ANALYSIS OF RIOT GAME'S INSTAGRAM CONTENT

Kathryn Chunn | 2/17/2022
TCO 485: Social Media Management

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to detail findings of Riot Game's social media from an inventory audit. Then providing a critical analysis of the audit where I draw conclusions from the data and give recommendations. Due to time restrictions, I am only looking at a sample of 15 posts from Riot Game's Instagram profile. I chose the Instagram because they have an active presence on their account and an array of types of content. Ideally Riot Games would have a mix of content that engages their users regularly, but their forms of content have a variety of engagement and is not the best content mix for this channel.

BACKGROUND

Riot Games is a video game development company that prides itself on "having the most player focused games in the world" (Riot Games). Some of their headline games include League of Legends, Arcane, and VALORANT. Their values are:

- Player Experience First
- Dare to Dream
- Thrive Together
- Execute With Excellence
- Stay Hungry; Stay Humble

They also pride themselves in being a global company focused on diversity and inclusion, and their social impact. Their target audience is young adults primarily between the age range of 14-25 years old but even have older players. League of Legends, their main game, has over 100 million active players on average (see Figure 1). League of Legends also has an Esports league that has live-streamed matches with views up into 99 million.

Figure 1: League of Legends Player Count Chart by LeagueFeed
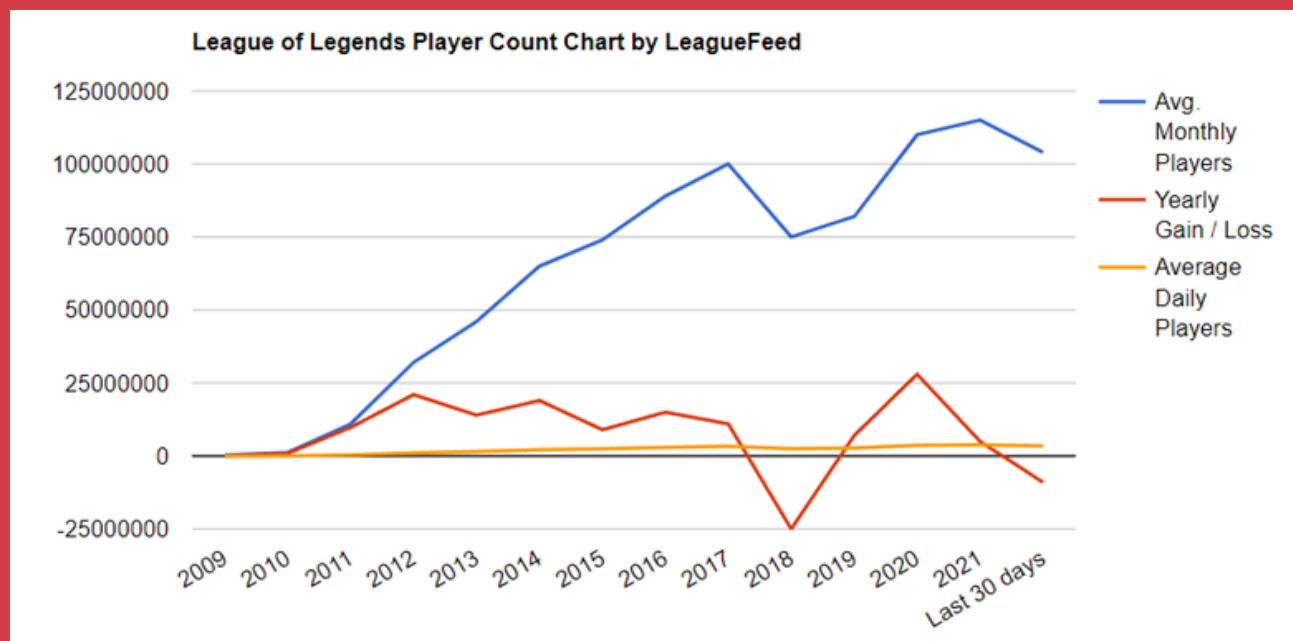
THEORY

Riot Games is a vast company that has a large fan base. Their leading strategy on their Instagram is a friend-of-mine awareness, a fundamental marketing strategy that means the users view the brand as their friend. Riot Games plays on this strategy by producing interactive posts with casual language along with the use of emojis. Riot Games already has a loyal fanbase to its games but must work to maintain this loyalty with the brand and turn their loyalty into ROI through sales of merchandise. They promote their merchandise on their Instagram as promotional posts mixed in with feature posts. In my discussion I will go into more detail on how Riot Games uses these strategies and theories in their marketing mix.

Some of the questions I will be answering about Riot Games Instagram are:

• How do Emojicons effect brand personality? And is the use of Emojicons effective for Riot Games?
• Are branded posts more popular than others?
• What kind of reactions do they get from users?

In my belief, these questions help provide a complete evaluation of the Instagram profile and leads my analysis and data.

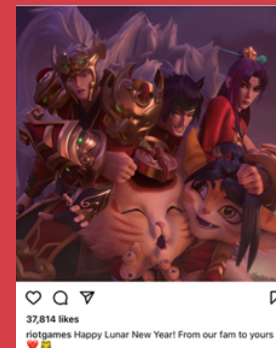Figure 2: Category Key
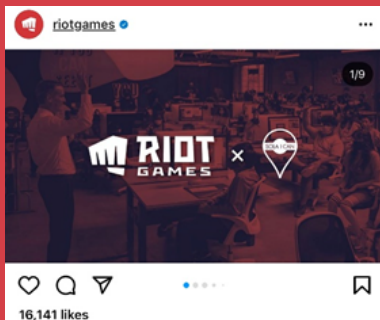
BRANDED MESSAGE
Includes Riot Games logo and is an official announcement from the company.

BEHIND THER SCENES
Includes a sneak peek on how things work or the brand story. It's a look into the company from the outside.
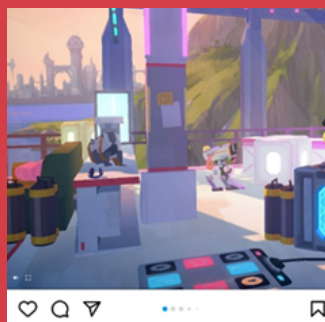

FEATURE POST
Includes game characters and references to gaming without a real point. Like a vanity post, it is filler content used to connect with the audience.
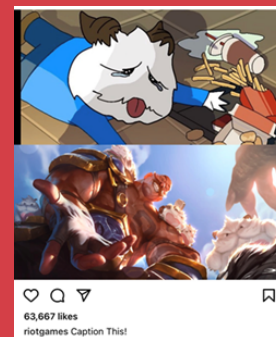

PROMOTIONAL
Includes a product or merchandise and is promoting it. Usually includes a reference to where you can buy it.

INFORMATIONL
Includes important game information that players or potential players need to know or be reminded of.

HUMOR
Is almost a feature post but a feature post that is meant to be funny. Includes a joke or meme.

DISCUSSION

Riot Games has a variety of active social media profiles including: Twitter, Instagram, Linked In, Facebook, Twitch, and Reddit. The chosen profile for this analysis, Instagram, has almost weekly posts and activity. Their content can best be described using 6 categories: Branded Message, Behind-The-Scenes, Feature Post, Promotional, Informational, and Humor as shown in Figure 2: Category Key.

All of their social media messaging aligns with their values listed on their website where they post news and Esports content. Riot Games prides itself on being user focused, and users first. We can see this in their strategy to befriend their fan base with feature posts that are relevant to their users. Their users interact more with feature posts than any other post type as show in Figures 3. While feature posts are the most popular type of post, branded posts are one of the least popular by number of interactions.

This is curious because feature posts don't contain any information the users would deem valuable, it is in essence a vanity post. This shows me that Riot Game's audience on Instagram is looking for fun content instead of something related to the brand. They want to see the characters they play with and relate to, and by posting these characters Riot Game's is able to achieve a connection of friendship with their audience. Almost all of Riot Game's posts include simple language and Emojicons which help influence the brand personality to be friendly to the audience, see Appendix A for more data on Emojicons.

Riot Games receives a mix of interactions but from the sample they, on average, receive more positive comments than negative comments and has an average of 39,427 likes per post as shown in Appendix A. This shows that their users respond to their posting positively. The data also shows us that more feature posts and less of other forms of posting would up user interactions and be a better application of this social media platform. I recommend keeping any branded or business-related posts to a different platform like Facebook or Linked-In or featuring it as a highlighted story. By sectioning those posts off from the Instagram feed I predict Riot Games will better develop their friend personality and I turn up their sales of merchandise items.

Figure 3: Bar Charts of User Interactions

Sum of # of Comments by Content Category

Sum of # Of Likes by Content Category
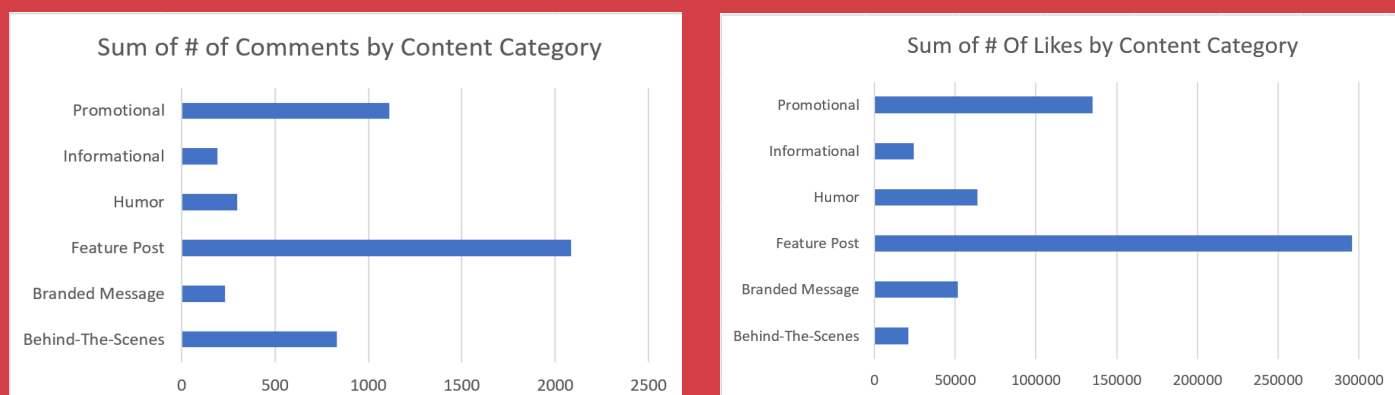
CONCLUSION

Riot Games is a user focused company that prides itself on putting the users first. This ideal has lead to the development of their brand persona as friend-of-mine, or being friends with their fans to develop trust and loyalty. This can be seen through their postings on Instagram of feature posts that engage with the users and use simple language and Emojicons as shown in the data from the invetory audit.

These findings are significant because they show a gap between what the users interact with and what Riot Games posts on their Instagram. Riot Games posts a mix of content from 6 categories but users interact most with feature posts, meaning if Riot Games focused on just feature post with a mix of promotional posts they would see a higher ROI and more user interactions on average.

APPENDIX A

Content Category	Type of Content	Emojicons (Yes/No)	Hashtags (Yes/No)	Date	# Of Likes	# of Comments	Positive Replies	Negative Replies
Feature Post	Image	Yes	No	2/1/2022	35,342	98	6	4
Behind-The-Scenes	Video Reel	Yes	No	1/28/2022	20,902	832	1	9
Feature Post	Image	Yes	No	1/26/2022	22,964	282	10	0
Promotional	Image	No	No	1/26/2022	21,409	166	10	0
Promotional	Image Reel	Yes	No	1/24/2022	18,968	117	8	2
Feature Post	Image Reel	Yes	No	1/19/2022	104,492	411	8	2
Promotional	Mixed Reel	Yes	No	1/17/2022	25,262	117	10	0
Branded Message	Mixed Reel	Yes	No	1/13/2022	16,133	135	7	3
Feature Post	Image Reel	Yes	No	1/7/2022	101,044	1041	10	0
Feature Post	Image Reel	Yes	No	1/3/2022	21,627	125	10	0
Humor	Image	No	No	12/21/2021	63,663	296	9	1
Informational	Image Reel	Yes	No	12/10/2021	24,383	191	6	4
Promotional	Image Reel	Yes	No	12/8/2021	58,375	304	10	0
Promotional	Mixed Reel	Yes	No	12/1/2021	11,228	408	6	4
Feature Post	Image Reel	Yes	No	11/26/2021	45,620	226	9	1
				average:	39,427	*replies are taken out of a sample of 10		

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