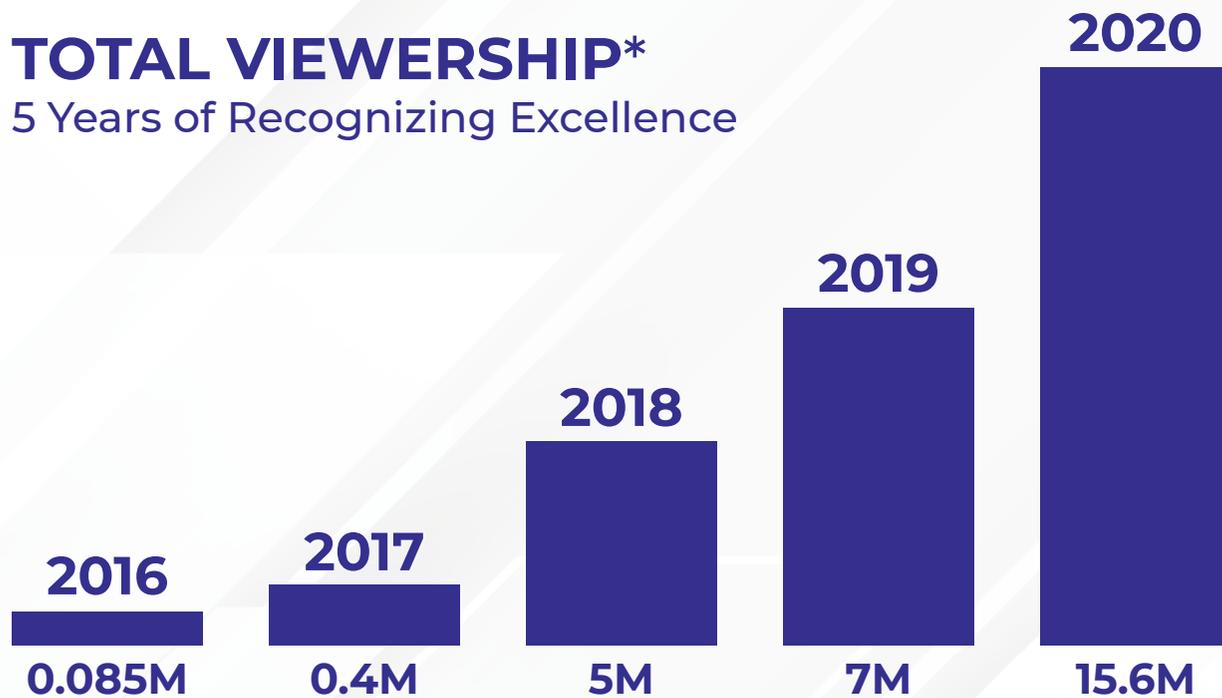
**Social media engagement =  
Harnessing a loyal audience base**

# ESPORTS AWARDS GROWING VIEWERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

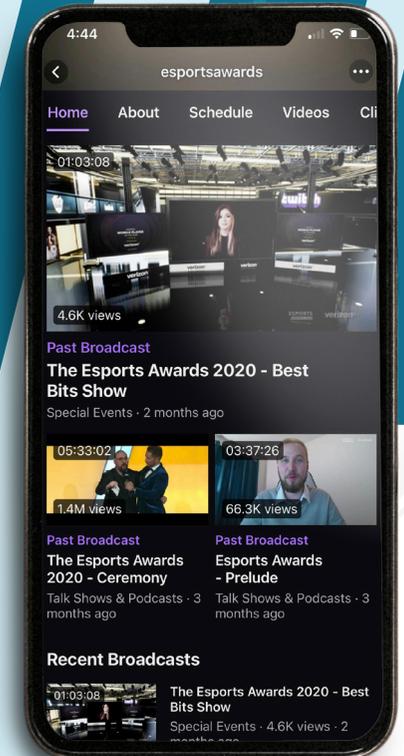
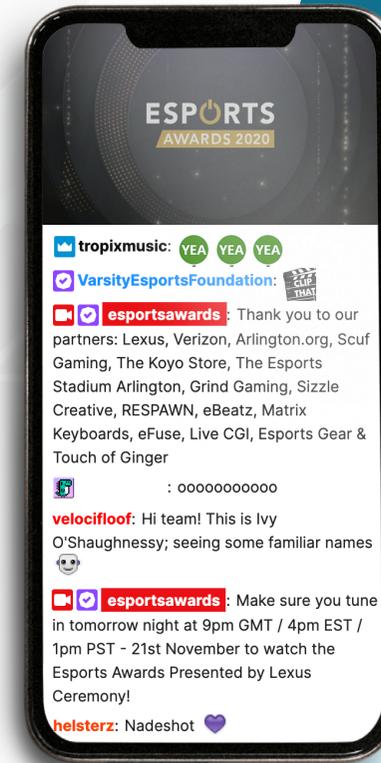
From 2016-2020, the Esports Awards has seen substantial increases in viewership and engagement due to strategy, reach, and influence.

Live and on-demand viewership of the Esports Awards 2020 stood at 15.6 million. This included OTT platforms, co-streams, and coordinated broadcasts globally.

## TOTAL VIEWERSHIP\* 5 Years of Recognizing Excellence



\*Total viewership is an assimilation of both live viewership and video on demand for the campaign



# ESPORTS AWARDS STREAMING VALUATION

From 2017 to 2018, the Esports Awards multicasted. In 2019, the event changed its posting strategy and used Twitch as the main streaming platform. Year-over-year earned media value (based on a cost per viewer per second) on Twitch was \$6.38 million, an increase of 56% compared to 2018. **Twitch streaming value in 2020 increased 12.5% to \$7.17 million.**

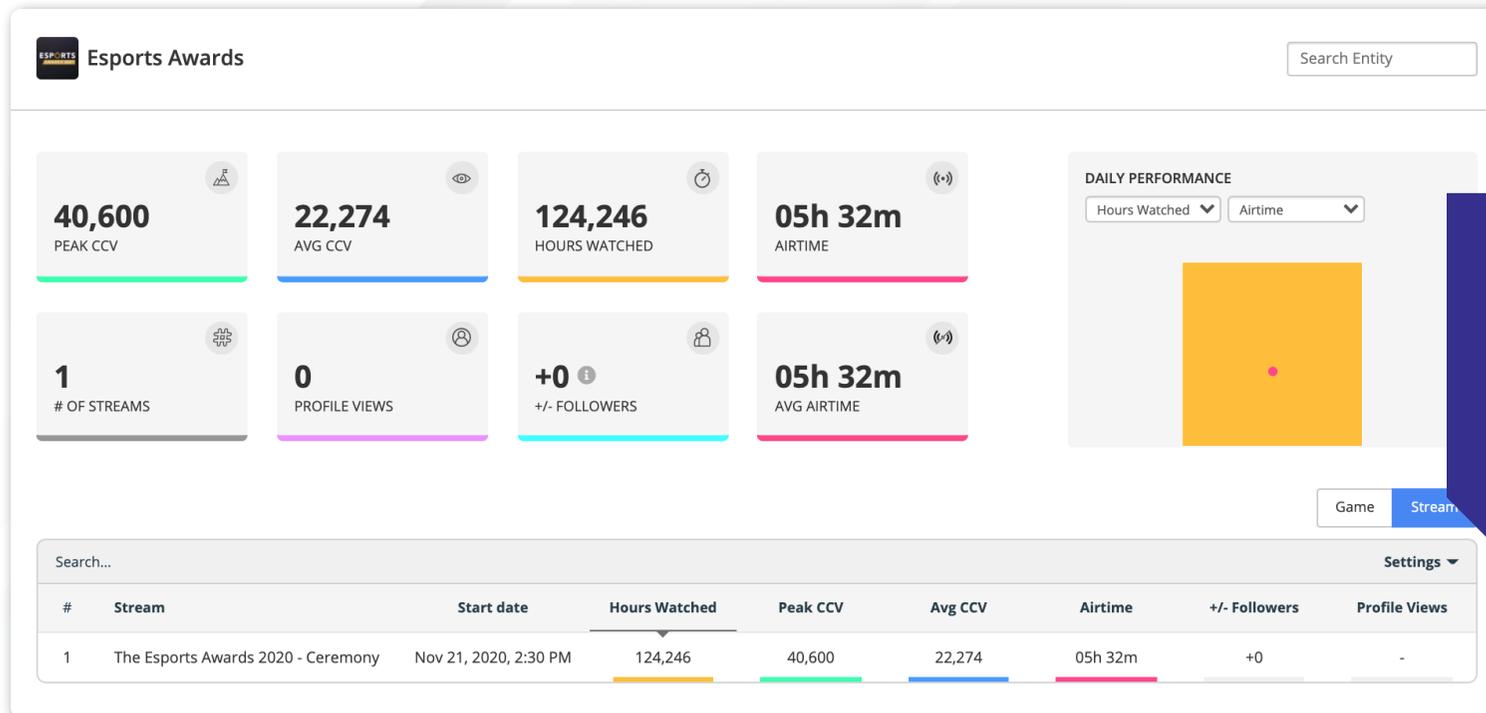
2020

YEAR-OVER-YEAR  
STREAMING VALUE

12.5%

INCREASE TO

\$7.17M



As the Esports Awards **continues to focus on Twitch** for streaming and produce more content series, **their 2021 streaming valuation should see more growth.**

# ENGAGING PERSPECTIVES – Observations & best working strategies

Esports Awards posts on social media drive the most engagement and value.

## SOME IDEAS

- 1) Look for sponsors that tie in with the content series.
- 2) Create extra content around event winners.



**Lean on popular streamers and influencers.** Identify fan favorites like Ibai or Sjokz and build content around them.

## Pre and post-event excitement.

Social media is 24/7. Building engagement before an event gives fans anticipation. Closing with event highlights is a way to keep the Esports Awards top of mind while remembering fun moments.

## Passive exposure drives value for partners.

Photos and interviews of the nominees with the step and repeat in the background drive value and sponsorship exposure.



ESPORTS  
AWARDS 2020

STREAMER OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY LEXUS



**Find the content series that works — and run with it.** Streamer of the Year and Esports Athlete of the Year

are the most popular awards based on engagement and value.



**Find, build, and grow emerging audiences.** Mobile Player of the Year was a popular post earning \$19.7K in value. Create more content around mobile esports to reach Asian and South American audiences.





## ABOUT BLINKFIRE ANALYTICS

Blinkfire Analytics is the leading business intelligence & marketing analytics platform to evaluate sports, esports, media, and entertainment sponsorships across social media, digital, and Advanced TV. Using artificial intelligence, machine learning, and proprietary computer vision technology, Blinkfire Analytics measures media value and impact – allowing rights holders, players, influencers, agents, and brands to better engage their fans and sponsors across multiple platforms. Many of the world's top teams and leagues rely on Blinkfire Analytics' real-time, always-on platform for sports and entertainment sponsorship evaluation to quantify engagement and sponsorship dollars.

To learn more about Blinkfire Analytics, email at [bizdev@blinkfire.com](mailto:bizdev@blinkfire.com) or visit [www.blinkfire.com](http://www.blinkfire.com).

