

# FORTNITE

## INDUSTRY CONTEXT



## FACTSHEET BREAKDOWN

# FORTNITE

## AUDIENCE RESPONSE

### [PRODUCT/INDUSTRY INTRODUCTION]

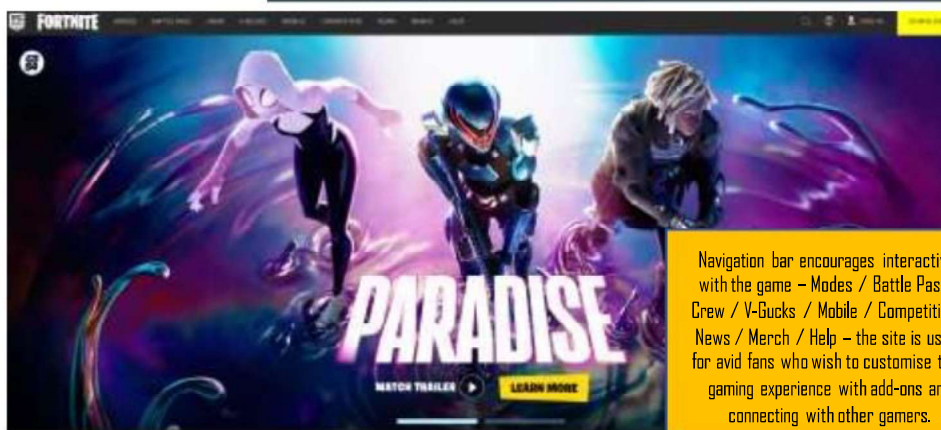
- **Launched in July 2017** - \$67,000 production budget.
- **Produced by Epic Games** - multiplayer free-to-play constantly updated battleground game (MMORPG).
- **Founder/CEO of Epic Games** - Tim Sweeney.
- **Game premise** - aim of the game is to fight to the death, with the last player standing as the winner - players seek out weapons/materials but can demolish structures and rebuild them into forts and towers - as storms encroach, it drives players into smaller areas forcing conflict.
- **Videogame industry context**
  - growing since early 1980s and dawn of Atari Home Entertainment.
  - explosion in gaming industry has led to economic forecast of videogame sales to reach \$90 billion by 2020.
  - in 2014, 1.8 active gamer estimate (25% world population)
  - challenging gamer stereotypes - just 28% of gamers under 18, 23% over 50 years old
- **Genre** - fusion of battle games (Battlegrounds) with construction games (Minecraft).
- **Ownership** - Epic Games owns video game developer Chair Entertainment and cloud-based software developer Cloudgine - sub-studios in UK, Japan and Germany.
- **Unreal Engine** - engine used to create Fortnite - promoted as the 'world's most open and advanced real-time 3D creation tool for photoreal visuals and immersive experiences' - Unreal Engine was also used to create Batman: Arkham City and Infinity Blade.
- **'Games as a Service' (GaaS) model** - Fortnite uses GaaS through micro transactions that act as in-app purchases with V-Bucks in the game - upgrades are purely 'cosmetic' (new skins to alter character appearance, 'emotes' such as a victory dance move after a 'kill')
- **Tencent** - a Chinese investment company bought a 42% stake in Epic in 2012.
- **Fortnite franchise revenue** - £2.4 billion in 2018.
- **Epic Games worth increase:**
  - \$825 million (2012)
  - \$5.8 billion (2018)
- **Franchise includes:**
  - Fortnite: Battle Royale/ Save The World / Creative
- **Most successful free-to-play videogame ever = Fortnite: Battle Royale:**
  - made \$1.2 billion in first 10 months of release
  - players originally bought 'battle passes' to play
  - from September 2018, this version was offered for free
  - won 'Best Ongoing Game' 2018 PC Gamer and IGN Awards
- **Technological convergence**
  - variety of gamer platforms
  - home consoles, tablets, smartphones
  - increased accessibility for all types of gamers.
- **Cross-media convergence** - Fortnite is the most viewed game on YouTube and uses streaming platforms like Twitch to broadcast live competitions.
- **Synergy** - Fortnite has collaborated with other brands, including Marvel for 'Infinity Gauntlet Limited Time Mash-Up' uniting elements of Avengers: Infinity War/Endgame within the Fortnite game.
- **Location drops** - according to marketing data, the most common 100 group location drops in the game are as follows: - Tilted Towers (64%) / Lonely Lodge (6%) / Wailing Woods (5%) / Pleasant Park (4%) / Everywhere Else (21%)

### [AUDIENCE/MARKETING]

- **Gamer participation**
  - in 2014, 1.8 billion active gamer estimate (25% world population)
  - just 28% of gamers under 18, 23% over 50 years old
  - gender split: 66% male, 34% female
- **Fortnite, the gender split is more pronounced:**
  - 78% male, 22% female, 53% 1-25 year olds, 42% in full-time employment.
- **Diverse genres of Fortnite for gamers**
  - first-person shooters, puzzles/learning tools - varied demographic.
- **Gaming as a social activity**
  - since 1997, gamer socialising has become an everyday activity for millions.
- **Active and passive audience responses:**
  - gameplay of Fortnite: Battle Royale is collaborative - encouraging players to work together.
  - deconstructing and rebuilding game environment - players are encouraged to be creative.
  - Fortnite: Creative is another format - greater agency with 'skins', 'emotes' and landscapes.
  - Epic Games have made Unreal Engine operating system available to encourage next generation of gamers.
- **eSports Marketing:**
  - live competitive gaming with celebrity players on sites like Twitch causing viral sensations.
  - Ninja has over 10 million subscribers and has highest social media worldwide interactions.
  - Live celebrity gamer streaming also leads to an increase in gamer activity. - Drake and NBA's Ben Simmons have caused a short-term surge in gamer involvement on certain times.
  - gamer celebrities become aspirational role models for some audiences.
  - popularity of 'Twitch Girls' (like KatyPlaysGames) - non-traditional gamer demographics.
- **Viral sensations - Release Structure - 'Seasons'**
  - Season Passes act like a subscription that allows gamers to access new content over the course of a period of gameplay that play-for-free users can't access - this exclusivity boosts revenue, demand for limited edition/exclusive content grows with most avid gamers.
- **PEGI Rating**
  - 2012 video game regulation incorporated into UK law and The Video Standards Council
  - Fortnite has the PEGI rating of 12 for 'frequent scenes of mild violence'
  - whilst moral panic exists around game franchises such as the PEGI 18 rated Grand Theft Auto, parents are often more concerned with issues around addiction and overspending on in-app purchases.
- **Moral panic**
  - fear that violent video games lead to copycat behaviour.
  - worries about addiction/unhealthy 'screen time' leading to distraction from school work.
  - Prince Harry and some Premier League footballers called the game "dangerous" for its addictive qualities.
- **Fortnite - Uses & Gratifications**
  - Escapism/entertainment - gamers get a cathartic release due to gamer spectacle.
  - Integration/social interaction - opportunity to connect with other gamers and gain status.
  - Information/education - puzzle/strategy expertise - skills development.

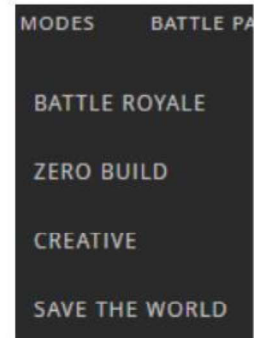
# SCREEN GRABS FROM THE FORTNITE WEBSITE FOR ANALYSIS (<https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/home>)

## HOME PAGE



Navigation bar encourages interactivity with the game – Modes / Battle Pass / Crew / V-Gucks / Mobile / Competitive / News / Merch / Help – the site is useful for avid fans who wish to customise their gaming experience with add-ons and connecting with other gamers.

## MODES

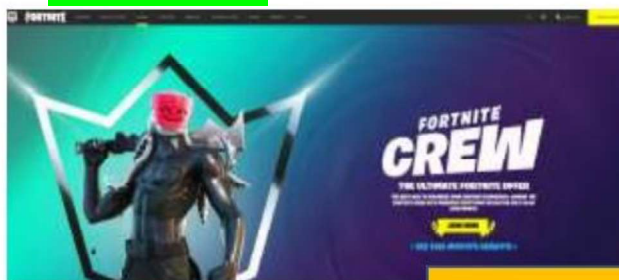


## BATTLE PASS SECTION



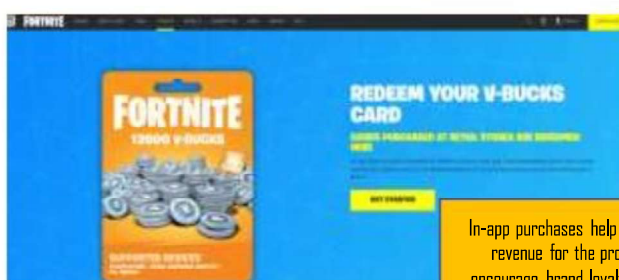
VIP tickets create status for gamers and appeal to their Social Interaction Needs – access and exclusivity acts as a USP.

## CREW SECTION



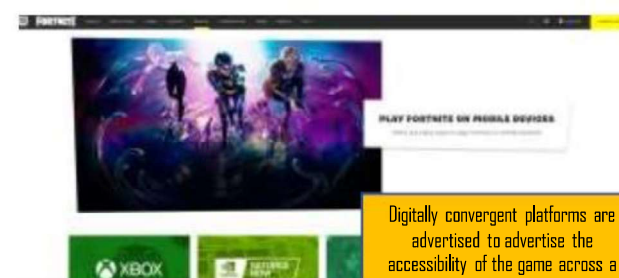
Appeals to the gamer's Social Interaction Needs.

## V-BUCKS SECTION



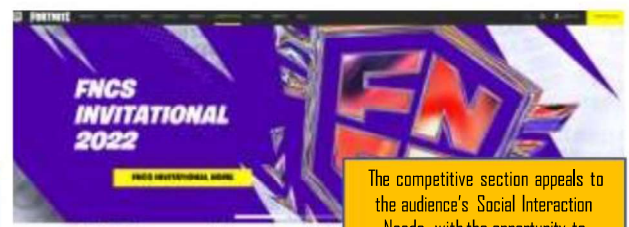
In-app purchases help to produce revenue for the producers, encourage brand loyalty and give incentives for gaming development.

## MOBILE SECTION



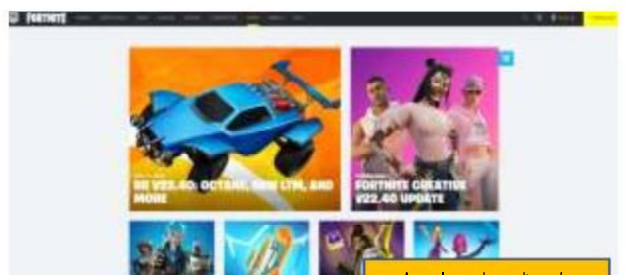
Digitally convergent platforms are advertised to advertise the accessibility of the game across a range of devices.

## COMPETITIVE SECTION



The competitive section appeals to the audience's Social Interaction Needs, with the opportunity to challenge other gamers, where a binary opposition between winners and losers is formed.

## NEWS SECTION



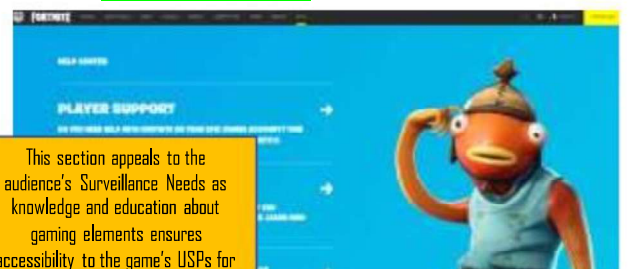
Appeals to the audience's Surveillance Needs.

## MERCH SECTION

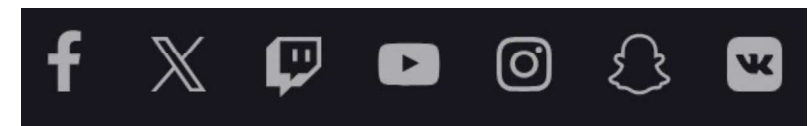
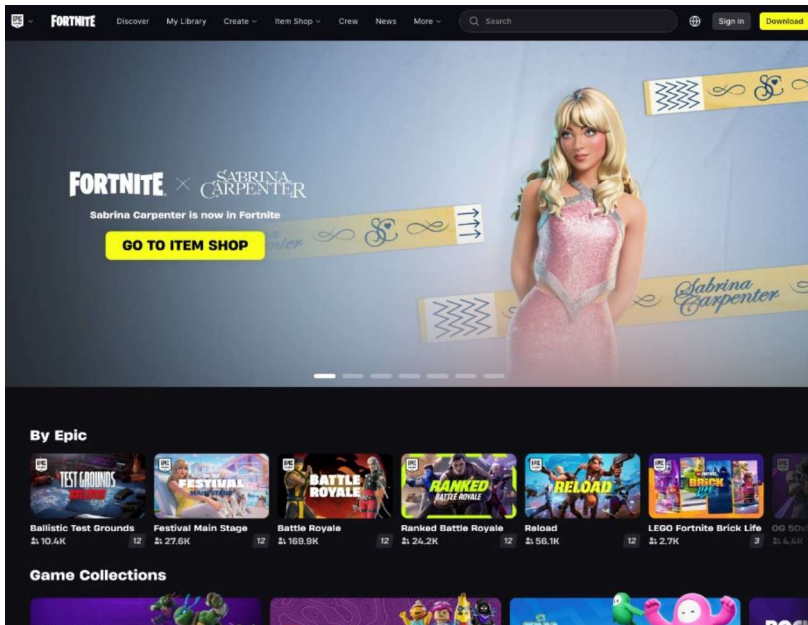


Incentives to appeal to the audience's Personal Identity Needs is established through the Merch section and acts as a form of diversification to increase revenue for the brand.

## HELP SECTION



This section appeals to the audience's Surveillance Needs as knowledge and education about gaming elements ensures accessibility to the game's USPs for all gamers.

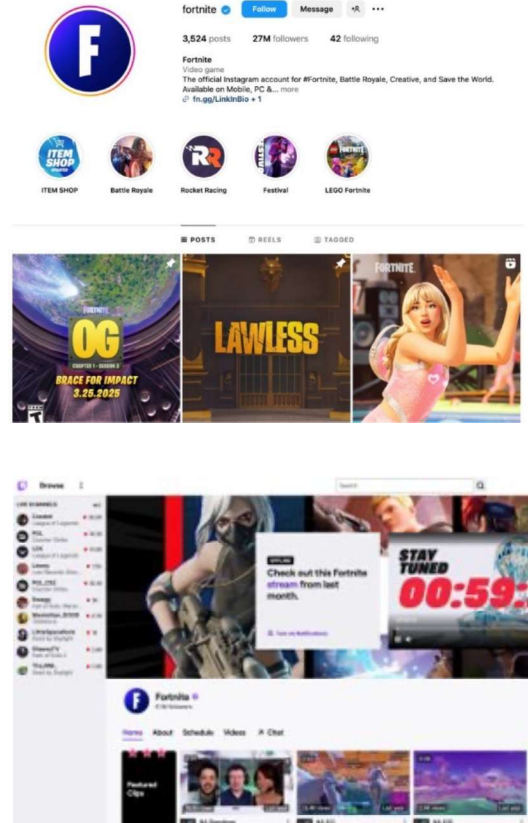
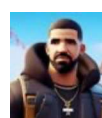


**Audience – Exam Example Questions**

Identify two ways in which media producers categorise audiences. [2]

Briefly explain how Fortnite targets audiences. [4]

Explain why users visit the Fortnite website. Refer to the Uses and Gratifications theory in your answer. [12]



| Key Terms                |
|--------------------------|
| Clickable links          |
| Tabs                     |
| Navigation Bar           |
| Buttons                  |
| Home page                |
| Embedded audio/video     |
| Thumbnails               |
| Images/captions          |
| Banner ads               |
| Social media convergence |
| Typography/copy          |
| Background image         |
| Epic Games Logo          |
| Digital convergence      |
| Uses & Gratifications    |
| User interactivity       |
| Vlogging gamers          |
| Avid fans                |

- Above-the-fold content on Fortnite Official Website:**
- The Fortnite logo features in sans-serif typography in the navigation bar which features tabs such as: Discover, My Library, Create, Item Shop, Crew, News, Competitive, More and a Search Bar – there are options to Sign In and Download.
  - The Create and Competitive options encourage high levels of user interactivity, with Discover, My Library and Item Shop promoting customising that builds avid fans into the gamer community – these features appeal to the gamer's Personal Identity Needs, with the opportunity to create unique characters through skins and emotes.
  - The dominant image is a rolling tab of features including the synergetic partnership with Sabrina Carpenter, clickable tabs to the Item Shops to buy specific characters such as Scorpion, Kitana and Raiden outfits.
  - Epic Games tabs feature below the rolling dominant image including a synergetic partnership with Lego for 'Lego Fortnite Brick Life', as well as Fortnite Main Stage, Battle Royale and Reload Versions.
  - Below-the-fold, there are clickable links to Game Collections with additional synergetic partnerships to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Lego with Lego Fortnite, Fall Guys and Rocket Racing.
  - Additional below-the-fold content includes various News tabs that informs about exclusive updates, alongside a huge number of clickable tabs to a range of Epic Games – the production company have utilised the popularity of Fortnite to market other games from the same brand.
  - Digitally convergent links feature at the bottom of the homepage with icons to Fortnite's official social media pages (Facebook, X, Twitch, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat and VK) – platforms such as Facebook, X and Instagram promote new tie-in features and exclusives.
  - The Fortnite Twitch link takes avid users to an interactive space where gamers can watch vloggers in live broadcasts playing Fortnite and respond with BTL (below-the-line) comments – this creates a parasocial relationship between famous vlogging gamers and users.

# Glossary of Key Terms – Video Games

| Term                            | Summarised definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Detailed definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Genre                           | Type/category of media                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Film (horror, sci-fi, Western, rom-com, melodrama), Video Game (Battle Royale Game, MMORPG, etc)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Stereotype                      | Generalised assumptions                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | These are a simplified representation of a person, groups of people or a place, through basic or obvious characteristics - which are often exaggerated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Platform                        | A media service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | A service, site, or method that delivers media to an audience – platform can decide whether a text appeals to a mass or niche audience.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Synergy                         | United marketing industries.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Where two industries (not necessarily media based) work together to achieve an objective they couldn't do alone.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Franchise                       | Series of products under brand.                                                                                                                                                                                                              | A general title or concept used for creating or marketing a series of products, typically films or television shows.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Convergence                     | Multiple platforms                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Convergence:</b> The ways in which products are made available to an audience on a number of different devices or platforms<br><b>Technological convergence:</b> Where one media text (such as Fortnite) is available on multiple platforms (smartphone, laptop, TV, PCs, Macs, Xbox, Playstation, Tablets.<br><b>Cross-media convergence:</b> where different brands collaborate with a product – Fortnite: YouTube, Twitch, Marvel Infinity War (tie-ins with costumes, weapons and games).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Revenue                         | Money earned as profit                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Advertising, subscription, in-app purchases and merchandise are four such methods to ensure profit for a video game manufacturer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Free-to-play                    | Free gameplay                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Free-to-play (F2P or FtP) video games are games that give players access to a significant portion of their content without paying or don't require paying to continue playing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Marketing                       | Promoting media products                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Marketing mediums include a blend of options companies have at their disposal during the promotional phase of marketing. While traditional media, such as TV and newspapers, remain prominent, 21st century integrated marketing strategies have emphasized the use of interactive, real-time engagement through new media.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| In-app purchases                | Extra content to buy inside an app                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Fortnite earns revenue entirely from in-app purchases (V-bucks).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Engine                          | Software framework to build and create video games                                                                                                                                                                                           | A digital production tool that helps create and runs elements of a game – Fortnite use 'Unreal Engine'.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Distribution                    | Media product delivery                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | The methods by which media products are delivered to audiences, including the marketing campaign.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Games as a Service (GaaS) Model | Method to monetise free-to-play games such as in-app purchases                                                                                                                                                                               | Providing video games or game content on a continuing revenue model, similar to software as a service. Games as a service are ways to monetize video games either after their initial sale, or to support a free-to-play model.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| PEGI Regulation                 | 3, 7, 12, 16, 18 game age ratings based on content<br><br><b>Reasons for classifications:</b><br>- Bad Language<br>- Discrimination<br>- Drugs<br>- Fear<br>- Horror<br>- Gambling<br>- Sex<br>- Violence<br>- In game purchases<br>- Online | <b>PEGI 3</b> - The content of games with a PEGI 3 rating is considered suitable for all age groups. The game should not contain any sounds or pictures that are likely to frighten young children. A very mild form of violence (in a comical context or a childlike setting) is acceptable. No bad language should be heard.<br><b>PEGI 7</b> - Game content with scenes or sounds that can possibly be frightening to younger children should fall in this category. Very mild forms of violence (implied, non-detailed, or non-realistic violence) are acceptable for a game with a PEGI 7 rating.<br><b>PEGI 12</b> - Video games that show violence of a slightly more graphic nature towards fantasy characters or non-realistic violence towards human-like characters would fall in this age category. Sexual innuendo or sexual posturing can be present, while any bad language in this category must be mild. Gambling as it is normally carried out in real life in casinos or gambling halls can also be present (e.g. card games that in real life would be played for money).<br><b>PEGI 16</b> - This rating is applied once the depiction of violence (or sexual activity) reaches a stage that looks the same as would be expected in real life. The use of bad language in games with a PEGI 16 rating can be more extreme, while games of chance, and the use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs can also be present.<br><b>PEGI 18</b> - The adult classification is applied when the level of violence reaches a stage where it becomes a depiction of gross violence, apparently motiveless killing, or violence towards defenceless characters. The glamorisation of the use of illegal drugs and explicit sexual activity should also fall into this age category.<br><b>! Rating</b> - In addition to age ratings, PEGI also operates a special rating represented by an exclamation point labelled "Parental Guidance Recommended." These contents are available for all ages, but it is recommended that parents (mostly with children who are under the age of 18) supervise activities within the program. Examples include Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.. These do not apply to dating sites (e.g. Tinder), where the PEGI 18 rating is used. |
| Moral panics                    | Public anxiety over media content                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Anything which is seen as a threat to society as we know it – often an exaggerated reaction to a cultural phenomenon.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Uses & Gratifications           | Specific audience wants and needs                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Information and Education</b> – the viewer wants to acquire information, knowledge and understanding by watching programmes like The News or Documentaries.<br><b>Entertainment (escapism)</b> – Viewers watch programmes for enjoyment. Computer games and action films let viewers escape their real lives and imagine themselves in those situations.<br><b>Personal Identity</b> - Viewers can recognise a person or product, role models that reflect similar values to themselves and mimic or copy some of their characteristics.<br><b>Integration and social interaction</b> – the ability for media products to produce a topic of conversation between people.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Active audiences                | Critical audience engagement                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | An active audience engages, interprets and responds to a media text in different ways and is capable of challenging the ideas encoded in it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Passive audiences               | Influenced by media without active deconstruction                                                                                                                                                                                            | A passive audience is more likely to accept the messages encoded in a media text without challenge and are therefore more likely to be directly affected by the messages.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Gamer                           | Video game fans                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | The video game player and consumer of the media product, referring to the avid enthusiast of video game playing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Audience Appeals                | Variety of aspects that cause gamer enjoyment                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Active gameplay</b> - any game that uses a game system and/or remote to elicit movement from the person<br><b>Addictive</b> – games have the ability to release dopamine in the gamer. The chemical reaction can increase gamer addictiveness.<br><b>eSports</b> - a multiplayer video game played competitively for spectators, typically by professional gamers.<br><b>Release structure (seasons)</b> – by releasing new seasons of a game, it ensures that gamers remain hooked on new elements of the game and increases addictiveness.<br><b>Catharsis</b> – gaming providing relief from strong, repressed emotions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Demographics                    | Categorising audiences by NRS Social Grade ABC1C2DE                                                                                                                                                                                          | Demographic information is used in media marketing to classify an audience into age, gender, race and other categories. Demographics are broken into bands depending on peoples jobs or status (NRS Social Grade ABC1C2DE).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |