

Embracing Humanity in Gaming

2024

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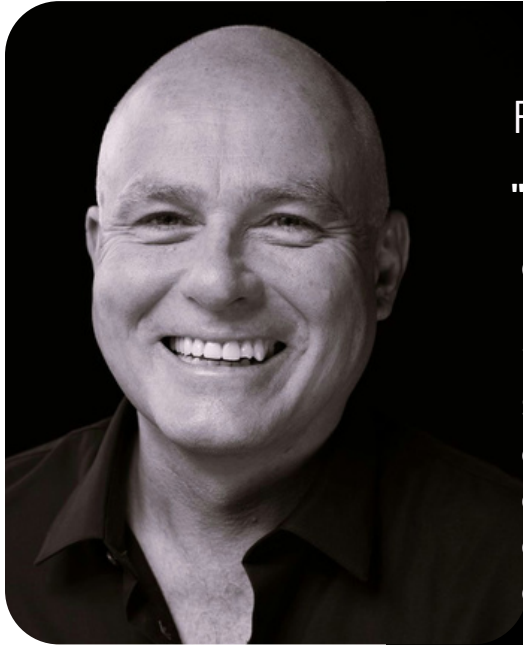
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01. Introduction



Mike White

Founder of **Audience 101**

"Real Human Connections in a Digital World."

Gaming, once seen as a solitary pastime, has evolved into a thriving ecosystem for interaction and community-building. At SXSW 2024, experts highlighted how gaming now serves as a platform for creativity and influence, where players actively shape their digital experiences as creators and collaborators.

This white paper presents a comprehensive roadmap for brands looking to tap into gaming's potential for meaningful audience engagement. It focuses on:

- **Ethical technology use**
- **Community-driven experiences**
- **Fostering emotional connections**

Purpose

To guide brands in leveraging gaming as a platform for authentic, lasting engagement with their audiences.



02. Activision Blizzard Media – Leading the Gaming Revolution

Jonathan Stringfield

VP, Global Business Research & Marketing at **ACTIVISION** **BILZARD**

"Gaming has transcended traditional entertainment boundaries, evolving into a powerful entity that eclipses global box office and music revenues."

Transforming Gaming into a Social Force

Activision Blizzard Media (ABM) has positioned gaming as more than just entertainment, it is now a shared digital space where players and brands meet organically. By seamlessly embedding brands within gaming experiences, ABM fosters connections that feel genuine and resonate with players on a deeper level.

ABM's approach ensures that brand integration doesn't disrupt the gaming experience. Instead, it enhances it by aligning with players' preferences for meaningful engagement, turning in-game brand moments into opportunities for loyalty and emotional connection.

By the Number

345M+

Monthly Active Gamers

8

Franchises Worth \$1 billion+

Seamless Brand Integration

"Players gravitate toward games that offer personal interaction and emotional depth. Brands that create these experiences within games can expect lasting loyalty," notes **Ella McCarthy**, Global VP Brand and GM Merchandising at Ford. With a focus on fostering emotional connections, ABM creates brand experiences that are **authentic**, **immersive**, and **aligned** with what players value.



03. Case Study – Candy Crush & Prada Candy Collaboration

Setting the Standard for Brand Engagement

The Candy Crush & Prada collaboration highlights how ABM transforms gameplay into a canvas for authentic brand storytelling. By seamlessly integrating Prada's campaign within Candy Crush, ABM achieved remarkable results:

40,000+

sample requests within
24 hours.

1,800%

spike in traffic to Prada's
fragrance redemption page

Community and Emotional Connection

ABM's gaming environments are designed to foster **shared experiences** that connect players with each other—and with brands—on a personal level. "Players value games that deliver interaction and emotional depth" emphasizes Ella McCarthy. By prioritizing emotional engagement, ABM sets a benchmark for what meaningful brand integration can achieve.

Immersive Benchmark

The collaboration established new industry benchmarks:

98.9%

Engagement Rate

96.2%

Completion Rate

These metrics illustrate how immersive, non-disruptive brand experiences drive higher recall and positive sentiment.



04. Fostering Community and Emotional Connections in Gaming

Building Connected, Interactive Communities

ABM's vision extends beyond gameplay—it's about creating ecosystems where players form lasting connections. These thoughtfully designed spaces allow players to interact with:

- Friends and fellow gamers
- Integrated brands in meaningful, authentic ways

62%

of players report playing games as a way to connect with friends and family

64%

of U.S. consumers feel companies have lost the human touch in customer experience.

Emotional Engagement as a Core Strategy

Today's players seek **more than entertainment**; they crave emotional fulfillment and shared experiences. ABM's partnerships prioritize these desires, enabling brands to connect with players in ways that create lasting impressions.

"Players are drawn to games that provide interaction and emotional depth." ABM's strategy aligns with this demand, allowing brands to connect on a level that's both meaningful and memorable. Ella McCarthy, Global VP Brand and GM Merchandising - Ford.

Vision for the Future

ABM is reshaping gaming as a cultural and social ecosystem where brands contribute to the community. This evolution moves beyond traditional advertising, fostering **authentic engagement** and enabling brands to build deeper, more meaningful relationships within purpose-driven environments.



05. The Power of User-Generated Content (UGC) in Gaming

Introduction to UGC and Community Engagement

User-generated content (UGC) is redefining gaming, empowering players to take control of their experiences. Platforms like Roblox are at the forefront of this movement, showing how active player participation fosters creativity, loyalty, and connection.

88.9M

daily active users

180

minutes/day average
playtime among Gen Z

“Platforms like Roblox represent the latest evolution, moving beyond social media to immersive, user-generated experiences that captivate today’s audiences,” Charles Hambro, Co-founder, CEO – GEEIQ.

Case Study: Forever 21’s “Shop City” on Roblox

Forever 21’s Shop City initiative illustrates the power of UGC in engaging players:

2M

units sold for one
virtual item

49

minutes per player
engaging with Shop City

260K

user visits

\$6.2M

units sold for one
virtual item

UGC as the Future of Brand Engagement

While UGC underscores a broader industry trend, ABM’s expertise lies in crafting emotional, purpose-driven brand experiences that seamlessly integrate within existing games.

06. Key Takeaways for Brands

At Audience 101, our mission is to transform audience behaviors into lasting customer relationships by fostering authentic connections. This white paper has shown how brands can thrive in gaming; a vibrant, immersive space where trust, loyalty, and emotional engagement are paramount.

1. **Creators Drive Authenticity.** Gaming creators and platforms have earned their audiences' trust. Success lies in collaborating with these experts to seamlessly integrate your brand into the gaming experience—without disrupting it.
2. **Think Beyond Short-Term Campaigns.** Building trust and loyalty in gaming requires sustained partnerships, not quick fixes. Investing in long-term relationships unlocks enduring ROI and deeper brand engagement.
3. **Prioritize Experience Over Control.** Gamers value authenticity. Flexible collaboration with creators enhances the player experience, turning brand interactions into meaningful connections.
4. **Measure What Matters.** Success in gaming isn't about clicks; it's about engagement, loyalty, and brand sentiment. Focus on metrics that reflect the depth of your connection with audiences.

Your Strategic Partners in Success

Gaming is a unique ecosystem of trust and emotional depth. To succeed, you need the right expertise and strategy.

- **Audience 101** provides guidance on selecting the most impactful partnerships, tailoring creative tactics, and building long-lasting customer relationships across channels.
- **Activision Blizzard Media** offers unparalleled expertise in connecting brands with millions of engaged players through authentic and results-driven gaming campaigns.

Together, we can help your brand foster authenticity, unlock new audiences, and achieve results that extend far beyond a single campaign.

Let's Connect

Website: activisionblizzardmedia.com | [Audience 101](#)

Email: inquiries@activisionblizzardmedia.com

Whether you're ready to launch a gaming campaign or need broader strategic advice, we're here to guide your way.

