

# Playing the Brand Game

If I scroll through your media plan I'm sure it will contain all the usual and well-known media options, TV and Radio ads, the print ads and the outdoor. We've all picked these options for years well in fact decades because we knew you would never be fired on choosing them. Just like an IT guy wouldn't be fired for installing an IBM solution for your company. But soon these days are long gone – soon you will be fired to choose these options.

Today the size of the computer gaming market is double of the revenue generated by the movie industry. ACNielsen predicts the movie industry will be one third of the computer gaming industry within only four years leaving me wondering where the enormous power once placed in the hands of Hollywood is about to go. Is it about to go online? And if it is – where are you?

It is fascinating to think about that almost every media you can think of has a price, which you at a click at Google would be able to find in seconds. It's a fixed and well-known price. All this except one channel – the computer game. Quick – tell me what's the price of placing a commercial message in a computer game and I'm sure you'll have no clue. Is it \$1 per user? One million up front? One cent per second? Who knows – no fixed model exist, no media agency really has (yet) specialized in booking space in

computer games like in any other industry – in fact this is virgin area – which often means virgin prices. Low prices.

Let's do the math – research from my latest book BRANDchild showed that kids now, for good or worse, spend almost the same time in front of the computer games as they do in front of the TV. These numbers will soon revert – showing the computer game in the lead. The only difference is just that where your TV commercial probably secures some 30 seconds with the consumer – the computer game very likely may spend hours.

No wonder why Red Bull – the energy drink was claimed to secure its success due to it's appearance in one of the first Playstation games – stating: "Want more energy?" Do I need to tell you what the answer was?

If you belong to the IBM gang – going with the secure solution – don't continue reading. However if you like me believe that TV no longer is the one and only path to brand success – you should already now consider your role in the wonderful world of computer games. The prices are still low, as this is still an unexplored territory. The results are still high – as the clutter is limited. But all is already going full steam into the computer gaming world. Sims Online – one of the worlds best established computer games –

no longer will take place in a non-branded world – but in a world where players in the game will be able to buy a McDonald's kiosk and sell the company's branded food products, earning "simoleans," the game's currency. Eating that food will also improve their standing within the game.

It's another way of building brands. Where brands in the past never interacted with its customers or in any way engaged them in their philosophies – the role is about to change. The brands are about to learn that creating an engaged consumer is all about ... engaging them. Surprise! All this kick starts a wave of brands moving from the passive world of branding to a world where brands to a substantial stronger degree needs constantly to interact with the consumer. Taking onboard a role, playing the role and constantly giving the consumer feedback. A brave new world of branding has yet again written a new chapter – this time online – I hope you are part of the story.



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## Further Information

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