



ENVISIONING ESPORTS VENUES

Rashed Singaby | Senior Project Designer

The esports industry has grown at a tremendous pace and is showing no signs of slowing down. The number of fans has been growing exponentially for the past few years, averaging almost 35 million new fans annually.

When we monitor the esports fans closely, we immediately learn how similar the new fan is to the conventional sports fan when it comes to loyalty and commitment. But they are very different in how they interact with an event and how they'd like to be catered to.

Unlike any other sport, the whole esports industry is being built from the top down. There are millions of fans and gamers, thousands of tournaments and very large prize pools. But the business and operational structures are still evolving, as are the expectations for the physical venues.

This is where we see an opportunity to rethink everything. What does the venue of the future look like? Is there a seating bowl? Maybe. What's the entertainment factor? What does the new fan want? It becomes quickly apparent that opportunities are broadly split into two categories.

One is modifying existing spaces ranging from arenas to convention centers, to old warehouses, department stores and movie theaters. All can be redressed to accommodate the new genre of new events.

Second are the purpose-built new venues. As we challenge the existing standards of a conventional sports facility, we allow ourselves to reinvent it. We start at the microscale of a fan's seat and how it becomes more specific to its new medium and go all the way up to the urban impact of an esports facility at the macroscale—and everything in-between.

We think about redefined concourses in premium offerings, interactive and immersive experiences, innovative sponsorship strategies, blurred lines between virtual and physical realities, and new revenue streams. The esports venue of the future is coming.