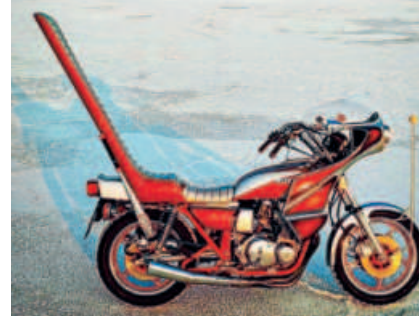




# A LOOK INTO THE INFAMOUS JAPANESE BIKE GANG 'BOSOZOKU'

ITMAM BASHAR



Who would've thought that there were retired Kamikaze pilots, the guys who were conditioned to fly their planes into ships as weapons, founded the most notoriously dangerous biker gang Japan have ever seen. The soldiers that survived World War 2 returned home looking for a spark of adrenaline and the disgruntled young bikers emerged and created what was first known as 'Kaminari-Zoku' or 'Thunder-Tribe'. The term 'Bosozoku' which translates to 'Violent Running Tribe' was created in the 1970s when riots broke out and biker culture became more criminal in nature. The gang mostly consisted of working-class teens.

The Bosozoku became infamous for violence, reckless driving and ridiculously loud modified exhaust systems. They drove while wielding wooden swords, baseball bats, steel pipes and the occasional molotov cocktail which was used against the civilians as well as the police. The gang had unique aesthetic clothing known as the 'Tokko-Fuku', which roughly translates to 'Special Attack Clothes'. It is a jumpsuit that is a modified working clothes version of the Kamikaze Pilots uniform embroidered with the specific Bosozoku gang name on the back, personalised slogans, Kanji and stitched on nationalist symbols like the Rising Sun flag. They had absurd hairstyles, wore military boots and avoided wearing protective gears for the extra thrill.

Their motorcycles were extreme with crazy tall seats, raised handlebars, custom frames, colourful paint jobs and most importantly Shugo (a multiple-tube header and a single collector pipe connected with a muffler) from which annoyingly loud and forceful sounds were made. Their cars were customised to have an appearance of a low rider that is

exaggerated to be as showy as possible. These were equipped with comical tail-fins, skirts, airfoils and flashing lights.

There is one thing that no one can ignore, the behemoth of a front splitter and the lunatic 7-10 foot long 'Takeyari' exhaust pipes that made a statement of standing out which are anything but mundane. The sheer number of flamboyant customisations, ironically, does not make their vehicles faster - just adding the illusionary appearance of



speed. The group's distinct auditory presence and unmistakable visual flair are known all over Japan as well as the world.

Compared to most delinquent gangs in Japan, they surprisingly had a high sense of morality followed by holding onto traditional Japanese values. These values were modelled according to the Bushido or 'Way of the Samurai' which was followed by warriors during feudal times in Japan. The code contained eight basic virtues: rectitude, courage, benevolence, politeness, sincerity, honour, loyalty and self-control. These virtues of honour and loyalty influenced the culture's mentality as members were incredibly dedicated to their gangs and were willing to do whatever it took to protect their dignity.

They rode recklessly and purposefully

clogged up streets. After a couple of massive groups run blocked traffic and incited riots in tranquil neighbourhoods they got into fierce disagreements with rivals, carried weapons and ended up in the Yakuza (Japan's Mafia). Rivalries between different groups were bloody and common; if they weren't careful enough, they would be kidnapped or jumped by rivals, beaten or killed, often having their Tokko-Fuku stolen. Members also got involved with organised crime by running drugs, guns and other such goods for the Yakuza. These businesses often led to a whole different level of danger if they didn't strictly stick to business.

The sub-culture obviously wasn't all about violence, as during peaceful times they were often found skipping school, playing cards, smoking or drinking and often hanging out in parking lots or restaurants. They would often talk about their bikes or cars during meets. They would also work on their bikes or cars around workshops to pass their free time.

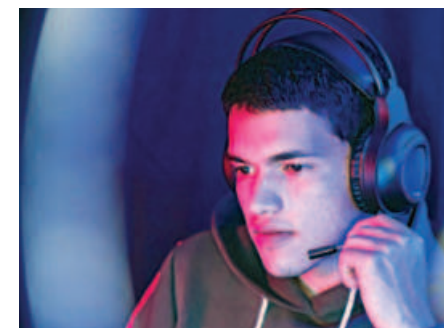
While they used to dominate the streets of Japan with their large massive groups of modified motorcycles and cars, Bosozoku has been fading in recent years. Police crackdowns have drastically reduced the number of real gang members since the peak of 42,510 known members in 1982, but the crazy modifications lived on. It is an art of its own now to look different and ridiculous in the streets.

With legal stakes heightened, many members decided that it isn't worth the risk anymore and ended up quitting the gang. Nowadays, the Bosozoku are an endangered species of vehicle enthusiasts that exist in people's memories rather than within reality itself. And soon memories might be all that remains of the gang Bosozoku.



# How to build an audience online by streaming video games

SUBEH TAREK



With lockdowns keeping people stuck online and audiences shifting to digital platforms, there has been a surge in the supply and demand of video game streaming content both home and abroad. From mastering dexterous strategies to providing fun commentaries, gamers are now evolving their traditional gameplay with a sense of content creation.

If you're considering starting a career in video game streaming, we have listed

Why do people like watching other people play video games? While there can be many answers to that question, in recent times we have witnessed a rise in the mainstream popularity of video games, particularly in the form of gaming circuits and streaming online.



some starter tips for you to take note of.

## Understand the market

Video game streaming is still a freshly accepted concept in modern-day media. With newer opportunities on sight and more resources to utilise, gamers are making their way to live streaming platforms. However, in a profession where viewership reflects success, is the journey from an amateur streamer to a professional one really that easy?

Unfortunately, the resources available to local streamers are quite inadequate, making it difficult for newer streamers to get a jumpstart. According to Bangladeshi online gaming creator Naruto Gaming, the game streaming scenario in Bangladesh is still growing. "There are some organisations and personalities who are helping local streamers grow. But still, local streamers are mostly lost when it comes to this line of work, and have no idea how to grow themselves," he says. Where gaming is embraced as a legitimate career choice abroad, establishing in the local streaming scenario is still quite challenging for aspiring streamers in this country.

## Grasp the scenario

As the gaming industry in Bangladesh is still in its infancy, it differs largely from its international counterpart in terms of audience segments, monetary policy and content creation facilities. That's why being acquainted with the local streaming environment is a fundamental priority for any gamer planning to enter live streaming.

Most resources online represent an international perspective of gaming scenarios - something difficult for beginner streamers to grasp. One such confusion occurs while choosing a streaming platform. Talking to local professionals can be helpful in such cases. As gaming video maker AkibDiablo points out, "Worldwide, Twitch is the most renowned website for streaming. But in Bangladesh, it's easier to attract an audience on Facebook. Moreover, it requires a good internet connection to stream on Twitch. But on Facebook, you can stream with 4-5 MBPS speed, which is easily accessible here." Regarding YouTube as a potential platform for video gaming streaming, Akib adds, "Most Bangladeshi streamers don't use YouTube as you can't earn directly from there, as you can from Facebook."

## Focus on your offering

To achieve target viewership while streaming, it is important to set goals and plan accordingly. Focusing on your channel's core offering should be the first task on your clock. A channel mainly creates value with its gameplay, interactivity and quality content creation skills. The basics of planning for content start with choosing the right video game. While selecting trendy and hyped games can help gain viewership momentarily, playing per the streamer's preference adds value to a channel's

image. Experienced streamers often advise beginners to focus only on one game.

Besides researching for trends and video ideas, streamers should focus on arranging cameras, microphones, lighting and screen recording software, as streaming quality often differentiates because of the overall gaming setup. Disruption in the setup can end up affecting views. When asked what gets one hooked to a gaming video, Tanzim Ahmed, a student consumer of gaming content said, "The first 15-20 seconds are the most crucial for a streamer to get the attention of a person who just started watching his stream. Then stream trending games and games you are good at."

## Interact with the community

With newer trends arriving and older ones declining, keeping up with the community can be a difficult task for streamers, especially those with a minimal audience. As such, novice streamers often find it difficult to understand what their audience wants.

Interacting with the audience is the best solution to



this problem. Joining gaming communities and connecting with followers can give streamers new video and marketing ideas.

A good idea is to check up on the audience daily and ask them directly how they would like the stream to evolve. Try giving the audience quality

time by connecting with them more often. As Facebook and YouTube are the most common streaming platforms for Bangladeshi audiences, the live comment sections are great ways to keep connected with the fans. Some streamers may even choose to talk to their top fans individually to get a portrayal. Catching up through posts and live interaction is another smart method to increase appeal to the audience.

## Think out of the box

Video game streaming is a profession built on practice, perseverance and creativity. Though the profession holds gameplay at its core, personal touches in the live commentary, reactions, setups, variation in content and streamer's entertainment methods add significant value to a channel's content. Though the audiences and streamers share a similar interest in gaming, inventive content is what secures a loyal audience base.

When asked what a streamer should follow to create a unique brand, Rimsha Iqbal, the face behind gaming video creator Uziboozie says, "Focus on both your individual and team play. Practice hard and try to understand what your audience wants. Be sure to entertain them with whatever your talent is. Don't follow others. Be your own example."

Lastly, be mindful that focusing on content is more important than gaining an audience quickly. So gear up your game and let the internet traffic follow your way.