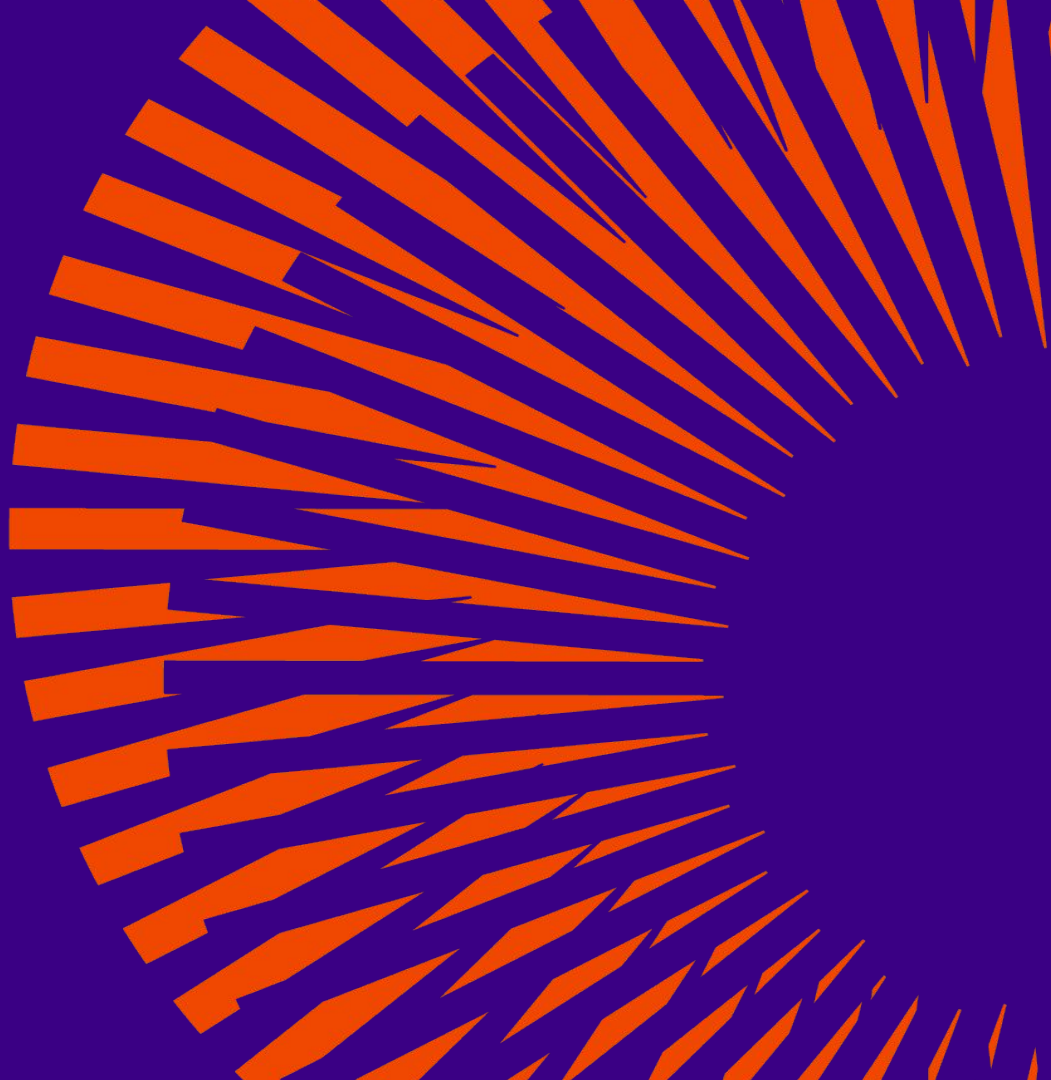


Online Gaming

Resource kit for
activations



Contents:

Introduction	3
Online Gaming	4
What is Online Gaming?	5
What is Twitch?	6
Reasons people play and watch online gaming	7
IFPA island	8
Creator led experience	9
Key learnings	10
Key steps for you to activate	11
Benefits of all involved	12
Inspiration	13
Monitoring performance	14
Important considerations	15
Links	16



Introduction

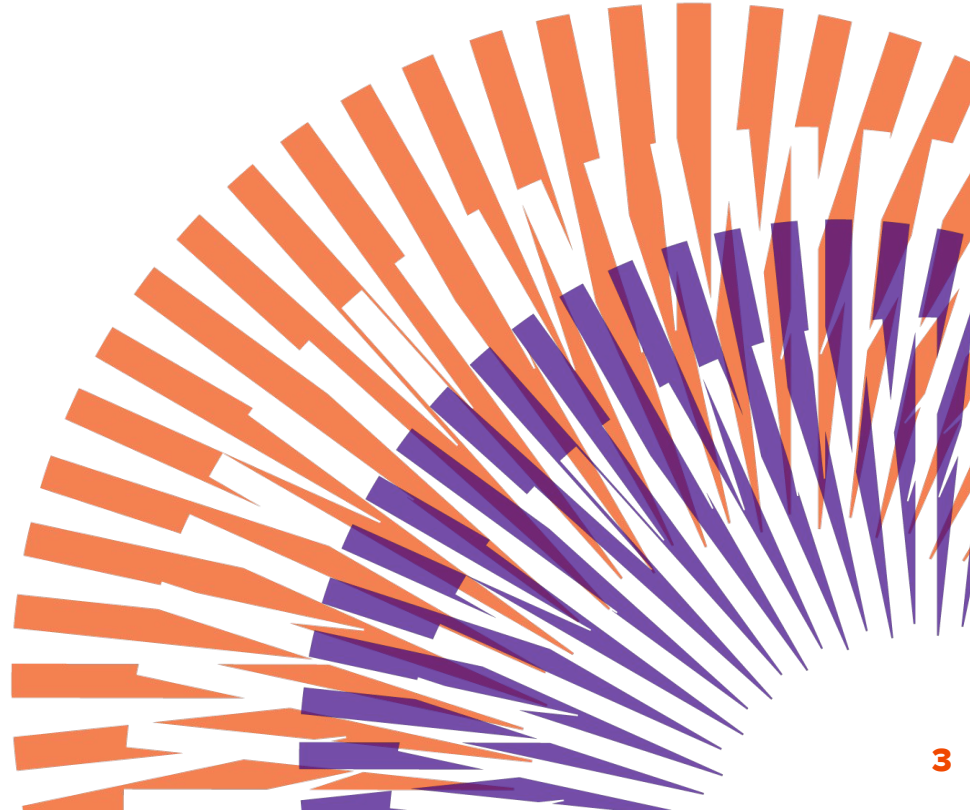
This report shares the knowledge from the creation of a psoriatic disease community around a Nintendo computer game called Animal Crossing.

An understanding of this sector might help to **increase awareness, engagement and support for young people.** This in turn should help **increase membership, volunteer support and possibly donations.**

IFPA worked with a patient to host and develop an island within a game that others could explore. This was also live streamed via Twitch and videos uploaded to YouTube.

It is hoped that by sharing this information that local organisations can activate their own activities to engage with gaming audiences.

In particular, online gaming is seen as an attractive way to connect with young people (age 14+).



Online Gaming

It is estimated that there are over 1 billion people who play games online. This grew by 21% last year. (Statistica, 2022)

Participation is not limited to playing, people like to watch people play games. Two of the top 5 YouTube channels with the most subscribers are gaming related (ThinkwithGoogle, 2022).

Online gaming is increasingly a social activity, played between family and friends as well as the wider world.

An average of 79% of Millennials and Gen -Z play video games and there is no gender gap. (Cloudwards, 2022)

What is Online Gaming?

An online game is a video game that is either partially or primarily played through the Internet or any other computer network available. Online games are ubiquitous on modern gaming platforms, including PCs, consoles (Nintendo, XBOX, PlayStation) and mobile devices, and span many genres, including first-person shooters, strategy games, and extensive multiplayer online role-playing games.

It is common for people who play online to live stream their play on Twitch.tv and/or YouTube. This allows people to watch and interact with the play without necessarily having access to devices or gaming software.

This guide is not about online gambling. We do not encourage this type of activity.



What is Twitch?

Twitch is where millions of people come together live every day to chat, interact, and make their own entertainment together.

Twitch is an American video live streaming service that focuses on video game live streaming, including broadcasts of esports competitions, in addition to offering music broadcasts, creative content, and "in real life" streams.

The Twitch services are not available to persons under the age of 13. If you are between the ages of 13 and the age of legal majority in your jurisdiction of residence, you may only use the Twitch services under the supervision of a parent or legal guardian who agrees to be bound by these Terms of Service.



Reasons people play and watch online gaming

To be part of a community, to feel included

Playing and watching people play games includes having conversations with them and each other whilst they play, often on a weekly basis. The game allows people to bond, have fun and immerse themselves but conversations are not limited to the game. Audiences include all genders, age, race and countries.

To escape and have fun

Online worlds can be joined from home to provide entertainment, friendship and joy. They are a meeting ground for people to escape.

To learn new things

Online gamers and creators are trusted and foster exciting, authentic conversations in the communities they help to build.

IFPAisland

IFPAisland has been created to connect with a younger audience, in an innovative way.

The campaign called “Explore Psoriatic Diseases Together” was the start of a 7-week island build that finished on World Psoriasis Day (29th October 2022).

The island was built in the Nintendo Switch game, Animal Crossing™: New Horizons.

IFPA partnered with psoriasis ambassador Joel Nelson who has built the island and live-streamed his progress on his Twitch channel: www.twitch.tv/joelvsarthritis.

IFPAisland is a safe space for everyone, especially people living with psoriatic disease, to interact and have fun together. Everyone is invited to visit the island, take and share pictures in the psoriatic disease-themed spaces, participate in events, and learn more about psoriatic disease.

During the build, the island was accessible to everyone who played Animal Crossing and you can visit and explore the Dream Island: IFPAisland.





Creator led experiences

A creator experience is one where a community is built around a person. It is important to have a trusted, authentic person to lead the gaming experience. It is also helpful if they are an established influencer with an existing following. In the case of IFPAisland, this was Joel. He has his own website, social media channels and organised the game activity and live streams.

Joel held weekly livestreams where he updated the game and discussed issues with the growing community.

He used his own social media channels to build awareness as well as IFPA sharing his messages.

A creator needs to commit to at least 4 hours a week to play the game and live stream. Building a following can take time and commitment. This can be challenging when that person, like Joel, is a patient. However, the long term rewards can be huge and over time we could see the building of trust, increased audience membership and interaction about the game and psoriatic disease.



Key learnings

- IFPA island was a creator led game experience. One person leads the experience of playing the game, streaming it for others and deals with the interactions amongst community members. This can place burden on a single person as the community builds.
- An alternative is to organise tournaments or have leader board games that could be centrally managed by the national or global organization. E.g. Sports games (e-sports), racing or multiplayer battle games.
- The choice of game is very important to attract the right audience. Some games are 18+, some are for young children. Some games require expensive equipment and software. All these factor should be carefully considered.
- It is advisable to have clearly defined start and end dates of any gaming experience and associated campaign.
- Make it clear how people can take part and engage by playing or by watching.
- Twitch is a very good livestream option for broadcast play and building community, but content does not stay available for long periods so remember to save it and upload it to YouTube and other social media channels.
- Discord is an emerging platform to allow the community to develop offline.
- Games that can be played for free, across multiple devices or platforms are going to have a wider appeal.
- Editing content that is created and sharing on social media is a great way to attract audiences.
- Always remember to share your web address, mission and purpose, and remind people to join their local organisation.
- Other countries might be interested to take part in your national organisation activities. Please do collaborate and share materials. For IFPA island we translated key documents from English into Spanish and shared this.

Key steps for you to activate

1. Decide whether you want a creator led experience or if you want to host your own event
2. If you seek a creator led experience then you could broadcast a request amongst your community to find existing game playing patients/carers. Aim for someone who is an established influencer with an existing following
3. Decide the game you wish to play and check it is available to play online
4. Make sure your chosen game is compatible with your intended audience (age, language, skill, popularity, cost)
5. Set a campaign plan for a start and end date
6. Set up the broadcasting channels (Twitch or YouTube) and set the community rules
7. Share the information on your social media, website and emails to members
8. Create a press release and share with media
9. Ensure you have clear messages about your organisation, it's purpose and the support available
10. Consider requesting donations during activities
11. Save your content and reuse or reload across your digital estate
12. Share your activity and source documents with other organisations to learn from or translate
13. Ensure you continue to develop any communities to become your members on completion of the activity

Benefits for all involved

Participants	IFPA	Member Societies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to develop join a community• Opportunity to have fun and discuss important topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support local organisations• Inspire young people and drive global voice of the young• Build and share knowledge• Embrace digital change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drive local membership amongst young people• Connect with other organisations to share experiences, knowledge• Embrace digital change



Inspiration

- Organise a Soccer tournament (Women's World Cup - 2023)
- Organise car racing tournament
- Online multiplayer board games (e.g. Catan)



Monitoring performance

IFPA island and its related videos broadcasts have been popular.

- The social awareness generated reached nearly 1m people with 10'000s of interactions
- Over 500 minutes of live stream were created and over 5,000 minutes watched from over 15 countries
- The social posts had over 100,000 link clicks
- Live streams were attended by special guests from the global psoriatic disease community
- Traditional press covered the story
- Community discussions included topics like mental health, pain and treatment
- It is still too early to track any increase in memberships or donations



Important considerations

Online safety is extremely important

It is important to ensure that young and vulnerable people are kept safe online. This ranges from appropriate content, language, interactions, gaming addiction and personal data privacy.

There are costs involved

Be aware that equipment and game costs can be expensive in many cases.

It's easy to lose sight of key messages

The point of encouraging online game activation is to encourage conversation about psoriatic disease and to increase engagement and interaction within these communities. Always remember to share links to websites, support information and set community rules accordingly.

Links

IFPA island

[Twitch](#)

[YouTube](#)



Twitch



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