

Nevada Leads the Way on ESport Wagering



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Perhaps the hottest topic in gaming today is the growth of professional esports. Esports are – essentially – professional video game tournaments and contests. Audiences for such tournaments have been filling stadiums in Asia and Europe for the last few years. The phenomenon is just beginning to gain popularity in the U.S., but the acceptance of esports as a spectator event is growing rapidly.

To put esports popularity in perspective, the League of Legends Championship Finals drew 43 million unique online viewers while Major League Baseball’s World Series drew about 40 million viewers, and the final game of the NBA Championships drew only an estimated 31 million viewers. Viewership of the League of Legends Championship was primarily through online streaming rather than terrestrial or satellite television.

As with other competitive spectator-driven events, wagering is occurring on esports. Estimates vary widely, but the worldwide esports betting market is likely measured in the billions of dollars, with wagering occurring primarily in Asia and Europe. However, at a recent esports seminar in Las Vegas, an analyst from the United

Kingdom estimated that illegal wagers from the U.S. were rising in correspondence to the rising popularity of the activity.

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