



BI-LUISS Joint Msc in Marketing

Course of Integrated Marketing Communication

Marketing Strategy: what are the most effective marketing strategies for Red Bull to engage and grow in the Norwegian e-sport market?

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Abstract

This thesis explores the impact of sponsorship and marketing strategies within the Norwegian e-sports market, focusing specifically on Red Bull's involvement around their upcoming market entry. Through in-depth interviews, it investigates the cultural nuances, consumer engagement, and perception of sponsorships among Norwegian e-sports consumers. The study highlights the balance between individualism and collectivism, the importance of sincere brand partnerships, and the effectiveness of unconventional marketing strategies. Findings suggest that Red Bull's innovative marketing strategies, such as viral and tribal marketing, resonate well with the community, enhancing brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. The research concludes that Red Bull's strategic adaptation to local cultural values is crucial for successful engagement in the Norwegian e-sports scene.

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1.0 Introduction

The global e-sports market was valued at a staggering \$1.38 billion in 2022, expected to increase to \$1.86 billion in 2025 (Newzoo, 2023). Amongst this explosive growth, one brand, Red Bull, stands out for its pioneering role in e-sports sponsorship. Recognized for its unique marketing strategies and adventurous brand image, Red Bull has been a key aspect within the global e-sports market, sponsoring events, teams, and athletes. However, one market remains untouched by the famous energy drink giant, Norway.

Subsequently, a question arises as Red Bull is preparing to make its grand entrance into the Norwegian e-sports market. **Marketing Strategy: what are the most effective marketing strategies for Red Bull to engage and grow in the Norwegian e-sport market?** This will be the research question for this thesis, refortifying a positive market entry for Red Bull.

There has been conducted numerous research regarding Red Bull and sponsoring sport. However, insufficient research has been conducted when it comes to the e-sports market, particularly from the perspective of Red Bull. Therefore, this thesis aims to fill that gap, providing valuable insights into e-sports sponsorship. Thus, leading the way for Red Bull's effective entry into the Norwegian e-sport market.

Cuesta-Valiño et al. (2022) conducted a study in Spain on value creation through sponsorship in the growing e-sports industry. The researchers used a quantitative approach to investigate the multifaceted impact of sponsor factors on different aspects of audience engagement and brand perception. Their findings provided fascinating insights into the significant impact of sponsor factors on increasing general interest in e-sports, amplifying consumer purchase intentions, and encouraging positive word-of-mouth.

However, it is worth noting that the study does not propose a comprehensive model that includes all aspects of sponsorship in the e-sports market, instead focusing on specific aspects. This suggests that, while the research contributes significantly to understanding the value creation process in e-sports sponsorships, there is still room for future research to develop more holistic frameworks that capture the overlooked aspects to ensure a complete understanding of the impact of sponsorships in e-sports.

This indicates the necessity of further research regarding the overlooked aspects to ensure a complete

understanding of the impact of sponsorships in e-sports. This will be examined further in this thesis, however focusing on the Norwegian e-sport market and Red Bull as the sponsor. The significance of this study lies in its ability to fill a significant research gap concerning e-sports marketing and sponsorship, especially considering Red Bull's delve into the Norwegian e-sports market.

Therefore, this thesis will venture into the uncharted territory of Red Bull's entry into the Norwegian e-sports market. It seeks to unravel the most effective marketing strategies in this unique and upcoming scene, filling a significant gap in previously conducted research. Collecting insights and exploiting qualitative in-depth interviews to optimize Red Bull's new journey in the untouched market.

The conduction will touchdown on sponsorship within the e-sport market both globally and in Spain in comparison to the Norwegian market. Since, Red Bull's marketing is so sufficient with their unconventional marketing strategies, this topic will be discussed to effectively interpret the strategy in the Norwegian e-sport market. Constructed on current secondary data regarding e-sports in Norway, a marketing strategy will be conducted, which will later be confirmed or rejected by the in-depth interviews of consumers of the Norwegian e-sports market. Constructing a thorough research of Red Bull's marketing strategy in the Norwegian e-sports market, contributing to the research of e-sports sponsorship.

1.1 Sponsorship

Sponsorship could be defined as a financial investment in a subject to obtain access to a possible image or message associated with the subject (Chebli & Gharbi, 2014). The most frequent reason for investing in sponsorship is to increase brand awareness, and to establish, change, or better your perceived brand image (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). Three main roles take part in all sponsorships: the sponsor, the sponsee, and the consumer. The sponsor provides support through financial investments or knowledge. The Sponsee provides a place to reach out to its audience, where the subject will contribute to the brand image or message for the sponsor. The role of the consumers is to perceive the connection between the already-established brand image of the sponsee and the sponsor (Chebli & Gharbi, 2014).

1.2 The e-sport market

The e-sports market has been in exponential growth in the last ten years (Cristofol et al., 2020). The unique sport has become a global phenomenon, which hosts events with million-dollar sponsors and prizes. E-sports could be defined as physical activities that players develop together through non-human activities such as a computer or a game console (Witkowski, 2012). The availability of consumers to watch e-sports for free from their platform of choice has made this sport more accessible than other sports which require geographical and budget implementations. Spectators could also interact with the e-sports events, co-creating value that enhances the experience for both parties (Seo, 2013).

The e-sports market is in exponential growth as previously mentioned. In the previous years, the global audience has annually increased by 8-12% (Newzoo, 2022). The industry has had an exponential

increase in revenue as the industry generated \$ 700m in 2013, the number rose to \$ 1.1 bn in 2020.

Formerly, 57.9% of these figures came from sponsorship (Cristofol et al., 2020). This makes the e-sports market an attractive market for Red Bull to enter, evoking an increase in interest among sponsors in general.

1.3 Sponsorship in e-sports

E-sports' exponential growth in interest also brings a parallel interest in sponsorship within the market. As previously mentioned, most of the revenue from e-sports is obtained from sponsorship, making sponsors the key stakeholders. Most sponsors in the e-sports market are non-endemic brands, meaning they have no direct relation to gaming and e-sports. The addition of Red Bull to the Norwegian e-sports market would classify them as non-endemic as energy drink have no direct relation to e-sport. The reason for non-endemic brands to sponsor the e-sports market is to effectively engage with a younger audience. E-sports are classified as a market to target the youth audience with a low level of advertising noise, favorable for many brands. When sponsoring e-sports there are several options, the sponsor could choose to either sponsor a team, player, or a competition. The latter is the option with the lowest risk level as competition avoids the risk of a team or a player underperforming, leading to less exposure to the brand. Sponsoring e-sports compared to most normal sports is significantly cheaper in terms of impact per viewer, making it a beneficial market to enter for brands (Elasri Ejjaberi et al., 2020).

1.4 The global e-sports market

The global e-sports market was valued at above \$1.38 billion in 2022. According to Newzoo (2022) this number will increase to \$1.86 billion in 2025. Making that an increase of nearly 35 percent over such a short period, showcasing the sponsorship possibilities for the e-sports market. The global interest is at a staggering 3,3 billion consumers in total shows a report from 2023. Most of the consumers are from Asia-Pacific, accounting for 53 percent of the total global consumers. Middle East, Africa, and Europe account for 1 billion consumers combined. Within the European market, Spain accounts for a large portion of the total consumers (Newzoo, 2023).

1.5 E-sports market in Spain compared to Norway

Spain has a significantly larger e-sports revenue (\$101m) than Norway (\$24m) (Statista Market Insights¹, 2022). However, Spain's large population compared to Norway's smaller population directs to a higher proportion of revenue per persona in Norway. The Spanish e-sports market is estimated to have a growth in revenues of 6.7% from 2024 to 2028. However, during the same period, the Norwegian e-sports market is estimated to have a growth rate of 7.37%. This is also above the average growth rate for the whole of Europe over the same period (6.44%) (Statista Market Insights², 2022). This might indicate a rather beneficial fit in terms of the market to enter for Red Bull.

Within high-restraint cultures such as Norway, the corporate culture may be perceived as more rule-

oriented and disciplined compared to the high-indulgence Spanish culture, which favors a more open and elastic approach. Red Bull must recognize the influence of restraint and indulgence approaches on consumer behavior and social norms to ensure the tailoring of marketing strategies to optimally engage with consumers of the Norwegian market. Hofstede et al. (2010) established a framework for understanding the cultural dimensions in the global market. This is perceived as a cornerstone when comprehending nuanced ways in which cultural disparities impact brand strategies worldwide. By applying these dimensions to the marketing strategy, Red Bull can enhance their probability of succeeding in the new market and connect with the target audience more effectively (Kozhevnikova, 2023).

1.6 The History of Red Bull

Mateschitz was introduced to the phenomenon of energy drinks in Asia to counter jet lag. He perceived the value of the product and decided to introduce it to the European market in 1983, despite rejections from several investors who believed there was no market for energy drinks in Europe (Bergstrom, 2023).

Red Bull was first introduced in Austria in 1987 (Gorse, Chadwick, & Burton, 2010). As the product was banned in Germany, it became known as “the forbidden brand”. Numerous young Germans were willing to cross the border to Austria to buy the forbidden energy drink, associating Red Bull with rebellion. From Austria, the drink quickly spread across Europe, first to Slovakia and Hungary in 1992, then to Germany and the UK in 1994. When they entered the American market three years later, Red Bull sold over a million cans every day (Bergstrom, 2023).

To further strengthen the brand, Mateschitz initially focused on nightclubs and student parties, with the help of student ambassadors. These ambassadors were popular university students, encouraged to promote Red Bull on university campuses and at various parties, with all expenses covered by Red Bull itself. Special cars with a large can of Red Bull attached to the top began to appear on beaches, colleges, gyms, and even office buildings with free samples. Thereafter, Red Bull became increasingly popular, and is now sold worldwide, making it one of the biggest actors regarding sponsorship in the energy drink market (Bergstrom, 2023).

1.7 Red Bull and sponsorship

Red Bull is a pioneer regarding unique sponsorships within sports through the adoption of unconventional methodologies. The energy drink company sponsors everything in between events and athletes through unique marketing. Through their events and athletes, the brand sponsors through storytelling. This is usually the sponsee who showcases their sport or their events, as this enlarges a high degree of consumer engagement. The brand is highly associated with extreme sports due to fostering an exceptional brand image through sponsoring a lot of events in these niche markets. Therefore, Red Bull built up an image where action, risk-taking, adventures, and extremes are highly visible. For example, Red Bull previously had a

Stratos campaign where an extreme sports athlete jumped out of a balloon into the stratosphere and was only published through Red Bull's channels (Pafitis, 2020).

Red Bull applies a sponsorship strategy through an ownership method, also referred to as property marking. This indicates that they get their brand out to the sports world through owning different sports teams, thus being able to showcase their logo and their brand regularly. Red Bull owns several football teams such as RB Leipzig, New York Red Bulls, and FC Red Bull Salzburg. However, they might have experienced further success with their Formula 1 team which they also own. Additionally, they have diverted their sports events, creative producers, and media channels that support their brand strategy. The brand has applied a consequent method to integrate the brand message professionally into the produced content (Chan-Olmsted & Shay, 2015).

Through organizing their teams and events, Red Bull eliminates potential conflicts of interest that usually arise with contract negotiations with TV broadcasters, sponsors, and other event organizers. This is showcased throughout their Formula 1 team, associating their brand values such as extreme, adventure, and courage, fostering this message to their consumers. Therefore, customers engage with their content and feel inspired to exceed their limitations, coherent with the distinctive ethos of Red Bull (Dominique-Ferreira et al., 2022).

Red Bull's sponsorship and ownership of sports teams engage customers more profoundly than traditional advertising. Consuming a soft drink with the same logo as seen on a Formula 1 car or the shirt of a football team evokes a sense of adventure and activity. Red Bull produces its own stories with the assistance of the athletes and their own media houses. This implies that Red Bull owns the photos and videos that have led to viral videos (Athletic Interest 2020). This indicates that Red Bull is way more than just a producer of an energy drink, conducting marketing activities, sponsoring, content production, and brand building at an extreme level. Thus, generating more revenue and a substantial amount of market shares.

1.8 Red Bull in the global e-sports market

Red Bull is a prominent sponsor in the global market of e-sport, sponsoring a variety of teams, players, and events. In terms of events, they sponsor the League of Legends European Championship and women's Valorant event in the United Kingdom. A team competing in the sponsor League of Legends European Championship is T1, which has a history of winning the event several times. T1 has a partnership deal with Red Bull which includes sponsorship and exclusive access to Red Bull's performance training resources. Red Bull sponsors several other e-sports teams, including G2 Esports, Cloud9, and Vodafone Giants which are all well-established and competitive (Esports Insider, 2020).

1.9 Unconventional strategy

A unique and young market requires a likewise marketing strategy when entering the market. However, this is intricate as the modern customer is endowed with high expectations and discernment. Cova and Saucet

(2014), state that for continuous innovation an unconventional strategy is crucial. Thereby, the main objective is to engage the target audience, emotionally connecting the sponsor to the consumer, and increasing brand awareness and recall which could further positively affect purchase intentions. This method has exponentially benefitted the sports market; hence it might have a positive effect on the e-sports market (Cherubini, 2015). Red Bull's pioneer role with unconventional marketing strategies in the sports market might have prepared them to conduct the same strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market.

Red Bull encourages their consumers to generate user-generated content (UGC) together with their branded content, which highlights the sponsored athletes. This is highly showcased in their Stratos campaign where UGC emerged from sponsored content. This turned into a viral trend to generate content around the Stratos campaign, generating both brand awareness and reputation for Red Bull. This generates a community and enhances brand loyalty (Chan-Olmsted & Shay, 2015).

Considering the information and data mentioned above, it is necessary to get a better understanding of the role of market strategies in e-sports in Norway to determine the fit for Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market. Sponsorship in sports has previously been investigated at a moderate level, minimal research has been conducted regarding sponsoring e-sports. Especially, within the Norwegian market and for Red Bull as a brand. Thus, the objective of this study is to determine the most effective marketing strategy for Red Bull to engage and grow in the Norwegian e-sports market. This will be examined by comparing the Norwegian e-sports market to the Spanish and investigating what strategies are effective in such a unique market. To better understand the Norwegian e-sports market that is still yet to be examined. This thesis will conduct quantitative in-depth interviews with established consumers within the market to get applicable and professional responses.

2. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

To get a better understanding of which marketing strategies are applicable for Red Bull in their new market, I will delve into the different frameworks in this part. It is centered around previously conducted research, especially in the fields of sponsorship and e-sports. Due to the absence of prior research conducted regarding e-sports, the traditional methods within sponsorship and marketing strategies will be applied to e-sports. The first step delves into the understanding consumer perception of sponsorship.

2.1 Hofstede's concept of cultural dimensions

In an ever-increasing globalized global market, businesses are expanding their strategies to diverse markets. However, effective marketing strategies depend on comprehending and adjusting to the cultural challenges that may occur in a diverse market. The cultural dimensions theory of Geert Hofstede offers an insightful framework for understanding these exact variations (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Geert Hofstede's breaking research established the groundwork for an all-encompassing framework for comprehending cultural differences. Power Distance, Individualism vs.

Collectivism, Masculinity vs. Femininity, and Uncertainty Avoidance are the four cultural dimensions he identified. Two more dimensions were later added to this model by his son Gert Jan Hofstede and Michael Minkov: indulgence vs. restraint and long-term vs. short-term orientation (Hofstede et al., 2010).

2.1.1 Power distance

The degree to which a society expects and accepts hierarchical power structures is measured by power distance. High power distance cultures target a great focus on hierarchy and authority, and people are typically willing to tolerate large disparities in status and power. Low power distance cultures, on the other hand, are more likely to value accessibility and equality and to accept pronounced power differences. Consumers are also more likely to challenge authority with the expectation of influencing decisions in low-power cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010). Therefore, sponsorship strategies within this market should benefit from being more interactive, engaging consumers to cooperate with the sponsor.

The Norwegian power distance dimension is perceived as a low-power society, that values independence. The low power distance appears in a few areas of Norwegian business practices as they value equality, including the lack of formal titles, and dress codes, and decisions are usually made collaboratively. Spain is perceived as a high-power distance where dress code, attitudes, and formal titles are strict and usually non-negotiable (Minkov & Kaasa, 2022). In this high-power distance culture, a relationship with authoritative figures is perceived as crucial (Warner-Søderholm, 2012). An understanding of the power difference between the Spanish and Norwegian e-sports market is essential to determine the correct marketing strategy for Red Bull. This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H1a: Red Bull's entry into the Norwegian e-sports market will be positively perceived due to Norway's low power distance culture, which values independence and equality.

2.1.2 Individualism vs. collectivism

The next dimension is individualism vs. collectivism, which measures the balance between group and individual interests within the society. Individualism presents a high value on self-reliance, achievement, and autonomy of the individual. In these cultures, people put their ambitions and goals first, which might be important to interpret in sponsorship message framing. Sponsorships in these cultures often showcase personal achievements and uniqueness, encouraging a more segmented target audience. In contrast, interdependence, harmony within the group, and cooperation are valued more highly in collectivist cultures. Individual preferences are frequently subordinated in collectivist cultures in favor of the needs and objectives of the family, community, or organization (Hofstede et al., 2010).

According to Gert Hofstede (2010), is Spain perceived as collectivist and individualist, as they could easily get along with non-Europeans, whereas other Europeans might be considered to be aggressive. Spain has high morals taking care of themselves and their family, but also has a low level of self-esteem. However, Norway has a high level of individualism, indicating that individual rights are dominant within the society

and personal opinions are valued. Individualistic cultures prefer marketing messages with a focus on uniqueness and personal achievements. Whereas, the collectivist cultures, emphasizing well-being, community, and family is perceived as more efficient (Minkov & Kaasa, 2022). Highlighting the importance of tailoring the marketing strategies, especially to the Norwegian market. This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H1b: Red Bull's marketing strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market, focusing on uniqueness and personal achievements, will be positively perceived due to Norway's high level of individualism.

2.1.3 Masculinity vs. femininity

Within a society, the Masculinity vs. Femininity dimension evaluates the level of ambition, competitiveness, and assertiveness. In societies dominated by men, achievement, success, and materialism are highly valued. These cultures typically place a high value on aggressive and competitive actions. Contrarily, cooperativeness, a high quality of life, and nurturing are valued more highly in feminine cultures. These societies give less weight to traits associated with traditional masculinity, such as ambition and rivalry (Hofstede et al., 2010).

The market message in masculine cultures focuses on achievement, ambition, and competition. Therefore, marketing messages including competition encouragement and showcasing of achievement might work better for the target audience. Nevertheless, marketing in feminine cultures underlines quality of life, cooperation, and social responsibility. The market messaging here would focus more on showcasing well-being and cooperation. Norway is valued to be a feminine culture, emphasizing equality, social comfort, and a strong community relation. Spain on the other hand is perceived to be less feminine but not directly masculine, focusing more on achievement and competition (Minkov & Kaasa, 2022). This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H1c: Red Bull's marketing strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market, focusing on quality of life, cooperation, and social responsibility, will be positively perceived due to Norway's feminine culture.

2.1.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

A society's tolerance for ambiguity, uncertainty, and risk is evaluated by the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension. Cultures with high levels of uncertainty avoidance place a high value on consistency, organization, and well-defined norms and guidelines. For sponsorship strategies within these cultures, it is important to align with local norms and maximize effectiveness. Individuals from these cultures may avoid risk-taking and feel uneasy in situations that are unclear or unpredictable. Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance, on the other hand, are more likely to welcome innovation, change, and a more relaxed adherence to laws and regulations (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Strict adherence to marketing and advertising regulations may be vital in cultures with high levels of uncertainty avoidance. Spain has a high Uncertainty Avoidance ranking, indicating low tolerance for

ambiguity and uncertainty. Spain has one of the highest uncertainty avoidance scores in the whole world, leading to a high level of confrontation avoidance and change avoidance. Conversely, cultures with low levels of uncertainty avoidance might have more relaxed regulations, enabling innovative and avant-garde marketing strategies. Norway has a moderate level of Uncertainty Avoidance, suggesting that the Norwegian society values consistency and well-defined norms in society and marketing (Minkov & Kaasa, 2022). This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H1d: Red Bull's adherence to well-defined norms and consistency in its marketing strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market will be positively perceived due to Norway's moderate level of Uncertainty Avoidance.

2.1.5 The Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation

The Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation dimension examines a society's outlook on the future and method of making plans for it. Perseverance, thrift, and future planning are highly valued in cultures that prioritize the long term. These cultures are inclined to value long-term partnerships and are prepared to put money and effort into accomplishing long-term objectives. Showcasing the importance of choosing a brand that aligns with the target culture and values. On the other hand, societies that have a short-term orientation value tradition, instant pleasure, and an emphasis on outcomes and rewards that happen quickly. (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Norway would be categorized as more of a long-term-oriented society, as the country values future planning and forward-thinking, emphasizing the importance of aligning accordingly within the sponsorship strategy. This could also be categorized as a pragmatic orientation, as they believe the truth varies a lot on context and situation. However, Spain is more normative, valuing in-the-moment decisions and quick results without delays (Minkov & Kaasa, 2022). This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H1e: Red Bull's long-term oriented strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market, focusing on future planning and forward-thinking, will be positively perceived due to Norway's long-term orientation.

2.1.6 Indulgence vs. Restraint

The degree to which society permits or prohibits the satisfaction of fundamental human needs and pleasures is measured by the Indulgence vs. Restraint dimension. High-indulgence societies are more tolerant of living life to the fullest and pursuing happiness for themselves, thus more open to trying new products and experiences. This is something sponsorship messages might emphasize through their strategy. Whether it comes to socializing, eating, and drinking, high-indulgence cultures are typically less strict and tolerant. High-restraint cultures, on the other hand, value impulse control, behavior regulation, and adherence to social norms and rules (Hofstede et al., 2010). Advising that sponsorship strategy which focuses on responsibility and control should be more successful in high restraint cultures.

High indulgence was frequently linked to Spanish culture, as they were infamous for their thriving

social scene, delicious food, and culture that emphasizes celebration, relaxation, and life's little pleasures (Hofstede et al., 2010). However, according to Minkov & Kaasa (2022), Spain are not an indulgent society, as they tend to practice pessimism and cynicism. Spain also emphasizes leisure time and has their desires under gratification control, concluding a perception that their actions are restrained by social norms. Norway scores an intermediate and inclusive score, making them sort of neutral in this dimension (Minkov & Kaasa, 2022). This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H1f: Red Bull's marketing strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market, which balance indulgence and restraint, will align with Norway's intermediate score in this dimension, leading to a positive perception of Red Bull's brand.

2.2. Sponsorship factors and sponsorship image

Sponsorship factors are a set of constructors that includes ubiquity and sincerity towards the sponsor (Human et al., 2018).

2.2.1 Sponsorship ubiquity

Ubiquity is a crucial component that determines the perception of the sponsor. Speed and Thompson (2000) propose a definition that connects the selectivity and frequency of a brand's sponsorship effectivity and activity. Consumer perception is an effective way to determine the ubiquity of the sponsor. This is conducted through using conative and affective reactions regarding sponsorship activities.

The results from previous research differ in the direction of perception of ubiquity. Speed and Thompson (2000) examined that the presence of various sponsors is perceived as a less committed behavior, indicating lower credibility and insincerity for a sponsor. However, Smith (2004) identifies that several sponsorships are common but there are different compositions of the arrangement were complicated situations, having a higher chance of creating consumer confusion.

Further research was conducted resulting in a positive relationship between the ubiquity of sponsorship image and sponsor (Ko et al., 2017). The factors that play a role here are events, sponsee, consumer affective reactions, and other sectors. Shimp (2013) examined that consumers most likely will interpret the ubiquity of sponsors as confirmation of the success both financially and practically, which could be correlated to the perception of a positive brand image. Previously, Baker (1999) stated that the recurrence of stimulus may increase the possibility for successful brand recognition and recall, attracting the attention of the consumers. Ultimately, Biscaia et al. (2013) identified that the ubiquity of sponsorship has an indirect impact on sponsorship response but has a positive influence on perception towards the sponsor. This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H2a: The ubiquity of Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market positively influences consumer perception and brand recognition.

2.2.1 Perceived sincerity

Sponsors that are perceived to be sincere by the consumers will achieve better sponsorship results, especially when compared to sponsorships that are motivated by commercial intentions (Speed & Thompson, 2000). Consequently, sincerity is a factor that the sponsorship brand could enhance to accelerate the sponsored activity (Human et al., 2018). Sincerity is also perceived to create goodwill, a positive attitude on behalf of the e-sporting consumer obtained through the support of the sponsor for a specific player, team, activity, or event which they interact with. Demirel (2020) states that the perceived sincerity of the sponsor is stronger when the sponsor is significantly identified with the sponsee. Additionally, it is greater if the consumers do not perceive irregularities in the relationship between the sponsee and the sponsor. Scheinbaum and Lacey (2017) concludes that the sincerity of the sponsor has a crucial role in the sphere of corporate social responsibility, thus showcasing that sincerity influences sponsorship. This is confirmed further by Olson (2010) in the cultural framework. Furthermore, Eddy and Cork (2018) examined that goodwill influences the image of the sponsorship, thus leading to purchase intentions. This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H2b: Red Bull's strategic partnerships in the gaming community will enhance its perceived sincerity, leading to increased visibility and engagement.

2.3 Sponsor fit and team identification

Sports fans are commonly considered to have a strong loyalty toward their favorite team and players, thus identifying with the team or players to a certain extent (Tsordia et al., 2018). This could also draw relevance in the e-sports market as the foundation of identification of teams and players highly coordinates with the sports market. Identification could be described as an individual orientation regarding a group or a person which leads to a closer relationship between the two parts (Trail et al., 2000). Team identification is then the perception of the consumer's connection to a team or a player, and the same feelings for the consumer when the team or player succeeds or fails within their respective market (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). This applies a psychological relationship for the fans deriving from an increase in social connections between the two parts (Lianopoulos & Theodorakis, 2020).

When a brand determines to sponsor a specific team, player, or event, it expects to convince the supporters of the sponsee in the same way they have a relationship with their team or player. Supporters of the same teams usually consider themselves as member of a group due to sharing the same feelings towards the team or the player, thus experiencing positive attitudes towards each other. Therefore, the sponsors could be accepted as a part of this group due to their financial support of the team or player, potentially generating loyalty and positive relationships towards the sponsor (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003).

The more a supporter identifies with the team or player due to exposure, the more their perceived awareness towards the sponsor increases (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). The authors examined a positive

relationship between sponsorship image and team identification. Additionally, has there been conducted research that confirmed that team identification mediates between sponsor identification and the transformation of brand image? Suh et al. (2008) have confirmed the relationship between team identification and sponsorship within the market of e-sports. This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H2c: The level of a supporter's identification with a Norwegian e-sports team sponsored by Red Bull has a positive effect on their perception of Red Bull's sponsorship image.

H2d: The level of exposure a supporter has to Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market significantly affects their brand awareness.

2.4 Word-of-mouth

Word-of-mouth is one of the most efficient marketing strategies, since consumers perceive it as trustworthy, since they already have a relation with the source and it is perceived as less biased as it is not coming directly from the brand (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). However, word-of-mouth could be both negative and positive as the communicator gives an honest review about the product or service, without nothing to gain or lose from covering crucial information. Another definition is that the method is the transmission of opinions between people who are related to the brand which is the priority of the communication (Laczniak et al., 2001).

Word-of-mouth is a direct output of sponsorship. Koronios et al. (2015) confirm that the image of a sponsor influences word-of-mouth. Tsiotsou and Alexandris (2009) further affirm the relationship between word-of-mouth and sponsorship image within the sports world. This approach creates the following hypothesis:

H2e: The image of Red Bull as a sponsor in the Norwegian e-sports market has a positive effect on word-of-mouth communication among supporters.

2.5 Participation and co-creation

Co-creation could be described as actions from different factors that contribute to the welfare of the involved consumers (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). For service brands, several different actors participate in co-creating value which stretches far past only the provider or sponsor (Horbel et al., 2016). Co-creating and consumer participation are cycle variables that are self-reinforced. Thus, when supporters feel psychologically attached to a sports group, more interested are they in learning unique information about the specific sports group. The supporters that usually interact with team-related activities usually have reinforcement of feelings of membership, thus increasing co-creation value within the group (Dionisio et al., 2008).

Consumers usually participate and interact with their preferred teams and players on social media, enhancing their interest and popularity. Consumer participation thoroughly increases consumer's preference for products and services used by the sponsored team and player. Therefore, co-creation is enhanced when conducted. There have also been examined that participation is positively related to word-of-mouth (Uhrich

& Benkenstein, 2012). This approach creates the following hypotheses:

H3a: Co-creation activities facilitated by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market increase the consumer preference for Red Bull.

H3b: Co-creation is enhanced in the Norwegian e-sports market when conducted by Red Bull.

H3c: Consumers' participation on social media for both teams and players sponsored by Red Bull increases the reputation of Red Bull.

2.6 Cultural differences with sponsorships

Cuesta et al. (2022) examined that the effectiveness of sponsorship image and participation in the Spanish e-sports market varies depending on the attitudes, intentions, and the type of e-sports conducted. They also concluded that different strategies are necessary for e-sports sponsors compared to traditional sports sponsors. This research has been conducted in Spain which has significant cultural differences compared to Norway, presuming that the same marketing strategies performed in Spain cannot be directly applicable to the Norwegian market. Norway obeys a high-restraint culture, thus perceived as more rule-oriented and disciplined compared to the high-indulgence Spanish culture, which favors a more open and elastic approach.

The authors further stated that sponsorship image had a positive impact on the consumer sponsorship response, which variables included purchase intention, interest, and word-of-mouth. These deliver a very positive influence on interest and purchase intentions, especially in the e-sports market. The results when thoroughly focusing on the influence of word-of-mouth were not that impressive (Cuesta et al., 2022). This relationship is not as effective in e-sports as in other sports (Koronios et al., 2015).

However, when Cuesta et al. (2022) examined the relationship between participation and sponsorship response, the results were in opposition to the previous. The results showed a positive impact on word-of-mouth when participation and co-creation were present within the e-sports market. Peculiarly, this strong relation does not occur in other sports as the level of influence is more moderate. When the authors examined interest and purchase intentions, they concluded that these relationships do not behave equivalent to traditional sports (Cuesta et al., 2022).

Furthermore, within sponsorship response, sponsorship participation and image are complementary when the objective is to develop word-of-mouth, interest, or purchase intention. Participation produces a better result in sponsored e-sports when the variables focus on sharing rather than word-of-mouth or intentions. These results differ from traditional sports results, thus suggesting the importance of considering other marketing strategies for the e-sports market (Cuesta et al., 2022).

A lot of cultural differences will sponsor factors to be effective across all e-sports markets, as these factors are recognized to be the best method to improve sponsorship image. Sponsor factors contribute to purchase intention and influence interest. Since sponsorship image is primarily emotional, highlighting the

importance of ensuring a positive perception and avoiding the negative influence of image. The consumer may be engaged through word-of-mouth, showcasing the importance of interacting with consumers through athletes, teams, events, and live chats. If this is the case should this be the top priority for companies when managing sponsorships in the e-sports market. Here non-endemic sponsorships could associate with e-sports and engage with younger target audiences. This approach creates the following hypotheses:

H4a: The cultural resonance of a supporter's participation and co-creation in the Norwegian e-sports market sponsored by Red Bull has a positive effect on word-of-mouth.

H4b: The effectiveness of sponsor factors employed by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market has a positive effect on improving Red Bull's sponsorship image with the use of cultural resonance.

2.7 Unconventional marketing strategies

Unconventional marketing techniques emerged in the 1980s when Jay Conrad Levinson introduced *guerrilla marketing* to the world. The idea of this phenomenon is to use low-cost techniques to generate both brand awareness and reputation, expressed through the intentional creation of emotional impact. This is conducted by leveraging the "surprise effect" which triggers psychological emotions sparking immediate reactions and emotions (Levinson, 2007).

Additionally, Cova and Saucet (2014) stated that *viral marketing* fosters sincere emotional connections with their target audience, encouraging the audience to unconsciously promote a message or a story by using word-of-mouth on their social platforms. This will trigger a chain reaction that exponentially expands the reach and visibility of the campaign (Goswami et al., 2013).

Tribal marketing is an ancient and effective marketing method that invites to creation company around the promotional product and the brand. This strategy differs from more traditional demographic segmentation, rather aiming to cluster heterogeneous individuals based on factors like shared products and common values. Additionally, Mohr (2017) describes buzz marketing as both online and offline marketing strategies stimulating discussions around the brand. How successful the campaign is, relies on the contagiousness of the message. Corresponding to an effective disease, must the strategy be able to reach, spread rapidly, leave an impression, and influence the behavior of the contagious individuals.

Furthermore, ambient marketing encompasses utilizing surrounding elements of consumers to deliver the message in an unconventional way (Wilcox, 2006). This method allows to establish trust in the communication with the consumers as they do not directly perceive it as advertising, hence potentially avoiding rejection as they might have done with traditional advertising.

When consumers get exposed to unconventional marketing strategies, they are more likely to distribute their thoughts further to family and friends, establishing a chain of word-of-mouth. This effect enables the marketing strategy to reach a larger audience with minimal extra effort and cost. This method could also produce a surprise effect for the consumer, which occurs from the disparity between expectations

from the consumer and outcome. This could lead consumers to facilitate stronger associations with the brand (Dahlen, 2005). This approach creates the following hypotheses:

H5a: The use of unconventional marketing strategies by Red Bull enhances its brand awareness in the Norwegian e-sports market.

H5b: The use of viral marketing by Red Bull fosters sincere emotional connections with its target audience in the Norwegian e-sports market, leading to an increase in word-of-mouth.

H5c: The use of tribal marketing by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market leads to the creation of a community around the brand, enhancing brand loyalty.

H5d: The use of ambient marketing by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market establishes trust in the communication with the consumers, leading to a positive perception of Red Bull.

2.8 Red Bull's practice of unconventional marketing strategies in sports

By utilizing unconventional marketing strategies Red Bull successfully differentiated themselves apart from their competitors, which has helped them maintain a strong market position. Red Bull has used a variety of strategies in place of conventional marketing strategies to create awareness, build a narrative around the brand, and interact with its target audience (Mortimer, 2012).

Red Bull has generated a lot of brand awareness and reputation through hosting unique sports events that capture the attention of consumers. These unique and experimental strategies showcase the power of marketing in sports to generate engaging experiences for their customers. Red Bull hosts numerous sports events, with the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series being one of the most spectacular ones. Throughout these events, Red Bull constructs both online and real-life communities, which aligns with the concept of tribal marketing mentioned previously. The brands' strategy is centered on creating a feeling of community and a shared identity as they frequently use social media and their official website to post engaging and unique content regularly. Red Bull benefits from consumer advocacy, higher loyalty, and increased engagement because of this deliberate building of a tribe of committed customers that enable fans to share their passion for the sport (Alexander, 2009).

Red Bull also practices guerilla marketing through their establishment of the Red Bull Wings Team, which deploys branded cars with huge Red Bull cans attached to their roofs, resulting in an immediate visual impact on the consumers. The Wings team is strategically placed in highly populated areas where potential customers abound regularly. Red Bull's strategy is to establish a non-intrusive presence among consumers who might need an energy kick around workplaces, universities, and public transportation, generating an individual and personalized experience with the consumer, subsequently advocating them for the brand (Chan-Olmsted & Shay, 2015).

3.0 Methodology

This section outlines the research methods used to explore the impact of sponsorship and marketing strategies within the Norwegian e-sports market. The methodology includes a combination of hypotheses and primary data collection through in-depth interviews with consumers.

3.1 Objective

The objective of this research is to enable Red Bull to enter the Norwegian e-sports market with the best possible market strategies. Moreover, highlights the importance of staying, growing, and enhancing the market after entering it. To understand this, I need to explore the relationship consumers in the Norwegian e-sports market have towards Red Bull, and then present the most feasible marketing strategies for Red Bull in a new market. The findings of this case could be proven to be viable for Red Bull Norway.

3.2 Research design – qualitative method

I will utilize an exploratory research design to obtain the most valuable and in-depth information to research this field. The collected data in this method will give a deeper and more precise understanding of the topic to ensure the identification of the relevant courses of action. Since most of the data is qualitative, it may be challenging to fully capture the range of topics with predetermined responses in a questionnaire. Therefore, will in-depth interviews be applied to delve deeper into the subject. Therefore, I will interview consumers within the market of e-sports and will also have a few professional athletes' inputs on the hypothesis for Red Bull as a market entrant. Cognitive development is relatively limited in this case, thus emphasizing the benefits of performing qualitative methods to obtain crucial information.

However, I will first test the potential solutions for the research problem, preliminary to conducting the qualitative methods. This allows me to test the hypotheses and then reject or not reject them later with the qualitative method. This allows for testing methods based on a theoretical fit, thus ultimately confirming with in-depth interviews to ensure a practical fit. Therefore, the marketing strategy will be tailored to fit Red Bull when entering the new market.

3.2.1. In-depth interviews

I will conduct this research utilizing semi-structured interviews as it is proven to be a very flexible and versatile method (Kallio et al., 2016). With conducting this method, will it be feasible to combine predetermined questions and improvise with potentially relevant follow-up questions throughout the interview. This creates a reciprocity between me as an interviewer and the interview subject. This allows the interview subject to deliver thorough and well-described answers, encouraging them to present detailed and relevant information.

3.3 Segmentation

To ensure the obtain of the most valuable and applicable information I will interview Norwegian consumers within the e-sports market. They have good experience and knowledge of how the market works compared to other markets and the e-sports markets in different countries. Most of the consumers in the Norwegian e-sports market are younger people between 15-25 years of age, influencing the number of interview subjects of younger age. Since the majority of the consumers in the market are men will this be representable in the interview subjects. However, I will still interview enough women to ensure the sample is representative of the whole Norwegian e-sports market. To further ensure the validity of the data collection, I will interview 2-4 e-sports athletes to validate the solutions confirmed from the interviews.

I have decided to utilize this suitable sampling due to the advantage of already being well-established in the Norwegian e-sports market through my job. Thus, having the possibility to reach out to consumers within the market to conduct the interview, and athletes to further ensure the validity of the hypotheses.

The recommended sample size by Marshall et al. (2013) is to be between 20 and 30 to ensure validity and saturation. Therefore, I utilized my big network within the community to conduct 23 in-depth interviews and continued until I ensured saturation, which could be described as the aspect where the data collection process no longer brings any relevant and new information (Marshall et al., 2013). This concluded in 23 interviews in total, 14 males, 8 females, and 1 non-binary. The age gap of the interview objectives was between 16 and 29.

3.4 Interview structure

The interview length was estimated to be between 20 to 30 minutes, conditional on how detailed the interview objective responded. For a few of the respondents, I was not obtaining complete answers, resulting in asking them to elaborate and follow-up questions. Several of the respondents were younger as the consumers of the e-sports market are consumed by the youth. However, I avoided respondents under the age of 16 years as this is the minimum age to consume energy drinks in Norway. Furthermore, I adapted my vocabulary and wording depending on age and the vocabulary level of the respondents, ensuring understanding of each question. This underlines the importance of confirming the theories with in-depth interviews as the method for data collection.

The interview is segmented into 7 different segments. The first is just an introduction section, ensuring the confidentiality of their responses. Followed by a second part regarding background information, where they briefly introduce their age, gender, and background interest in e-sports. The third segment delves deeper into the interviewees' interest in e-sports and starts to introduce Red Bull. The fourth segment is dedicated to cultural differences including definitions beyond general knowledge. Thus, before each question included a definition, I briefly explained the definition to ensure the validity of the answer. Furthermore, the fifth segment manages the perception of Red Bull. Penultimately, the sixth segment delves

into the topic of marketing strategies, exploring what type of marketing strategies would be beneficial for Red Bull as the market enters. Ultimately, the seventh segment concludes the interview with potential additional thoughts or corrections to ensure the optimal answer from each respondent.

To ensure the avoidance of confirmation bias from my hypotheses, I avoided making the respondents aware of the hypotheses. Occasionally, the participants just answered very short with a “yes” or “no” I asked them to elaborate to ensure the capture of their full thoughts and insights. To ensure the effectiveness of the interviews and to create a natural flow in the conversation, interviews were recorded. This allowed me to concentrate on the participants' responses, and act accordingly with potential follow-up questions. Indubitably, I informed the participants in advance of this, ensuring they gave consent. To ensure this was done legally, participants signed a form of consent (appendix 10.2), including the reasoning behind the interview, that it was for this research only, and that it would be deleted after the research was fully conducted. Since a few of the interviewees were under the age of 18, I had to ensure agreement with their parents. This aligns with the Norwegian law regarding researching people under the age of 18.

3.5 Ensuring validity from the qualitative study

I aimed to identify the many concepts that the respondents used to interpret the interview questions through in-depth interviews. Therefore, can I confirm that the understanding of the respondents matches my understanding of the essential concepts of the literature. To further ensure validity, I assessed the research questions and their applicability to the intended result, the appropriateness of the methodology selected to address the questions, the justification of the research design about the methodology, the appropriateness of the sampling and data collection, and finally the validity of the findings and conclusions in light of the circumstances.

3.6 Integration of Research Design and Cultural Context

The qualitative approach of conducting in-depth interviews was designated since it is compatible with the cultural setting of the Norwegian e-sports market, enabling a detailed investigation of consumer attitudes and actions. This research design aims to capture the specific preferences and attitudes of the target demographic towards e-sports sponsorships and brand engagements by interacting with Norwegian e-sports consumers between the ages of 16 and 30.

When constructing the interview questions and analyzing the answers, Hofstede et al. (2012) emphasis on cultural differences regarding the Norwegian market will be considered. For Red Bull to effectively tailor its marketing strategies for its entry into this market, it is imperative to comprehend the intersection of Norwegian cultural values and e-sports consumption behaviors.

3.7 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method for recognizing, interpreting, and analyzing patterns or "themes" of qualitative data. This method is especially useful for analyzing data from in-depth interviews because it allows me as a researcher to identify and interpret intricate opinions in interviewees' responses (Qualtrics XM, 2024).

The process starts with getting comfortable with the data. Where reading and rereading the interview transcripts is essential to gain a complete understanding of the data's content and context. Once I get familiar with the data, I interpret concise labels or "codes" to identify significant features that may be relevant to the research question. These codes aid in organizing data into meaningful groups. The respondents could for example be divided into three groups; the ones who casually consume e-sports, the ones who strongly consume e-sports, and the ones who barely or not at all consume e-sports (Qualtrics XM, 2024). After completing the coding process, patterns within the codes should become noticeable. These patterns can be grouped into potential themes and sub-themes, which represent the underlying concepts or ideas that emerge from the data. Followed by cross-checking the identified themes against the data set to ensure they provide a convincing and grounded representation of the data. Themes that lack sufficient supporting data may be removed at this point (Qualtrics XM, 2024).

Once the themes have been reviewed, the need for refining and clearly defining them appears, so that they can articulate what each theme represents. Perceiving what aspect of the data each theme captures. The final stage of the process involves integrating the analytic narrative with data extracts and contextualizing the analysis within the existing literature. Doing so results in the production of a coherent and insightful report of the findings (Qualtrics XM, 2024).

3.8 Testing Hypotheses and Data Collection

The purpose of the in-depth interviews is to test hypotheses about how well Red Bull's marketing strategies would perform in the Norwegian e-sports market. Through consumer and professional athlete engagement in the e-sports space, this qualitative approach seeks to validate hypotheses and obtain insights into Red Bull's most effective marketing strategies. This study aims to investigate how Red Bull's trailblazing role in traditional sports sponsorships can be translated to the e-sports space, building on Cherubini's (2015) insights regarding the possible benefits of unconventional marketing strategies in the sports market. Therefore, this study intends to collect and analyze data to improve and customize marketing strategies that appeal to the Norwegian e-sports audience and support Red Bull's successful market entry and growth.

4.0 Analysis and Results

The results section will showcase the hypothesis testing which further be either confirmed or rejected by the in-depth interviews. When referring to specific respondents they will be specified as "respondent" followed

by the number in which they were interviewed. This is to preserve their privacy throughout the complete participation of the interviews.

4.1 Testing hypotheses

The hypotheses were created using previous research combined with the unique characteristics of the Norwegian e-sports market. Through the analysis of data gathered from in-depth interviews with Norwegian e-sports consumers, establishing the desire to confirm or reject the hypotheses and acquire a deeper understanding of the key factors affecting sponsorship effectiveness and brand engagement in this market

The research findings are validated through the insights obtained from the in-depth interviews. Validation of the hypotheses, improvement of marketing tactics, and pinpointing of critical recommendations will effectively guide Red Bull as a market entrant. The confirmation process ensures that the research findings are founded on the viewpoints and real-world experiences of the target audience, giving Red Bull a solid foundation regarding the selection of marketing strategies.

4.1.1 General information about participants

The table below showcases the gender and age of all the respondents, including how long they have been interested in e-sports, which platforms they consume e-sports on, in addition to how often they consume e-sports.

4.2 E-sports engagement

The first set of questions the participants were asked about were regarding their engagement within the e-sports community in Norway. A pattern was not fully established throughout the interviews, as most participants responded with different and unique answers. An example of this is the words of Respondent 7 (R7), “I have been actively involved in e-sports for the past six-seven years, starting with casual gaming and gradually transitioning into competitive gameplay”. Nearly all the participants gradually got further into the competitive frame of gaming, establishing interest and loyalty to their preferred team and players. However, a few of the respondents had just recently gotten involved in the competitive aspect of gaming, even though they have been gamers for a long time themselves. Both new and established members of the e-sports market bring value to the market as both groups consume e-sports, thus getting exposed for sponsorships and potential unconventional marketing strategies.

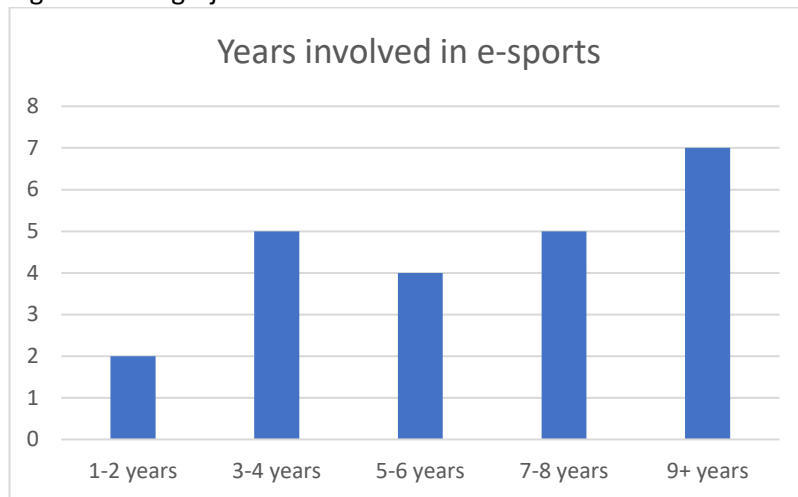


Table 2: Years involved in e-sports

The participants were then got asked about their level of engagement with e-sports on a level from 1-7 (where 1 is not engaged and 7 is very engaged). As the results showcase below every participant is somewhat or very engaged in the Norwegian e-sports market.

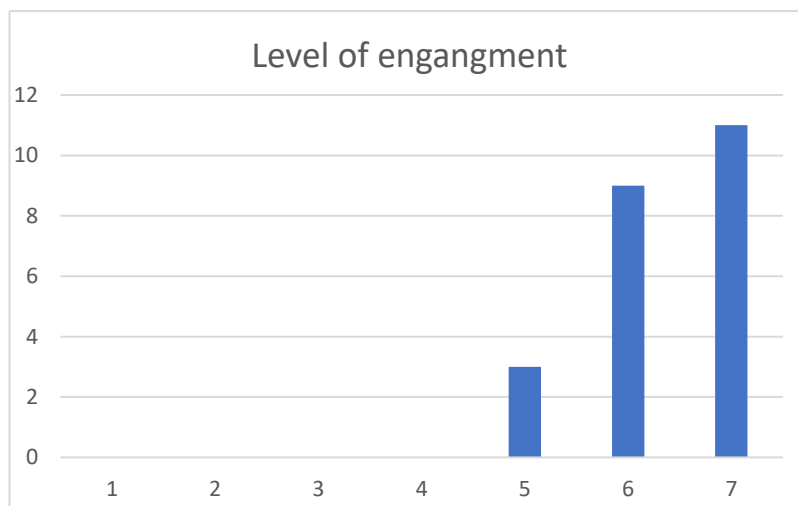


Table 2: level of engagement

4.3 Consumption of e-sports

However, when it came to their favorite teams and players, the diversity was sufficiently large as the respondents consume different forms of e-sports due to the wide variety of options. The variety lowered when it comes to how the respondents consume their e-sports as the majority stated that they consume it through Twitch and YouTube Gaming, in addition to Instagram, X, and TikTok where they stay up to date on e-sports news.

A theme emerges when it comes to how many days a week the respondents consume e-sport, whereas the vast majority stated they consumed it daily, either through watching it on Twitch/YouTube or through reading news about it on social media. R4 stated "If there is a day without any sort of e-sports event, I usually stay up to date regarding e-sports news on Twitter or Instagram. Additionally, I watch highlights

and funny moments from previous events on both YouTube and TikTok, leading to a daily consumption of e-sport”.

4.4 Experience with sponsorship deals in the e-sports market

Furthermore, the respondents were asked about their experiences with sponsorship and promotions in the e-sports market. A vast number of respondents stated they had experienced various e-sports sponsorships and promotions, such as sponsored tournaments, branded in-game content, and partnerships between gaming organizations and companies.

Additionally, I asked if they were able to recall any sponsorship deals that caught their attention. Most respondents were able to recall some specific sponsorship deals. The most mentioned sponsorship deals were Twitch collaboration with Doritos, Intel sponsoring the Extreme Masters League of Legends tournament, and Red Bull Kumite which is a worldwide series of fighting game invitationals organized by Red Bull.

Moreover, I asked the respondents what comes to mind when they think about Red Bull Bull's involvement in the e-sports industry. Here the Red Bull Kumite was further mentioned. In addition, Red Bull Solo Q, which is a 1-versus-1 tournament on League of Legends located in different regions, allowing players and fans from various locations to participate and interact strongly with the tournament.

The main findings for e-sports engagement showcase that the majority of Norwegian e-sports participants have made the transition from casual to competitive gaming over the last few years, concluding in a foundation of a theme. Despite the diversity of favorite teams and players, e-sports consumption remains consistent, with the most popular platforms being Twitch and YouTube Gaming. Participants typically consume e-sports content daily. They have also had several e-sports sponsorships and promotions, including Twitch's collaboration with Doritos and Intel's sponsorship of the Extreme Masters League of Legends tournament, which were memorable. Red Bull's involvement in e-sports, particularly through events such as Red Bull Kumite and Red Bull Solo Q, has left a lasting impression on the competitors.

4.5 Cultural differences

The e-sports interest for the consumer has been established through the first set of questions, now opening to delve deeper into their judgments regarding cultural differences within the e-sports market and how it could be best leveraged. For cultural differences, I started with more general questions which gradually turned out to be questions regarding my hypotheses.

Firstly, I asked if they think there are any important cultural differences in the Norwegian e-sports to take into consideration. Involving this topic, R3 stated that “one key aspect to consider is the strong emphasis on teamwork and collaboration. In Norway, there is a deep-rooted tradition of valuing collective efforts over individual achievements, which is reflected in how e-sports teams are perceived and celebrated”. This was one of the most detailed answers, with other respondents also mentioning the same aspects,

highlighting the importance of collaboration within the Norwegian e-sports market, thus forming a theme.

With a strong fundament regarding the theme of their cultural differences' orientation, the opportunity to further build on to the fundament with testing of my hypothesis through distinguished questions will now be interpreted. As previously mentioned, will the hypothesis be tailored to the questions to ensure avoidance of confirmation bias.

4.5.1 Power Distance

The respondents were further asked about how they perceive the concept of power distance in the Norwegian e-sports community, with relevant follow-up questions added. "The concept of power distance is perceived as relatively low in Norway, as we emphasize equality and open communication among players, fans, and brands" R12 stated. This egalitarian approach influences how decisions are made and relationships are formed within the e-sports ecosystem. The rest of the respondents to some sort agreed with R12 that the Norwegian power distance is at a low level forming a theme, emphasizing open communication and equality.

This is aligned with the Hofstede et al. (2010) impression of a low power distance culture, valuing accessibility and equality. Therefore, is **H1a** not rejected, stating that Red Bull's entry into the Norwegian e-sports market will be positively perceived due to Norway's low power distance culture, which values independence and equality.

4.5.2 Individualism vs Collectivism

Furthermore, they were interviewed about their opinions regarding the balance between individualism and collectivism manifesting in the e-sports community in Norway. "There is a strong sense of solidarity and mutual support among team members and fans within the community, even though players strive for personal recognition and excellence" R8 expressed. This perception was experienced through the rest of the interviewees, where the strong sense of team spirit is represented, however with a little inclusion of personal interest. Minkov & Kassa (2022) perceived Norwegian consumers to a high level of individualism. However, this is not completely aligned with the interviewees as their answers do not indicate a high level of individualism. Hypothesis **H1b** stating that Red Bull should target uniqueness and personal achievements to be positively perceived by Norwegian consumers, is therefore rejected.

4.5.3 Masculin vs Feminine

Thereafter, the respondents were questioned about how they perceive the representation of masculine and feminine values in e-sports marketing in Norway. Almost everyone said that there is a growing awareness of gender representation and inclusivity. A few respondents also cited that they have experienced a growing awareness of sponsorship deals and market strategies. When followed up with questioning if they had experienced marketing focusing on the quality of life, cooperation, or social responsibility, variously

mentioned that they had experienced marketing focusing on both cooperation and social responsibility.

Furthermore, I asked if they thought this was good marketing, and 21/23 of them mentioned they resonated well with the marketing strategies, forming a theme. However, only R9, R10, and R2 were able to recall a marketing campaign focusing on quality of life. As cooperation and social responsibility are strongly showcased here, **H1c** is not rejected, as the main feminine values are present for Norwegian e-sports consumers. This is also in parallel with Minkov & Kassa's (2022) perception of Norway, emphasizing social comfort and quality of life.

4.5.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

Regarding uncertainty avoidance were **H1d** being tested through the interview. When asked about how the respondents respond to uncertainty and risk-taking, the whole specter of answers was present. R14 stated that she preferred a rather lower level of uncertainty avoidance, as she preferred more relaxed regulations and marketing strategies. However, R8 stated the preference for a rather higher level of uncertainty avoidance with stronger regulations. These are polar opposite sides on the scale since the majority answered at a more moderate level, that they perceived a balance between uncertainty and risk-taking to be most effective on them. Therefore, is **H1d** not rejected as 19/23 out of the participants preferred a balance between uncertainty and risk-taking, leading to a moderate level of uncertainty avoidance. This is further building on Minkov & Kassa's (2022) perception of Norwegian consumers, valuing consistency and well-defined norms in society and marketing.

4.5.5 The Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation

H1e were tested through the question “How do you perceive the importance of long-term planning and future orientation in the Norwegian e-sports market?”, where I as the interviewer elaborated and asked several follow-up questions to ensure the validity of the response from the interviewee. 21/23 stated somewhat that they perceived that long-term planning and future orientation were important in general and for the Norwegian e-sports market.

R16 stated that Team Dignitas is known for its strategic and forward-thinking approach to management and development in the market. R3 mentioned that “Companies that demonstrate a commitment to long-term partnerships and sustainable growth resonates better with me as they actually mean business and are there to stay for a long time”. This aligns with the perception of Norwegian consumers by Minkov & Kassa (2022), indicating that the e-sports market values future planning and forward thinking. Therefore, is **H1e** not rejected as the majority of the participants prefer a long-term-oriented marketing strategy.

4.5.6 Indulgence vs. Restraint

Hypothesis **H1f** was tested through the question “How do you perceive the balance between indulgence and restraint in the consumption habits of Norwegian e-sports enthusiasts?” in the questionnaire. “I find that brands offering exclusive in-game content and immersive virtual experiences cater to the indulgent side of my gaming preferences, providing me with exciting opportunities to enhance my gaming experience and connect with the brand on a deeper level” was the words from R6. Whereas R1 stated that “I value brands that promote responsible gaming initiatives and ethical sponsorship practices, demonstrating a commitment to player well-being and fair play”.

The interviewees certainly did not agree with all aspects of this hypothesis, as answers on both ends of the indulgence vs. restraint specter were attained. However, the biggest theme were sort of in-between both sides of the spectrum, bringing them to a moderate level of indulgence vs. restraint. Thus, the **H1f** is not able to be rejected, as a moderate level of indulgence vs restraint was acquired. This aligns with the observation of Minkov & Kassa (2022), demonstrating that Norway balances between indulgence and restraint cultural dimension.

4.6 Sponsorship factors and image

To further collect relevant data to be able to answer more hypotheses and the research question, the interviewees were questioned further about their thoughts regarding Red Bull and their sponsorship factors and image. Firstly, they were asked to describe the level of visibility and presence of Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market. Whereas 17/23 mentioned that Red Bull had a good presence within the e-sports market in Norway before even entering it. The other theme with the remainder of the participants mentioned that they had little current presence.

4.6.1 Sponsorship ubiquity

Furthermore, I asked how does the ubiquity of Red Bull's sponsorship impacts consumer awareness and recognition of the brand within the e-sports community. Whereas R11 responded with “Personally, seeing Red Bull's logo and branding across different e-sports platforms and events has made me more aware of the brand and has increased my recognition of Red Bull as a key factor in the e-sports sponsorship space”, aligning with most of the respondent. Interestingly, this suggests that Red Bull’s current marketing strategy in general is effective in brand recognition. Thus, not rejecting **H2a**, stating that the ubiquity of Red Bull’s sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market positively influences consumer perception and brand recognition.

4.6.2 Perceived sincerity

Thereafter, perceived sincerity was investigated. I asked the participants if they could share any specific instances where the visibility of Red Bull's sponsorship in e-sports events or activities has influenced their

perception of the brand. “As a passionate e-sports enthusiast, I’ve noticed Red Bull’s presence in numerous events. One instance that particularly stands out was during the ‘League of Legends World Championship’, where the Red Bull logo was prominently displayed throughout the event, and they even sponsored a few of the participating teams.” These were the words of R5. Further indicating that Red Bull is well-established in the global e-sports scene. Based on the data provided by the in-depth interviews, could I not reject the **H2b**, since Red Bull’s strategic partnerships in the gaming community will enhance its perceived sincerity, leading to increased visibility and engagement.

4.6.3 Sponsor fit and team identification

Additionally, the fit of the sponsor and the team identification of the consumers were further examined. They were first asked about how they would perceive the relationship between their team identification to a Norwegian e-sports team if the team were sponsored by Red Bull. Followed up with a question asking what their perception of Red Bull’s sponsorship image would be like in that case. Here I managed to identify a theme as 22/23 as stated that they would be pleased if their team of preference were sponsored by Red Bull due to their already well-established positive association towards the brand. “Since I like Red Bull a lot already and I consume at least one of their energy drinks each day, I would perceive it as highly positive if my team were sponsored by Red Bull” stated R13, confirming a rather positive sponsorship image of Red Bull for R13 and the theme.

One of the respondents did not perceive a positive relationship between their team identification if they were sponsored by Red Bull. However, as only one of the respondents did not agree with the other theme, a theme was not enabled, thus this answer was discarded. Therefore, is **H2c** not rejected as the respondents stated that the level of their identification with a Norwegian e-sports team sponsored by Red Bull has a positive effect on their perception of Red Bull’s sponsorship image.

Secondly, the interviewees were asked about how they think the level of exposure to Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market would significantly influence their awareness of the brand. Two themes were quickly created, as many mentioned that their general awareness of Red Bull is already significantly high, therefore their awareness would only change minimally with Red Bull’s introduction into the e-sports market. The other theme stated that Red Bull in the e-sports market would significantly influence their awareness of the brand. Since the two themes do not correspond and the theme stating that awareness would only change minimally was the biggest theme, thus not able to accept (not reject) **H2d**, stating that the level of exposure a supporter has to Red Bull’s sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market significantly affects their brand awareness.

4.6.4 Word-of-mouth

The interviewees were further asked if they think the image of Red Bull as a sponsor in the Norwegian e-sport market has a positive or negative effect on word-of-mouth communication among supporters. Whereas

two themes were established, 18/23 stated that it will have a positive effect on word-of-mouth. However, the other theme stated that it depends, which R2 explained nicely; "It depends what kind of team, player, or event they sponsor. If they for example sponsor an event which is not perceived as good by the consumers, they might perceive the brand Red Bull accordingly, leading to a negative word-of-mouth". This could therefore lead to both negative and positive word-of-mouth for the brand. Nonetheless, the theme that stated that Red Bull will have a positive effect on word-of-mouth was the vast majority, concluding that the **H2e** is not rejected. The hypothesis states that the image of Red Bull as a sponsor in the Norwegian e-sports market has a positive effect on word-of-mouth communication among supporters.

4.7 Co-creation and Participation

4.7.1 Co-creation

Moreover, the interviewees were asked about their thoughts regarding Red Bull and co-creation. Firstly, they were asked if they think that co-creation activities facilitated by Red Bull in the market increase or decrease the consumer preference for Red Bull. The responses were all very aligned as all respondents agreed. This is if I discard one response that was not sufficient. Based on this is **H3a** not rejected.

Secondly, they were questioned about their opinion regarding whether they think that co-creation would be improved or unimproved in the market when conducted by Red Bull. Although, the biggest theme stated that it would be improved, not everyone agreed. "This also depends on the creators you co-create with. If conducted with someone that has got "canceled" or very bad reviews lately, this might negatively influence the output for the co-creation by Red Bull" R2 stated. However, since the vast majority agree that co-creation will be improved with Red Bull is **H3b**, stating that co-creation is enhanced in the Norwegian e-sports market when conducted by Red Bull, is not rejected.

4.7.2 Participation

The participants were further asked about their perspectives on the impact of consumers' participation on social media regarding teams, players, or events sponsored by Red Bull on the reputation of the brand. The responses altered, reflecting a wide variety of opinions on how consumer engagement on social platforms. For instance, Respondent 12 expressed, "I believe that active engagement on social media by fans of Red Bull sponsored teams and players can significantly improve the brand's reputation, as it creates a sense of community and loyalty among fans, which ultimately reflects positively on Red Bull." Conversely, Respondent 5 had a contrasting view, stating, "While social media participation can generate buzz and hype, it also opens up the brand for criticism. Negative interactions and controversies could potentially harm Red Bull's reputation." These diverse perspectives highlight the complexity of consumer engagement on social media and its potential impact on brand perception.

The respondents were opposed to this question, especially as the theme that were agreeing and the

theme that were disagreeing were almost equal. Thus, **H3c**, states that consumers' participation on social media for both teams and players sponsored by Red Bull increases the reputation of Red Bull, is rejected.

The respondents certainly had different opinions regarding the impact of sponsorship factors and image, as they conferred various aspects such as brand visibility, influence, word-of-mouth, and co-creation possibilities. One of the themes perceived the sponsorship as having a positive effect on brand awareness, while the other theme had differing views on its ubiquity. The respondents also emphasized the need for aligning sponsorships with consumer preferences. The analysis of consumers' social media engagement revealed varying perspectives on the impact of the sponsorship on the brand's reputation. This highlights the complexity of managing online interactions for brand enhancement in e-sports.

4.8 Cultural differences with sponsorships

Furthermore, the respondents got interviewed regarding how cultural differences might play a factor with sponsorships. Here they provided intricate perceptions on the hypotheses whilst considering the cultural differences within the market. **H4a**, which proposed that the cultural resonance of supporter participation and co-creation sponsored by Red Bull has a positive impact on word-of-mouth, revealed fascinating insights concerning cultural differences. The interviewees emphasized the importance of cultural values such as teamwork and collaboration in Norway, implying that supporter engagement based on these values might enhance word-of-mouth communication.

For example, R17 highlighted that "in a culture that values collective efforts, supporter participation can foster a sense of community and produce positive word-of-mouth for Red Bull as a brand". However, R9, stated that "on the other hand, identified potential cultural barriers that could hinder the effectiveness of supporter participation, showcasing the importance of culturally sensitive approaches in order to maximize impact". Since the theme that agreed with the hypothesis was majorly bigger than the opposite theme, **H4a** is not rejected.

Concerning the other hypothesis, **H4b**, addressing the positive effect of sponsor factors on improving Red Bull's sponsorship image based on cultural resonance, participants' responses were also split. A theme formed when several participants emphasized the importance for Red Bull to integrate sponsor factors within the Norwegian cultural norms. R12 made the following observation: "Cultural resonance is very important in shaping perceptions of sponsorships, as Red Bull's success in the Norwegian market centers on factors that resonate with local values and preferences".

The other theme that formed was the respondents that were more unaware or skeptical to inclusion of cultural differences, such as R6, emphasized the variety of cultural differences and recommended against performing a one-size-fits-all approach, suggesting that an in-depth understanding of cultural differences is required to make the sponsorship effective. The latter theme was skeptical and unaware to the inclusion of

the cultural differences to the marketing strategy, and were most of the interviewees. Thus, is **H4b** rejected and further disregarded.

4.9 Unconventional marketing strategies

After establishing the cultural differences, unconventional marketing strategies were further examined. Firstly, three general questions regarding unconventional marketing strategies were inquired, to obtain a general understanding of the interviewees thoughts on these marketing strategies. To ensure they understood what the different unconventional marketings strategies involved, each strategy where priorly explained in detail with examples. The first of the general question were asking if they think unconventional marketing strategies will be effective or ineffective in the Norwegian e-sport market. Where 21/23 participants had positive associations towards unconventional marketing strategies for Red Bull in the market. They further were agreeing on the next question, stating that if they thought the use of unconventional marketing strategies would improves or disimproves its brand awareness in the Norwegian e-sport market. Concluding, that the consumers interviewed have positive associations to unconventional marketing strategies in general. Thus, confirming **H5a**, concluding that the use of unconventional marketing strategies by Red Bull enhances its brand awareness in the Norwegian e-sports market. However, this might not directly imply that they perceive all the unconventional marketing strategies as positive towards the brand of Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market.

4.9.1 Viral Marketing

Participants were then asked about the impact of viral marketing in the Norwegian e-sports market. **H5b** proposed that Red Bull's use of viral marketing fosters sincere emotional connections with its target audience, resulting in an increase in word-of-mouth. Respondents emphasized the power of viral campaigns to connect emotionally with Norwegian consumers, fostering genuine connections and driving positive word-of-mouth. For example, R4 stated, "In a culture that values authenticity and emotional engagement, viral marketing can be a powerful tool for Red Bull to connect with the audience on a deeper level". Conversely, R23 raised concerns about cultural sensitivities that could impact the reception of viral content, emphasizing the importance of aligning marketing strategies with local values and preferences. 22 out of the 23 respondents believed that viral marketing would have a positive effect on word-of-mouth, emphasizing the effect value of organic content have on word-of-mouth compared to paid marketing. Therefore, is **H5b** not rejected.

4.9.2 Tribal Marketing

The next hypothesis (**H5c**) is concerning the use of tribal marketing by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market. Examining if it leads to the creation of a community around the brand, enhancing brand loyalty. Here the respondents were more split than previously. The first themed that formed, were respondents who

stated uncertainty towards the method, where R20 highlighting the degree of difficulty this includes, as developing specific communities around the brand and the market takes time. However, this same theme stated that if they manage to establish a community it would enhance the brand loyalty.

Contrarywise, the other theme (five respondents) was rather unsure or partially negative towards the integration of tribal marketing for Red Bull, leading to an uncertainty in rejecting **H5c** or not. However, since the biggest theme were more positive than the minor theme, the hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

4.9.3 Ambient Marketing

Furthermore, **H5d** proposed that Red Bull's use of ambient marketing builds trust in communication with consumers, resulting in a positive perception of the brand. Participants' responses to the ambient marketing question revealed cultural variations that influence consumer trust and perception in Norway.

The first theme that were established were respondents emphasizing the ability of ambient marketing to create subtle but impactful brand interactions that resonate with Norwegian consumers, thereby fostering trust through non-intrusive communication. For instance, R4 made the following statement, "Here as well the culture values authenticity and transparency, which ambient marketing can establish a sense of trust by engaging consumers in a non-disruptive manner." R17, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of ambient marketing being tailored to local sensitivities and preferences in order to effectively build trust among Norwegian consumers.

In terms of the effect on brand perception, participants' perspectives differed depending on how they interpreted ambient marketing strategies. The first established theme believed that ambient marketing could improve brand perception by providing trust and creating memorable experiences. The other smaller theme informed that the success of such initiatives is dependent on cultural relevance and consumer receptiveness. R19 emphasized the importance of developing authentic and contextually relevant ambient marketing campaigns to improve Red Bull's brand perception among Norwegian consumers. Since, the theme first theme thinking that ambient marketing could improve brand perception for Red Bull was the vast majority of respondents (19/23 respondents), is **H5d** not rejected.

Unconventional marketing strategies, especially viral, tribal, and ambient marketing, are generally well perceived in the Norwegian e-sports market. These strategies are deemed effective in raising Red Bull's brand awareness and fostering sincere emotional connections with its target audience. However, the success of these strategies is dependent on cultural relevance and consumer acceptability. Ambient marketing is regarded as a powerful tool for increasing trust and improving brand perception if it is tailored to local sensitivities and preferences. Despite a few uncertainties, particularly regarding tribal marketing, most respondents believe that these strategies will benefit Red Bull's brand in the Norwegian e-sports market.

5.0 Discussion and Recommendation

This chapter delves into the research findings and insights, with the goal of presenting the major points previously mentioned. This will then provide a complete review of the cultural, economic, and strategic elements influencing Red Bull's market entry. Based on the debate, precise suggestions will be made to optimize Red Bull's involvement and growth in this expanding market, while maintaining alignment with local cultural values and market realities.

5.1 Cultural differences

5.1.1 Power distance

The results suggest that Norway is a low power distance culture, valuing accessibility and equality. This indicates that Red Bull's entry into the new market will be received positively based on the cultural emphasis on independence and equality. Therefore, Red Bull's marketing campaigns should emphasize inclusivity and accessibility to attraction the Norwegian audience.

This could be conducted by highlighting Red Bull's equality as a brand to align with the target market's cultural values. Furthermore, using messaging that promotes independence to showcase how Red Bull can enable and inspire consumers in the e-sports community. Therefore, Red Bull should construct marketing campaigns that highlight equality and inclusivity in the esports community, concentrating on diverse perspectives and the collaborative nature of e-sports teams.

5.1.2 Individualism vs Collectivism

Despite the rejection of the hypothesis in results, findings were still gathered. Instead of targeting uniqueness and personal achievements, respondents reported a strong sense of solidarity and mutual support among team members and fans in the e-sports community. This demonstrates a balance of collectivism and individualism in Norwegian e-sport culture. Therefore, Red Bull should emphasize the value of teamwork and community in their marketing campaigns, while also celebrating individual accomplishments. This could be conducted through showcasing how Red Bull's support and products can improve both team dynamics and individual performance in the e-sports and showcase specific stories of personal growth and success to resonate with the high level of individualism in Norway. Red Bull should also create content that reflects the audience's appreciation for both collective efforts and individual success in the e-sports industry.

5.1.3 Masculin vs Feminine

Respondents indicated a growing awareness of gender representation and inclusivity in the marketing of e-sports in Norway. The impact of demonstrating co-operation and social responsibility in marketing campaigns is widely acknowledged. The results suggest a shift toward more feminine values in the e-sports industry. Thus, embrace and promote gender inclusivity in e-sports marketing campaigns to align with the

changing values in the Norwegian e-sport community. Furthermore, their campaigns could emphasize themes such as cooperation, social responsibility, and inclusivity. They should also showcase how Red Bull's brand values are consistent with the e-sports industry's emphasis on quality of life and community well-being.

By including these insights based of Hofstede et al. (2010) in their marketing strategies, Red Bull can effectively resonate with the values of gender inclusivity, cooperation, and social responsibility which is rated highly in the Norwegian e-sport market, enhancing their brand perception and engagement within the industry.

5.1.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

Norway is identified for its moderate level of Uncertainty Avoidance per the respondents from the results. The society is classified for valuing consistency and well-defined norms, particularly in marketing and society. These cultural attributes display a strong demand for stability and a committed loyalty and faithfulness to generate norms in the Norwegian culture.

Therefore, Red Bull should tailor their marketing strategies to maintain consistency and alignment with well-established norms in the Norwegian e-sport market. The brand messaging should include and focus on dependability and trustworthiness, appealing to the respondent's desire for consistency and predictability.

Red Bull should also be careful with too risky or ambiguous marketing strategies, anticipating the moderate tendency of Norwegian consumers to avoid uncertainty. Instead, focusing on trustworthy, clear, and consistent messaging is likely to generate better results in the Norwegian market.

5.1.5 The Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation

The results showcased a desire for long-term oriented marketing strategy. This indicates a cultural incline towards valuing forward-thinking and planning ahead in the society. Therefore, Red Bull should accentuate long-term oriented partnerships deals with Norwegian e-sports teams, players and events, aligning with the preferences of the respondents of forward-thinking. Generate sustainable growth in the market, ensuring an integration of Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market for a long time. This should be beneficial for the sponsees as well, showcasing they are invested and highly professional about the partnership. This further aligns with the perception of Norwegian consumers by Minkov & Kassa (2022).

The importance of selecting the correct sponsee here is crucial, as if the sponsee does not perform at the level of expectations, it weakens the brand. Therefore, well-established teams, players and events is a safe route to ensuring performance at high level. However, well-established sponsees usually requires more funds but brings stability and long-term safety. Nonetheless, Red Bull should also combine this strategy with investing in a few upcoming talents within the e-sports market, giving them some potential and room to grow and establish themselves in the market.

5.1.6 Indulgence vs. Restraint

Ultimately, the Indulgence vs. Restraint results show that the Norwegian e-sports market is at a moderate level regarding indulgence and restraint, meaning that the market has a balanced approach towards permitting or prohibiting the satisfaction of fundamental human needs and pleasures.

Thus, Red Bull should develop marketing strategies that balance the level of indulgence and restraint, reflecting the respondent moderate perspective in this dimension. The brand messaging should promote responsible consumption while also highlighting the joy of balanced indulgence. However, due to the in-between answers, prioritizing this in the marketing strategy is not highly relevant as the other aspects bring more direct areas of focus.

Successful understanding and incorporating these cultural differences within the marketing in the Norwegian e-sports, will enhance the output for Red Bull. By aligning their strategies with the local cultural values of inclusivity, teamwork, social responsibility, and a balanced approach to uncertainty, Red Bull can foster strong connections and build loyalty within this community.

5.2 Sponsorship factors and image

According to the results, a Red Bull-sponsored Norwegian e-sports team has a good impact on how people perceive Red Bull's sponsorship image. This indicates that Red Bull's sponsorship operations in the e-sports sector are well-received and positively impact the brand's image among the public. Red Bull should leverage this further to enhance brand reputation and awareness.

5.2.1 sponsorship ubiquity

The ubiquity might be one of the solutions as the results suggest that ubiquity of Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market positively impacts consumer perception and recognition. The extensive presence of Red Bull's sponsorship activities in the general e-sports community contributes to a favorable presence when entering the Norwegian e-sports market.

Therefore, Red Bull should leverage their international recognition further using sponsorship activities in the Norwegian market. The strategies should also be implemented across various e-sports players, teams, events, and platforms to ensure the widespread and consistency of the sponsorship. Throughout the marketing campaign Red Bull needs to monitor the consumer feedback and reactions to assess the effectiveness of the sponsorship ubiquity. Here, Red Bull could organize and host branded tournaments and events in a sponsorship deal in collaboration with the e-sports league. This could be conducted in different cities in Norway, ensuring the widespread visibility of the brand and sponsorship deal.

5.2.2 Perceived sincerity

Regarding further leveraging of Red Bull's positive brand image, perceived sincerity within sponsorship activities brings possibilities. The results suggest that the respondents and therefore the Norwegian e-sports

consumer, values sponsorships that are perceived as authentic and genuine, since the sincerity positively influences consumer engagement towards the brand.

Therefore, Red Bull could enhance its sponsorship strategies by prioritizing genuine and authentic engagement with the consumers, drawing inspiration from the positive influence perceived sincerity. Thus, the brand lay there focus towards developing meaningful and authentic sponsorship content, resonating with the values and cultural difference of the Norwegian e-sports consumers. Through aligning sponsorship activities with consumers' preference and genuine needs, Red Bull could generate a sincere connection which enhances brand loyalty and reputation.

Red Bull could also further enhance the perceived sincerity of Red Bulls sponsorships, collaborating with local e-sport influencers and pro-players. This would demonstrate genuine commitment to engaging and supporting local communities in Norway. Maintaining clarity with the sponsors and the communication with the consumers is essential for generating strong genuine credibility. Thus, Red Bull should ensure transparency in their communications with the consumers regarding the sponsorship activities, showcasing the brands genuine interest and commitment to the Norwegian e-sports market.

5.3 Sponsor fit and team identification

The thorough review from the results through **H2c** and **H2d**, underscore the importance of sponsor fit and team identification. The consumers' perception of sponsorship was influenced to the certain level the sponsorship aligns to the with values and identity of the e-sports team or athlete. The results suggest that level of identification towards Red Bull and the level of exposure a consumer has towards Red Bull, plays a positive role towards sponsorship fit, playing a crucial role in in shaping consumers attitudes towards the sponsorship activity.

Building on the results presented regarding sponsor fit and team identification, Red Bull should optimize its sponsorship strategies through focusing on enhancing brand reputation and alignment with e-sports teams, players, events, and the community with the supporters. Accordingly, Red Bull should strategically partner with e-sport teams and players sharing the equal values, resonating with the brand's identity and image. Thus, Red Bull could enhance the perceived fit of the sponsorship and strengthen their connections to their consumers.

Tailoring the sponsorship activities to match each unique characteristics of each sponsee will further enhance the alignment and team identification. Maintaining a consistent brand message across all the sponsorships within the Norwegian e-sports market will reinforce the sponsor fit and brand identity. Furthermore, Red Bull should ensure that the sponsorship actions reflect a cohesive brand story, aligning with Red Bull's values of the sponsees.

5.4 Word-of-mouth

The results concluded that the image of Red Bull as a sponsor in the Norwegian e-sports market has a positive effect on word-of-mouth communication among consumers. Highlighting the importance of obtaining a positive word-of-mouth communication, as word-of-mouth is hard to control, and a negative word-of-mouth could easily outweigh a positive one. To ensure a positive word-of-mouth communication, Red Bull should focus on maintaining a positive sponsor image. Implementing engaging sponsorship activities and factors should enhance the consumer preference, thus stimulating positive word-of-mouth.

5.5 Co-creation

Through the results both hypotheses were not rejected, underscoring the significance of co-creation activities in the Norwegian e-sports market. Consumer participation with co-creation activities hosted by Red Bull should influence the preference of the consumer, thus enhancing brand reputation. There are several ways of conducting this, however, here is detailed recommendation for Red Bull to enhance co-creation in the Norwegian e-sports market based on the voices of the consumers.

Red Bull should focus on consumer engagement in their co-creation activities, increasing consumer preference. For instance, involving consumers in the design of potential e-sports exclusive limited editions products, increasing consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Building on the partnerships mentioned prior, establishing collaborative partnerships with the certain e-sports players and teams, driving improvement in co-creation strategies. For example, the opportunity to then co-create unique gaming tournaments and events with the inclusion of top e-sports teams and players. Whereas each player or team could create exclusive experiences for the supporters, showcasing Red Bull's commitment to the gaming community. These events and tournaments could include workshops, meet-and-greet, and exclusive behind the scenes access, fostering a deeper and stronger connection between the consumers and the brand.

5.6 Participation

H3c got rejected due to risk of negative participation, however, it still provided crucial information and potential to still conduct the participation with caution though. Encouraging consumer participation on social media where sponsored players and teams can enhance Red Bull's brand reputation, fostering a sense of community. Red Bull can therefore initiate interactive social media campaigns where supporters share their experiences with gaming and generate UGC with e-sports relation, amplifying engagement and brand awareness.

If conducted correctly, Red Bull should launch interactive social media campaigns that encourage the consumers to actively engage with sponsored team and players. This could include challenges, contests, or interactive story posts related to e-sports, fostering further a sense of community, and generating brand

Capitalizing on the valuable assets of influencers is vital to promote Red Bull sponsored events or other initiatives on social media. This will further generate brand awareness among target audiences, leveraging the reach and credibility of the influencers, driving consumer participation and elevating brand reputation. Utilizing the influencers further, Red Bull can establish communities where the consumers could connect and interact with each other, fostering a sense of belonging and brand loyalty. The brand could then curate discussion and provide exclusive content, enhancing consumer engagement and brand loyalty.

Combining both co-creation and participation, Red Bull could solidify their presence in the Norwegian e-sports market. Engaging in exclusive products with the usage of e-sports players and team would enhance consumer preferences and brand loyalty.

5.7 Cultural differences with sponsorships

The findings revealed that collaboration, teamwork, and community spirit have an important influence in modeling consumer perceptions of sponsorship. Interviewees agreed, namely through **H4a**, that in a team-oriented culture, fan involvement may foster a feeling of community and generate favorable word-of-mouth for Red Bull. This suggests that sponsorship efforts that are consistent with local cultural norms have the potential to boost brand reputation and engagement among Norwegian e-sports customers. Thus, Red Bull may professionally support campaigns and events that value and accept cultural values, so building meaningful connections with Norwegian customers and improving brand perception.

Furthermore, the results highlight the need for culturally sensitive methods in sponsorships to maximize the impact and reach. However, the interviewees highlighted potential cultural barriers that could hinder the effectiveness of consumer participation, highlighting the importance of aligning sponsorships deal with Norwegian cultural values. Thus, Red Bull should conduct this when selecting sponsorship deals, incorporating themes of collaboration, teamwork, and community spirit in its sponsorship activities, enhancing cultural resonance and foster positive word-of-mouth.

H4b demonstrating the cultural sensitivity needed in the communication and messaging with the Norwegian market. Tailoring its marketing messages, activities, and visions to align with the Norwegian values, ensuring a positive consumer perception from the consumers.

Collaboration with local groups, influencers, or cultural influencers who understand the values of Norwegian culture might improve sponsorship partnerships. By harnessing insights from cultural specialists, Red Bull can efficiently traverse cultural differences and improve the legitimacy of its brand presence in the e-sports community.

Building on previously established cultural differences by Hofstede et al. (2010), adapting sponsorship activities to reflect Norway's mix of individualism and collectivism, masculine and feminine

ideals, and other cultural elements might help to increase brand acceptance. Therefore, Red Bull's sponsorships should be tailored to match the cultural nuances and preferences of the Norwegian audience, building a stronger relationship with its customers.

5.8 Unconventional marketing strategies

The study's findings show that participants had favorable connections with unconventional marketing strategies, mentioning their effectiveness in improving brand reputation and involvement within the e-sport community. Red Bull can effectively differentiate and improve its position in this new and energetic Norwegian e-sport market by utilizing new approaches to create engaging content, fostering emotional connections and building a sense of community leading to brand reputation.

Since the participants acknowledged Red Bull's previously use of unconventional marketing strategies, it is more likely to be perceived good by the consumers. Red Bull should therefore leverage creative and unique strategies, amplifying brand awareness and reputation. Viral marketing was highlighted in the role of fostering sincere emotional relation with target audience. Relatable and shareable content are therefore effective, as it resonates with the consumers on an emotional level. Cultivating strong relationships with e-sport enthusiasts, generating good brand reputation and word-of-mouth. Red Bull can here viral marketing campaign that includes influencers that participates in high-relevant gaming challenges sponsored by Red Bull.

Leveraging tribal marketing strategies that specify on engagement and community-building, Red Bull can generate a sense of belonging among the consumers. This could strengthen the brand loyalty and affinity among the fans when fostering a community and encouraging active participation. Therefore, Red Bull can establish a brand ambassador program, utilizing passionate influencers and gamers can represent the brand, promoting Red Bull's involvement in e-sports engaging with their followers. Through enabling supporters to spread their love for Red Bull and their relation e-sports, thus the brand could build dedicated and loyal tribe of supporters.

Ambient marketing was classified as effective by the vast majority of the participants, emphasizing the importance of establishing trust when communicating with the consumers. Throughout, creating authentic and immersive brand experiences that resonate with the community. Red Bull can incorporate ambient marketing elements into sponsorship activities, through enabling installations at sponsored events. This could be all from interactive game zones, custom branded lounges at the events, and chill out areas at the events, providing consumers and players with visually appealing and comfortable space, reinforcing brand awareness in an effective way. Installations could also be placed at high-traffic areas frequented by e-sport consumers, such as university campuses, e-sport areas, digital cafes, and tech events.

Red Bull can differentiate itself in the Norwegian e-sports market by leveraging unconventional

marketing strategies, enhancing their brand reputation, loyalty, and awareness, fostering emotional connections and engaging consumers effectively.

6.0 Theoretical contribution

This study adds to the existing body of knowledge in several theoretical domains, such as marketing strategy, international business, cultural studies, e-sport studies.

6.1 Market entry strategies

The research generates the theoretical assumption that successful market entry tactics demand both adaptation and standardization. Red Bull's need to tailor its global sponsorship plans to Norway's unique market and cultural factors reveals the need of cultural sensitivity in foreign marketing. This is consistent with the contingency theory in international business, which holds that there is no one-size-fits-all strategy, but that tactics should be tailored to individual market situations and cultural contexts (Van de Ven, 1984).

6.2 Brand management and sponsorship

This study further adds to knowledge of brand management by examining how non-endemic companies could generate brand equity and reputation in unique and specialized markets like for example the e-sport market. It further builds on Keller's brand equity concept, accentuating the importance of unique sponsorships and localized content to further increase brand reputation and loyalty.

The study also highlights the value of sponsorship as a driver for brand positioning and consumer interaction in the digital age. It supports and expands to previous sponsorship-linked marketing theory, emphasizing that effective sponsorship in e-sports requires a thorough understanding of the dynamics in the community and equal consumer behavior.

6.3 Cultural Theories in Marketing

Applying Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory can provide significant insights into how cultural influences influence marketing strategy. The study's findings on how Norway's low power distance and high individualism influence customer preferences and marketing efficacy provide empirical support for Hofstede's approach, particularly in the context of e-sports, a relatively new and active industry (Hofstede et al., 2010).

By investigating the interaction of cultural values and consumer behavior in the Norwegian e-sports market, this study adds to the theoretical knowledge of how cultural settings impact consumer involvement with businesses and brands worldwide. It supports the idea that cultural similarity between brand messaging and consumer values improves marketing effectiveness.

6.4 Digital and Social Media Marketing

This study also adds to theoretical ideas on digital marketing by illustrating the importance of social media and user-generated content in establishing brand communities. It provides empirical evidence for theories that stimulate and encourage interactive and unconventional marketing strategies, showcasing how these strategies can increase brand engagement and loyalty in these markets.

My research and findings emphasize the revolutionary impact of digital platforms on sponsorship and marketing initiatives. This is aligning with the media richness theory, which proposes that the richness of digital media promotes deeper engagement and more effective communication of brand values (Sun & Cheng, 2007).

6.5 E-sports Marketing and Consumer Psychology

Additionally, the research adds to the understanding of consumer psychology in e-sports by highlighting the importance of identity and community-building. It generates credence to the theories of social identity and community by demonstrating how e-sports customers generate perception of belonging and identity from their engagement in e-sports groups, which could be leveraged further to improve other businesses marketing efforts.

Throughout examining the motivational elements that drive consumer involvement in e-sports, this study contributes to theoretical frameworks that explain consumer motivation in digital contexts. It contributes to the uses and gratifications theory by demonstrating how e-sports fans pursue content and community interactions that meet their requirements for entertainment, social connection, and personal achievement (Ruggiero, 2000).

My study offers positive theoretical insights across several domains, emphasizing the significance of cultural adaptation, the function of digital platforms, and consumer interaction dynamics in the context of e-sports marketing. These theoretical contributions provide a solid platform for future research and practical applications in international marketing and brand management in rising digital marketplaces, especially in the Norwegian e-sport market and in general for market entry in e-sport.

7.0 Limitations

The research conducted provides significant insights into the unique and effective marketing strategies for Red Bull in a new and explorative market, several limitations must be acknowledged that may influence the results and their generalizability.

7.1 Age range

The study primarily focused on interviewing consumers within a certain age range, young adults between the age of 16 and 30. This limitation apply that the findings may not be fully representable of the perspectives and preferences of older and younger e-sports consumers, who might have different views and behaviors.

However, due to the upcoming age limit on energy drinks to the age of 16, ensuring the legal requirements, no under the age were interviewed even as some of them are consumers.

7.2 Geographic Segmentation

The research is limited to the Norwegian e-sports market. Since the findings provide valuable insights for Red Bull's market entry in Norway, they may not be directly applicable to other markets with different cultural, economic, and demographic characteristics. The strategies that is applicable in Norway might require substantial adaptation for other countries. However, might be somewhat equivalent to other countries in Scandinavia and potentially the Nordics.

7.3 Data Collection Methods

The research primarily depends on qualitative in-depth interviews, which provide detailed insights. However, may not capture the full breadth of consumer behaviors and preferences. Combining qualitative methods with quantitative surveys could have enhanced the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

The data collected through interviews is self-reported and may be subject to biases such as social desirability bias and confirmation bias, where participants might provide responses they believe are expected or favorable. However, this was strongly worked against to ensure the credibility of the responses, so this might be very small limitations in that case.

7.4 External Influences

My research does not extensively justificative for external factors such as changes in technology, economic fluctuations, or competitive actions by other brands entering the same market. These factors can significantly influence the effectiveness of marketing strategies and were not within the capacity of this research. If other both direct and indirect competitors of Red Bull were to enter, information like this would be kept confidential to ensure their effectiveness of their market entry.

Changes in regulations related to advertising, sponsorship, and digital content in Norway could impact the feasibility and legality of the recommended strategies. Efficient research was conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the marketing strategy, with minimal news of changes to regulations in the near future.

Dealing with these limitations for future research could enhance the comprehensiveness and applicability of the findings and in the market. This could include expanding the incorporating quantitative data, demographic range of participants, and considering longitudinal studies to capture trends over time. Additionally, comparative studies across different markets could provide a more global perspective on e-sports marketing strategies.

8.0 Conclusion

The prospective success for Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market is dependent on its ability to properly tailor its marketing strategies to the local cultural and market factors. By focusing on localized and fitting sponsorships, culturally applicable marketing, unique digital content, strategic alliances, and unconventional marketing strategies, Red Bull can establish a strong and devoted consumer base within e-sports in Norway. This could be conducted through sponsoring and organizing local e-sports events using influencers help to establish Red Bull as a significant actor in the Norwegian e-sports market, enhancing brand loyalty, awareness and brand reputation. Furthermore, emphasizing personal success and individual achievement success stories for the Norwegian consumers aligns with the values of the Norwegian culture, ensuring that the brand message resonates with the locals.

Engaging with the community through interactive campaigns that promote user-generated content and participation can help to establish a strong brand community. Using high-quality content production resources to generate exclusive e-sports-related content for platforms such as Twitch and YouTube can effectively engage the digital native audience. Maintaining a comprehensive social media presence to facilitate real-time audience participation and dialogue is critical for strengthening brand ties. Partnering with local e-sports organizations, gaming cafes, and educational institutions will further increase involvement in local communities and brand engagement.

Cross-promotional initiatives with highly relevant brands can improve marketing strategies, thus reach a larger audience. Implementing initiatives for ongoing consumer feedback on social media through listening tools, will guarantee that Red Bull remains responsive to potential changing preferences. Using data and insights on social media analytics to measure the performance of marketing campaigns, allowing for more informed and agile decision-making. Therefore, Red Bull can generate long-term development and loyalty in the Norwegian e-sports sector by blending the worldwide brand awareness and reputation with local cultural relevance, as well as remaining committed to innovation and community. This thesis outlines a strategy roadmap for Red Bull and adds to a better knowledge of efficient marketing in the e-sports market.

This study delivers direct recommendations for Red Bull, adding to the larger understanding of market entry tactics and consumer engagement in the digital age and the market of e-sports. As Red Bull navigates this new terrain, its dedication to innovate and build a community will be decisive in fostering long-term growth and brand loyalty in the Norwegian e-sports market.

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10.0 Appendix

10.1 Template of the in-depth interview

1. Introduction

Briefly introduce yourself.

Assuring the interviewee of the confidentiality of their responses.

Asking them to sign the statement of consent to proceed with the interview if confirmed.

2. Background Information

What is your gender?

What is your age?

What is your profession?

How long have you been involved in e-sports?

What is your favorite e-sports games, teams, and players?

Which platform do you consume e-sports on?

How many days a week do you consume e-sports?

3. E-sports Engagement

What is your level of engagement with e-sports on a level from 1-7? Where 1 is not engaged and 7 is very engaged

What is your favorite e-sports events and why do they like them?

What are your experiences with e-sports sponsorships and promotions?

Can you recall any memorable sponsorships or branded content in e-sports that caught your attention?

What comes to mind when you think about Red Bull's involvement in the e-sports industry?

4. Cultural differences

Do you think there are any important cultural differences in Norwegian e-sports to take into consideration?

How do you perceive the concept of power distance in the Norwegian e-sports community?

How do you see the balance between individualism and collectivism manifesting in the e-sports community in Norway?

How do you perceive the representation of masculine and feminine values in e-sports marketing in Norway?

How do you perceive the uncertainty and risk-taking in marketing strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market? And which model do you prefer?

How do you perceive the importance of long-term planning and future orientation in the Norwegian e-sports industry?

How do you perceive the balance between indulgence and restraint in the consumption habits of Norwegian e-sports enthusiasts?

5. Perception of Red Bull and sponsorship

How would you describe the level of visibility and presence of Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sport market?

In your opinion, how does the ubiquity of Red Bull's sponsorship impact consumer awareness and recognition of the brand within the e-sport community?

Can you share any specific instances where the visibility of Red Bull's sponsorship in e-sport events or activities has influenced your perception of the brand?

If Red Bull were to sponsor a major e-sports event, what type of activation or marketing campaign would resonate with you as a viewer?

Do you believe that sponsors perceived as sincere have a greater impact on consumer attitudes and engagement within the e-sports community?

How do you perceive the relationship between your team identification to a Norwegian e-sports team if they were sponsored by Red Bull? What would your perception of Red Bull's sponsorship image be?

How do you think the level of exposure to Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market would influence your awareness of the brand?

Do you think the effectiveness of sponsor factors employed by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market has a positive effect on improving Red Bull's sponsorship image with the use of cultural resonance?

Do you think the image of Red Bull as a sponsor in the Norwegian e-sport market has a positive or negative effect on word-of-mouth communication among supporters?

Do you think that co-creation activities facilitated by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market increase or decrease the consumer preference for Red Bull?

Do you think that co-creation would be improved or unimproved in the Norwegian e-sport market when conducted by Red Bull?

Do you think that consumers' participation on social media for both teams and players sponsored by Red Bull increases or decreases the reputation of Red Bull?

Do you think that the level of a supporter's participation and co-creation in the Norwegian e-sport market sponsored by Red Bull has a positive or negative effect on word-of-mouth?

Do you think that the effectiveness of sponsor factors employed by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market has a positive or negative effect on improving Red Bull's sponsorship image?

6. Marketing Strategies

Based on what we've discussed, do you think Red Bull's unconventional marketing strategies will be effective or ineffective in the Norwegian e-sport market?

If you were to choose one unconventional marketing strategy for Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market, which would it be and why?

Do you think the use of viral marketing by Red Bull fosters sincere emotional connections with their target audience in the Norwegian e-sport market? And would it lead to an increase in word-of-mouth?

Do you think the use of tribal marketing by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market leads to the creation of a community around the brand? And how would it affect brand loyalty?

Do you think the use of ambient marketing by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market establishes trust in the communication with the consumers? And would it lead to a positive or negative perception of Red Bull?

What are some of the types of marketing strategies that resonate with you? (e.g., social media campaigns, influencer partnerships, etc.).

Do you recall any of Red Bull's marketing strategies in general?

What are your thoughts on Red Bull's entry into the Norwegian e-sport market, and would it be successful?

What are some ideas on how Red Bull can engage with the Norwegian e-sport community effectively?

7. Conclusion

Do you have any additional thoughts or comments?

Thank you for your time and participation.

10.2 Statement of consent

Statement of Consent - In-depth interview

The objective of this research is to relevant information about the most effective marketing strategies for Red Bull to engage and grow in the Norwegian e-sports market. The information collected will be anonymized and used in the thesis only. The recording will be deleted after the thesis has been submitted, thus the profile of the respondent will not be traceable. LUISS Guido Carli, Rome, Italy is responsible for the thesis, with my supervisor also playing a part, Stella Romagnoli.

Your participation is voluntary, including the possibility to redraw your consent at any time. The information obtained will be preserved confidential and in line with privacy regulations. You as a participant have the rights to be identified in the material collected, access to the personal information registered about you, and have your personal information corrected.

I consent that the information I provide is used and stored until the research project is finalized, approximately 01.08.2024. I consent to my participation in the interviews and providing personal information which will be anonymised.

 (Signature by the participant, date)

10.3 Example of an in-depth interview**1. Introduction**

- Introduce Yourself:

Hi, I am Respondent 12

2. Background Information

- What is your gender?

Male.

- What is your age?

29.

- What is your profession?

I'm an e-sports journalist. I write about e-sports events, teams, and players for an online gaming site.

- How long have you been involved in e-sports?

About 10 years. I started as a gamer in high school and now I write about e-sports and play when I have time.

- What are your favorite e-sports games, teams, and players?

My favorite game is "League of Legends.", I like the team T1, and my favorite player is Faker.

- Which platform do you consume e-sports on?

Mostly on Twitch and YouTube for live streams and highlights.

- How many days a week do you consume e-sports?

Around 5 days a week, watching tournaments, otherwise I like keeping up with tournaments and news on social media.

3. E-sports Engagement

- What is your level of engagement with e-sports on a level from 1-7?

I'd say a 6. I'm very engaged with watching games and following the latest news.

- What is your favorite e-sports event and why do you like it?

The League of Legends World Championship. It's exciting because it brings the best teams together, has high production value, and great storylines.

- What are your experiences with e-sports sponsorships and promotions?

I've seen many, like Red Bull sponsoring events and teams, and Intel sponsoring tournaments with the latest tech.

- Can you recall any memorable sponsorships or branded content in e-sports that caught your attention?

Yes, Red Bull's "Solo Q" tournament was memorable. It focused on individual skills and had great promotional content.

- What comes to mind when you think about Red Bull's involvement in the e-sports industry?

Red Bull is known for exciting and creative marketing in e-sports. They sponsor top teams and events, producing high-quality content.

4. Cultural Differences

- Do you think there are any important cultural differences in Norwegian e-sports to take into consideration?

Yes, Norwegian e-sports culture values equality, community, and inclusivity. It's less commercialized and more about building a supportive community.

- How do you perceive the concept of power distance in the Norwegian e-sports community?

The concept of power distance is perceived as relatively low in Norway, as we emphasize equality and open communication among players, fans, and brands.

- How do you see the balance between individualism and collectivism manifesting in the e-sports community in Norway?

There's a good balance. Individual achievements matter, but teamwork and collective success are also highly valued.

- How do you perceive the representation of masculine and feminine values in e-sports marketing in Norway?

Marketing in Norway is more balanced, promoting inclusiveness and creativity over just competitiveness.

- How do you perceive the uncertainty and risk-taking in marketing strategies in the Norwegian e-sports market?

Norwegians prefer careful planning over risky strategies. Marketing focuses on building trust and long-term relationships.

- How do you perceive the importance of long-term planning and future orientation in the Norwegian e-sports industry?

Long-term planning is very important. There's a focus on sustainable growth and developing local talent.

- How do you perceive the balance between indulgence and restraint in the consumption habits of Norwegian e-sports enthusiasts? Norwegians enjoy e-sports but in a balanced way. They indulge responsibly, enjoying events and in-game content without going overboard.

5. Perception of Red Bull and Sponsorship

- How would you describe the level of visibility and presence of Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sport market?

Red Bull is very visible. They sponsor major events and teams, and their branding is everywhere in e-sports.

- In your opinion, how does the ubiquity of Red Bull's sponsorship impact consumer awareness and recognition of the brand within the e-sport community?

It greatly increases awareness. People associate Red Bull with energy, excitement, and top-level e-sports.

- Can you share any specific instances where the visibility of Red Bull's sponsorship in e-sport events or activities has influenced your perception of the brand?

Seeing Red Bull sponsor big tournaments like the League of Legends World Championship makes me view them as a serious and committed brand in e-sports.

- If Red Bull were to sponsor a major e-sports event, what type of activation or marketing campaign would resonate with you as a viewer?

Interactive experiences or unique content, like an online tournament where fans can compete against pros or behind-the-scenes videos of players.

- Do you believe that sponsors perceived as sincere have a greater impact on consumer attitudes and engagement within the e-sports community?

Yes, sincere sponsors have a bigger impact. They build trust and loyalty by showing real support for the community.

- How do you perceive the relationship between your team identification to a Norwegian e-sports team if they were sponsored by Red Bull?

If my favorite team, T1, were sponsored by Red Bull, it would make me like both the team and the brand more.

- How do you think the level of exposure to Red Bull's sponsorship in the Norwegian e-sports market would influence your awareness of the brand?

High exposure would definitely increase my awareness and keep Red Bull at the top of my mind.

- Do you think the effectiveness of sponsor factors employed by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sports market has a positive effect on improving Red Bull's sponsorship image with the use of cultural resonance?

Cultural resonance is very important in shaping perceptions of sponsorships, as Red Bull's success in the Norwegian market centers on factors that resonate with local values and preferences.

- Do you think the image of Red Bull as a sponsor in the Norwegian e-sport market has a positive or negative effect on word-of-mouth communication among supporters?

Mostly positive. People tend to share their good experiences and excitement about Red Bull-sponsored events.

- Do you think that co-creation activities facilitated by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market increase or decrease the consumer preference for Red Bull?

Increase. Co-creation makes fans feel involved and valued, boosting their preference for the brand.

- Do you think that co-creation would be improved or unimproved in the Norwegian e-sport market when conducted by Red Bull?

Improved. Given Norway's community-focused culture, involving fans in creative processes would be very effective.

- Do you think that consumers' participation on social media for both teams and players sponsored by Red Bull increases or decreases the reputation of Red Bull?

Increases. Active social media engagement shows that Red Bull is connected with the community.

- Do you think that the level of a supporter's participation and co-creation in the Norwegian e-sport market sponsored by Red Bull has a positive or negative effect on word-of-mouth?

Positive. Engaged fans are more likely to share their experiences and spread the word about Red Bull.

- Do you think that the effectiveness of sponsor factors employed by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market has a positive or negative effect on improving Red Bull's sponsorship image

Positive. Their strategic sponsorships and genuine engagement help improve their image.

6. Marketing Strategies

- Based on what we've discussed, do you think Red Bull's unconventional marketing strategies will be effective or ineffective in the Norwegian e-sport market?

Effective. Red Bull's unique and memorable experiences resonate well with the e-sports audience.

- If you were to choose one unconventional marketing strategy for Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market, which would it be and why?

Viral marketing. It can reach a wide audience quickly and generate a lot of buzz with the right content.

- Do you think the use of viral marketing by Red Bull fosters sincere emotional connections with their target audience in the Norwegian e-sport market?

Yes, if done authentically. Emotional stories and relatable content can create strong connections.

- Do you think the use of tribal marketing by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market leads to the creation of a community around the brand?

Yes, it can. By creating exclusive fan clubs or online communities, Red Bull can enhance brand loyalty.

- Do you think the use of ambient marketing by Red Bull in the Norwegian e-sport market establishes trust in the communication with the consumers?

Yes, it can. Sponsoring local events or gaming cafes creates a positive and familiar presence.

- What are some of the types of marketing strategies that resonate with you?

Social media campaigns, influencer partnerships, and community-driven events.

- Do you recall any of Red Bull's marketing strategies in general?

Yes, like the "Red Bull Stratos" space jump, which was a huge and memorable event.

- What are your thoughts on Red Bull's entry into the Norwegian e-sport market, and would it be successful?

I think it would be successful. They already have a strong global presence and can adapt their strategies to fit the Norwegian market.

- What are some ideas on how Red Bull can engage with the Norwegian e-sport community effectively?

Host local tournaments and events. Partner with popular Norwegian influencers and streamers. Create localized content. Offer exclusive in-game content or merchandise. Support educational programs to develop local talent.

7. Conclusion

- Do you have any additional thoughts or comments?

Red Bull's involvement in e-sports has been positive and innovative. It'll be interesting to see how they continue to contribute to the industry.