



ASSIGNMENT

As a new player within the gaming/esports landscape, U.S. Bank is looking to become an authentic sponsor within the space. Focusing on delivering gaming equity and access to diverse communities and women gamers, U.S. Bank's next step is to develop a strategy that allows for more integrated gaming/esports partnerships, deeper community engagement, and greater storytelling. It will be critical that any approach is aligned to the bank's core values and initiatives.

Your task is to develop an integrated gaming/esports strategy that delivers on U.S. Bank's key goal metrics and establishes a platform for U.S. Bank to expand their gaming/esports presence.

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

The primary goals for this assignment will be awareness and brand consideration. As a new player in the space, it is not only important that the gaming/esports audience is aware of U.S. Bank, but that the bank appears in an authentic manner. Studies within this space have shown overwhelmingly the gaming/esports' community disdain for brands that force their way into the space in an inauthentic fashion, so crafting a partnership that delivers value for the community will be critical.

Awareness will be measured by basic reach metrics, such as impressions, clicks, and click-through rate. While awareness is the primary goal, clicks are important because those are most likely to lead to new customers.

BUSINESS IMPACT OBJECTIVES

The ultimate business impact is new accounts, which is defined as someone who is driven to a U.S. Bank offering and signs up for that offering. In many cases, this person is a new customer who becomes part of the U.S. Bank ecosystem. As a baseline, we will measure potential newly opened accounts based on clicks.

CURRENT SITUATION

The pandemic rocked the sponsorship and experiential world, accelerating the shift to hybrid or digital experiences. Gaming/esports is perfectly positioned as a digital first environment, with IRL activation opportunities. U.S. Bank is looking to become a more prominent financial services sponsor within this



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space before it becomes too cluttered. But how to do this in an authentic and engaging way?

BRAND ARCHITECTURE

Current Brand Campaign

We'll get there together.

- Whether you've achieved your pursuit, are on the path to pursuit, or are searching for next pursuit. U.S. Bank's role in those pursuits is to Elevate and Celebrate.
- The new campaign direction will strike an empathetic yet encouraging tone. U.S. Bank has the tools to help you achieve your pursuits. It is a collaborative message...we are in this together as partners.

Purpose statement

Our purpose statement describes our reason for being. It is the "true north" on our compass. Our purpose statement is **not** our brand or tagline.

We: Our purpose applies equally to all U.S. Bank employees at every level and in every facet of our business, without exception.

Invest: As a financial enterprise, we apply our time, talents, expertise and experience to meeting challenges and solving problems — and we accomplish that by dedicating ourselves to the best possible outcome.

Our hearts: We are passionate about creating the best path forward for our customers, colleagues, communities, and the shareholders we serve. We understand that potential means more than just dollars and cents.

We invest our hearts and minds to power human potential.

And minds: We are driven to find a better way, to exceed the expectations of our customers and the standards we hold ourselves to, and to never settle for the status quo.

To power: We actively and continually advocate new ways of thinking and initiate new opportunities that benefit our customers and our business — we don't wait for them to find us.

Human: Our business may be based on numbers, yet we're called to be champions of the people we serve and work with, advocating for their dreams, ambitions and best interests.

Potential: We are the catalysts that help our customers, colleagues, communities, and shareholders make the most of every opportunity and realize their full potential.



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Core values

Our core values establish a standard of measure for acting in the best interest of our customers, colleagues, communities and shareholders. They tell us what's important and how we'll succeed — now and in the future. Our core values are **not** our brand or tagline.

We do the right thing.

We act ethically, honestly and with integrity. We earn the trust of our customers by helping them make smart choices, recommending only the products and services we'd choose for our own families. We treat each other with respect and fairness. And we work to make positive change in our communities, because when they succeed, we succeed.

We power potential.

Potential is all around us, every day. We champion and encourage that potential in our customers, each other and our communities. We take pride in what we do, because our work makes a real difference. In every conversation, interaction and decision, we help people make the most of what they have today and build toward a more secure and prosperous tomorrow.

We stay a step ahead.

We seek out smart strategies over untested fads, focusing on long-term objectives, not short-term gains. We value continuous improvement over fast growth, because bigger isn't better: Better is better. We anticipate the needs of our customers and find better ways to serve them. We set ambitious goals and assert thoughtful leadership — always with one foot in the future.

We draw strength from diversity.

We come from many places, cultures and backgrounds, with a wealth of different skills and experiences. And we encourage contributions from all perspectives. We work together across departments, business lines and seniority levels to get things done. We learn from our colleagues and share what we know. Diversity, inclusion and collaboration aren't just policies — they're defining characteristics of our culture and our company.

We put people first.

The most important facets of our business are the people who use our products and services, and the people who stand behind them. We manage risk to protect the interests of our employees, customers, colleagues, communities and shareholders. And we invest in enhancing the skills and knowledge of our employees to create great experiences for our customers. Our success has always been and will always be based on putting people first.

Positioning

The objective of our positioning statement is to increase our brand value by driving awareness, consideration and usage.

The positioning statement is not a tagline and is not externally-facing. Rather, it is meant to be used as a filter to ensure all work is in alignment with our vision for the brand and the course we've charted.

Master brand position

Make possible happen. You work toward your goals with persistence and determination. We take the time to understand your goals — both big and small — so we can offer sound advice, ideas and tools that help. That's how we help you make possible happen every day.

***Note:** Our positioning statement, "Make possible happen" is not a tagline, but the idea should come through in everything we do. However, it is important to be thoughtful when using the word "possible" in any communication piece to avoid overuse. For detailed information on using "possible," see page 19.*

Key target audience mindset

People with goals — some big, some small — who are disciplined about how they work to achieve them. Money is often one of the means by which they achieve these goals, and they find clever ways to establish good money habits so they can reach their better tomorrow.

Brand tone and personality

Disarmingly warm, plain-spoken and earnest (for a big bank). A wise, resourceful and engaged listener who always finds a way to support and inspire those around them.



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Voice

The U.S. Bank voice is always that of a smart, resourceful and respected partner. We don't just talk at customers; we listen and ask questions that let us offer meaningful support.

Our brand voice is:

- Clear and plain-spoken without being blunt or simplistic
- Friendly and conversational, as if a banker were talking across the teller window
- Casual yet professional, as befits a trusted bank that's easy to interact with
- Warm and empathetic, but not overly emotional

Tone

Our brand tone is defined as disarmingly warm, plain-spoken and earnest (for a big bank). A wise, resourceful and engaged listener who always finds a way to support and inspire those around them.

When determining tone, always consider what a user is likely to need in a given moment, and what will inspire comfort and trust.

The gaming/esports platform you develop must stay true to our brand positioning of “We’ll get there together” as a north star but it doesn’t have to be verbatim. As an example, we’ve started using “Level Up Together” as a way to use nomenclature more familiar to a gaming/esports audience (you do NOT need to use “Level Up Together” verbatim either).

TARGET AUDIENCE FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT

U.S. Bank Segment 3

- Millennials (ages 18–35) with changing life stage demands (family, house, retirement planning) – going from on-line only to full services bank partner
- Defining attributes:
 - Spontaneous
 - Easygoing
 - Gregarious
 - Unorganized
 - Overconfident
- About them
 - I am...Always one of the first to adopt new technologies
 - A music and podcast buff – I stream both daily
 - Somewhat confident managing my finances
 - Not financially regimented
 - Looking for a personal banking relationship
 - Seeking expert financial support



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- I love...
 - Experimenting with new gadgets and apps
 - Family hikes and beach time
 - Traveling to college football games with my buddies
 - Brewing beer
 - Visiting national parks
 - Unplanned travel and adventures

U.S. Bank Segment 4

- Millennials (ages 18–35), diverse, aspiring – small business owner aspiration – working on building financial security
- Driven by status and image
- Defining attributes:
 - Aspiring
 - Assertive
 - Joyful
 - Skeptical
 - Entrepreneurial
- I am...
 - A confident budgeter and bookkeeper, but unfamiliar with investing
 - Seen as money-savvy by friends and strongly trust my intuitions
 - Feeling like my business has hit a plateau
 - Not sure I need a professional advisor and a little skeptical of banks, but would like to have a financial partner for guidance
 - In a love/hate relationship with my phone – love the convenience, hate the distraction
- I love...
- Running my business – it's my number one passion in life
- Taking good care of my employee and customers and forming real relationships with them
- Being creative – I have to add my own touch to everything
- Unwinding with a book and my cat, Murphy – I love mysteries!
- Streaming videos and music

Millennials (ages 18–35) are exploring bank products to fit the changing demands of their increasingly complex lives, but they default to the status quo because of the anxiety they feel over a lack of meaningful choices.



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U.S. Bank's new approach to sponsorship and experiential marketing will shift Millennial banking customers to:

- **THINK** U.S. Bank is a new option with the same service / products as a big bank yet the local / personalized service of a community bank.
- **FEEL** in control and empowered
- **BEHAVE** by making the change to U.S. Bank, staying engaged continuously

KEY PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES

- *U.S. Bank prioritizes supporting you and the communities in which we live, work, and play*
- *U.S. Bank is a true partner on your path to pursuit better*
- *U.S. Bank is committed to championing Diversity & Inclusion at work, in the community, and throughout its business*

SINGLE MOST CRITICAL POINT TO COMMUNICATE

U.S. Bank is committed to elevating, supporting, and celebrating community and equity in gaming.

SUCCESS METRICS

- *Creativity: Is the solution a new idea in the gaming/esports space? Is there outside the box thinking that provides the brand an opportunity to connect with this consumer demo*
- *Brand Integration: Does the case study solution fit within the overall brand priorities?*
- *ROI: Cost Benefit Analysis to establish which solutions provides the brand the most value & impact*
- *Scalable Awareness: What kind of reach and pull through does the solution provide the brand?*

HISTORICAL INSIGHTS

U.S. Bank does not and has not had any formal sponsorships or relationships in the space currently. In 2020, U.S. Bank did run media buys on Twitch, timed around the North American League of Legends Championships. Utilizing U.S. Bank creative with gaming/esports-specific messaging, it performed better–



than-expected, yielding awareness metrics on par with industry standards and more account conversions than expected.

A few learnings from the Twitch media buy program:

- Ads with CTAs performed best
- Video ads performed better than static ads
- CTR exceeded .10% industry standard
- Female-focused content performed well

KEY DELIVERABLES

An integrated sponsorship strategy that involves a moment-in-time activation with legs to expand the partnership for multiple years.

Included in this strategy should be:

- Executive Summary
 - Provide a 1-page executive summary
- Situational Analysis
 - Demonstrate your understanding of the gaming and esports space including:
 - Competitive analysis of U.S. Bank's retail banking category
 - SWOT analysis for U.S. Bank in the gaming space
- Strategic rationale
 - Why do you think your recommendation best aligns with the U.S. Bank brand and will provide us the best chance to accomplish our goals?
 - What considerations/assumptions were made in formulating this strategy?
- Strategic framework
 - Provide a detailed framework outlining the partnership assets, program activation, and marketing benefits
 - What different partner and channel strategies were utilized to bring this program to life?
 - Is there a messaging architecture that should be used to connect this program and make it successful?
 - What is the audience engagement flow? How will our audience interact with this program?



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- If content is included, how will it support this program and potentially be utilized for complimentary programs?
- Partner and/or talent overview
 - What does the partner(s) do?
 - Why did you recommend this partner(s)?
 - Are there any concerns or risks about partner(s)?
- Activation timeline
 - Provide a rough workback schedule outlining key milestones from partnership inception to activation
- Considerations/Callouts
 - How has world events impacted your strategic approach? Does the pandemic effect rationale for this approach?
 - Any caveats we should consider in reviewing this proposal?
- Budget
 - Provide a segmented budget breakdown
 - Media
 - Partnership rights
 - Activation
 - Agency/Partner Support

Do not feel bound by the above inclusions. This is your strategic proposal, own it.

DESIRED MARKETING CHANNELS

- Streaming platforms (Twitch, Facebook Gaming, YouTube Gaming, etc)
 - Partnerships and/or media buys
- Sponsorship
- Community (Corporate Social Responsibility)
- Influencers

BUDGET

- \$5,000,000.00

TIMING

- Your proposed solution/budget should launch during the timeframe of June 2021 to May 2022 with the potential of continuing into the future with a new budget each year.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS



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- **U.S. Bank will not be associated with First-Person Shooter (FPS) games.** Games that would fall under this category, but not limited to, are Call of Duty, Fortnite, Apex Legends, etc. Games with fantasy violence such as League of Legends, is allowed.
- Additionally, U.S. Bank has strict risk/compliance rules when it comes to working with influencers/talent. **Influencers would need to have values that align with U.S. Bank.** It is also important to consider any conflicts of interest influencers may have from currently working with U.S. Bank's competitors (other financial institutions).
- **Focus should be on the U.S. domestic audience**
- To ensure a fair RFP process, you may **not speak directly** to anyone who currently works at U.S. Bank.
- Each school will be allowed to ask up to five (5) questions, in writing, to U.S. Bank. This Q&A will be kept private between each school and U.S. Bank and not shared with other schools.

Appendix

Gaming or Esports

- Gaming is entertainment, gaming is culture.
- Esports is the competitive aspect of gaming.
- U.S. Bank is looking to develop a gaming strategy that may or may not include esports