

Improving the Service Offering of European Football Organizations Through Service Design

**A Theoretical Implementation of Digital Best Practices
From Esports**

PROCESS REPORT

Master Thesis by Christian Karger

Service Systems Design

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ABSTRACT

Developments in sports spectatorship technology have changed the normative ways of live sports enjoyment making passively watching football on television both insufficient and obsolete to certain users. Each year, competitive esports has amassed a larger following with its online streaming measure resulting in a recently emerged superpower that is seemingly impossible to ignore. With an increasing focus on experience-centric services, where deeper customer connection is achieved by heightened emotional engagement, service design acumen is used to explore how European football organizations can improve the user experience by implementing modern best practices from esports.

The methodological approach is based on the Design Thinking Process. Grounded in existing academia, a comparative analysis, quantitative research through a survey, and qualitative research through exploratory user-centered interviews and concept tests, as well as expert interviews, a solution is presented.

This thesis, finally, provides a theoretical implementation of viable means which could increase the emotional engagement and user experience of European football fans. This can happen by supplying the fans with the opportunity to consume casual football content, communicate with the players, and generally allow for a higher level of participation in the service experience.

KEYWORDS: Service design, Benchmarking, User-centered design, Esports, European football, User experience

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INTRODUCTION

This master thesis paper is written by Christian Karger for the Service Systems Design program at Aalborg University, Copenhagen in 2023. The project was supervised by Nicola Morelli, professor at Aalborg University.

It presents the process of, through service design practices, investigating the opportunity for professional European football organizations to implement best-practice solutions from professional esports organizations, to improve their service offering. It is organized chronologically and follows the paths taken by the researcher initiated with a case presentation. The research process along with the design process is included in this report, with the coherent product report solely presenting the culmination of the process through the final suggestion to the research question. Furthermore, the report takes the perspective of the researcher to transparentize the reasonings behind the paths taken and involve the reader in the process of research and design.

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives for this thesis are composed of the official learning objectives specified by Aalborg University (n.d.) and my own personal learning goals. The personal learning goals are reflecting my desired outcome and personal motivation. The thesis should demonstrate how I over the course of the project obtained the required knowledge and competencies to call myself a service systems designer.

Official Learning Objectives

Knowledge

- Must have knowledge about the possibilities to apply appropriate methodological approaches to specific study areas.

- Must have knowledge of design theories and methods that focus on the design of advanced and complex product-service systems.
- Account for the scientific foundation, and scientific problem areas, of the specialization.
- Describe the state of the art of relevant research in the specialization.

Skills

- Must be able to work independently, identify major problem areas (analysis), and adequately address problems and opportunities (synthesis).
- Must demonstrate the capability of analyzing, designing, and representing innovative solutions.
- Must demonstrate the ability to evaluate and address (synthesize) major organizational and business issues emerging in the design of a product-service system.
- Master the scientific methods and general skills associated with the specialization.
- Produce a project report according to norms of the area, apply correct terminology, document extensive command over relevant literature, and communicate and discuss the research-based foundation, problem, and results of the project orally, graphically, and in writing in a coherent manner.
- Critically evaluate the results of the project in relation to relevant literature and established scientific methods and models, and evaluate and discuss the project's problem area in a relevant scientific context.
- Evaluate and discuss the project's potential for further development.

Competences

- Must be able to master design and development work in situations that are complex, unpredictable, and require new solutions (synthesis).
- Must be able to independently initiate and implement discipline-specific and interdisciplinary cooperation and assume professional responsibility (synthesis).
- Must have the capability to independently take responsibility for own professional development and specialization (synthesis).
- Participate in, and independently carry out, technological development and research, and apply scientific methods in solving complex problems.

- Plan, execute, and manage complex research and/or development tasks, and assume professional responsibility for independently carrying out, potentially cross-disciplinary, collaborations.
- Independently assume responsibility for own scientific development and specialization.

Personal Learning Objectives

- Utilize service design principles in an environment where such is often disregarded.
- Gain comprehensive knowledge in the field of live sports spectatorship.
- Create a project that will add useful insights to the field.
- Propose a modern concept that could disrupt the current norms of live sports spectatorship by adding another relevant dimension to the service experience.

Service Design

Service design is a process where designers create sustainable solutions and optimal experiences for customers, the service provider, and other involved actors. It is an approach to tackling problem-solving, optimizing an existing service, or designing a new service concept (Holmlid & Evenson, 2008). As a designer, it is about seeing the bigger picture and understanding a service experience from start to finish. Users do not access experiences in a vacuum but within complex chains of individual interactions. Service design can help improve each interaction and ensure an optimal correlation between them. As a field of study and work service design has rapidly expanded. The field has gathered interest from a broad range of industries, the public sector, and academia alike. It is an approach to explore new opportunities where users are recognized as part of the value-creation and where understanding the experience in-depth is the driver of innovation and improvement. Not all industries, however, have taken advantage of the benefits that service design principles can offer. It can vastly improve the user experience of a given service, or change the status quo for the better, which in return can result in happier users and refine the overall business.

Case Presentation

Football as a commercial industry has been researched and improved for numerous years. On the contrary, the esports industry lacks scientific rigor despite the academic research on the topic being nascent (Lokhman et al., 2018). In spite of the lack of thoroughness and academic diligence, the rapidly evolving popularity of modern esports has allowed the industry to become an unneglectable market segment (Tang, 2018). Esports utilize concepts and theories from European football and many indistinguishable between the two are present (Kane & Spradley, 2017). For instance, recent results indicate that the affective disposition theory (ADT) is applicable to both traditional sports spectatorship and esports. This explains why people enjoy mediated entertainment and how individuals form affiliations with people and characters (Trent & Shafer, 2020). ADT predicts that enjoyment increases when liked team or player experiences positive outcomes and decreases with negative ones. This has emerged as a precondition for greater suspense regardless of specific team or player preference. Increased suspense is further increased with higher uncertainty of the outcome of the game. That being said, the uncertainty of the outcome of the games is outside of the scope of this project. This is instead a matter of sports performance, league structure, and competitiveness.

Esports differentiates itself from football through its online format and private league. Overall, Wagner (2006), argues that theoretical approaches and methodologies from traditional sports are applicable to esports as well and vice versa. This paper takes the standpoint that the similarities between the two industries and their market conditions provide homogeneous service design possibilities.

The organizations operating within the esports industry have shown impressive financial results, which is far from awaited amongst professional European football organizations (Bang et al., 2014). European football organizations have had difficulties attracting fans to the stadiums and for several of them, the number of spectators both physically in the stadium and on live television, has been declining (Karger, 2020). Income from physical attendees is, in the company of sponsorship and broadcast rights, the main source of revenue for the clubs (Storm, 2013). Football as an industry has been, according to Kornai (1979), affected by the presence of soft budget constraints, where despite financial losses, the organizations will be saved from bankruptcy by investors and even sometimes the

Project Limitations

A few factors limit the scope of this project. Firstly, it strictly focuses on the service offerings of professional football organizations in Europe. Knowingly, other factors are crucial in terms of the possibilities of those organizations such as legislation from governing bodies, media and sponsorship contracts, and league structure. The organizations have different elements included in their contracts with, for instance, sponsors. This means that the final suggestion might not be applicable to all football organizations in Europe. This report does take the ecosystems of the two industries into account but does not encompass the unique characteristics of specific organizations. The focus here is solely to provide a theoretical suggestion on how the user experience could be improved through the lens of best practices from the esports industry. Currently, the live experience of European football does not allow for much innovation from an organizational perspective due to media rights (Storm, 2013). The media controls the televised output leaving the football organizations bounded in terms of innovative ventures. With those circumstances in mind, the report examines what could be done as a designer to create a more enabling ecosystem where a solution could thrive.

Secondly, an in-depth feasibility analysis from a financial perspective is not covered throughout. Whether the suggested idea is a good idea from a cost-benefit perspective is overlooked. From a design standpoint, the focus is predominantly user-centered, meaning suggesting a solution that would result in users being more pleased and emotionally engaged with the service offering.

Thirdly, as the academic research on esports is not as well-covered as is the case for European football, the majority of the data on esports, in particular, is based on interviews and surveys. This compromise could decrease the reliability of the research on the esports industry.

Lastly, resource limitation was a factor. Both monetary when it comes to prototyping, but also time restrictions. Despite this report being the sole focus of the fourth semester, it was done by just one researcher. The consequence was that the suggested service concept was not tested sufficiently. To create an optimal version of the suggested solution, further testing is necessary.

government. Notwithstanding, the occasional showing of a win-maximized strategy instead of rational profit maximization, means that European football organizations often disregard best practices within service design (Késenne, 2006). This results in an unhealthy competitive environment as some football organizations focus more on winning their games than running a healthy business that offers a great user experience.

Project Relevance

Larger football organizations are often considered “Too big to fail” (Storm, 2013, p.87). Because of that, major improvements in their service offering have not been a necessity in terms of financial survivability. Modern service design disciplines have, therefore, not to a larger degree been implemented in the strategies of European football organizations. Nor have they potently modernized their service offering, but is rather based on long traditions within European football. This paper ought to explore exactly that. How football organizations can improve their service offering by applying esports best practices. The increased focus on experience-centric services where improved experiences are to be achieved by heightened emotional engagement, makes this project fitting (Matthews, 2016). Esports has differentiated itself from football and digitalized the service in a format that aids emotional engagement. The theory is that football could benefit from implementing some of the esports practices. Exploring whether this is the case and how, could aid the future improvement of the football user experience. The report is by no means meant to frame esports as an overall superior industry to that of European football but merely as an investigation as to whether European football, from a user perspective, could benefit from implementing some of the esports practices. It is known that some European football organizations are doing considerably to improve the user experience already and that some esports organizations are not great at increasing the emotional engagement of their fans. It is rather the ecosystems of esports that provide beneficial circumstances to increase emotional engagement, and that ought to be utilized in European football.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can European football organizations improve the user experience of users between the ages of 19 - 36 through increased emotional engagement by implementing digital best practices from esports?

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

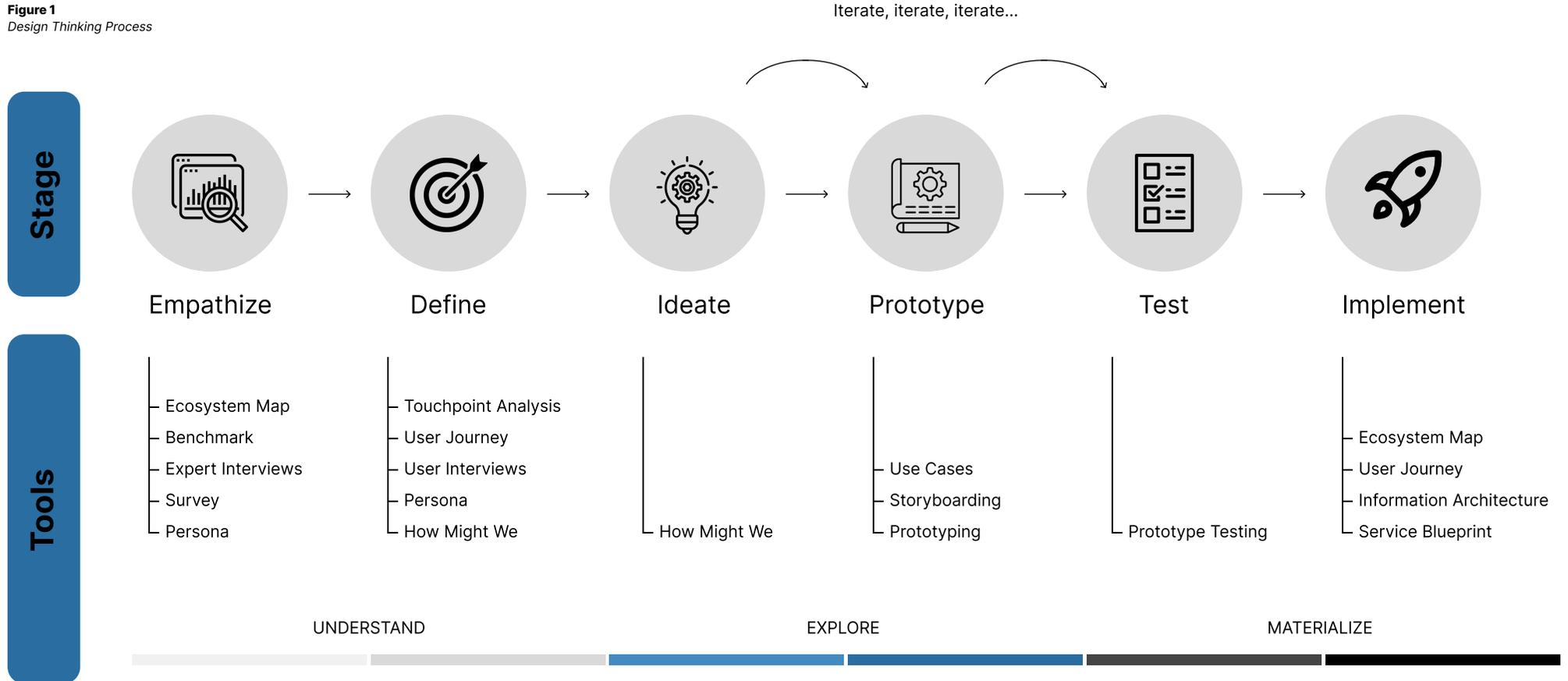
To thoroughly understand a case or a design problem it is a necessity for a designer to remain critical, reflexive, and repeatedly seeking to render the complexity of the matter (Lowgren & Soltermann, 2007). This chapter presents the framework used to examine the case. The framing of the design process will be delineated along with how it supported my actions.

Design Thinking Process

The methodological approach of this report is based on the Design Thinking Process which contains five interconnected steps: Empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test, and implement (Friis & Yu Siang, 2021). The process is simply illustrated and intertwines a divergent and convergent approach, and allows for iterations by revisiting earlier steps if needed. The report will follow the paths taken to answer the research question framed and structured through the six steps of design thinking. This process is an agile methodology including a user-centered focus. This allows the researcher to take a creative approach, which additionally, gives a great starting point to understand the complexity of the industry and its underlying system. Notwithstanding, the method includes a prototyping stage, which means that concept tests can be made, and ultimately result in ending up with a more genuine solution. Besides, the Design Thinking Process gives a structured overview, while allowing for flexibility and following a non-linear path. The first two steps (Empathize and define) serve as the research part and materialize into a concrete opportunity. The ideate phase and onwards serve as the design part in which the earlier defined opportunity will be explored. This methodology calls for continuously enhancing the service through multiple iterations and letting the research corroborate the final solution. Consequently, the process even though presented as linear in this report to unravel an otherwise muddled read was in reality more iterative. It is, however, still organized sequentially for the decisions made.

The Design Thinking Process is often criticized for its time-consuming procedures which are not always needed, for instance, if the solution is obvious (Iskander, 2018). That being said, as the entirety of my focus this semester was on this project, the completion of these steps was considered doable given the time span of this project, hence still valuable.

Figure 1
Design Thinking Process



Data Collection

A mix of quantitative and qualitative methods was used to strengthen the preconditions for valid conclusions. By using mixed methods to explore the case topic I could more effectively understand the underlying mechanisms. Other than that, it gave me a better chance to create a greater solution by understanding the topic from different perspectives. Both quantitative and qualitative research provides a more absolute and compelling understanding of a given problem space than either method alone, thus increasing the reliability and validity of the study (Frederiksen, 2015). In regard to quantitative data, the objective was to gain at least 100 respondents. As the sample size increases, the average of the observed values will converge to the expected value or true population mean resulting in an increased reliability. In simpler terms, it suggests that with a large enough sample size, the observed outcomes will become more predictable and closer to the expected probabilities (Larsen & Vejleskov, 2006). When it came to qualitative initiatives, the objective was not based on the number of participants, but rather on their relevance to the case.

A mix of primary and secondary data was also used. The research went between primary data in the form of interviews and surveys, and secondary data in the form of academic- and scientific papers to constantly test newly gained knowledge, thereby giving a finer chance to make a good analysis.

The process was affected by a need for an initial understanding of the underlying mechanisms of the markets, followed by a user-centered approach revolving around the opportunity space. One could argue that this is an abductive way of thinking. It is acknowledged that the worldview of the researcher is unique resulting in an unconscious bias, thereby influencing how the data is perceived, examined, and debated (Clar et al., 2021). Namely, the final solution presented in this report, may not be the only solution to the stated possibility, but simply a result of my process, interpretation of data, and chosen methods and tools.

Each step of the process was tackled with an open mindset, however, not with an omission of hypotheses. For instance, as aged data express that commercial sports organizations in Europe have difficulty attracting spectators, the offset of the empathize phase was affected accordingly. Elaborately, each step and the obtained knowledge laid the foundation for the

following, of course, affected by my own inevitable interpretation of the extrapolated data (Bjørner, 2015, p. 20). The accessible research on the field would act as a guide to a more specific area of focus.

Excluding desk research, the gathering of own data started with the utilization of qualitative data. This is even despite the scarcity of statistical reliability or validity of this method (Bjørner, 2015, p. 21). As a minor background knowledge of the field was present, a qualitative initiation entirely acted as a means to gain a deeper understanding and a specification of the industry through the eyes of experts.

On top of the collection of data, different tools and methods were used throughout the five steps of the Design Thinking Process. The following section will present their contribution to the process, including slight reasoning behind their inclusion.

Methods and Tools

 **ECOSYSTEM MAP:** This was mapped to visualize and recognize the industry differences between football and esports.

 **BENCHMARK:** This was chosen to gain an understanding of the valuable digital practices from esports organizations, and to get initial ideas for improvements.

 **EXPERT INTERVIEWS:** These were conducted to gain first-hand insights from esports experts to complement the desk research.

 **SURVEY:** This was made to add some quantitative data to the project with the goal of exploring general user tendencies and preferences. Ultimately the data here sought to aid me in creating thorough personas.

 **PERSONA:** These were constructed to capture and synthesize the user insights from previous analyses to assist me in the ideation phase.

 **TOUCHPOINT IQ:** This analysis was done to explore discrepancies or opportunities in the two user journeys of football and esports to guide me toward a specific focus.

 **USER JOURNEY:** I opted to use this tool to better empathize with the end-to-end experience of the users and identify opportunities for improving that experience.

 **USER INTERVIEWS:** This was made to add qualitative user opinions to the project which would initiate the ideation phase.

 **HOW MIGHT WE:** This method was incorporated to turn the research question into an opportunity through an open-ended question that helped the exploration and ideation of a solution.

 **USE CASES:** I created use cases to define the specific actions that the underlying system of the concept should be able to perform to meet the needs of its intended users.

 **STORYBOARDING:** This was utilized to initiate an illustrative version of the solution and quickly explore different design possibilities.

 **PROTOTYPING:** This was done to create testable wireframes of the design solution allowing me to gather user feedback and refine the concept.

 **INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE:** This was used as a way to organize and structure the content within the design concept to look for general usability improvements.

 **SERVICE BLUEPRINT:** I incorporated this to visually identify pain points, understand where processes could be streamlined, and create an understanding of the relations between the involved actors.

EMPATHIZE PHASE

As part of the first step it was necessary to get an understanding of the two industries, their similarities, and differences, the opportunities, and the best practices within esports. I needed to know what industry mechanisms separate the two ecosystems to spot possible opportunities. Nevertheless, an understanding of how successful esports organizations are currently operating and securing a great user experience and emotional engagement was required. The constitution of this step was mostly secondary research, through the most relevant accessible scientific discoveries on the topic. The research gathered here will dictate the following steps.

Mapping the Industries

People's behavior cannot be designed. Even so, it is possible to create conditions that make some ways of being and doing things more probable than others (Manzini, 2015). This is also true for active, participative behavior. The question is, how can conditions be created by which users make choices willingly and where different user motivations can thrive? The consumption of live football or football content in general is subject to decades of traditions with disruption being distant. The objective was to, through organizational innovations, reply to this question by intervening in the existing ecosystem, at various moments, and on different levels. Simply exploit technological possibilities, features, or infrastructures capable of sustaining numerous autonomous but connected initiatives to improve the given experience. This step aspired to map the existing ecosystems of football and esports respectively.

The Football Industry

European football use flow television as their online means to reach the fans. Besides that, physically attending stadium games is how live football is consumed. This means that the user needs either to pay a television subscription to the channels that will broadcast their

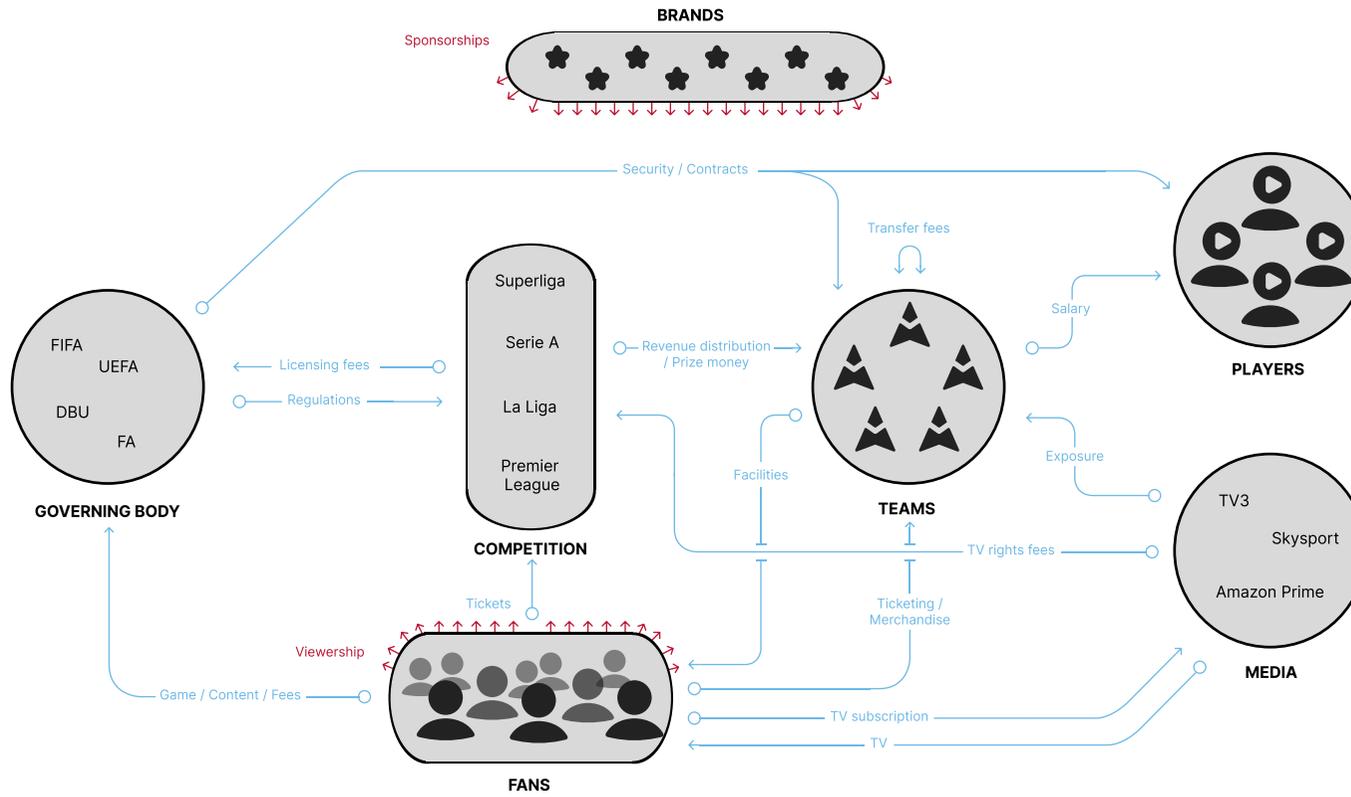
favorite team or pay for a ticket to watch them at the stadium. This is problematic since the domination of broadcast television and the structural integrity of national televisual systems has been eroded (Rohde & Breuer, 2017). What is more, the viewership of many European football clubs is decreasing both on television and physically in the stadium (Storm, 2013). Many portals through which televised content can be delivered have created new market conditions. Broadcast corporations are now forced to collaborate and compete with distributors and providers in the digital technology sector, such as Amazon Prime, Youtube, and Twitch (Hutchins et al., 2019). This is something that still has not fully been exploited by football organizations.

From a business perspective, European football is characterized by an overinvestment environment in which teams progressively compete based on their spending power (Dietl et al., 2008). If you look at the industry especially the largest leagues in Europe, fees have far outgrown revenues. As a result, top clubs increasingly require large financial resources to remain competitive. Such resources are often provided by shareholders acting as non-profit-seeking investors or patrons (Andreff, 2007).

The ecosystem of European football is regulated and controlled by, for instance, DBU (Denmark) or FA (England) as the facilitator on a national level, and FIFA and UEFA on an international level. Teams are the mediators between fans and the player and are generally involved in many processes compared to esports organizations, making the required skillset more extensive. Teams being the mediators between fans and the players, as well as having a governing body overseeing the industry, on the one hand, gives a sense of security. On the other hand, it also creates a barrier between the players and the fans.

The teams are hosting the games often in stadiums owned by the organization. Football as an industry is unique in the sense that the organizations own an asset of huge value but with a very low occupancy rate. Typically the stadiums are utilized only 20-30 times per year (Rohde & Breuer, 2018). Utilizing the stadiums for other services such as concerts and other sporting activities has long been considered a main area of potential for such organizations. This is something numerous football organizations are doing such as the Danish organizations FC Copenhagen, AC Horsens, and Århus GF (Storm, 2013).

Figure 2
Ecosystem Football



The Esports Industry

Esports use online streaming through, for instance, Youtube and Twitch to reach fans (Southern, 2017). This allows esports tournaments to broadcast their events online to millions of potential viewers for free. Esports can reach a large range of consumers across the world through the internet. This contributes greatly to the viewer base, as accessing broadcasts of tournaments is easy and requires nothing but an internet connection. It is anticipated that in terms of viewership, esports will soon outgrow traditional sports (Taylor, 2018).

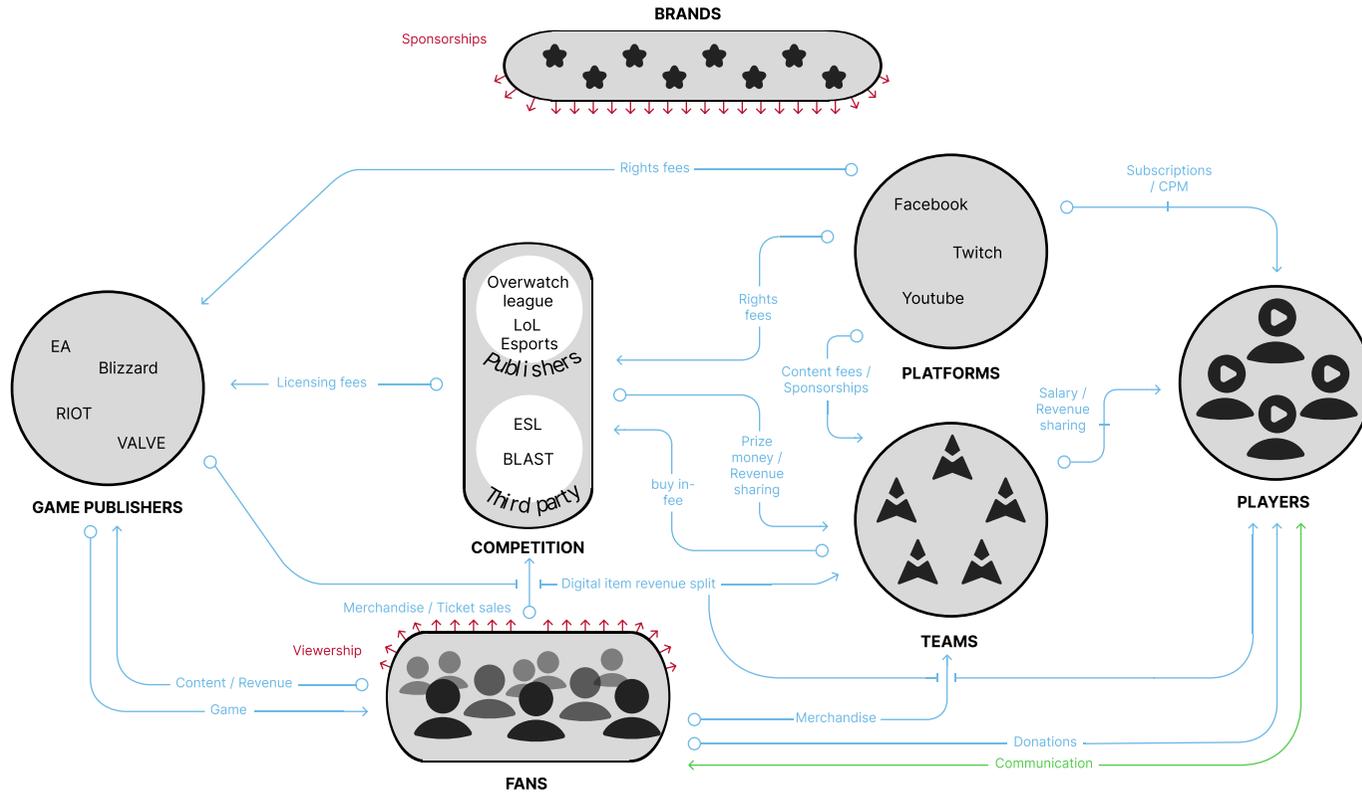
What is more, a crucial aspect of the streaming services offered through the internet is that they allow the fans to have a channel to communicate with the professional players of esports which increases emotional engagement (Hamara & Sjöblom, 2017). These streaming services have live chat rooms where the viewers can communicate with the players and ask questions. This creates a deeper connection between spectators of esports and the game's professional players, which builds a greater sense of community and achievement within esports communities. All players, both amateurs and professional esports players, are also playing on a shared domain. This means that casual users of esports games can, by chance, play with or against their idols simply just by playing the game. Taylor (2018) states that this tendency leaves the players actively acting as both brand and community managers as well, resulting in an even stronger fan base for both the games and the teams. From a player perspective, this effectively gives another two sources of salary, as the fans directly can send donations via the streaming services, as well as receiving a cost per mille (CPM) share as the platforms occasionally are showing ads.

Contrary to the ecosystem of football (See p. 15), esports lacks regulations through a governing body (Hollist, 2015). The league format is simply just trying to emulate that of the private American leagues such as the National Football League (NFL) or the Major League Baseball (MLB) (Sprangler, 2017). This might be beneficial as there is a mutual agreement amongst existing sports management literature, that the league structure of European football is a part of the existing problems of difficulties in turning a profit (Bang et al., 2014). In European football, teams are regulated or promoted based on performance. This nourishes the overinvestment aspect of the industry as a correlation between player spending and performance, generally can be seen (Storm, 2013). The teams can affect their

position by spending more money on players. This is sometimes beneficial as relegations can have a massive effect on income. In esports, a spot in the league is instead purchased at the beginning of the season. Finally, it is the leagues themselves that are hosting the live events, leaving the teams out of this facet.

Xiao (2019) identified four elements that positively impacted the attitudes toward esports: aesthetics, social norms, drama, and escapism. Those elements are the same in football. That being the case, in esports, the positivity towards watching esports from a social perspective has largely improved. The fact that esports viewership is now seen as a normal and socially acceptable behavior among friends and family further improved the positivity towards esports. Drama relates to the uncertainty of the outcome of who will win. This generates suspense. The ability of both traditional sports and esports to generate suspense reflects another similarity between the two (Xiao, 2019). Escapism is an element frequently mentioned as a primary consumer motivator for watching or playing esports. The nature of video games is meant to be very immersive, making it a great distraction for users to help them forget about difficulties and unhappiness in life (Yee, 2006).

Figure 3
Ecosystem Esports



Benchmark Analysis

Benchmarking is a systematic exploration and evaluation of comparable companies or organizations (Krishnamoorthy & D'Lima, 2014). Through a benchmarking analysis, it is possible to assess the practices of best-performing organizations, their internal processes, and initiatives, and consequently, encourage continuous improvements (Downs, 2018).

A benchmark analysis was conducted to investigate how best-performing esports organizations have approached the challenge of increased user engagement. Specifically, the benchmark analysis sought to explore the following points:

- **How do esports organizations increase the viewing time of their users?**
- **How are esports organizations increasing user engagement?**

To increase reliability the esports organizations had to be present within the esports ecosystem boundaries. If looking at best practices in just a like-minded organization with esports attachment, the comparability might be lacking, thus reducing the value and validity of the analysis.

Benchmarking is frequently criticized for merely focusing on emulating existing market approaches, rather than considering new options to lead ahead. This is particularly relevant in an ever-changing world where what might have worked in the past may not be suitable for the future due to changing trends, technology, and tools. An exploration of the esports consensus and its practices is still relevant due to the first-moving patterns within the industry. Since European football has been at a standstill for years without groundbreaking changes to the service offering, a benchmarking of esports is still valuable.

Benchmark Findings

Increased viewing time

There are certain features of the mediums of esports that draw spectators in and make them increase their viewing time. Chat-room features to connect with the players, quality of the stream, and virtual rewards. These are all key elements that viewers of esports consider when choosing what to watch (Qian et al., 2019). Also, as covered in the section *The Esports Industry* (see p. 16), esports has become a socially acceptable activity making it a talking point amongst family and friends, such as has been the case for football. But how did that happen? A big part of the answer should be credited to the game publishers, the leagues, and the media. Jang and Byon (2020), found that esports recreational gameplay consumption is linked to the consumption of online media esports. Live-streaming content by individual players is a new type of media consumption and should be distinguished from broadcasted esports events.

In traditional sports and its flow television media, consumption is constrained by the linearity of the imposed schedule. These constraints are reinforced by commentary and established sports viewing habits, as well as the social rituals of the watching fans. Contrarily, streaming service media have provided new possibilities such as watching multiple live esports events simultaneously on different screens. This way the user can cut between different events in quick succession, access integrated live statistics, and explore interactive features during mediated play. In short, streaming services offer a more extensive and customizable service, which is fitting to the modern way of entertainment (Jang et al., 2020). Users are seeking quick amusement, with the ability to swap between channels and interact with the content (Hutchins et al., 2019).

On an organizational level credit also has to be given. The teams are signing players for the sole purpose of streaming, meaning that the streamers create content for the team. Larger teams usually have streamers from different parts of the world, resulting in a constant live flow of content. This is the case with, for example, Team Liquid, G2, and Cloud 9 (Murke, (2022). Nonetheless, even the contracts of professional players often include some mandatory online streaming and creation of content (Hutchins et al., 2019). According to Trent and Shafer (2020), a high level of accessibility and supply of content is crucial to increase both the fan base and the viewing time.

Expert Interviews

In order to provide further value to the benchmark analysis, some interviews with esports experts were necessary due to the lack of existing team-specific research. These interviews were semi-structured. This means that the questions were asked in a specific order, but that I as the interviewer had the leverage of deviating from the exact questionnaire if needed. I could also be flexible in administering the path of the interviews if follow-up questions were to be needed (Larsen & Vejleskov, 2006). The process of creating the questionnaire (See *Appendix A*) required numerous iterations. It was based on an elaboration of knowledge from previous analyses, exploring topics that seem insufficiently covered through existing accessibility academia, and, most importantly, gaining in-depth insights into how esports experts are approaching the topic of increasing user engagement.

The interviewees were selected through quota sampling, where they were selected based on pre-specified characteristics (Bjørner, 2015 p. 62). They had to be working within the esports ecosystem with insights into growth strategies, esports tendencies, and industry mechanisms. As Eisenhardt (1989) stated, there is no ideal number of interviews when it comes to qualitative research. Because this round of interviews in part acted as aidance to the benchmark analysis on how successful esports organizations are providing value, the number of interviewees was only two. I was aware of its limitations in terms of not over-generalizing the data to make it applicable to all esports organizations. This sampling method was in this case, instead, time efficient and well suited as an exploratory study of best practices.

A full transcription of the two interviews (*Appendix B* & *Appendix C*) was carried out as essential information oftentimes emerges only after the interviews have been conducted (Döring & Bortz, 2015). The interviews were conducted online and lasted 21 - 25 minutes. The extrapolation of the interview data was done through the traditional coding method (Bjørner, 2015). Finally, both interviews were done in Danish, and have been translated into English, to the best of my capabilities.

Interview Findings

The assessment of the interview data revealed multiple interesting insights. The reasons for the growth of esports were, in the minds of the interviewees, due to the accessibility of the content, which required nothing but internet access, the on-demand entertainment that esports offers, which taps into the existing trends, and finally, the amount of action that the games naturally offer. The latter is enhanced by great live events.

Both organizations of which the interviewees are working are putting a large emphasis on a steady flow of content. This mostly includes online content on platforms such as Youtube, Twitch, or Facebook. Pop-up events, and meet and greet are also a part of the daily tasks.

The improvement of the user experience is tackled with multi-platform content, interactive content during live streaming, and creating content that the fans have requested. Charlotte (*Appendix C*), said that at Astralis they do the following: "Creating fun content on different platforms to get some reach and have a wider audience really. For instance, doing weird challenges with our players playing against cheating fans or playing 1 against 5 and the like. It is just something that we found is great fun for the fans that they have the chance to be a part of such a thing and have fun with their idols."

User engagement is reached through the two-way communication that esports platforms offer by involving the users in co-creation where they can partake in the generation of content. They can ask live questions to the broadcasters or a specific player, request certain challenges for the players to solve, and even partake in the challenges.

Both of the interviewees thought that the esports ecosystem had some advantages to that of football, with accessibility and simplicity being mentioned as advantageous.

Figure 4
Expert Interview Findings

	Reasons for growth	Differentiates	Improve user experience	Increase viewing time	Doing better	Opportunity	User engagement	Superior ecosystem?
Jonas	Amount of action and on-demand entertainment - Computer games are designed to provide action	Online media	Multi-platform an interactive content to make it easily accessible	Voice communication, live statistics and interactive content	Keeping the attention of the fans with better camera angles and more action	Make more content with the players on social media	Broadcasters answering questions throughout the event	Yes, it is simple
Charlotte	The availability of the platforms	The online platforms instead of TV	Try different things out and involve the users in generating new ideas for content	Online content, pop-up events, and meet and greet	More constant flow of content	More interesting content - Involve the fans in challenges, mini games and such	Involving the users in the creation of content and having them participate in the stream	It seems like it - it has some advantages

Survey

The existing data at this point consisted predominantly of desk research and, of course, expert interviews. However, quantifiable data originating from users was lacking. To ensure a user-centered design solution, I opted to do that through a survey. This could provide me with some general user tendencies. The survey targeted consumers of live esports and football and was treated as a divergent analysis. This segment, despite being broad, was chosen as it would give me the prerequisites to get a more resolute segment.

The goal of the survey

The goal was to accumulate data that along with previous analyses could create a thorough view of the users and their preferences. This was materialized through personas (See p. 25) which would aid me in making the design task at hand less complex by knowing who I was designing for, and what the preferences are. There was a need to grasp which contradictory opinions and user characteristics existed within the realms of the industries. With the survey, I sought to verify the validity of the theory that the esports format is superior but I also sought to promote the define phase. If the empirical data did not support the theory, an iteration would instead be the strategy to ensure a suitable solution.

To increase reliability the aim was to receive a minimum of 100 responses from users with different involvement and experiences with esports and football to provide a high market representativeness. A higher number will, unarguably, decrease the statistical significance of the data. The strategy here was simply to upload it to various social media platforms including Facebook, Twitch, and Youtube which are some of the main actors in online streaming. I am aware that uploading it to my own social media could lead to results not benefitting the opinions of the general population.

The questions were formulated neutrally, with an omission of personal opinions to avoid prejudices (Bjørner, 2021). Added to that, the questions were formulated clearly and with distinct options. This will help secure answers that are accurate and avoid confusion. An "other" option was added to a few of the questions in case the suggested options did not match the opinions of the respondents (*How to write good survey questions*, n.d). Finally, no strict conclusions were made unless 75 percent of the pool of data had chosen the same answer. This was to ensure a high level of validity.

Question 1: How old are you?

- 18 or younger
- Between 19 - 36
- Between 37 - 54
- 55 or older

At this point in the process, no data suffices in specifying user penchants based on age. Former analysis revealed that a considerable proportion of the esports user base were young men (Sun, 2019). This description is not substantial enough to make a generalization of a clear user segment. It was necessary to specify this more to uncover the motivations behind different age groups, and to explore if age plays a significant role in the motivations of the users. The age ranges were simply added to make the comparison to other questions more tangible.

Question 2: What gender do you identify as?

- Male
- Female
- Other

Along with the former question, it was relevant to detect whether gender plays a noticeable role in the answers. If this were to be the case, another persona would be needed.

Question 3: Do you occasionally watch any of the following live sports online?

- Esports
- Football
- Both

The goal here was to distinguish the rest of the answers from the unique users of any of the two. It was determined early in this report, that the two can be compared. However, it was relevant to explore whether the amount of consumption varied, and whether consumer habits would differ.

Question 4: If you have watched live football on television, how would you describe that experience in one word?

The aim here was to connect the two service experiences with a feeling. I wanted to describe the service experiences through the inclusion of the five most frequently mentioned feelings. The aim was also to create two-word clouds that would visualize the two industries from a user perspective. This could potentially give me a direction of what is good about esports and what is bad about football. It would be easier to tackle the solution space if I could narrow down the good or bad touchpoints.

Question 5: If you have watched live esports online, how would you describe that experience in one word?

Question 6: How often do you watch either live football or esports online?

- At least 3 times per week
- 1 - 2 times per week
- 1 - 2 times per month
- Less than once a month

In the effort of creating rigorous personas, an understanding of the user habits was needed. By comparing the frequency of consumption with other questions, it was possible to look for common denominators which would add value to the personas.

Question 7: Do you prefer the TV format of football or the online streaming format of esports?

- The online streaming format of esports
- The TV format of football

Despite the esports format being favored by the minimal existing academia earlier in this paper, as well as being preferred by the interviewees of esports organizations, it was beneficial to add a recent user perspective as well. The interviewees were creators of the content, which could give them a different perspective. Adding the recipients of the content to the equation was a necessity as the goal was to create a solution that was benefitting the users.

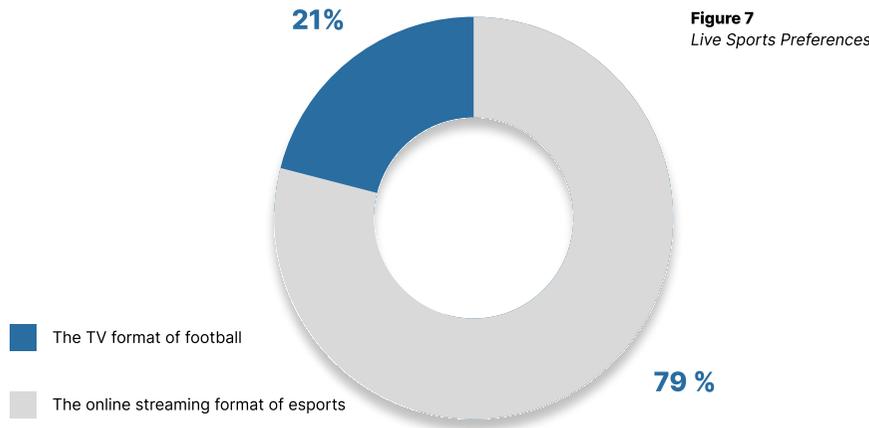
Question 8: Which of the following features are you using when watching esports online?

- Just specating
- In-Game statistics and interactive content
- Donations to the streamer
- Asking questions to the broadcaster, streamer, or player
- Suggesting challenges for the teams or the players
- Participating in challenges with teams or players if possible

Previous analysis revealed that these features are present in esports but to what extent they are used was not covered. Knowing which features are most frequently used by the users could tell me which are considered the most vital, hence providing me with useful insights when entering the ideation phase. If the most valuable features of esports are not present in football, an opportunity might arise in implementing those.

Esports was linked with unpredictability, entertainment, addictive, competitive, and action-packed. From the non-users of esports, words such as revolutionary, stressful, and technological were often mentioned. An interesting divergence is seen between the two experiences, with people perceiving esports as action packed and football as actionless. The mentioned action element of esports corresponds well with the data from the expert interviews where Jonas (*Appendix B*) also referred to the guaranteed action that esports offer.

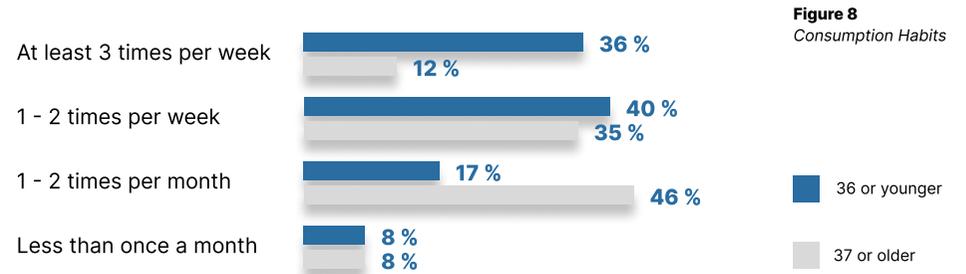
Do you prefer the TV format of football or the online streaming format of esports?



As the percentage of respondents answering that the online streaming format of esports is above the earlier mentioned limit of 75, the theory that this format is advantageous can be verified. Interestingly enough, if looking exclusively at users below 37, the percentage increases to 88%. This gives a clear indication as to how this segment prefers to watch live sports. Contrarily 50% of the respondents above 55 prefer watching live sports on

television. Presumably, some respondents older than 55 might favor television as this is the media they are used to and know how to use. A hurdle might exist in regard to understanding the esports format. This was not something explained in the survey, which in hindsight might have been valuable to some respondents.

How often do you watch either live football or esports online?



A correlation is seen between the frequency of live sports consumption and question eight. The amount of features used whilst watching live sports seems to increase proportionally with the frequency of consumption (*Appendix D*). Nonetheless, the propensity of using multiple added features seems more customary for the two younger segments. The more features they use during live sports, the more often they are watching live sports. Inversely, if they are just spectating, the tendency is that the frequency of consumption is lower. Conclusively, the existence of different ways of participating in live sports consumption became evident. Some preferred to passively spectate live content, whilst others preferred to actively partake in various challenges. The higher the level of participation, the larger the amount of consumption of live sports. The respondents that only watch esports are also more than double as likely to watch live sports at least three times per week than those who only watch live football. This can be due to the recurrence of esports and easy access. It can also be a manifestation that live esports offer a better experience, hence the fans are spending more time watching the events.

Finally, no clear picture could be drawn from analyzing the answers to question nine. Despite this question potentially being more well-suited for an interview question, the objective was to narrow down the focus. Anyhow, merely 64% of the answers revolved around the during phase of the experience whereby I could not conclude anything with certainty as a general tendency. The answers revolving around the during phase included elements such as in-game action, live statistics, and the intensity during matches. Others wrote that strategic components before kick-off, and social media content with challenges, were the things they liked the most about esports. Looking at the respondents aged 18 or younger isolatedly, the answers here revolved around on-demand live-streaming and two-way communication in 77% of the cases. It can be concluded that these constituents outside of live sports itself add the most value to this segment specifically.

Levels of Participation

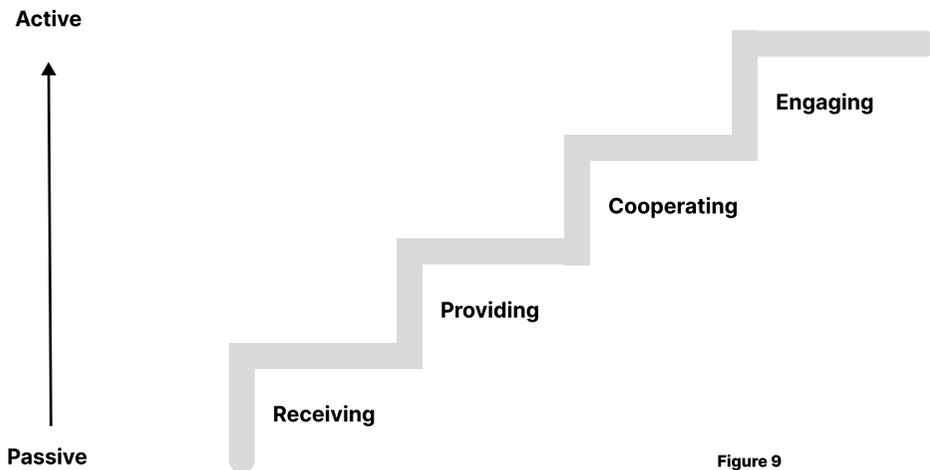


Figure 9
Levels of Participation

Based on the survey findings, it can, justifiably, be argued that the levels of participatory design in the community development framework of Nguyen et al. (2019) are applicable to increasing the emotional engagement of live sports users. The framework presents four levels of participation.

Receiving

The user is purely experiencing the live sport through one-way communication. The user does not have influence in the creation of content nor are they informally asked for opinions, ideas, and perspectives. This would be the case when watching live football on flow television.

Providing

At this level, two-way communication has been established and the user is provided with the opportunity for input and decision-making. This is the case during live broadcasting of esports, where the users can ask questions to the broadcasters or the players.

Cooperating

The cooperating level of participation allows for more input at the design stages, including defining the agenda or the design activities. This happens, for example, when a given esports team or a live streaming player, in collaboration with the users is coming up with a challenge or another content idea. This could be facilitated through a chat function.

Engaging

Finally, the engaging stage, as the name suggests, engages the user in the experience. This occurs when a given challenge or content idea allows for participation. The user is a part of the experience and the creation of content, which is the case, for example, when playing five fans against one Astralis professional (*Appendix C*).

Again, as the higher levels of participation yield more frequent consumption, a higher emotional engagement, and thus a better user experience, the focus will be on the cooperating and engaging levels.

Persona Version I

Based on the data obtained from the former analysis, two personas were generated to better be able to target coming explorations. These personas would evolve over the course of the *Define Phase* and would ultimately be displayed as version two (See p. 33). This sought to simplify the process of condensing existing knowledge to the coming research processes and thereby guaranteed that the final solution was based on real knowledge. Also, it is known that what adds value to one person in a given service setting, might be redundant for another and vice versa (Madsen, 2015).

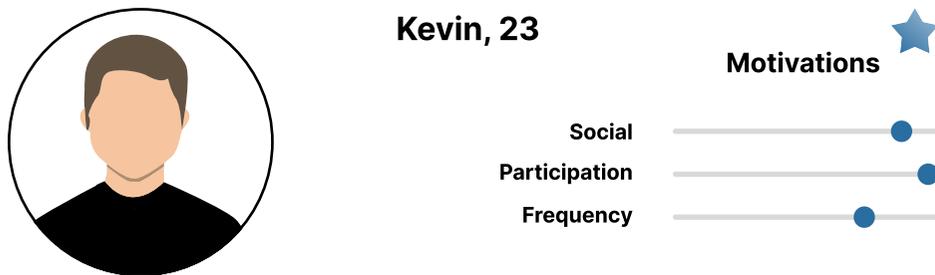


Figure 10
Persona (Kevin)

His story

Kevin is a 23-year-old guy who lives in Copenhagen. He enjoys playing various video games such as Counter-Strike (CS) and League of Legends (LoL). Kevin also watches different live sports including football on television and esports on Twitch of his favorite teams, although he sometimes finds football to be too tedious and has a lack of interactive features. He likes to watch live sports multiple times throughout the week and likes the interactive content that esports has to offer on Twitch. Kevin is a frequent user of the chat function where he can communicate with the players and the other spectators, which adds a social element to the experience as well. Kevin likes to request challenges from his favorite team Astralis, and, if possible, participate as well. This motivates him and strengthens the emotional engagement and connection he has with the team.

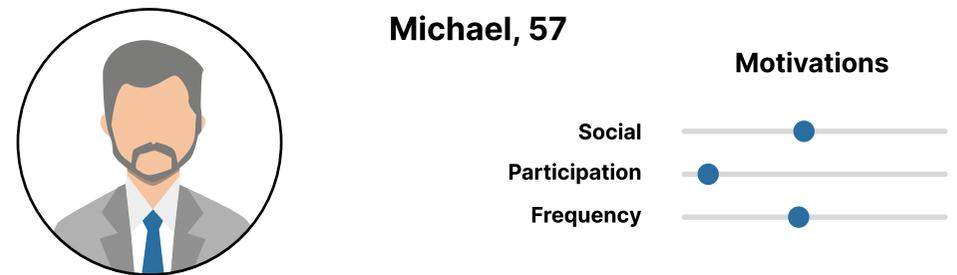


Figure 11
Persona (Michael)

His story

Michael is a 57-year-old man who lives in Brøndby. He is passionate about football and enjoys watching live games of his favorite team Brøndby IF at the stadium whenever they play at home. He also watches live games on television roughly once a week. Watching games on his television is his preferred way of consuming live sports if he cannot go to the stadium. He knows how it works, and he can just relax and enjoy the game without having to deal with technicalities and a range of features that he does not want to use anyways. Generally, Michael likes the way football is offered today.

DEFINE PHASE

After divergently researching the industries I needed to condense the obtained knowledge into a specified focus area. The define phase was approached with primary data and revolved around a touchpoint experiment and user interviews of both European football and esports.

Touchpoint Analysis

The goal of the earlier survey (See p. 20-24) was, among other things, to guide me toward an opportunity within a specific touchpoint or part of the experience. As a result was unclear I opted to make a touchpoint analysis. Here, two user journeys were made: The experience of live football on television and live esports exemplified through the journey of LoL from the perspective of Kevin (See *Persona Version 1* p. 25). The objective was to qualitatively elucidate whether the importance of the different touchpoints is equally well carried out. Simply, if a given touchpoint is central to the user's experience the quality of that touchpoint needs to be particularly well executed. By exploring discrepancies within the football user journey, or equivalencies in the esports user journey, opportunities regarding a specific part of the user journey could emerge. This was inspired by the touchpoint IQ principles of Wisler (2018) who argues that it is not just about mapping or improving individual touchpoints but rather about allocation, reduction, and effectivization of resources. It is about being average in the areas where the customers are indifferent or are not experiencing immense value if improved. At the same time, the service provider should be prominent in the areas that yield great value to the users.

To carry out this analysis, three users of both esports and live football agreed to participate in a qualitative setting of assessing the experienced touchpoints of the two experiences from 1-10. One being awful and 10 being perfect. Subsequently, a scoring of, again, 1-10 on how important those specific touchpoints are to them. The touchpoint IQ research should ideally provide a pattern of possibilities, and thereafter guide me in the ideation phase. I am aware that this was just based on three users, however, as this investigation was a part of

user interviews as well I could dig deeper into the answers in the questions to follow (See *User Interviews* p. 30-32).

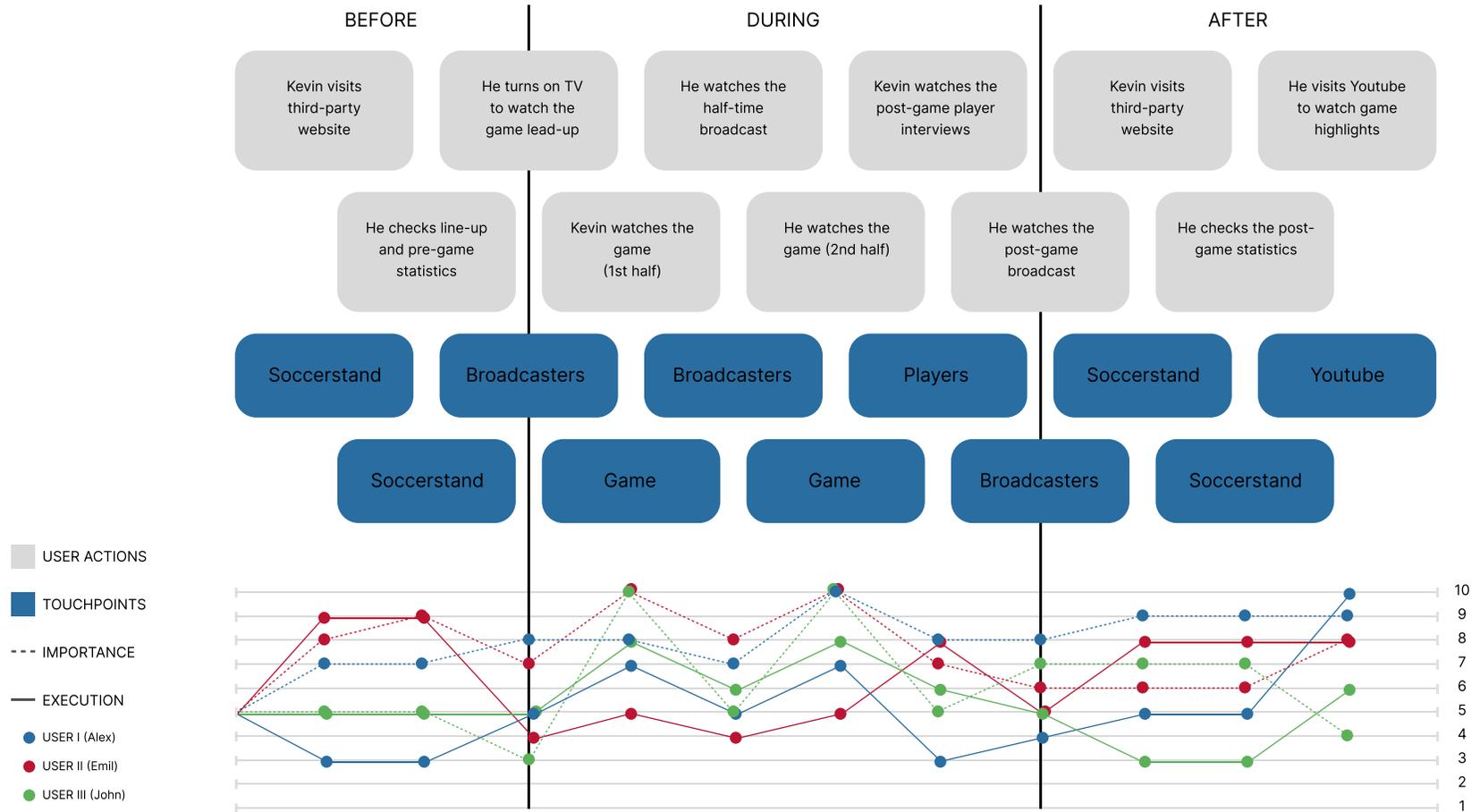
Football User Journey Findings

From the results, it can be seen that the importance of the touchpoint has an overall higher score than the execution of the given touchpoint in 10 out of 11 instances. It is noteworthy to mention that there does not seem to be any specific touchpoint that, generally, is of high importance yet the execution is correspondingly poor. That said, even though Wisler (2018) states that resources should be retained if improving a given touchpoint does not offer great value to the user it would, arguably, be preferred that the quality of the touchpoint excels importance.

There seem to be no redundancies in the touchpoints of the current football user journey. All of them appear rather important to the respondents with, foreseeably, the two halves of the game itself being perceived as the most pivotal. Nevertheless, Emil (*Appendix G*) mentioned that he finds football to be inferiorly executed to esports in general: "Esports has a lot more information on kills, structures taken down and stuff. The camera swaps angle a lot more often which to me gives a better dynamic to the experience. Football is more like one or two angles and a slower pace, so the dynamic is just less exciting. It of course depends on the game. It could end 4-4, which would make it a good game, but often that is not really the case. I feel like the quality of the game is now solely depending on the players and team performance."

A recognizable disparity can be seen for two of the respondents between the importance of the post-game statistics and the experienced execution of that touchpoint. Alex (*Appendix F*), argues that the current services of statistics are too minimalistic and only offer the bare minimum. He would like more statistics on a platform that is more interactive. For instance, being able to click on a certain player to watch his passing accuracy for the given game, compare numbers across the season, goals and assists per game, and so on.

Figure 12
Touchpoint IQ Football



Esports User Journey Findings

The esports user journey, based on the three respondents, materialized as a better and more holistic executed experience. Oppositely to the football user journey, the execution of a given touchpoint often overtakes the noted importance. Also, in the football user journey, no touchpoints seemed dispensable which is also the case with the esports user journey even with more touchpoints. That said, the final touchpoint of participating in challenges yielded a more arbitrary result. Two respondents gave this particular touchpoint a 10 on the scale of importance, with the final respondent rating it as a four out of 10. Here John (*Appendix H*), on the one hand, noted that he does it entirely for social purposes. To him, a part of the fun of video games is the social element, and playing with other fans or even professionals gives him exactly that. Emil (*Appendix G*), on the other hand, has previously participated in challenges and used the chat function frequently to improve his game by asking for tips and tricks, but is now just playing casually and he is not rating the final touchpoint highly. He sees these features as revolutionary in terms of being recognized by professional teams especially if participating in a challenge and doing really well.

The chat function and the post-game player interviews only scored a five and a four, respectively, on the scale of importance for one of the respondents. Conclusively, all strands of the esports user journey do not seem to offer great value to all users even though the same two touchpoints were rated as nine and seven by another respondent.

The touchpoints revolving around the pre-game-element of finding the right channel on Twitch were praised for their great execution. Likewise, the post-game section such as watching casual play, suggesting challenges, and participating in those, also received positive feedback on execution. As noted by Alex (*Appendix F*), the easy usage, the meticulous statistics on esports platforms, and the continual content of both casual and professional play make for a good experience.

Figure 13
Touchpoint Rating (Alex)

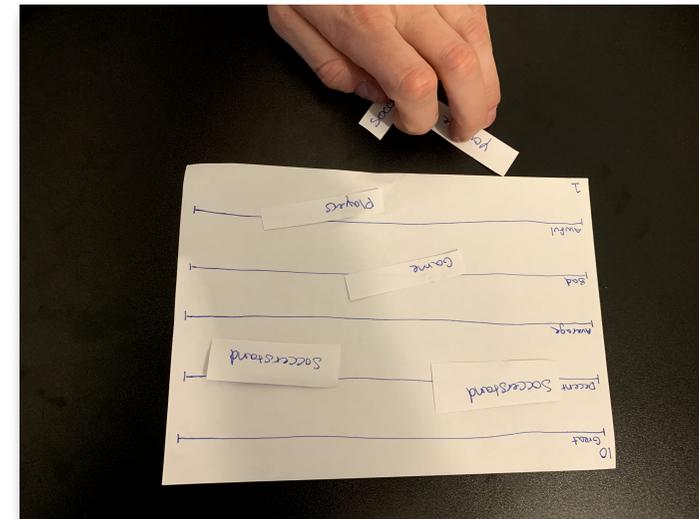
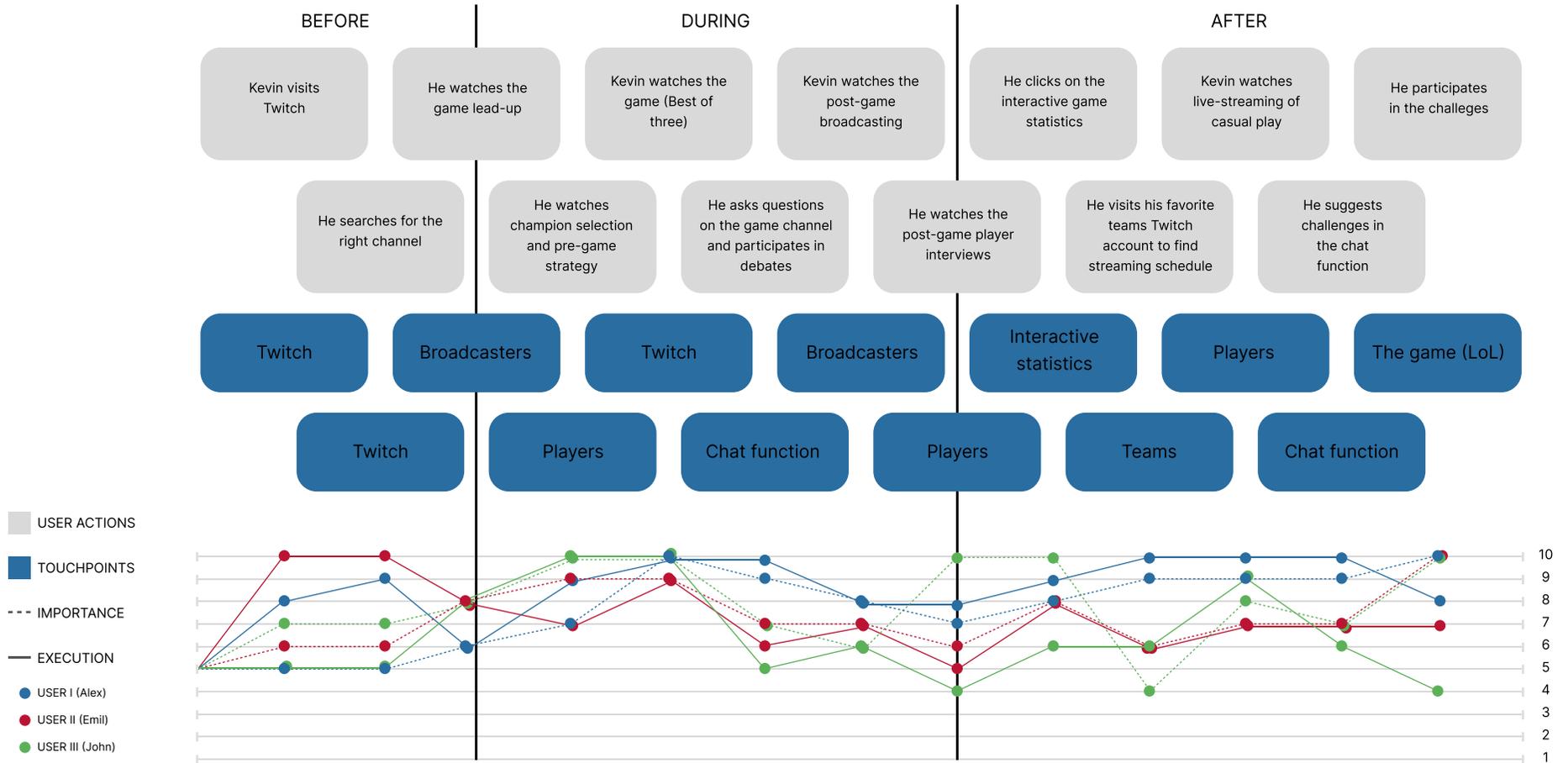


Figure 14
Touchpoint IQ Esports



User Interview

For the purpose of complementing the existing data with some primary qualitative data, some user interviews were conducted (*Appendix E*). Here, I could dig deeper into the user tendencies that were condensed into the first version of the personas (See p. 25). I found that when exploring a service experience, it was advantageous to use exactly qualitative research methods. This is because deep insight can be gained concerning the attitudes and behavior of the respondent (Trischler & Zehrer, 2012). The analysis was, as mentioned earlier, a part of the touchpoint analysis. This combination appeared essential for the ideation phase. It made it possible for the respondents to establish a relationship between the different features of the two experiences, which in turn contributed significantly to idea generation (Ku & Lupton, 2020 p. 40).

The interviewees were, once again, selected through quota sampling (Bjørner, 2015 p. 62). Some attributes measured that they had to be a user of both live football and esports and under the age of 37. Findings from the surveys concluded that this particular segment has some distinct preferences, among others, that they prefer to watch live sports online. In short, the respondents of the user interviews had to fit the general motivations of Kevin (See p. 25). I was not just designing for the one persona but in terms of the importance of social stimuli, need for participation, and frequency of consumption the direction for further exploration was on those with motivations like Kevins. The interviews all took place online, with the preliminary exercise of mapping the importance and the execution, being done through screen sharing.

Once again, a full transcript of the interviews was made (*Appendix F - H*). Also, the extrapolation of data was, again, done through the traditional coding method (Bjørner, 2015), and conducted in Danish.

Interview Findings

All three interviewees were frequent consumers of both live esports and live football. However, they were all between the ages of 20-36. In hindsight, as the conclusions from the

survey (See p. 22-24), also included users younger than 19, it would have been beneficial to involve an interviewee with such characteristics as well. Since the inclination of using added features seemed to be higher the younger the user, covering that in detail with an interview might have led to other solutions.

I found it obvious to let the insights obtained through the interviews dictate the ideation phase. This means that concretely mentioned deficiencies of the football user journey or strengths in the esports user journey were to be the starting point of improvements. Despite the variance of scores (See *Figure 12 & 14*) generally being rather low, the suggested optimizations were different. The difficulty lies in adding new features that would accommodate the different motivations.

Figure 16 collects the answers from each respondent to each question. Two of the three would change the available statistics either the pre- or post-game statistics or the in-game statistics. Both Alex (*Appendix F*) and Emil (*Appendix G*), are missing more statistics, with Emil arguing that such a change would improve the dynamic of watching live sports. John (*Appendix H*), would make the broadcasting constituents more graphical and illustrative like you do in the NFL, the MLB, or in esports. All three interviewees are missing some variation of casual content with practice highlights, practice challenges, quizzes with players, player vlogs, or videos that will provide the consumer with team insights. This question is particularly interesting, as it looks past the existing user journey, which in terms of the touchpoint analysis (See *Figure 12*), is not poorly executed, but rather explores whether other touchpoints would be relevant. This seems to be the case. More strikingly is that there seem to be numerous reasons for wanting to partake in challenges, or use the chat function. For the sake of Alex and John, the reasons are the social and fun aspects. For Emil, the chat function and the wish of partaking in challenges were to improve his own game, by playing a better opponent and asking



Figure 15
User Interview (Emil)

questions to get tips and tricks. Decisively, the motivations for using the chat function or challenge feature are several, since it adds an educational element as well.

The next question sought to figure out which elements from esports the respondent would add to football if possible. Once again, casual content was mentioned along with more opportunities to communicate with players and the team. The interviewees all agreed that it would make the most sense if the suggested added features were to be online. John stated that he rarely goes to the stadium and, therefore, it would be more valuable for it to be online, since that would make him use it more often. To add to this, Alex mentioned the possible distance as the main reason for preferring the changes to be online. He would not travel a long distance to participate in fun challenges. Finally, the last question sought to cover whether such changes would increase the emotional engagement that the respondent has with the team. Alex and Emil said that it would and they both mentioned getting to know the team and the players as the main reason for such an increase in emotional engagement.

Conclusively, the criticality of the football user journey appears not to be in the execution of the current features, but in the lack of added elements where a higher level of participation can transpire. This is something that esports has successfully implemented. Features that are not necessarily neither utilized nor valued by all users, but provide the users with an opportunity for a higher level of participation if desired.

Taking the contradictory motivation into account, it appeared useful to illustrate the differences in a graph. The information is synthesized into two chosen variables. One is whether it is on the cooperating level or the engaging level. This is based on the aforementioned levels of participation (See p. 23), where the higher the level of participation, the more frequently one could expect the user to consume live sports. Today it looks like passively spectating is not sufficient, whereas if the user is a part of the experience, or can interact with the content to some extent, the experience appears more pleasing, hence more emotionally engaging. The other variable concerns whether the user does it for social purposes or to improve their skills.

The cooperating/social factors include a chat function, suggesting challenges, and vlogs from the team or the player. Based on the ideas of the interviewees, the latter could be a day in the life of a given player, the build-up to a game from a team perspective, or the preparations for a game. This would be inadequate to qualify as on a cooperative level unless the user has a saying in the content. It would qualify as such if the user, through a chat function and in collaboration with the team, can come up with a vlog idea.

Looking at the cooperating/improvement we have the chat function. Here the purpose of the chat would be to help aspiring users improve their own game by answering various questions.

The engaging/social factor is partaking in challenges to have fun and socialize with other users and a player or team. This would be the case if, again, based on the ideas of the interviewees, a team invited users to partake in a fun and casual crossbar or freekick challenge. In an online format, the engaging element could be reached through a voting competition on who you think would win the challenge.

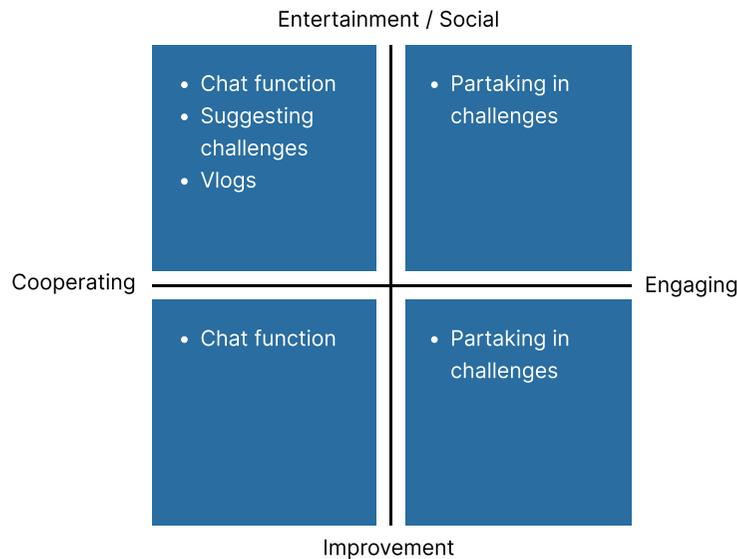
Lastly, engaging/improvement is, again, partaking in challenges. Here the objective would be more focused on learning purposes. For instance, if the coach of the professional team or the players would teach the users how to take a proper freekick. The difficulty lies in adding new features that would accommodate both sides of the motivations spectrum. This means a feature that is applicable for users who mostly want to learn, as well as users who

Figure 16
User Interview Findings

	"I would change"	Anything missing?	Esports touchpoints	Online or in person?	Increased emotional engagement
Alex	The pre-and post-game statistics	More casual content from practice	Esports statistics, practice vlogs, and challenges	Online	"For sure. I would spend more time looking at their website and different statistics. But the videos would make me get to know the players more"
Emil	Adding more in-game statistics and faster-paced camera swaps to increase the pace and game dynamic	In-game statistics, practice highlights, vlogs of a players day at the club, and team insights	More casual content and opportunities to communicate with the team and the players	Online but in person would be valuable too	"Of course it would. Getting to know them I think naturally adds some extra engagement"
John	Improve the broadcasting elements and make it more illustrative and graphical	Casual streaming and a chat function	They are good at illustrations and graphs and interactive content that you can access through Twitch during the game.	"I rarely go to the stadium, so for me, it would add more value if it was online because I would use them more often"	"Perhaps. I am not sure, but it would make the experience of watching it online a lot better"

are looking for a fun and sociable experience. Additionally, a feature that can be useful on both a cooperating and an engaging level.

Figure 17
User Interviews - Quattro Stagioni



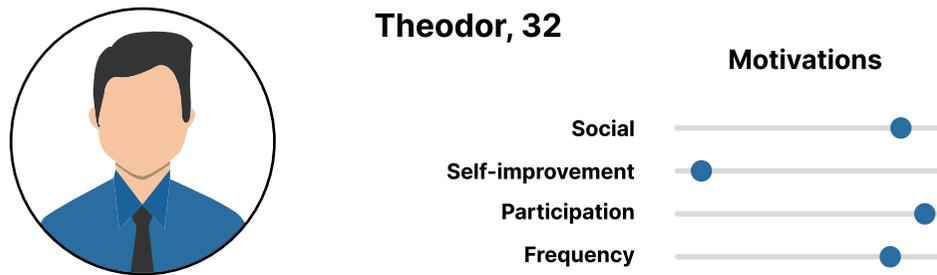
Persona Version II

Taking all the obtained knowledge into account a final version of the personas was made. These are integrating key outcomes of previous analyses which ensures that I could have a clear idea of who I was designing for.

These personas were mostly designed by only adding the most crucial research-driven information. This includes psychographic data and contradictory opinions (Polkosky, 2020). Minuscule made-up and nonessential details such as name and appearance were added to give life to the persona in a human-like manner. Two main archetypes with contradictory motivations within the territory of a need for a higher level of participation were found, hence two personas were created.

The employment of personas as a design tool is occasionally criticized for missing scientific accuracy. Even if the research is well-made and thorough, personas are about fictitious people and can just be an over-generalized set of characteristics (Jung et al., 2021). What is more, criticism has been raised regarding the underlying data that supports the personas. This data might be stale, which would result in design solutions being based on aged information (Salminen et al., 2021). Technology, trends, and circumstances change commonly meaning that using personas would require continuous adaptation. To circumvent the firstly mentioned critique, a persona was made for all crucial contradictory findings. Moreover, the personas do not argue to be the 'average' consumer of live football and esports but rather a product of this particular research process. The data that constitutes the personas were newly gathered but it is known that continuously exploring other trends or consumption habits going forward, is needed to ensure personas that remain representative of the users.

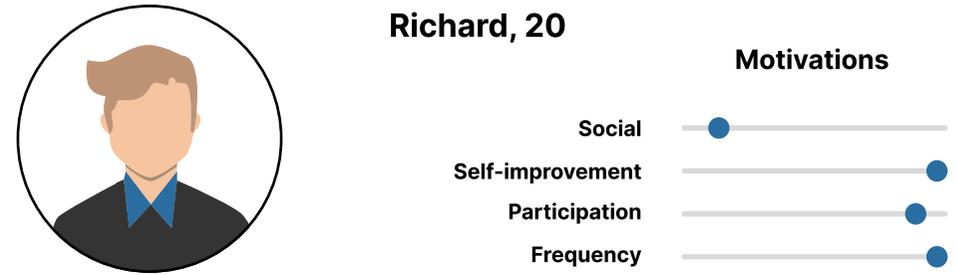
Figure 18
Persona (Theodor)



His story

Theodor is a 32 years old man who lives in Østerbro. He enjoys watching football both on television and in the stadium. Watching football on television is something he does multiple times throughout the week and especially during weekends. For him watching football is socially motivated when he goes to the stadium even though he finds it time-consuming. He sometimes plays recreational football or esports with his friends and also likes to watch LoL on Youtube. With esports, he finds the production more well-executed. Explicitly, the added features of a chat function, more casual content, and the opportunity to participate in videos are appreciated by Theodor. These features increase his emotional engagement with the esports teams or players because he gets to know them more and can satisfy his social needs. This is something he is missing when watching football online. If he could, he would also change the current pre- and post-game statistics of the football experience to include more interactive elements. For instance, being able to click on individual players to see their game statistics, and being able to compare statistics with the season average.

Figure 19
Persona (Richard)



His story

Richard is a 20-year-old guy from Århus. He is an ambitious football player who dreams of being able to make a living playing football. Despite his dreams, he is currently also attending school as a backup if his football dreams do not come true. He spends a great deal of time improving his football skills. Mostly this happens at his club Århus GF where he has his daily practice. That said, he also practices on his own and is looking for drills and tips on Youtube from his favorite teams or players. He finds this element to be missing quite a bit. If he could, he would love to participate in open practices or challenges with professional organizations to learn from his idols and show off his skills. He is watching a sizable amount of games on television both for enjoyment and also to learn from the best by looking at how they are handling different game scenarios. In this regard, he finds in-game statistics to be insufficiently covered. The production value is, to Richard, greater in esports where such ingredients are included. Seeing, for instance, the passing accuracy of different players and how much distance they have covered would, in his opinion, both improve the experience of casually watching a game but also increase the learning constituent.

How Might We

Now, with the challenge and direction materialized through the personas, Theodor, and Richard (See p. 33) I opted to proceed with formulating How Might We (HMW) questions. The method advocates formulating MHW questions that are not too broad nor too specific (*How Might We*, n.d.). That said, due to the specificity of the challenges and multiple ideas already presented to me, the MHW questions were affected accordingly. The plan was to ask a question that allowed for a variety of solutions despite the general direction of the solution being rather manifested. The direction was stringently towards value-added concepts outside of the during phase of the experience (See *Figure 12*). This would secure that it would become a launchpad for fruitful and worthwhile brainstorming where alternative solutions had that chance to be explored.

Defining Questions and Constraints

The final direction was formulated through a research question. Despite the final version being presented at the beginning of the report it evolved throughout the process and was not absolute before completing the define phase:

How can European football organizations improve the user experience of users between the ages of 19 - 36 through increased emotional engagement by implementing digital best practices from esports?

Further constraints and key findings could be summarized as follows:

- It was known that the ecosystems of football and esports were similar. That said, there exists a difference in the platforms on which live experiences are consumed. In esports, the platforms allow for two-way communication that naturally involves the user more than what is the case with the platform on which football is consumed. Some football clubs are active on some of the same platforms, for instance, Youtube but predominantly for post-game highlights. Live content cannot be tampered with from an organizational perspective due to media rights. This leaves a challenge in enabling a more favorable ecosystem where football content can be consumed outside of the regulatory hurdle of live coverage.

- I knew that a high level of participation increases the emotional engagement of the user, with a higher level of participation and the level of emotional engagement following a somewhat linear path. However, not all users wanted to actively be a part of the experience, and some only to an inconsiderable degree. I needed to design a solution that allows for different levels of involvement of the user.
- I knew that the younger the user, the more prone they would be to seek active participation. I also found that the younger users have different consumption habits than their older counterparts. Users younger than the age of 55, from the research in this project, prefer to watch it online, with consumers above the age of 55, being more divided between the traditional flow television and online streaming.
- The touchpoints of the current football user journey did not constitute any poorly executed components with high importance. Nonetheless, the esports user journey is greatly executed in various steps yet is equally important. Most noteworthy is the casual content where users can interact with the players or the team via a chat function, suggest a challenge, or even seek to participate in a challenge. These elements are increasing the emotional engagement that the user has with the team or player, which increases the frequency of live sports consumption.
- I found that different user motivations fluctuated when it came to watching live sports. Some users wanted to watch live sports or participate to various degrees simply for entertainment or social purposes, whereas others did it to improve their own game. The discovery of challenges, and casual content being perceived as value-added elements to the football user journey by the respondents of this research, led me to the conclusion that these should play a fundamental role in the solution. Interactive statistics would also increase the user experience, despite it not being participative.

After multiple tentative HMW questions and iterations, the constraints resulted in the following HMW question, which was chosen to proceed with:

How might we, through a two-way communication platform, implement a value-added feature that allows for different levels of participation?

IDEATE PHASE

The ideate phase indicates the starting point of the abductive steps toward a solution based on the formerly constructed HMW question. As the empathize and define phase were enduring and rather comprehensive the amount of information gathered made it challenging to narrow it down to a manageable scope given the timeframe of the project. Conversely, because so much time was spent understanding the industry and the motivations behind the users, the ideate phase was equivalently compact allowing for extra time in developing and testing a prototype. A large amount of data made the process of coming up with potential solutions a great deal easier, with especially the user interviews (See p. 30-32) helping substantially. As also mentioned in the *Methodological Approach* (See p. 10), the process was not as linear as this rapport insinuates. The user interviews did, in fact, overlap with the ideate phase and not only provided me with specific ideas but also enough information as to how those ideas ought to be designed to be of value. According to Stickdorn et al. (2018) and from my own experience from previous semesters, service design can be practiced by more than those who claim the title. This was also a result of data persistently validating my theories, and as a consequence, could allow me to use the user interviews partially as an ideation step.

How Might We Concepts

This HMW brainstorming was carried out with the involvement of Frederik Falkenberg and Mathias Petersen, two individuals with an educational background in sports management and current employees of DBU. They were aware of the complexity of the industry with plenty of insights and could, despite this project being predominantly user-centered, contribute with perspectives from a flagship organization of Danish football. The second version of the personas, the research questions, and the constraints and key findings were presented to the two participants. Subsequently, a 15-minute individual ideation session where each participant was to come up with basic digital value-added concepts that lie outside of the live football game. The evaluation of the generated concepts was not formally carried out until after a round of explanation and questioning. The following broad concepts

or features emerged from this session:

- **Player challenges and suggestion**
- **Interactive player statistics**
- **Competition with players**
- **A day in the life of a player**
- **Gameday vlogs**
- **Fan tryouts**
- **Fans playing against the professionals**
- **Team website with video content**
- **Statistic comparison feature**

Following this individual generation of concepts we had a sequence of collectively explaining and aligning the concepts. Each concept was presented, ensuing critically questioning each of them to detect flaws and ensure that they would adhere to the previously established constraints of the HMW question. The questions sought to uncover things such as how frequently the concept might be used, what are the levels of participation, and where on the user journey the concept is situated.

This initial evaluation resulted in three concepts being further developed:

Concept I: Player challenges and suggestions

The users could via a chat on an online platform suggest different challenges or quizzes for the professional players to attempt. The most common suggestion would be carried out for the next video upload with the participation of different players.

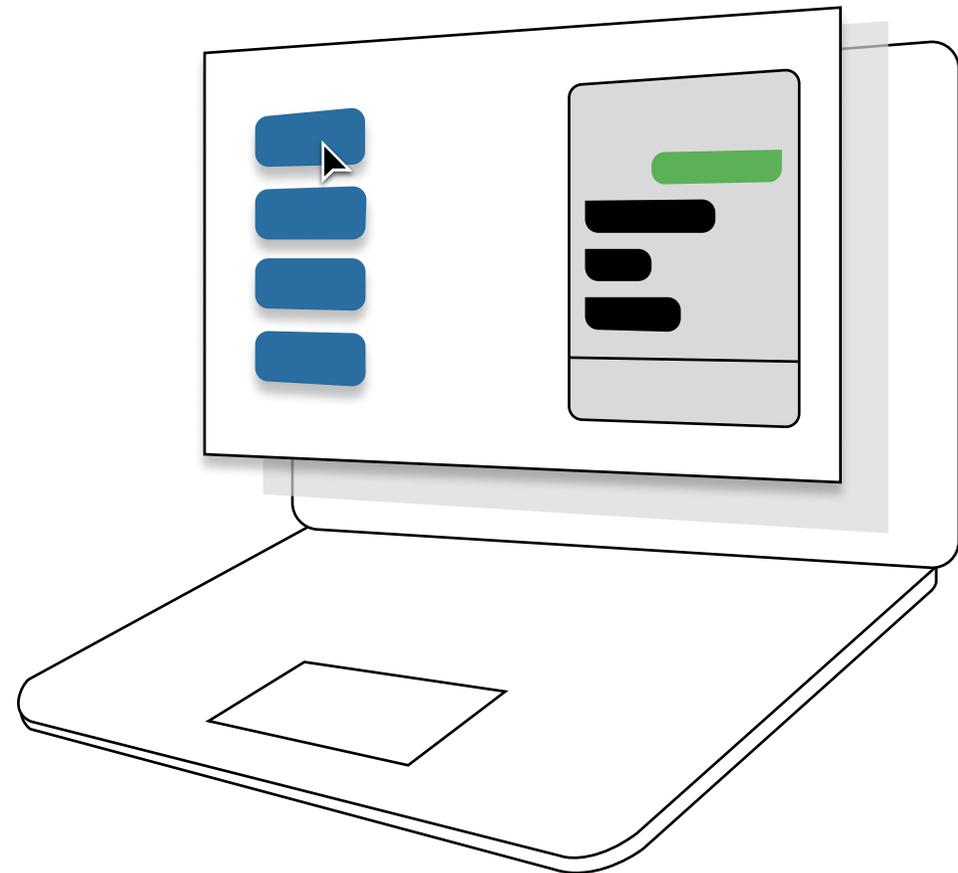
Pros:

- It would add a line of communication with the club.
- It provides an extra attribute of casual entertainment.
- It would add touchpoints similar to those seen in esports, to the user journey of live football.
- It could facilitate getting to know the players.

Cons:

- The level of participation would not be at the engaging level but rather just on the cooperating level (See *Figure 9*).
- There would not be a line of communication with the players.
- The social stimulus is not reached to a larger degree when watching these challenges.

Figure 20
Concept I: Player challenges and suggestions



Concept II: Interactive player statistics

The teams' website would have a subpage with thorough individual statistics from each player and team with the ability to compare the numbers from player to player and team to team across different leagues. Additionally, the user can ask affiliated questions to each player on the team.

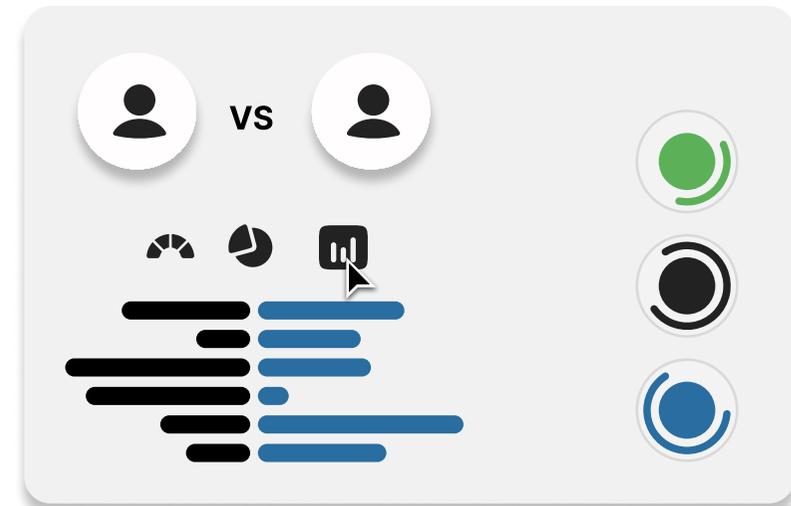
Pros:

- It would allow for quantities of interactive elements.
- It would provide the user with a greater deal of knowledge.
- It would aid and initiate rational discussions on which players are performing better.

Cons:

- The social facet of this concept would mostly be experienced indirectly and simply spark discussions to be experienced elsewhere.
- The participative ingredient would not be firmly present.
- The concept would need taxing maintenance to prosper.
- A complex and vital technological back-end has to be developed.
- Players of higher levels might receive an overwhelming number of questions, unfeasibly to answer within a reasonable time span.

Figure 21
Concept II: Interactive player statistics



Concept III: Competing against players

A concept where users, through a digital platform, can sign up for challenges where they compete against other users, professional players, or staff members. This could occur once a week or rarer and take place both online or physically, for instance at the teams' facilities.

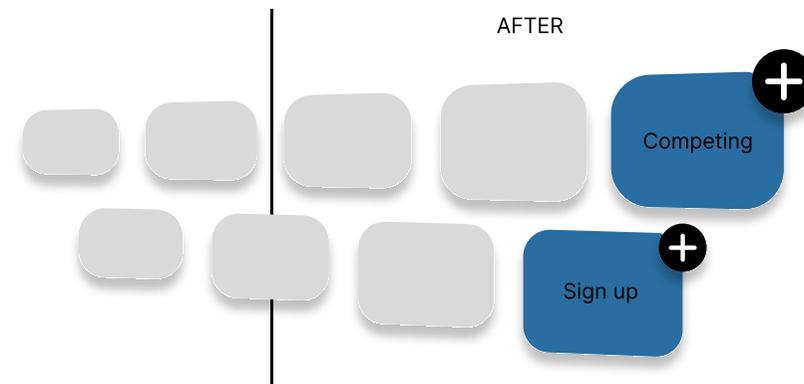
Pros:

- The engaging level of participation is reached.
- The user can get to know the players.
- The concept facilitates social stimulus.
- It facilitates exposure for those who seek recognition for their skills.

Cons:

- The concept could be constrained by a limited amount of spots
- It could compromise the teams' own practice

Figure 22
Concept III: Competing against players



Final Concept

The ideation session, after going over the pros and cons of each concept, ultimately ended with selecting just one. However, it became evident that merging multiple features were indeed possible, even without the consequence of excessively exploiting the established design opportunity and making it too complicated. *Concept I* and *Concept III* had similarities in their required platform to facilitate such a service. Additionally, the cons of *Concept I* could be resolved through the qualities of *Concept III* making it a more cohesive and consolidated concept by merging the two.

In hindsight, the concepts emerging from this session had close resemblances to the ideas presented from the early discoveries of this project. Thus could this step, in theory, had been left out and instead more time could have been spent on prototyping and testing concepts. That being said, from previous experience in the Service Systems Design program, the more knowledge the designer has, the easier the conceptualization of a final solution is. Alternative ideas could surface when more time is spent doing research, which even though might not be the chosen concept to answer the research question of this project, could be presented as considerable possibilities for future optimizations. So, despite numerous analyses merely proving predetermined hypotheses to be true or validating theories rather than pointing me in a different direction, the knowledge obtained did provide me with a great deal of value. In the case of this ideation session, the insights from best-in-practice practitioners ensured that the final concept was not just relevant from a user perspective, but was also applicable from an organizational perspective.

Concept VI: Player challenges with active participation

The users can via a chat on an online platform suggest different challenges or quizzes for the professional players to attempt, as well as sign up to participate themselves. The most common suggestion would be carried out for the next video upload with the participation of different players, staff members, and users. This would take place either online or physically at the teams' facilities with weekly occurrence.

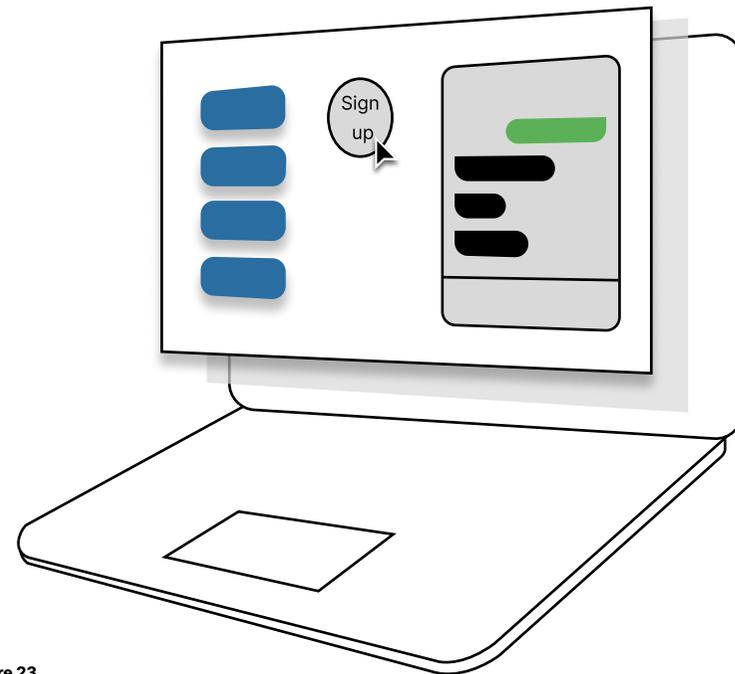


Figure 23
Concept VI: Player challenges with active participation

PROTOTYPE PHASE

At this point I had plenty of information and insights to solve the user needs, and with even a rough concept acting as the solution to the research question I entered the prototype phase. First, I needed to contemplate what I wanted to gain from prototyping. Stickdorn and Schneider (2012) say that a thorough and more prudent solution presupposes prototyping and user testing. This is to assess the quality of the concept, implement changes, and concretize the features. Therefore, the purpose became to create a simple low-fidelity prototype that could illustrate the concept and give the testees an indication as to what value the concept provides.

Use Cases

I opted to make a simple use case to articulate the concept from a user perspective in simple terms and specify how the system should behave to the requests of the user. What is more, it also helped me establish the complexity of the system and understand which functions and requirements were needed (Randolph, 2004). Finally, it also aided me in explicating the criticality of the current user journey followed by how this value-added feature solves a problem. The first use case demonstrates the current user experience of someone actively seeking social stimulus or active participation. The following use cases instead show how the value-added feature of *Player challenges with active participation* could solve this dissonance.

LEGEND



Theodor



Teams' website



Teams' facilities



Chat function



Email



Players

Use Case I: Theodor wants to watch live football

ACTORS



BASIC FLOW

- Theodor checks the line-up and pre-game statistics on a third-party website.
- He watches the game lead-up.
- He watches the game, the halftime broadcasting, and the post-game player interviews.
- He visits a third-party website to check the post-game statistics, as well as Youtube to see the game highlights.

PRECONDITION

Theodor has the required television or streaming package to watch the game.

Use Case II: Theodor wants to watch casual football content and be socially stimulated

ACTORS



BASIC FLOW

- Theodor visits the teams' website and clicks on the button 'Contents'.
- He is watching various videos of fun challenges, vlogs, and quizzes and is asking questions and interacting with other viewers on the featured chat function.

PRECONDICTION

- Theodor has an electronic device with internet access.
- He has logged in to the teams' website.

Use Case III: Theodor wants to participate on a cooperating level

ACTORS



BASIC FLOW

- Theodor visits the teams' website and clicks on the button 'Contents'.
- Next, he clicks on the 'Suggest video idea' button and proceeds with voting for his favorite idea on a list of the most common suggestions.

PRECONDICTION

- Theodor has an electronic device with internet access.
- Theodor has logged in to the teams' website.

ALTERNATIVE FLOW: Theodor has another idea than the ones from the list

- Theodor types his idea in the 'Other' section.

Use Case IV: Theodor wants to participate on an engaging level

ACTORS



BASIC FLOW

- Theodor visits the teams' website and clicks on the button 'Contents'.
- He clicks on the 'Coming videos' button, finds the video that he would like to participate in, and clicks on 'Sign up for video'.
- Next, he writes his contact information.
- Finally, he receives an email with the time and day and shows up at the scheduled venue.

PRECONDITION

- Theodor has an electronic device with internet access.
- Theodor has logged in to the teams' website.

ALTERNATIVE FLOW: Theodor does not get selected to participate in the video

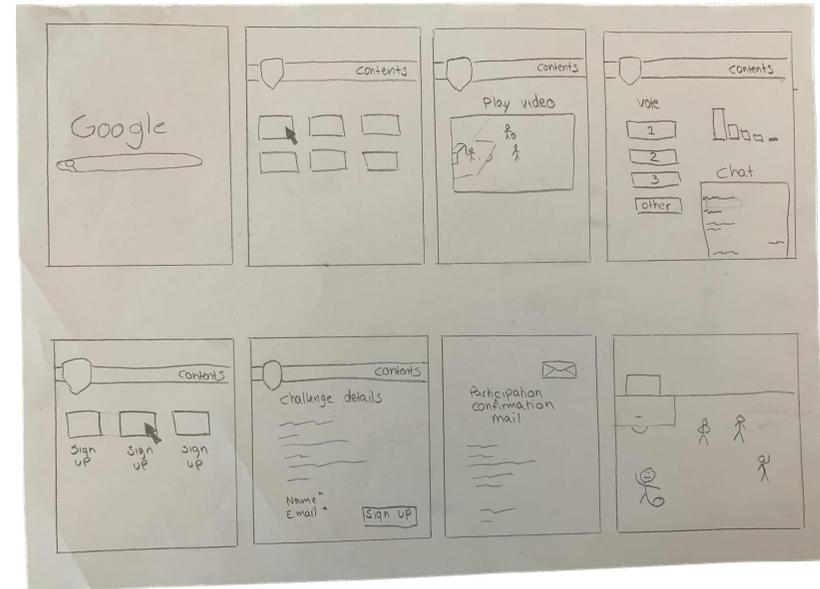
- Theodor signs up for a second video.

Storyboarding

The launch of the actual design of the prototype was based on gathering inspiration from esports organizations that offer something similar as well as larger football clubs, to get an idea of the website structure. This inspiration could point toward functionalities and the look of the concept. The sources came from interviewees, mentioned teams or websites throughout the research process, or through my own perception, teams that currently are successful.

Following the inspiration and the necessary steps explained in the use case I storyboarded the entire sequence of the value-added concept as simply drawn wireframes. This was beneficial since I could iterate quickly and give me a good idea of what each wireframe should contain once I proceeded with digital wireframes.

Figure 24
Storyboarding



Prototype I

A wireframe prototype was then made to quickly create testable interfaces of the concept that visually convey the structure and solidify requirements for the final design. Wireframes are low-fidelity representations of prototypes that lack the functionalities and visual elements of higher-fidelity prototypes (Earnshaw et al., 2018). Wireframes can be seen as an interim step that is particularly amenable to revision of minor tweaks, moving interface elements, resizing, or removing elements. A limitation of this type of prototyping is that it does not give highly detailed visuals of a concept such as visible images, colors, and the like. That said, despite the features of the concept being validated as valuable to the user, this prototype was just made to rapidly allow me to present testable layouts to users and, successively, incorporate changes.

The wireframes shown below present the concept of *Player challenges with active participation*. It broadly shows which key elements the concept embraces and how it could be integrated into the website of a given football club. The wireframes are exemplified by a fictitious football club.

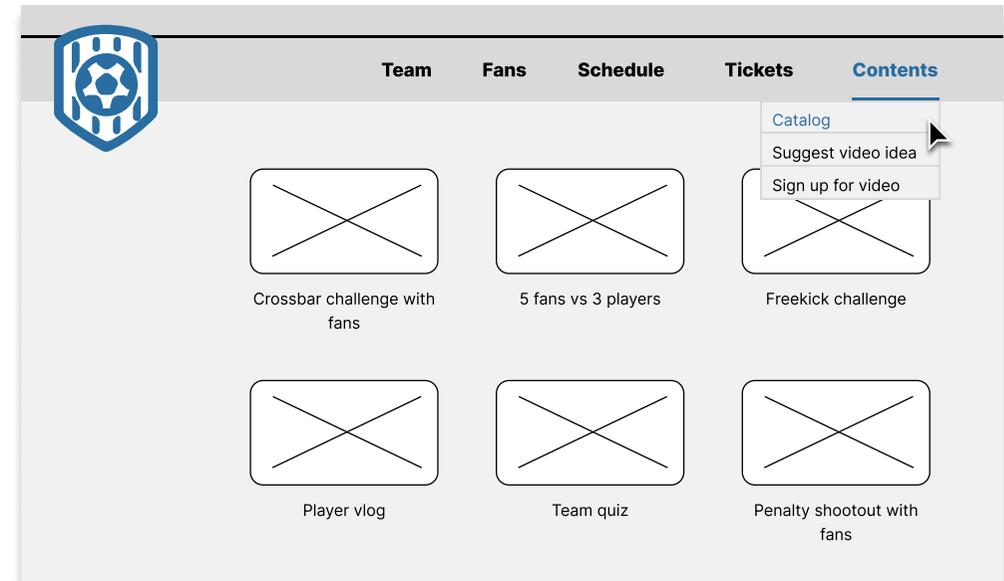


Figure 25
Website Wireframe - Catalog

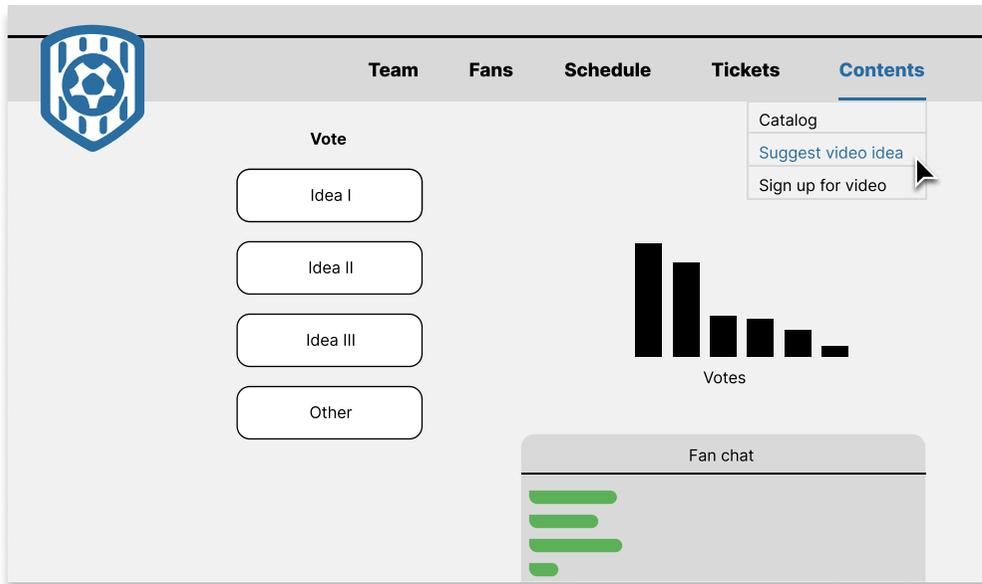


Figure 26
Website Wireframe - Suggest Video Idea

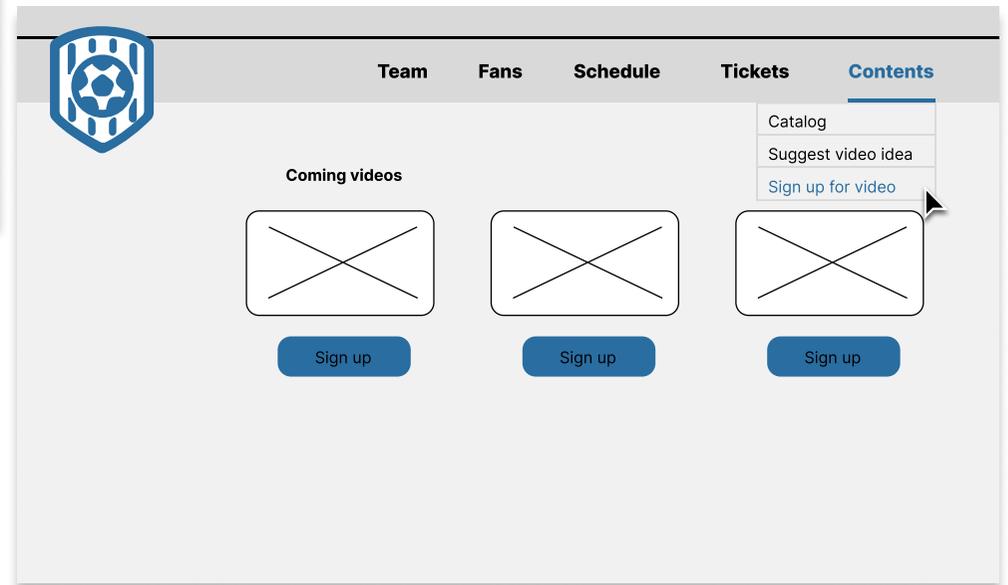


Figure 27
Website Wireframe - Sign up for Video

TEST PHASE

As the main focus was on a user-centered design solution I opted to test the prototype on three users to increase the user involvement to a larger degree. These users were the same as the ones from the first user interview (See p. 30-32), which was done to understand if the interpretations of their answers and the subsequent solution presented to them corresponded to what they imagined. Each user was presented with the three wireframes and asked a set of related questions, but with the liberty to ask additional follow-up questions if, for instance, specific changes were suggested (*Appendix I*).

The goal of the user test

The goal was first and foremost a concept validation. Simply to verify if the users understood what they were looking at and what function the concept performs. Secondly, I wanted to test the navigational elements. The wireframes were based on best practices of football club websites but I wanted to test if the suggested concept is coherent with those industry norms. I also wanted to test if the menu names make sense and if the design flow and functionality are intuitive.

Of course, there is a link between what you can expect to gain from a prototype test and the amount of detail on the wireframes. In this case, detailed user interface (UI) elements were not incorporated but the wireframes instead focused more on the functionalities, hence the questionnaire was affected accordingly.

Test Findings

The gist of the test was that the wireframes showed what they were supposed to, and the testees understood what value the concept could provide. Added to that, the concept, from a general perspective, did fit with their wishes. The users found this concept valuable to use in midweek a few days after or before a game, where football content is meager. John would use it upon the release of a new video, and would also sign up to participate whenever a new idea came up (See *Appendix L*). Now, looking at the elements out of place, the chat function was mentioned by both Alex and John. Alex would not use a simple chat function like that, but it instead had to be a comment section for each video, such as is the case for

regular Youtube videos (*Appendix J*). John instead said that the chat should be above the graph since it appears a bit hidden on *Prototype Version I*. For the graph to not appear until after you vote for a video idea was also mentioned to not give away the results and to encourage users to vote. Next, a page devoted to asking questions to each player of the team and even the staff members was missing. This page was to be used as a means to have two-way communication with members of the team and where those members could take their time to answer questions directed at them.

The prototype was, according to the testees, easy to navigate and intuitive to use. Mostly, the critique of the design experience was on the lack of details. There was a positive interpretation of the overall navigation and features of the concept. It also seemed clear to Emil that it was a football club website due to the design (*Appendix K*). Finally, the suggested changes included the need for the previously mentioned communication with club staff subpage, that the graph was invisible until the user had voted, and lastly, moving the chat above the graph.

Figure 28
Test Findings

	What can it do?	When would you use it?	Anything out of place?	Anything missing?	Proper guidance?	Easy navigation?	Design experience	"I would change"
Alex	Sign up for future videos where you participate, and chat with other fans	A few days before or after a game or instead of watching TV or a series	The chat function	A communication with a player page where you can ask each player or staff member a question	Yes	Yes	Good and simple navigation but lacking more detail	Adding a subpage with communication with players and adding more details
Emil	See videos, vote for video concepts, and sign up to be a part of videos	When visiting the site and participating when looking for a fun time	The graph should be shown after you vote for an idea	No	Yes super simple	Follow-up on the sign-up screen is needed	Good. "I could tell that it was a football club website from the design"	Would change the graph to be invisible until you have voted for one or typed in your own idea.
John	Chatting with other fans, watch videos with fans participating in competitions, and signing up to participate yourself	Any time when the videos are released. Would sign up for all of the challenges if it was for a club nearby.	That the chat is below the graph. The chat seems a bit hidden	A 'sign up' confirmation page	It did not show the sign-up confirmation page, which is important to the overall concept	Yes	More details are needed and something closer to the final concept	Move chat above the graph and call the menu "TV" instead of "Connect"

IMPLEMENT PHASE

Based on the synthesized findings of the prototype test, a second version of the concept was made. Unarguably, another round of testing would have been valuable (Penin, 2018 p. 272), but due to time limitations and the fact that only minor tweaks were suggested, the decision was to stick to just one round of testing.

Final Prototype

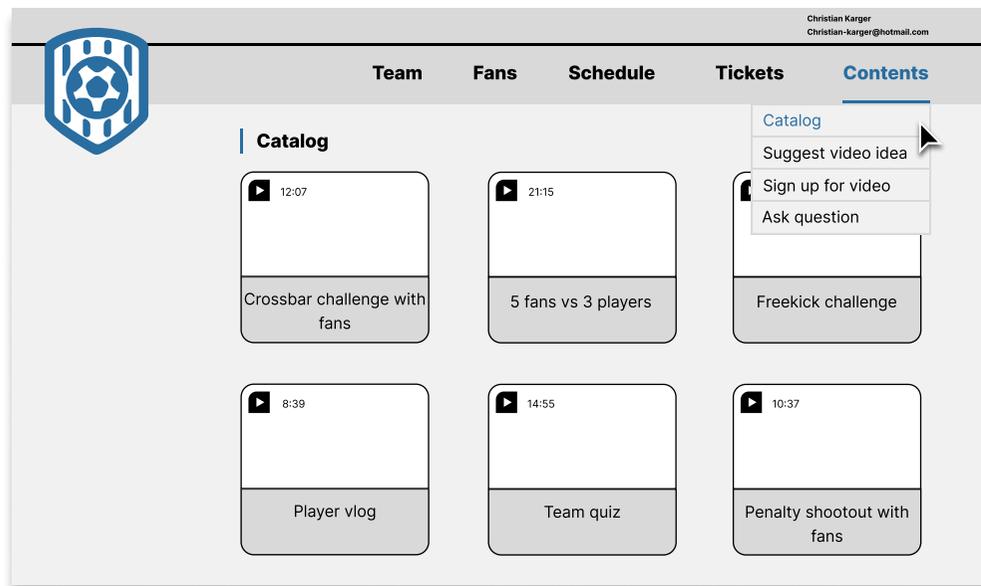


Figure 29
Website Wireframe - Catalog II

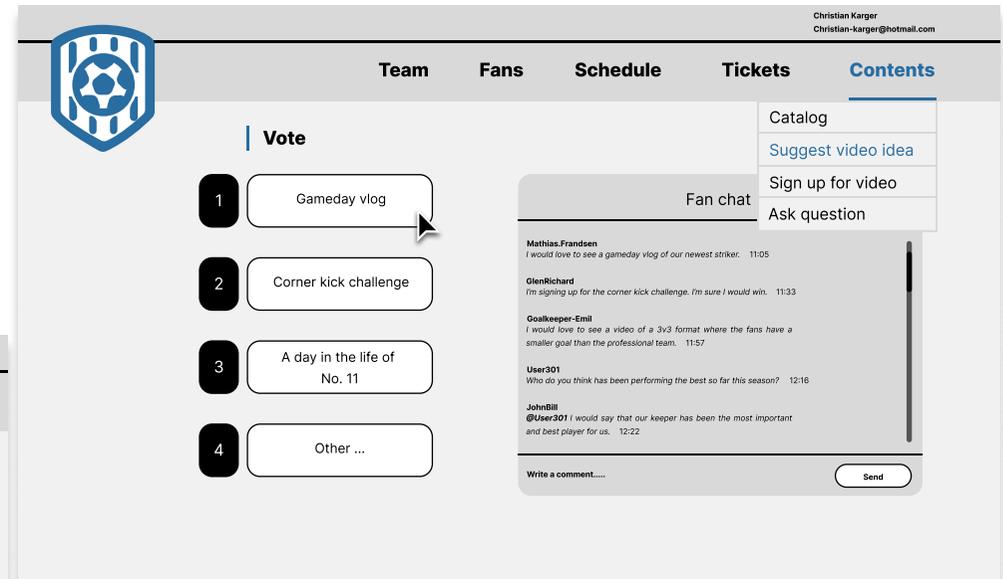


Figure 30
Website Wireframe - Suggest Video Idea II

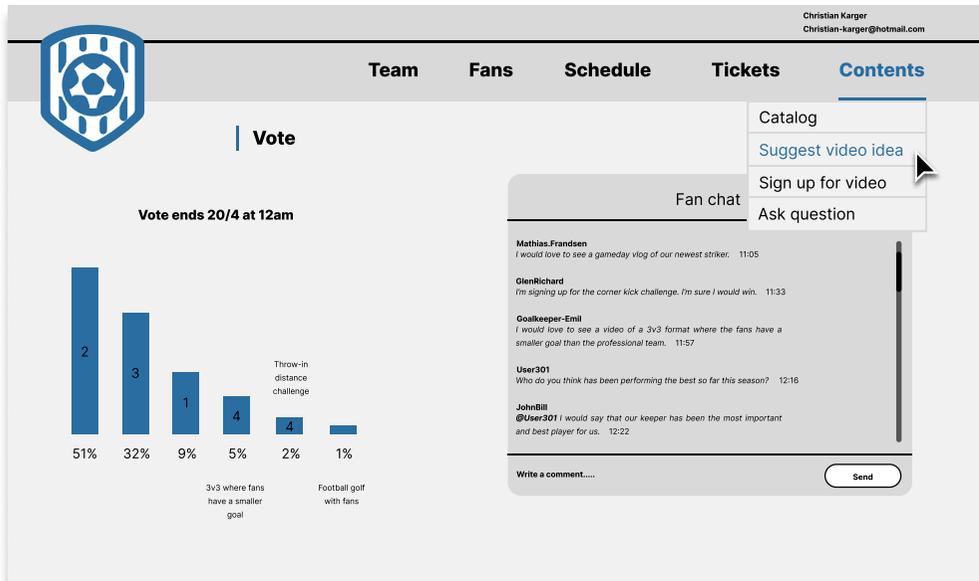


Figure 31
Website Wireframe - Voting Graph

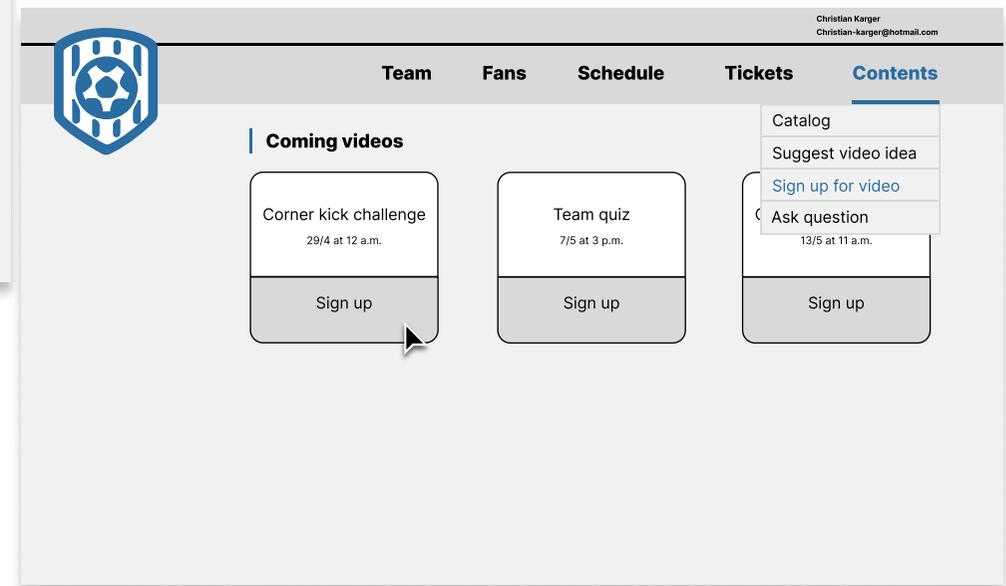


Figure 32
Website Wireframe - Sign up for Video II

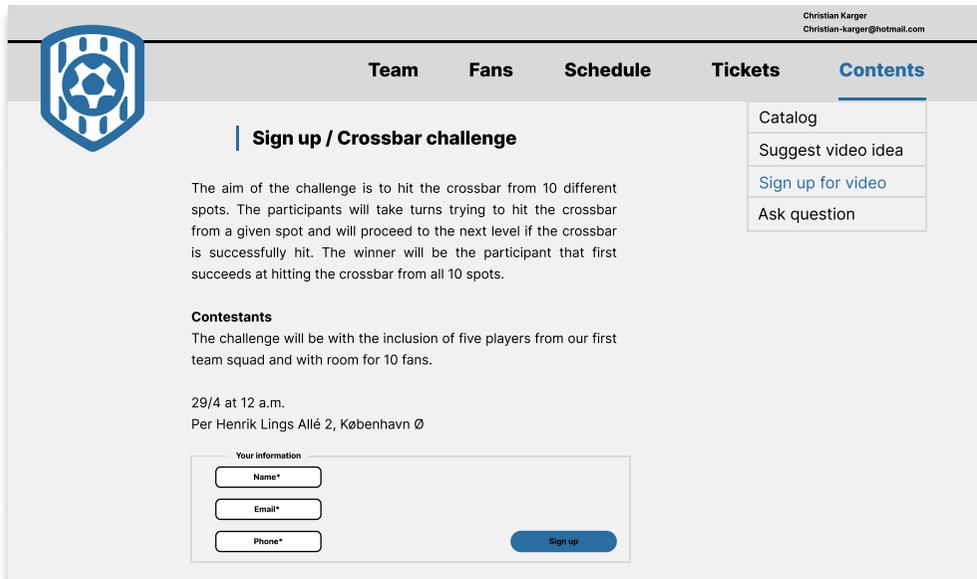


Figure 33
Website Wireframe - Sign up for Video Details

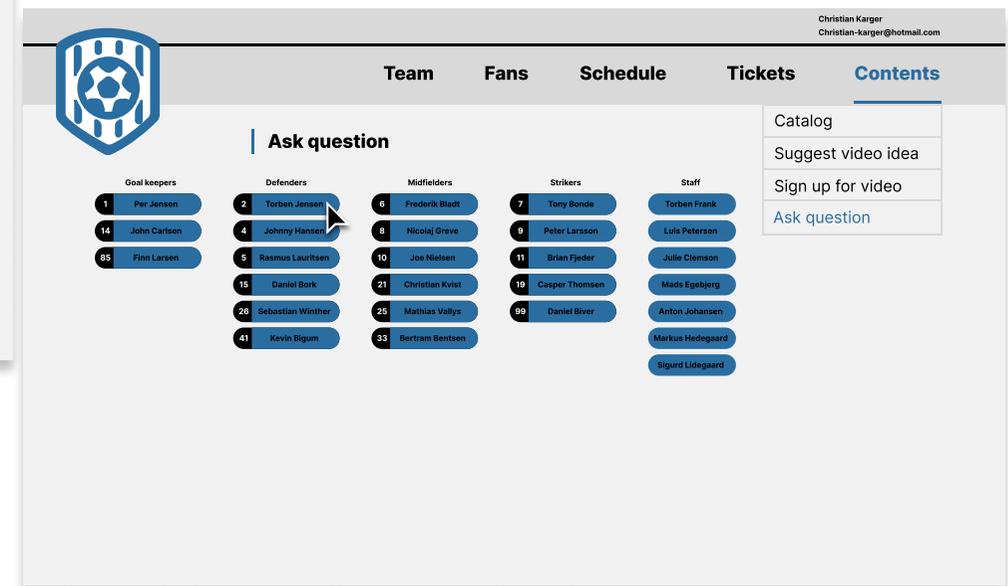


Figure 34
Website Wireframe - Ask Question Overview

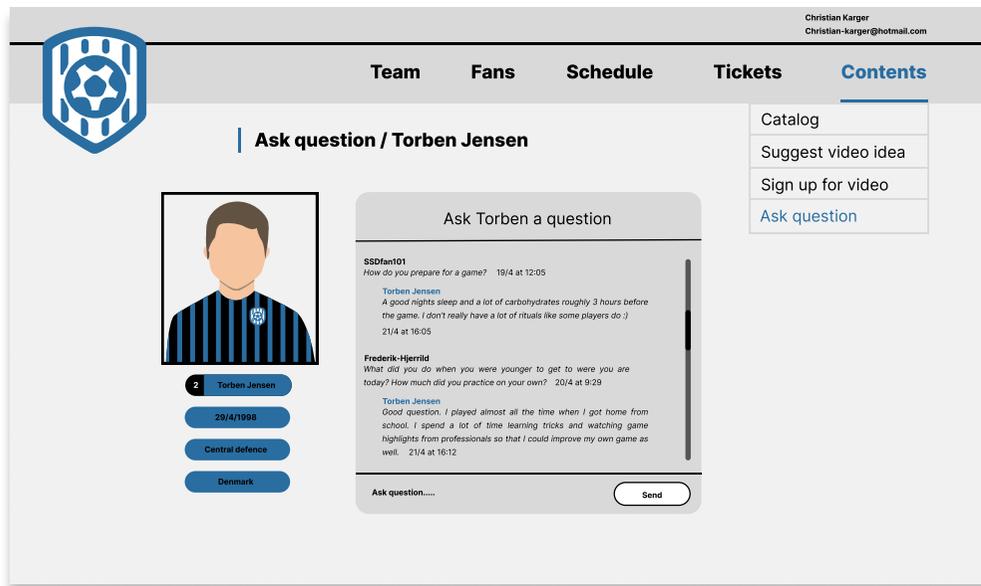


Figure 35
Website Wireframe - Ask Question

Service Description

The concept of *Player challenges with active participation* ought to improve the user experience of watching football, increase their emotional engagement with the team and its players, and allow for a higher level of participation than that of the current user journey. The concept consists of an added feature to a standard menubar of a professional football club's website. This is called 'Contents'. Here a catalog of fun short videos appears. This could be fans playing against players, a video where players compete in a quiz about other team members, or a game vlog where the viewer follows the day of a match through the eyes of one particular player. This feature is to allow the fans to virtually consume content from their favorite team outside of the live games that merely happen once or twice a week. Additionally, it gives insights into the team and its players that, according to the research, increases the emotional engagement one has with the team.

Next, the fans can vote for the next video idea to be added to the catalog page. Here the fans can add an 'other' option if their specific idea does not appear from the options. Once the voting deadline arrives, the idea with the most votes will be scheduled. When the fans click on one of the ideas, a graph will appear where it becomes visible which idea currently is in the lead. This subpage also has a chat where the fans can concretize their 'other' ideas and where ideas can be discussed amongst fans.

What is more, the 'Sign up for video' feature is to provide the user with the opportunity to participate in videos. The fans can see the coming videos, read about the specific videos, and sign up by typing in their personal details. This is to raise the level of participation that as concluded earlier (See *Levels of participation* p. 24) increases the emotional engagement.

Finally, an 'Ask question' feature is added. Here the fans can see the entire list of team members and staff around the team. By clicking on any of the people, the user can then ask a question to that specific person. This is a feature that was found very valuable in esports as it strengthens the connection the fans have with the player.

Ecosystem Football II

With the value-added concept a few improvements are made to the existing ecosystem of European football clubs. Firstly, the team orchestrates other points of value where the fans can enjoy content. This includes casual content and the opportunity to actively participate in video ideas and have fun with the professional players. Secondly, now another value exchange goes from the fans to the teams, as the fans co-create content and suggest ideas. Thirdly, the line of communication between the fans and the players of esports that previously was found highly valuable is now integrated.

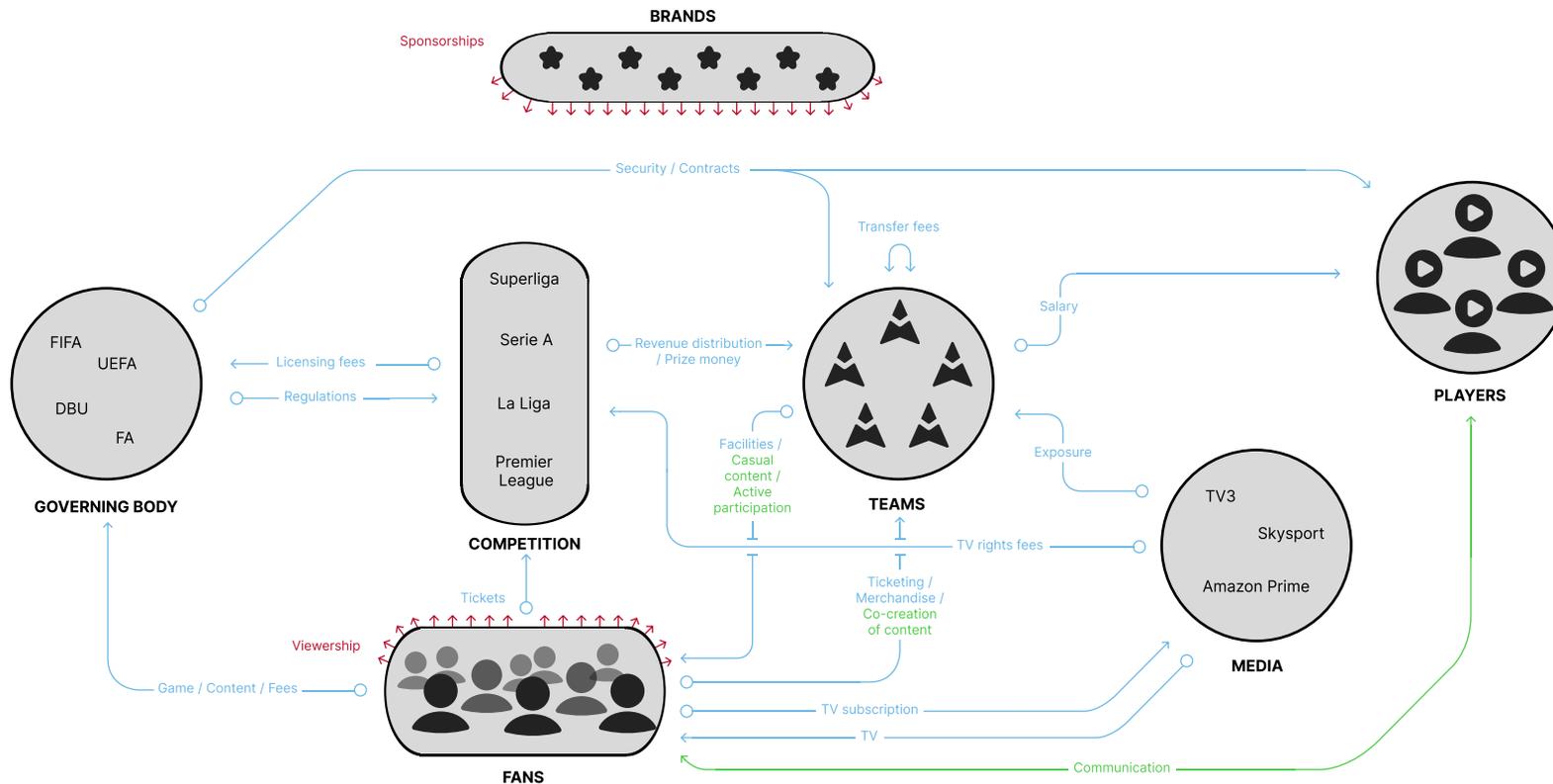


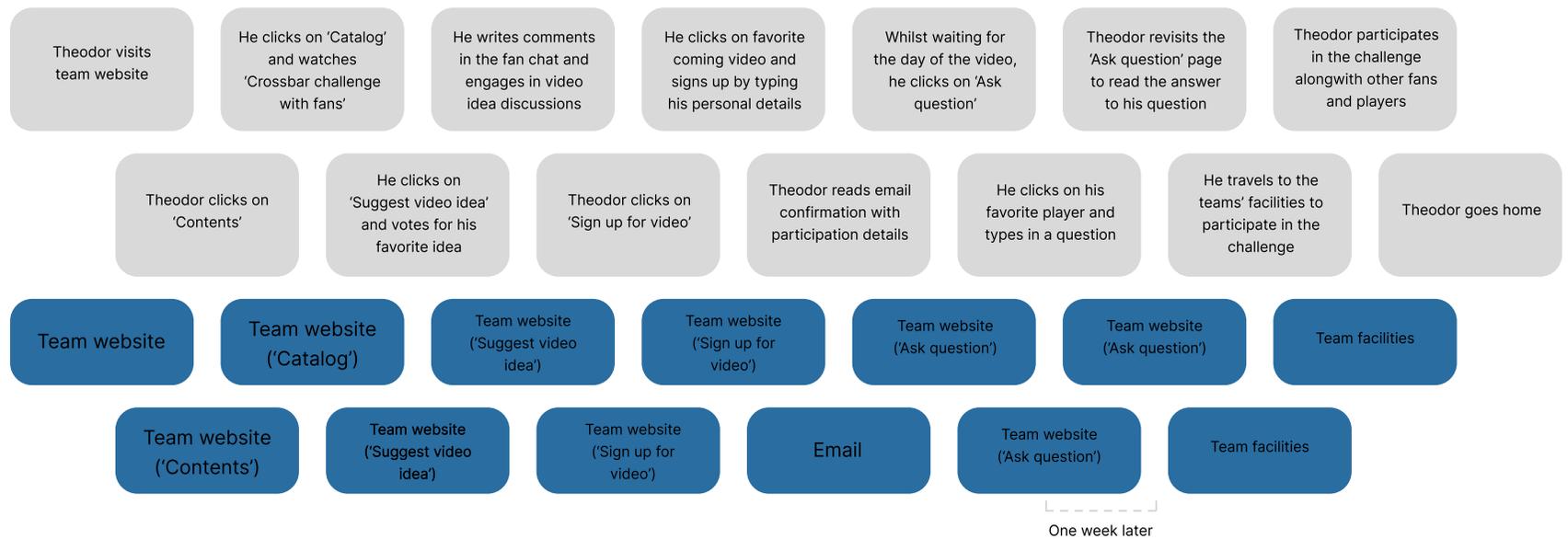
Figure 36
Ecosystem Map

User Journey

A user journey of the value-added element would not have to be unified sequentially with the current user journey (See Figure 12). The journey of *Player challenges with active participation* could happen either before or after a live game but is not preconditioned by a live game of football being played before or after for the journey to be plausible. This user journey shows the different touchpoints that the user will experience throughout the usage of all potential features of *Player challenges with active participation*. What is more, the user journey illustrates the value gained for the duration of the experience with an underlying emotional journey. The values are based on an interpretation of the research regarding what users stated as value-added elements. It is, therefore, merely an estimate of what could be expected.

PRECONDITION

Theodor has created an account on the teams' website and logged in



USER ACTIONS
 TOUCHPOINTS
 EMOTIONS

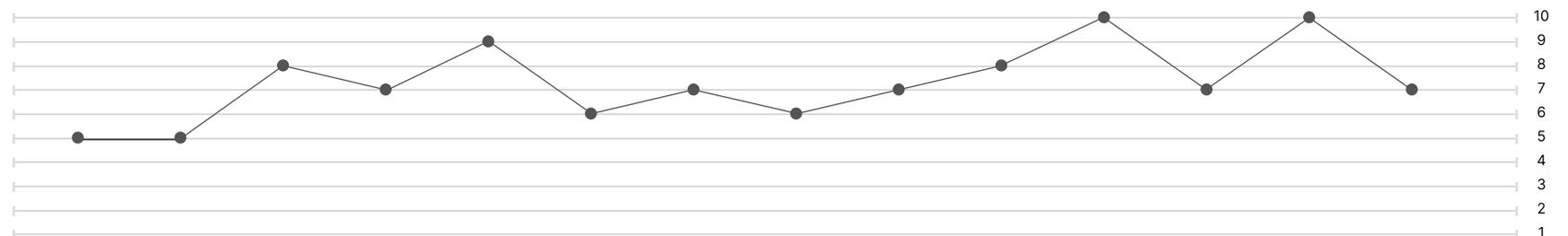


Figure 37
User Journey

Information Architecture

Player challenges with active participation is accessed through logging in if the user wants to partake in discussions via the chat, ask questions, or participate in video challenges. The user can still watch videos from the catalog page without logging in. The information architecture does not cover other features of a typical football club website in-depth but rather focuses on organizing the pieces of the value-added concept to visualize how the pieces fit together within the system.

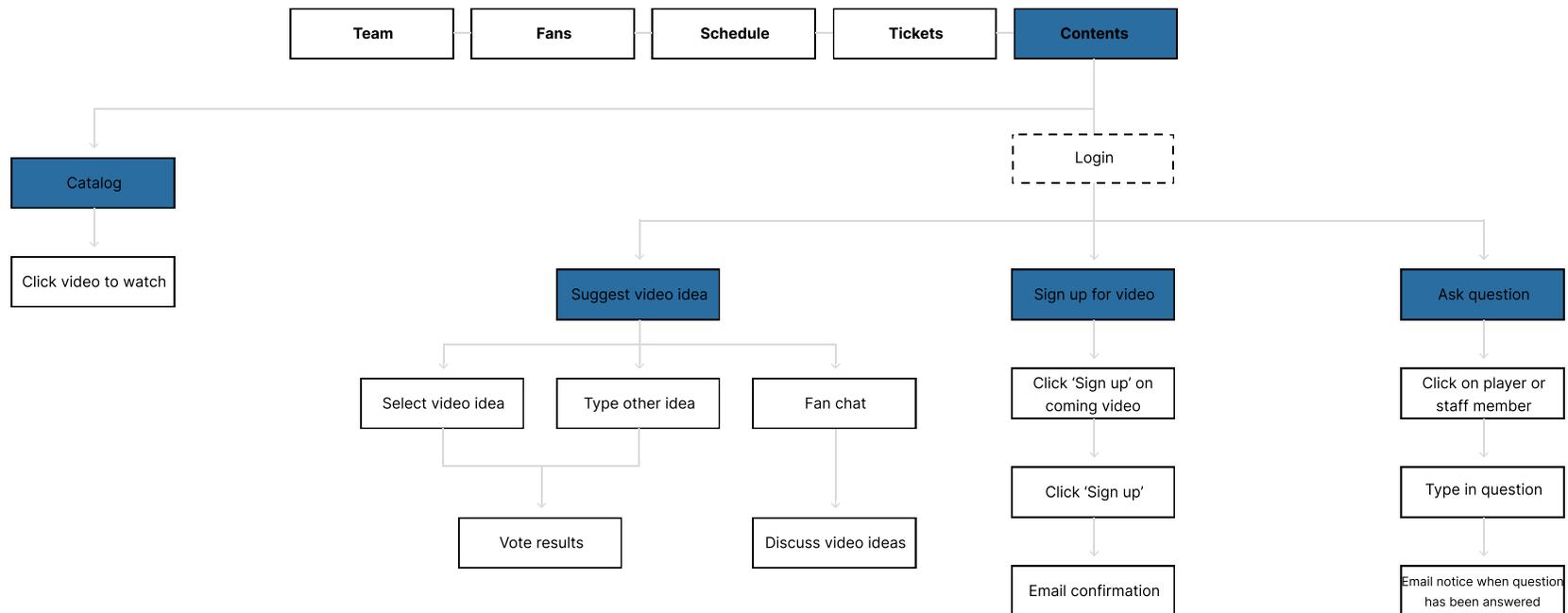


Figure 38
Information Architecture

Service Blueprints

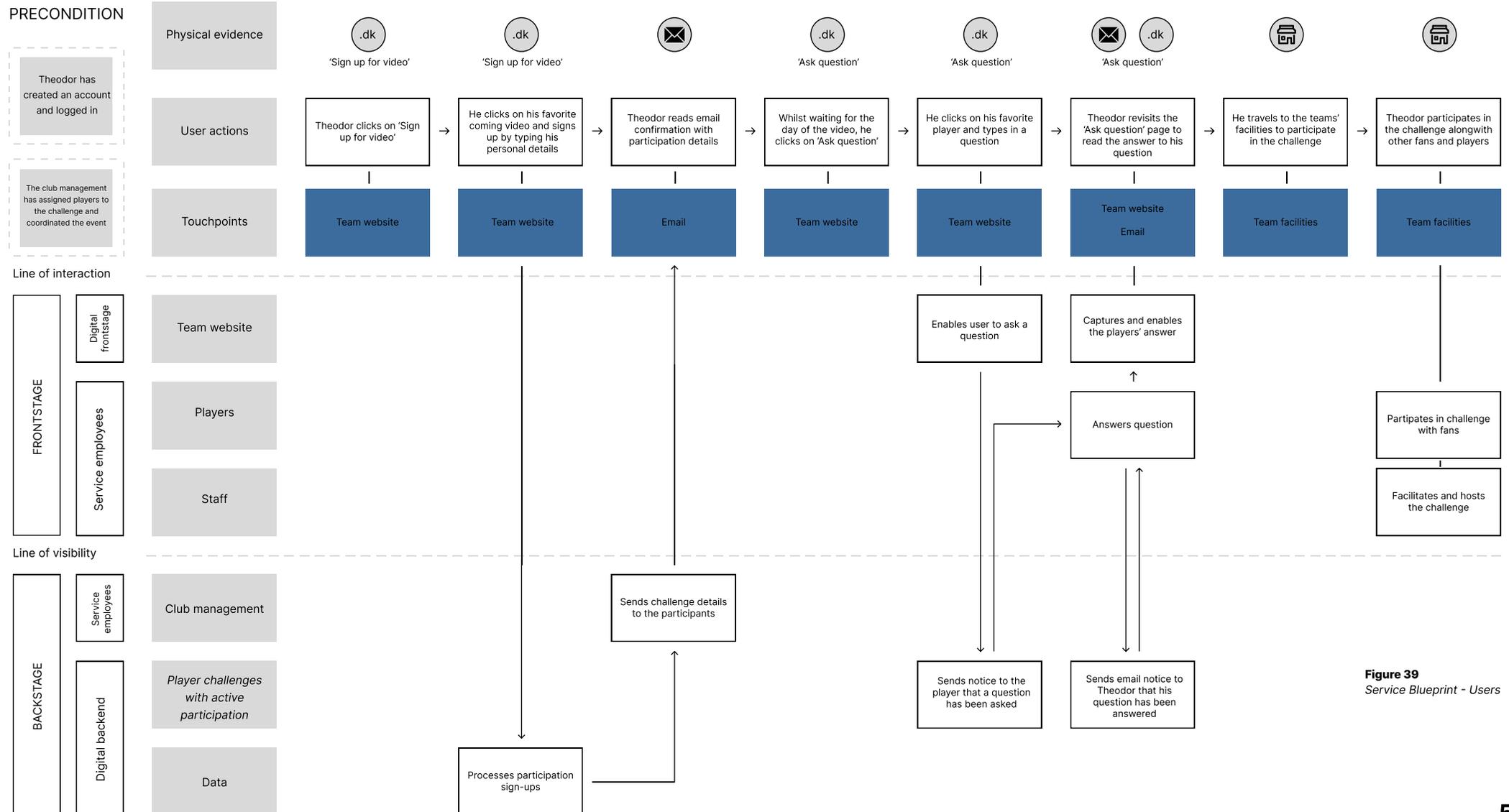


Figure 39
Service Blueprint - Users

PRECONDITION

Club management is logged in

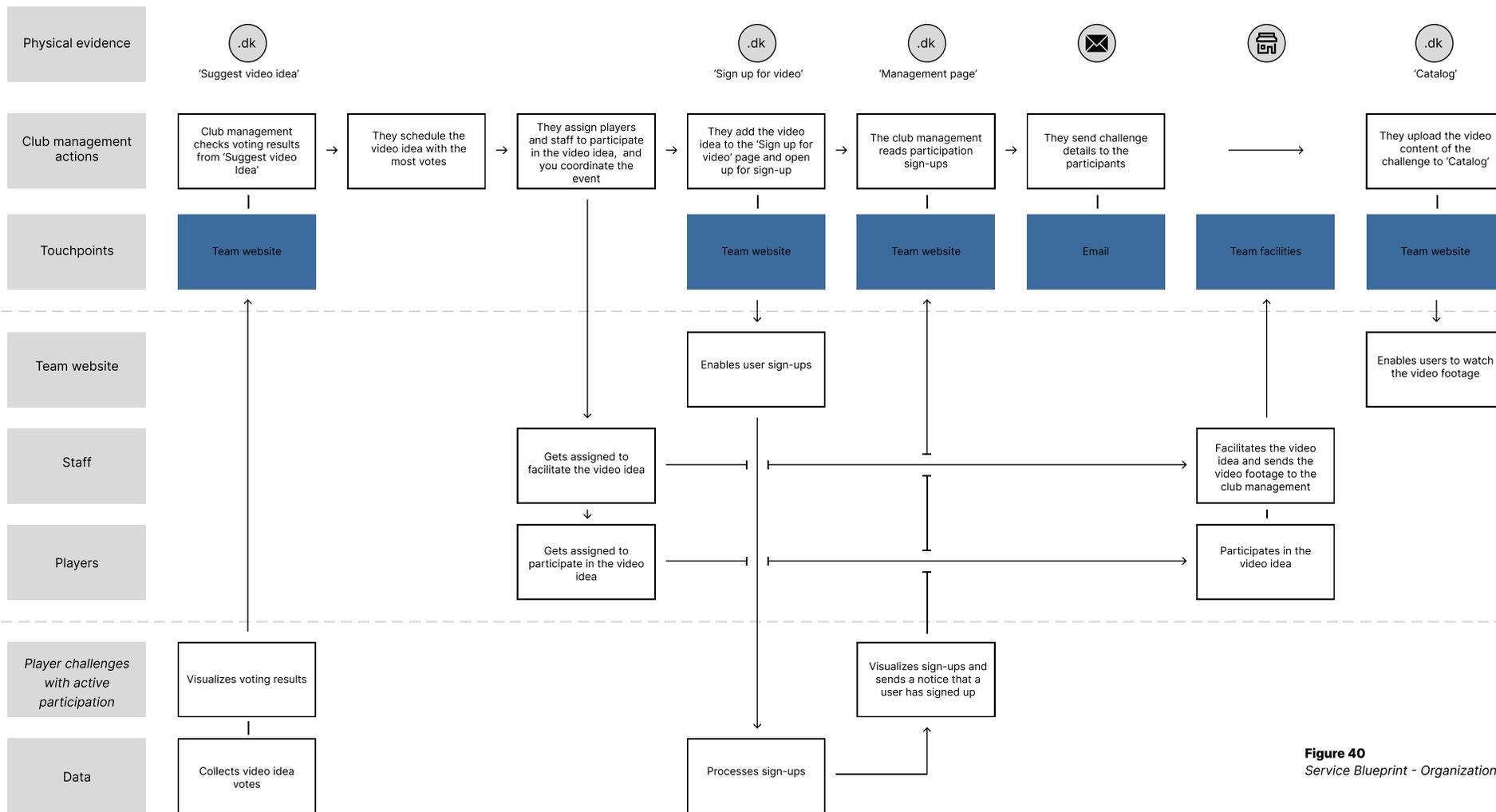


Figure 40
Service Blueprint - Organizations

The objective of the blueprints was to help identify where processes could be streamlined and to understand the system of the backend of the service in relation to the chosen touchpoints. The blueprints show the connections between the involved actors and how they interact throughout the different actions. The digital frontstage of the blueprint illustrates how the interface ought to handle the user experience. The frontstage service employees show the required actions of the players and the staff. Finally, the backstage elements consider the required elements for controlling and executing the chosen touchpoints of the value-added concept.

One blueprint is made to illustrate the user actions of using the various value-added features of *Player challenges with active participation*. The second blueprint instead takes the perspective of the football organization, and the actions they need to take in order to successfully carry out the concept. Creating a blueprint from the perspective of both the users and the organizations was found crucial to illustrate and fully understand the complexity of the concept and the required steps to successfully implement it.

DISCUSSION

Triangulation was the method used to gain a solid foundation for a valuable end result. By using both qualitative and quantitative methods, and also spending great time reading existing papers on the topic I could improve the preconditions for validity. That said, I am aware of a few limitations. Firstly, albeit the report suggests a theoretical implementation of a solution to an industry-specific opportunity it does come with caveats. Team-specific regulations, financial capabilities, and other feasibility factors were not considered. In this case, a partnering football organization would have been valuable to explore such elements to a higher degree. Expectedly, a more complete solution ready to be implemented in the given organization would have emerged from such a process by gaining deeper insights. By suggesting a general one-size-fits-all solution to a complex industry, the recipients are possibly left with, although valuable to the users, a solution that still needs to be adjusted to the specific football organization. It could also be certain features of the solution that might not be applicable to each team. For example, during the HMW workshop, the employees of DBU were fond of the 'Ask question' feature, and it immediately became a part of the solution. However, for a team of higher level, the players might get an immense amount of questions, which would require the players to spend hours answering them. This might not be sustainable.

Secondly, the essence and the main takeaways from numerous exploratory analyses were repeatedly reaffirmed which resonates greatly with the eventual solution of *Player challenges with active participation*. That said, whether the advised solution from this report is the best possible solution is unknown. No other solutions that would exploit the same opportunities were explored. Admittedly, being just a single designer in this comprehensive project with limited time, was an impediment both generally, and in particular in terms of exploring alternative paths. Multiple concepts originated from the HMW session were integrated into the final solution, but whether, for instance, a rigorous version of *Interactive player statistics* would have yielded more value to a greater audience is not determined. This project focused on a younger segment and included just three respondents for qualitative discoveries, which inevitably, results in room for improvement on the reliability front. A quantitative follow-up of the findings of the three respondents could have been profitable.

Thirdly, as a designer, I have been accustomed to providing clients with materialistic deliverables through high-fidelity prototypes. Without a collaborating client in this project, I had the leverage of structuring my own path which allowed me to exploit my service design mastery. The idea of focusing on the delivery of a solution or an end product rather than focusing on asking the right questions is a difficult balance. As Abraham Lincoln once said (Nini, 2006): "If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six sharpening my axe." In the case of research and design, I do believe that the more one 'sharpen their axe', the easier it is to come up with a more suitable solution. Spending time in the research phase, and assembling fitting knowledge is wise. However, finding the right balance of when to proceed is challenging. When do you have enough insights? One could imagine that some organizations will not pay a designer for the equivalent of an entire semester to come up with a suggested concept but rather expects ideas to emerge much sooner. This was the case during my third semester's internship. Conversely, if a design brief is too narrow, you might not allow the designer to properly utilize their service design prowess and ask the right questions. A designer's task could lie in also explicating the trajectory of the process to the client (Thoelen et al., 2015). Research into current practices and user motivations is crucial to understanding which problem to solve, and how it ought to be solved.

Reflections on Learning Objectives

At the beginning of the project a few learning objectives were phrased (See p. 6-7). This section seeks to reflect on those and assess whether I successfully accomplished those learning goals.

Official Learning Objectives

The official learning objectives were approached with an open mind and curiosity. No conclusions or resolutions were made without justifications originating from the analyses. The focus was on the users and the interactions between the potential service providers and the users, and a tested research-driven solution was presented. I feel that I succeeded in proposing a solution that could improve the emotional engagement that the fans have toward their favorite football organization. A solution that, furthermore, challenges the status quo of the European football ecosystem by suggesting a new service concept, yet to be seen on a broader scale in football organizations. Similar systems have been applied to esports organizations with seemingly great success and the capability of improving the overall user experience of live sports consumption.

Personal Learning Objectives

Simple service design methods and tools introduced throughout the course of the program were used to the best of my capabilities and to the extent that I felt necessary to unfold the case and propose a solution. In continuation of this, I feel comfortable adding these tools and methods to my toolkit for future use. Although I have used these methods and tools in prior semesters, being the sole designer working with them made it more fruitful in terms of personal development. I do feel that simple measures were used throughout which did not go beyond the tools taught in the program. A more creative and complex approach to the challenges presented to me could have excelled my learning even further. This was not done due to the limited time.

In terms of gaining knowledge on the field of live sports spectatorship, I feel well-equipped going forward to function as an expert in the field. A broad examination of the current consensus on the field was done making me confident in noticing areas of potential improvements. Even so, it was discovered that the complexity of the industry is even bigger than initially anticipated. One semester is not enough to fully grasp every corner of the European football industry. Ultimately, the project led me to a more narrow specialization than predicted which was necessary to produce a product in time.

CONCLUSION

Esports has become a global phenomenon due in part to the proliferation of streaming and content creation platforms. Football organizations can leverage similar platforms to provide fans with improved user experiences given the similarities between the two industries. This project sought to intervene with the current ecosystem of football with decades of history and challenge the status quo.

According to the findings of this project, the current user experience of live football consumption does not seem to have any particular element that is distinctively poorly executed. Instead, highly user-valued features from esports are not currently industry standards in the experience of consuming football content. The value-added feature of *Player challenges with active participation* seeks to utilize online platforms to allow for a higher level of participation and to minimize the gap between players and fans. Active participation in fun videos accompanying professional players, watching casual behind-the-scenes content, and having the opportunity to ask questions to the players will, according to this project, improve emotional engagement among football fans. Here, the level of emotional engagement that the fans have towards their team is not only crucial in determining the level of support that they give to the team but also crucial in the perceived quality of the user experience. When fans feel like they are part of the team, they become more emotionally invested in its success. Therefore, football clubs should continue to create content that allows fans to actively participate and engage with the team and its community. The final prototype, however, was not tested in practice to calculate its effects. Because of that, it cannot be concluded with certainty that the effect will be as prominent as otherwise determined in this report. Despite this, from a theoretical point of view, and based on the respondents participating in the process, it is advised that the concept of *Player challenges with active participation* is something that European football organizations should consider implementing. This is regardless of the fact that the concept will add extra tasks to be completed by the company. In continuation of this, a thorough feasibility check from a business perspective is suggested.

Noteworthy to mention is that the solution is based on a limited target segment of men between the ages of 19-36. How the solution will be welcomed by users of other segments is neither specified nor firmly investigated. Respondents older than 55 had other

consumption preferences than their younger counterparts, and the respondents younger than 19 had even stronger preferences towards an online format than the 19-36 segment investigated in this project. The perceived value of the *Player challenges with active participation* from other segments ought to be explored.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A - Expert Interview Guide

Date:

Name:

Workplace:

Question 1: Could you start off by telling me a bit about your job and what you do?

Question 2: What do you think are the main reasons for the growing popularity of watching esports?

Question 3: In your words, how would you say that the esports industry differentiates itself from traditional European football from a user perspective?

Question 4: What are you doing at your job to improve the user experience?

Question 5: Are you doing something specific to increase the amount of time the users spend with you?

Question 6: What would you say that you are doing better, if anything, than European football organizations, from a user perspective?

Question 7: Based on your knowledge of the field, do you spot any opportunities for European football organizations to implement some elements from esports, that would improve the user experience of football fans?

Question 8: How are you utilizing the two-way communication that esports platforms offer to increase the engagement of your users?

Question 9: Do you believe the esports ecosystem is superior to that of European football, from a user perspective? Why?

Appendix B - Expert Interview (Jonas) - Transcript

Date: 10/02/2023
Name: Jonas Thaysen
Workplace: BLAST

Christian: Could you start off by telling me a bit about your job and what you do?

Jonas: Yes. Of course. I work at BLAST as an event and operations coordinator.

Christian: And what are your main tasks at BLAST?

Jonas: Mainly securing great events when we are hosting our tournaments. Everything from A-Z really. Assisting in building the sites, securing a beneficial program, and making timelines. I like being a part of different elements really.

Christian: Alright. That sounds interesting. Alright, so what do you think are the main reasons for the growing popularity of watching esports?

Jonas: Hmm. The main reason could be the amount of action, right? So, we are only dealing with Counter-Strike. But generally, computer games are designed to provide action. In counter strike, each round is only two minutes long, and with guaranteed action. Of course, some rounds or games are more even, crazy, are action-packed than others, but compared to football where a game could last for 90 minutes and will end 0-0, Counter-Strike is just a great alternative.

Christian: It is interesting I think. How do you think that fits into the modern way of entertainment?

Jonas: We do physical events, so in that regard, it is not that different from the "old" ways.

Christian: What about esports in general? When you stream it online?

Jonas: It definitely taps into the on-demand entertainment. If you go to Twitch, there is content all the time if you want. In the culture of different ways of watching movies and tv series through Netflix, TV2 Play, and so on, esports as entertainment fits better into that.

Christian: In your words, how would you say that the esports industry differentiates itself from traditional European football from a user perspective?

Jonas: The obvious answer is, of course, that it mostly is consumed through online media. I am not an expert on the consumption of football, but I would guess it is just as much on the stadium or?

Christian: I am not aware of the exact percentages, but more people watch it on TV than physically in the stadium.

Jonas: Ah okay. Fair enough. Well, maybe the percentage in esports is a lot higher. We have a lot of physical attendees. 10.000 at the bigger events. But esports overall is mostly online. Actually almost exclusively online, if you do not consider

the final events. European League of Legends, for instance, oftentimes only has a few hundred spectators. And those are players from other teams, families, and crew members.

Christian: That is a good point. What are you doing at BLAST to improve the user experience when fans are coming to your events?

Jonas: We do a bunch of different things actually. We do things such as ensuring that the event is organized and planned properly to avoid annoyances. But we also have quite a lot of people working on what we call multi-platform content. This is something we do to make it as easy as possible to follow along if you want to.

Christian: What is multi-platform content, exactly?

Jonas: It is just where we do not just make physical content and broadcast it only to the ones present at the venue, but we also have it televised, as well as some streamed content.

Christian: So it is both televised and on stream? I thought that was something you could not do, as the TV stations had the rights to all content.

Jonas: In theory, that is correct. We can not stream it live on Twitch if it is something TV2 paid to broadcast. We do however have a lot of highlights that we show in the following days. An quite a lot of statistics and content that the fans can interact with.

Christian: What kind of statistics and interactive content do you have?

Jonas: Stats for the players, the teams, the weapons. All sorts of things that we show during the match, to make it a little bit more interesting. Of course, the online format is helpful here since we can show it right away on the screen they are already looking at, but we find that it gives a lot of value.

Christian: So I think we might have covered this already, but are you doing something specific to increase the amount of time the users spend with you?

Jonas: Yea again, having interactive elements as well. Something to check out during the match between rounds, also involving the players a lot for instance with voice communication from the teams.

Christian: The voice communication I think is interesting. It might improve the connection to the teams or the players, that you hear them talk during the game.

Jonas: Exactly right! But also that the fans can get an idea of the thought processes of the players during the game. Why they make certain decisions? Another thing that is also cool is the building of action. I do not know, do you know Counter-Strike?

Christian: Yes

Jonas: Yea, right, so you have seen how the screen swaps between the two teams to build up some tension, and you know that they are about to meet and such. It is again something that is a lot easier to do with a game, but it is super valuable. We of course do this on purpose.

Christian: I agree that is something unique to esports. It really sets the stage in a way. Looking past everything we have talked about so far, what would you say that you are doing better, if anything, than European football organizations, from a user perspective? It could be esports in general or at BLAST.

Jonas: I guess a lot of it comes down to the individual clubs? I am also not an expert on how things are done in football if I am being honest.

Christian: It is okay. There is no right answer. Maybe think about your own experiences with watching European football.

Jonas: Alright. Well, I think we are better at maybe not capturing the attention of the fans, but definitely keeping their attention.

Christian: Nice. Could you elaborate on that maybe?

Jonas: The live statistics added to the game screen. This is again stuff like how many kills each player has, deaths, assists, win ratios, and stuff like that. A small thing and more nice to have. I also think we are better at integrating the players. Or how do you say it? involve them more in a way. Not just them playing but also with coms (Voice communication), pre and post-game interviews, or guest broadcasters and such.

Christian: Based on your knowledge of the field, do you spot any opportunities for European football organizations to implement some elements from esports that would improve the user experience of football fans?

Jonas: That is a tough question. It might be to put an emphasis on creating more content from the club. When I see content from some of the teams, it is just highlights and such. Maybe humanize the players a bit by making some content about them goofing around at practice, them answering personal questions, or behind the scenes from their workouts or drills. Stuff like that would make it more interesting to follow along. Not just on their social media, but I would probably also go to the stadium more because I would feel a stronger connection to the club and its players.

Christian: That is a really good answer. Awesome! And I have experienced similar stuff. Just seeing the game highlights is fine, if you maybe did not see the match, but you could easily do more.

Jonas: Nono. I also did not mean for them to not post the highlights.

Christian: Right. Moving on. How are you utilizing the two-way communication that the esports platforms offer to increase the engagement of your users?

Jonas: I think we do it less so than some teams. We are more just providing a service for the fans. Or an experience. They come and enjoy a live event and have some fun. We do listen to the fans, if they have ideas but we do not really use Twitch

that much in communicating with us.

Christian: Okay.

Jonas: Oh actually we do take questions throughout. So our broadcasters will answer questions throughout the game, but I mean, they do that in the Tour de France too. But I guess it engages the fans in a way?

Christian: Definitely. I believe it is a great gesture. Especially in a developing industry such as esports. I could imagine a lot of spectators not knowing the rules?

Jonas: Well we still have a lot of first timers coming to our events just to experience it. So, yes, definitely there is some sort of education as well.

Christian: Okay, so last question. Do you believe the esports ecosystem is superior to that of European football, from a user perspective? Why?

Jonas: Oh for sure it is. The football ecosystem seems overly complicated in a way. Too many regulations and such. The esports ecosystem is more simple, and it is more like the American sports system.

Christian: That is also the plan. To emulate the American sports system with private leagues, buy-in, and no relegations. This is good from a business perspective, but why do you think it is good for the fans?

Jonas: Ah right. The fact that we arrange the events I see as a good thing rather than it being the teams' responsibility like in football. We are the experts and it is our focus to deliver some quality to the fans. In esports, the teams just focus on their performances and we focus on the product. I believe the end product is then stronger than in football, where the teams have too many things to worry about.

Christian: Thank you, Jonas. That was the last of my questions. I do not have anything else, so I just want to say thank you for your time. It was really helpful.

Jonas: No problem.

Data Consent Form

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Gives consent



Does not give consent

4/2/2023

Date

Signature

Appendix C - Expert Interview (Charlotte) - Transcript

Date: 10/02/2023

Name: Charlotte Baag

Workplace: Astralis

Christian: Hi Charlotte. Thank you for helping me with my project.

Charlotte: Hey! Of course. I remember it very well when I was trying to find data for my thesis.

Christian: It probably helps when you have been sitting at the other side of the table.

Charlotte: Yes I think so too.

Christian: Okay. Could you start off by telling me a bit about your job and what you do?

Charlotte: Of course. So I work at Astralis as a Commercial Project Manager. So, I do new projects, where I have a financial focus. Like how we can make a business of different ventures such as minor events where fans can come and play, media platforms, and working on advancing esports through different initiatives online or physically. So a lot of collaborations with stakeholders, designing events, financial statements, and such.

Christian: How much are you involved in the design process of the different projects?

Charlotte: From start to finish really.

Christian: What are some of the things you are considering when suggesting new projects besides profitability? I mean where are you trying to improve? which elements of the user journey are you targeting?

Charlotte: We spend quite some effort in user research. For now, one of our main focuses is to communicate esports to give it a broader reach. I think there are still a lot of improvements to be made in esports, but the industry is also growing a lot.

Christian: So it is before or after your games that you try to add content?

Charlotte: Yes. Creating fun content on different platforms to get some reach and have a wider audience really. For instance, doing weird challenges with our players playing against cheating fans or playing 1 against 5 and the like. It is just something that we found is great fun for the fans that they have the chance to be a part of such a thing and have fun with their idols.

Christian: And what do you think are the main reasons for the growing popularity of watching esports?

Charlotte: Probably the platforms. It is available to everyone really.

Christian: In your words, how would you say that the esports industry differentiates itself from traditional European football from a user perspective?

Charlotte: Again I would have to say the platforms. Fans can access it from anywhere if they have a smartphone. You do not have to pay for a TV subscription or the like. It just makes it convenient. I think at this point people accept esports as a sport. Or, well, at least that is my experience. And at Astralis we are good at utilizing the increasing interest in esports to really excel.

Christian: What are you doing at your job to improve the user experience?

Charlotte: Oh that is hard to answer. I think overall we just first of all deliver a lot of content and do a lot of things. We consider ourselves experts, but it is still hard to navigate this industry as a lot of things have not been done before. We are still evolving. So for us, a lot of it is just about trying out different ways of communication, different platforms, and different event styles, and then doing more of the things that receive good feedback and less of the ones that do not.

Christian: That makes a lot of sense. So you involve the users a lot in your service design? Feedback, ideas, and such?

Charlotte: Especially on the feedback part! When we are on-site. I am on-site for the far majority of the Danish events. Then we sometimes ask for ideas.

Christian: Alright. What kind of ideas are you getting?

Charlotte: A lot of them. I would even say maybe 8 out of 10, is an idea for a Youtube video. It could be to have a player surprise a fan with some equipment, the players only using certain weapons, requesting 1 vs 1 against Gla1ve. Anything really.

Christian: Are you doing those things then?

Charlotte: Not all of them, but it makes our jobs, or at least the marketing team's job a lot easier. Quite a lot of them I would say are ideas that we use. It is easy when we know that it is something that the fans would like, right? It is actually harder the other way around. To create content without any fan ideas because we do not know what they would embrace it.

Christian: I really like your approach to it. Not being too afraid of just trying things out, and involving the fans in the generation of content. Alright. Are you doing something specific to increase the amount of time the users spend with you?

Charlotte: This would have to be our online content for the most part. Our different events, pop-ups, meet and greet, and such.

Christian: What would you say that you are doing better at Astralis or it could also be esports in general, than European football clubs if you take the perspective of the fans?

Charlotte: We are winning more internationally haha.

Christian: That is true haha.

Charlotte: No, but for sure the constant flow of content is something we do well. Also better than Danish football clubs I think.

Christian: I agree with that. From what you know about football clubs from Denmark or Europe in general, can you spot any opportunities for them to implement some elements from esports that would improve the user experience of football fans?

Charlotte: That is a great question. Maybe invest more in their digital content. I am a fan of FCK and I must say that the content is a bit boring. The focus is for sure on the football part, which makes sense, but I would say that digital investment would just make sense. They could for instance do what we do, and involve fans in specific challenges in their practices, play some mini games against fans, or generally have them suggest ideas. We found that the fans in a way feel like a part of the Astralis community when we do such things.

Christian: The issue with football. Or at least a part of the issue is their ecosystem. They are not allowed to do some things because they sold the media rights to television and can not do what they want online. But what you suggest is a great idea. They could circumvent that issue with your idea.

Charlotte: I was not aware of that. In what way are they limited?

Christian: Showing live content through their platforms for instance.

Charlotte: Ah of course. But we do not do a lot of that either. There are many ways to utilize the content and edit it to make it super relevant after the live event even.

Christian: That is true. Alright, How are you utilizing the two-way communication that the esports platforms offer, to increase the engagement of your users? We talked a bit about this earlier.

Charlotte: Yes, for sure including them in the ideation of content. I mean it engages them in two ways: They type a request for a challenge or something and then again when the content is being streamed or created. It does not have to be the same users partaking in both, but yes.

Christian: It makes sense. I see a lot of value in this idea. Okay Charlotte, final question. Do you believe the esports ecosystem is superior to that of European football, from a user perspective?

Charlotte: It seems like it. I am not an expert on football at all but I definitely see advantages in how we do it in esports. I might be biased.

Christian: That is okay. The major difference between the two is perhaps how it is consumed. One being on television and the other one being mostly live streaming. I know that in Counter-Strike you show it on TV as well though.

Charlotte: Live streaming is what we do with most of our teams and that is just beneficial in all aspects I think. Easily accessible. If we showed it only on TV I think your fanbase and organization, in general, would be a lot smaller.

Christian: That is an interesting reflection. Another difference is also the distance between the players. You mentioned it earlier with the challenges you do with fans and players and such, but in esports the distance from players to fans is just smaller.

Charlotte: Yes good eye! We do a lot to make it that way though. Of course, the Youtube streaming format helps us because it has a chat function and all, but we also put an emphasis on it. This is something that for sure could be utilized in football as well. Maybe the platform should be another one, but it for sure is possible. You just have to be creative.

Christian: Do you guys prefer a specific platform, or how do you distribute your content and efforts?

Charlotte: Like I said earlier, we are just doing a lot of different stuff. This is also the case with different platforms. I mean we use Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, our website a lot, and sometimes Twitch. We prefer Youtube as it just seems to work better for our segment, and it is great for the content we make.

Christian: Thank you so much for your time Charlotte. You made some great points, so it is definitely something I can use.

Charlotte: Of course. I know how hard it can be, so I am happy to help you.

Data Consent Form

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Gives consent



Does not give consent

5/2/2023

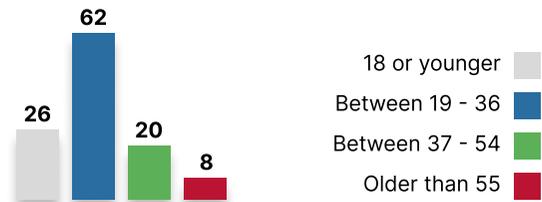
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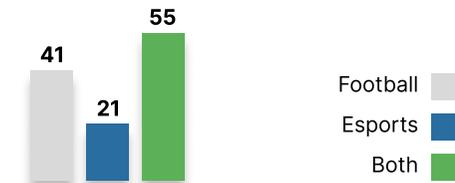
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Appendix D - Survey Findings

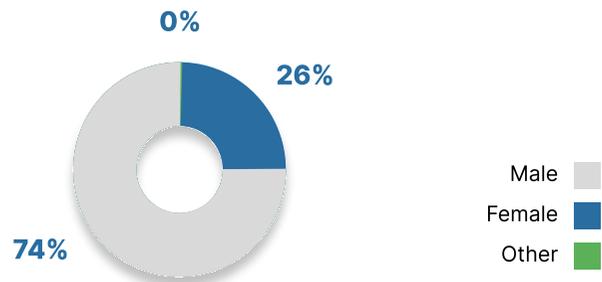
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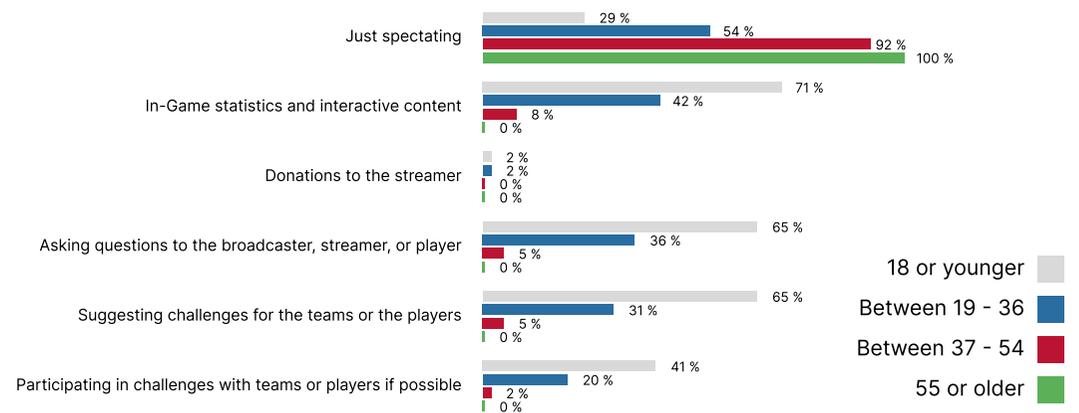
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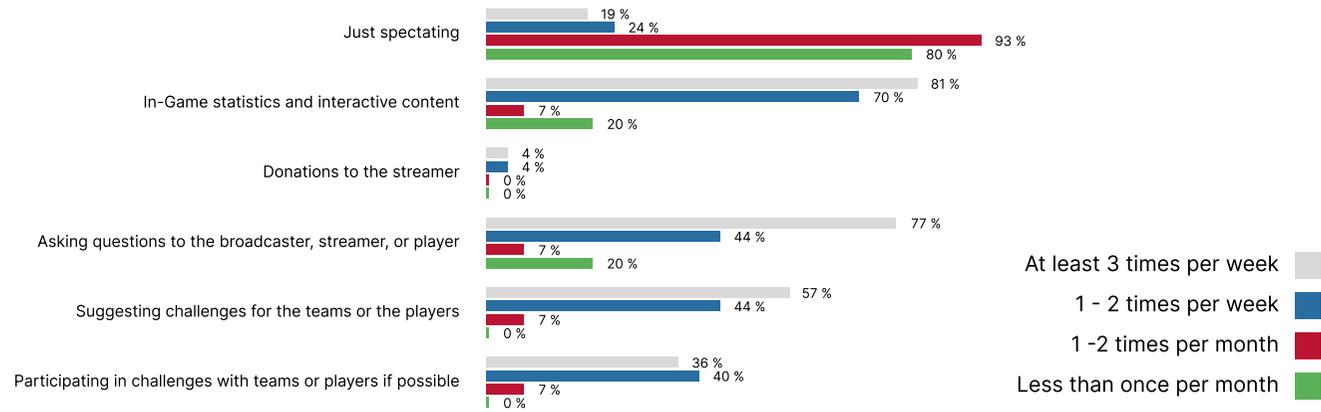
Question 2: What gender do you identify as?



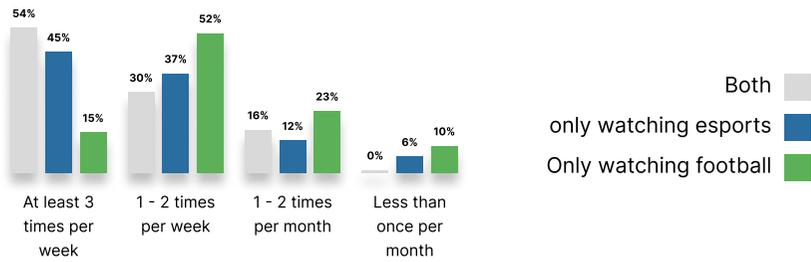
The usage of added features based on age



The usage of added features based on frequency of watching live esports



The frequency of consumption based on sports preference (Aged 19 - 36)



Appendix E - User Interview Guide

Date:

Name:

Age:

Residency:

- Show the user journey of football followed by having them place the cards on the scale of both importance and execution.
- Go over the result and ask needed questions.
- Repeat with the esports user journey.
- Proceed with the questionnaire.

Question 1: From the current user journey of football, is there anything that you would change that would improve the experience substantially?

Question 2: From the football user journey, is there anything that you feel is missing?

Question 3: If you were to implement touch points from the esports user journey to that of football, which would it be?

Question 4: Would you prefer those features to be online or in person?

Question 5: Would such a change in the football user journey increase your emotional engagement with the given club? How?

Appendix F - User Interview (Alex) - Transcript

Date: 13/03/2023
Name: Alex Carstensen
Age: 31
Residency: Amager

Christian: Hi Alex, thank you for participating in this. First off I would like you to fill out this. Rate the importance and execution of the different elements of both esports and football.

Alex: Sure. Alright.

- Show the user journey of football followed by having them place the cards on the scale of both importance and execution.
- Go over the result and ask needed questions.
- Repeat with the esports user journey.
- Proceed with the questionnaire.

Christian: Okay. Great. I noticed that you gave the execution of pre-game statistics and line-up a three. Why is that?

Alex: Yea well it is not very fulfilling. There are only a few statistics available and it is fixed.

Christian: What would make it better for you then?

Alex: If you could see the individual statistics of each player. I do not know. For instance, their passing accuracy across the season when clicking on their name. Their goals and assists per game on average. Things like that.

Christian: So generally just more data, and specific to each player?

Alex: Yes but I mean team data as well. The average possession, goals, number of corner kicks, and such. The current feature is really just the bare minimum.

Christian: Okay. I get your point. Do you think the ideas you mention would be used by everyone, or who is it for?

Alex: Probably not. This would be for the bigger fans and mostly, I think, for betting purposes. You have those sites already, but making it a place where you collect everything would be nice. Also I would not use it every time, but I would like it to be there when I wanted to, you know?

Christian: Yes. And this is also the case for the post-game elements? I see that you also rated the execution here to be kind of bad?

Alex: Yes. Same thing. You could make this a lot more interesting, again, comparing this particular game with the season average of the specific player or team.

Christian: Right. That would be really cool. Then you rated the execution and importance of game highlights really high. Even giving execution 10 out of 10. Could you elaborate on why this feature is so important, and what is great about it?

Alex: Well, I do it often for games I did not see because I do not have the channel, the time, or whatever. Sometimes I also just want to see the highlights again for games I already saw. The execution is, I mean, not always great because you look for videos on Youtube, but I would say that it is always possible to find a good one. Some are garbage, but yea.

Christian: Great. Okay. So now on to the esports user journey. You rated the post-game features really high on both importance and execution. Could you tell me why it is so well executed? From the interactive statistics to participating in challenges.

Alex: Right. Starting with the interactive statistics there is just more content and it is easy to use. The participating in challenges seems to work great when I have watched others partake in them.

Christian: You also rated the during phase really high. What do you think is so great about it?

Alex: There is just great action and the champion selection of LoL is just a great build up. It gives kind of an insight to the strategy that you never seen in football because that happens in the changing room, you know?

Christian: So from the current user journey of football, is there anything that you would change to improve experience substantially?

Alex: I think the pre- and post-game statistics we talked about already would be the first.

Christian: Okay. And is there anything that you feel is missing?

Alex: Hmm. I mean now that we went over the esports one as well, there are more elements to that, right. The fact that you can watch the casual play, or their practice I guess you could call it, is nice. I know that football teams sometimes post a few minutes of practice and such but yea. This is missing in football a bit I think.

Christian: Aha. Great point. DBU I know did it a lot during the World Cup actually. I really enjoyed watching those, to get a feeling of the vibe and get to know the players a bit more.

Alex: Yes! I remember seeing some of those. Totally agree.

Christian: If you were to implement touch points from the esports user journey to that of football, which would it be? I know we kind of just talked about this but there might be others as well?

Alex: Again statistics and practice videos perhaps. The challenge thing that was a part of the exercise would be kind of cool too. I mean in esports I do not use it that often. I like to watch weird videos of esports teams and even streamers but I do not suggest stuff often and I have never participated.

Christian: Would you participate if you have the chance?

Alex: I probably would. I think it would be super cool, but there are also thousands of young guys wanting to participate, so I would imagine that it probably would not be me anyways.

Christian: That is a fair point. I think you are totally right. Those features you just mentioned would be cool to have in football. Would you prefer them to be online or in person?

Alex: Online for sure. The distance is a major issue. I would never go to London to watch a Chelsea practice even though they would be doing something cool. It would be a lot more convenient for it to be online. On their Youtube channel or own website.

Christian: If your favorite team were to increase the statistics on their own website and add some practice videos to their Youtube channel, would such a change increase the emotional engagement that you have with the club?

Alex: Hmm. Yes, I think so. For sure. I would spend more time looking at their website and different statistics. But the videos would make me get to know the players more. So yea. Definitely.

Christian: Thank you very much, Alex. I appreciate your time and your help.

Alex: You are most welcome, Christian.

Data Consent Form

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Gives consent



Does not give consent

17/2/2023

Date



Signature

Appendix G - User Interview (Emil) - Transcript

Date: 13/02/2023
Name: Emil Jeppesen
Age: 20
Residency: Århus

Christian: Hi Emil. How is it going?

Emil: Fine thanks. What about you?

Christian: All good. Well thank you for helping out, it is really appreciated. As I told you I am working on a project where I am trying to suggest features that will improve the experience of live football, by implementing elements from esports.

Emil: Yep. It is a very interesting project, indeed.

Christian: The first step is that I would like you to fill out this where you rate the importance and execution of the different elements of both esports and football.

Emil: Okay sounds good.

- Show the user journey of football followed by having them place the cards on the scale of both importance and execution.
- Go over the result and ask needed questions.
- Repeat with the esports user journey.
- Proceed with the questionnaire.

Christian: Are you done?

Emil: Yes.

Christian: Perfect. Okay. Okay, I see that you rated the execution of pre-game statistics rather high. It is also something that is important to you. Can you tell me a bit about why that is?

Emil: It is just nice to see before the game. Like who is playing, injuries, and something like that.

Christian: And why do you think it is greatly executed? Where are you checking those things?

Emil: I use Soccerstand. I mean it is simple and easy enough to use. It shows the thing I find necessary.

Christian: How come it is not a 10 then?

Emil: I am not really sure. It can always get better, right? Perhaps if you do not use or know the site it might not be that easy. It is just because I use it often that I find it super easy.

Christian: Noted. Okay. And then the touch points during the game and half time broadcasting only scores 4-5. Why is that?

Emil: I watch more esports than football and in football the pace is just a lot lower. Esports has a lot more information on kills, structures taken down and stuff. The camera swaps angle a lot more often which to me gives a better dynamic to the experience. Football is more one or two angles and lower pace, so the dynamic is just less exciting. It of course depends on the game. It could end 4-4, which would make it a good game, but often that is not really the case. I feel like the quality of the game is now solely depending on the players and team performance and the producers are not doing much.

Christian: I like that point and it is definitely something I can relate to. In regards to the angles of the camera it might be more simple in esports because of the format compared to football, right?

Emil: Yes I think so too.

Christian: Could you imagine a way to implement it in football? You know, increasing the dynamic and pace of the game from a producer perspective?

Emil: Really the informations on kills, streaks, and stuff like that could be implemented. You know giving a notice when, for instance, a given player makes an assist, has 95% passing accuracy, completed 5 tackles in the game or what not.

Christian: I know that some channels add some statistics like goals during a season after they score or kilometers run during the game. That might just be in the Champions League, but I have seen it.

Emil: Ah okay. Yea, I do remember the goals scored during a season statistic, actually. But then more of that stuff. It might just be a nice addition to some, and maybe not necessary, but it would make me enjoy it more.

Christian: From the esports user journey I noticed that you rated a lot of them really high on importance. Does that mean that they are crucial to you and the experience?

Emil: I guess so yes.

Christian: Then you rate the chat-function as well-executed but not important. Could you tell me why you think that?

Emil: It does the job. But in cases with thousands of spectators your message probably will get lost. And with the importance, it is just because I do not really use it much. I have used it sometimes in the past but not any more.

Christian: Why is that?

Emil: Back then I wanted to participate in stuff and ask questions to streamers on how to improve certain elements of my own game and stuff like that. Now I just play for fun and do not have the same amount of time to watch streams for hours per day. But I mean, it is a great platform to be recognized even if you have an ambition of becoming a professional. A lot of people are spectating.

Christian: Okay, so the next few questions we have kind of covered already, but from the existing football user journey, is there anything that you feel is missing? Besides the in-game statistics, you mentioned before?

Emil: Hmm. I do not really know. It is a hard question. There is not a lot of stuff to it. A really simple experience without a lot of added stuff as is the case with esports.

Christian: This leads me to the next question. If you were to implement touch points from the esports user journey to that of football, which would it be?

Emil: I would love to see the same post-game features from esports in football. Or not necessarily post-game, but there is just more content with esports such as the casual play where you can talk with streamers. I once played against Broxah, a professional LoL player in a 1v1 because he had an event on his stream. Super cool experience. I know that is not the same as watching a live football match but I watch Broxah's stream quite often now because I became a bigger fan due to the 1v1 experience.

Christian: Nice! Wow, that is great. Did you beat him?

Emil: No haha! It was not as one-sided as you might think! I actually did alright, I would say.

Christian: I would be surprised if you did haha! How would you convert that into the football experience?

Emil: I mean, even open invites to watch the practice, highlights of the practice with good goals, fun moments, a quiz where the players are guessing stuff from teammates, or a vlog of a players' day in the club. Anything that would offer insights into the team. The experience of a football match today is like I said earlier, super simple and has been the same for quite some time, so I would say that it is working. I do not know. I guess it could use some new innovations, so yea, your project is super relevant, I think.

Christian: Right, right. Would you prefer that to be online or in person?

Emil: Both. I guess online is a lot easier, but I would not mind being a part of a little competition during practice or just watching it.

Christian: Noted. So final question. Would such a change to the football user journey increase the emotional engagement with the given club? How?

Emil: Of course, it would. Getting to know them I think naturally adds some extra engagement.

Christian: Thank you, Emil. That is all for me. I appreciate your time.

Emil: You are welcome.

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Gives consent

Does not give consent

17/2/2023

Date


Signature

Appendix H - User Interview (John) - Transcript

Date: 14/03/2023
Name: John Wisbom
Age: 36
Residency: Vesterbro

Christian: Hi John. Thank you for taking the time to help me out with this project. You know how it is.

John: Yes. No worries. I think your topic is super cool, and something pretty close to mine as well, so I could even learn something as well haha.

Christian: I hope you can haha. Okay, let's get started. Firstly, I have these user journeys of football and esports. I would kindly ask you to fill the points of contact out with how well you think it is being executed, on a scale of 1-10, and then also how important these points of contact are to you.

John: Sure. Give me a minute.

Christian: No stress. Just take your time.

- Show the user journey of football followed by having them place the cards on the scale of both importance and execution.
- Go over the result and ask needed questions.
- Repeat with the esports user journey.
- Proceed with the questionnaire.

Christian: Okay. The broadcasting steps before the game and during halftime are not, according to you, executed very effectively. What do you mean by that?

John: Yes, I just think it is too simple from a technical perspective. It is very old school and has not really utilized the new options that technology offers.

Christian: Do you have any examples of where it is utilized?

John: American sports are great at technical illustrations and fancy graphs. I watch the NFL and the NBA sometimes, and they do it very well from a broadcasting perspective.

Christian: Alright. Then you give the post-game player interviews a three out of 10. Can you elaborate and that? Why only three?

John: It just feels very forced and something they do just because they have to. very short interview with players who are still exhausted from the game, so they often do not even speak very well.

Christian: How would you do it, to make it better?

John: Perhaps plan it with a player beforehand, and have it maybe 15 minutes after the game. The players will know that they will partake in an interview and will have time to think about the game, as well as calming down from the game. That way it would be more professional and the content probably more useful.

Christian: That is a good point. Good idea. Now looking at the esports user journey. You rated the player interviews here really high compared to the one from football. How come?

John: This is just because esports is just exactly what I think football should do too. It seems like the players know they are supposed to be interviewed after the game and are therefore more prepared.

Christian: Then you rated partaking in challenges a 10 out of 10 on importance. Why is that so important to you?

John: I love playing video games and the social element is important to me as well. I am not really playing to become better. Playing against other fans or professionals would be super fun, and I frequently see such things on stream too.

Christian: Okay. Looking past what you have already suggested, is there anything from the current user journey of football, that you would change to improve the experience substantially?

John: Not really. I think overall it is alright. Besides the broadcasting part.

Christian: So nothing missing?

John: Hmm. Not really.

Christian: We have not talked much about what happens outside of the live esports games. Is that something you watch?

John: I have yes. For Counter-Strike I sometimes watch streams.

Christian: Do you use any of the available features there, that would make sense to implement in football?

John: The chat function is great. Having a line of communication with the player and other fans is super cool. That would be nice to have in football.

Christian: And if that were implemented in football, how would you use it?

John: Probably for the same reasons as I do in esports. Just chatting random stuff, suggesting picks for their weapons, challenges, which map to play, and stuff like that.

Christian: Good. Okay. Are there other touch points from esports that you would implement to the user journey of football?

John: Esports has a bit of the same as the NFL and the NBA when it comes to broadcasting. They are good at illustrations and graphs and interactive content that you can access through Twitch during the game. It might be hard to add to football

on television, but perhaps on the teams' website.

Christian: Right, right. This actually answers my next question, but let me rephrase it. If you were to implement extra features to the football user journey, would you then prefer for them to be online or physically in the stadium?

John: I rarely go to the stadium, so for me, it would add more value if it was online because I would use them more often. Not that the physical experience could not be better, but I would personally suggest online improvements.

Christian: Fair point. And would such a change in the football user journey increase the emotional engagement to your favorite club?

John: Perhaps. I am not sure, but it would make the experience of watching it online a lot better.

Data Consent Form

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Gives consent



Does not give consent

18/2/2023

Date

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Appendix I - Prototype Test Questionnaire

Question 1: What do you think you can do using this website?

Question 2: When would you use it?

Question 3: Is there anything that does not make sense or feels out of place?

Question 4: Was there a particular function that you feel is missing?

Question 5: Do you think the website guided you to the intended flow of events?

Question 6: Was the application easy to navigate through?

Question 7: How was the overall design experience?

Question 8: What would you change to this website if anything?

Appendix J - Prototype Test (Alex) - Transcript

Christian: Hi again Alex. And thank you for joining me once again.

Alex: Hi. Yea, no worries. Happy to help.

Christian: So, today we are going to test a prototype. You will be presented with some screens of the concept and we will go over what you see and experience. Alright?

Alex: Sounds good.

- Shows the wireframes

Christian: Okay. So what do you think you can do using this website based on what you have just seen?

Alex: It looks pretty cool! I think you can chat with other fans and sign up for videos where you participate as well.

Christian: Okay. When would you use it, if you would?

Alex: I guess instead of watching something else. TV or a series.

Christian: And what about in terms of the football experience? Like, watching sports online? Where would this fit in?

Alex: It could be midweek when there are still a few days until the next game or a few days after a game and you want some exposure to your team.

Christian: Aha. Is there anything that does not make sense or feels out of place?

Alex: Hmm. Not really. I am I probably would not use a simple chat like that.

Christian: How come?

Alex: If it was a part of the video like on Youtube or something I might add a comment or be a part of a discussion if the video kind off invites to it.

Christian: Was there a particular function that you feel is missing?

Alex: I could be neat with a communication channel to the players too. If you had the list of players, and then could ask them questions there, and they would answer them within a week or so.

Christian: That is a good idea. Nice! Do you think the website guided you to the intended flow of events?

Alex: Yes. I mean it just shows a few different subpages but yes, I like it.

Christian: A bit similar to what you just mentioned, but was the website easy to navigate through?

Alex: Yes.

Christian: Great. Two more questions. First, how was the overall design experience? I know it is just a few simple screens but still.

Alex: Well the idea is cool. It looks alright, but a few more details would be nice. But super simple to navigate.

Christian: What would you change to this website if anything?

Alex: I would add the ask question thing we talked about. Where you can ask questions to each player, potentially even the staff too. And then just make it more detailed really. With actual text instead of the chat bubble things, and the vote bar and stuff. But I think this concept is super great honestly. It really allows me to interact more with the organization and its players and feel a part of the club to a larger degree since I can have a saying in future videos. It definitely would make me more emotionally engaged with the team.

Christian: Alright. Thank you for your kind words. I am glad that it would because that means I am not far off. Anyways, that was it. Thank you once again. I really appreciate it.

Alex: Sure, no worries. I am certain this concept would be hugely valued.

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4/4/2023

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Appendix K - Prototype Test (Emil) - Transcript

Christian: Hi again Emil. Appreciate you wanting to help me out another time.

Emil: Hi. Yea sure.

Christian: So just quickly to fill you in. Since the last time I have made some wireframes that represent a prototype of a solution to what I am working on, right?

Emil: Okay. Sweet.

Christian: You will then be presented with those screens and I will ask a set of questions related to those. And just be completely honest.

Emil: Of course. Yea, sounds good.

- Shows wireframes

Christian: Okay so first question. What do you think you can do using this website?

Emil: Nice! See videos such as the ideas we talked about last time actually. That is pretty cool that you went with it. hmm. Then vote for the next video concepts which is also great, and then sign up if you want to be a part of the video?

Christian: Right. Good good. When would you use these features? If you ever would.

Emil: I mean I casually watch Youtube on a daily basis, and I see this being a bit similar with at least the video part. So yea potentially daily.

Christian: And what about voting for video ideas and participating?

Emil: I would vote for video ideas when I was visiting the site. I could see myself participating in video ideas again if it was something fun. But not like to improve or something like it used to be. Just to have fun.

Christian: Is there anything that does not make sense or feels out of place?

Emil: Nah not really. Maybe show the vote percentages after you select one instead of how it is here?

Christian: Aha. Why is that?

Emil: I think this way would give away the results beforehand if one idea got say 70% of the votes. It would encourage people to vote if it is hidden and maybe make it more exciting.

Christian: That makes sense. Was there a particular function that you feel is missing?

Emil: Not really. I suppose you can watch the videos shown in screen one if you click them?

Christian: Yes.

Emil: Then not. I like the concept.

Christian: Do you think the website guided you to the intended flow of events?

Emil: Yes totally. Super, super simple and nothing fancy. But to me, that is also preferred.

Christian: Was the website easy to navigate?

Emil: I mean the screens do not show how the sign-up feature is followed up. Maybe another screen that shows this would be needed, but the stuff that is there now is easy to navigate, yes.

Christian: How was the overall design experience?

Emil: Good. Again simple but I would change the graph thing to be invisible until you have voted for one of them, or typed in your own idea. I could tell that it was a football club website from the design, and the added things were good.

Christian: So the final question we covered already, so I actually do not have anything else. Thank you, Emil!

Emil: You are welcome. Good luck with it, I think it will be great.

Christian: Thanks.

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Appendix L - Prototype Test (John) - Transcript

Christian: Hi again John.

John: Hi Christian.

Christian: Okay, so last time was about your preferences and thoughts about improvements. Today is a little different. As I told you on the phone I have made a prototype presented through some screens. You will look at those and then we will have a little discussion on how it looks and the features and such. Sounds good?

John: Sounds good. I am excited.

- Shows wireframes

Christian: What do you think you can do using this website?

John: So obviously chatting with other fans. You can watch videos with fans participating in competitions and stuff. And then sign up if you want to participate, or is that correct?

Christian: Yes that was the plan. Okay. And when would you use this? If you would.

John: That could be any time. I love it. I would probably sign up for most of the things if it was a big club near where I live. The videos I would watch when they are released or when I have time. But it is a good idea to get some content outside of the live games.

Christian: Is there anything that does not make sense or feels out of place?

John: Maybe the graph below the chat. The chat seems a little bit hidden.

Christian: Is there a particular function that you feel is missing?

John: Hmm. Let me think. I can not think of anything, to be honest. I do not think so.

Christian: Fair enough. Do you think the website guided you to the intended flow of events?

John: It did not show the confirmation of 'sign up' which I think for the sake of understanding the total concept would be good, but everything else made total sense.

Christian: Was the website easy to navigate?

John: Yes

Christian: And how was the overall design experience?

John: It might be lacking a little bit of some details and something a little bit closer to the final thing but the concept is good.

Christian: What would you change to this website if anything?

John: More details, move the chat to the top instead of the graph, and maybe also instead of calling it 'contents' I would call it, for instance, FCKtv if that was the team. I know some clubs have such a site already, but this idea would fit into that, I think.

Christian: Alright. That is that, John. Once again thank you for helping me out. You are helping me massively.

John: Of course!

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