Beyond the Console: Enriching the Gaming Experience With Microsoft

Gaming is a larger platform than film, TV, and music, forming a powerful media channel and opening vast opportunities for retail media and advertising.

In this episode of The Garage, hosts Dan Masamino and Evan Hovorka sit down with Greg Carroll, general manager of gaming experiences at Microsoft Advertising, to explore the nexus of gaming and retail media.

They explore the world of gaming advertising, showing how brands can create authentic engagements with audiences while preserving the integrity of the gaming experience. Take a deep dive into the potential of Microsoft's ecosystem, which reaches over 3.4 billion gamers worldwide.

From sharing stories about small-town origins to exploring how to turn offline data into actionable insights, this episode of The Garage offers a clear look at how hyperlocal advertising can create new opportunities for brands, agencies, and retailers.

Episode highlights:

[05:26] The Evolution of Gaming – The evolution of how people interact with gaming and its relationship with advertisers, retail media, although new compared to films and TV has introduced the monetization of the industry. Greg discusses how he leverages different things to bring retail media to focus in this space while protecting the gamer. He shares how

his expertise in advertising technology and passion for gaming merged to birth his journey.

[09:04] The Delicate Balance of Gaming Experience for Brands and Users – Enrich the experience and unlock something that people are passionate about and love. Greg describes the gaming space as one closest to sports. This strategy ensures the halo effect for brands and retailers and any disruptions to this experience can have negative consequences for both users and brands. Greg adds that the alignment of passions always creates a win-win situation.

[15:43] The Future of Gaming Marketing – Greg shares the importance of a multi-platform approach and the effectiveness especially in a mid-to-lower marketing process and how it helps brands reach gamers in relevant ways across board, highlighting The Prada Candy Crush partnership as one that showcases these interactive branded experiences. He explains that Microsoft's gaming ecosystem offers a diverse range of interaction channels that optimize advertising performance and aligns messaging with gaming context and platform. He highlights The Prada Candy Crush partnership as one that showcases the effectiveness of interactive branded experiences.

[26:34] How Gaming Influences Community Building – The Covid-19 lockdowns validated how important gaming was as an escape, allowing gamers not just to associate but also socialize. Social gaming platforms recorded a massive surge in participation – it was an absolute boom for gaming according to Greg. The platform creates meaningful connections between people as well as shared experiences and this has transformed gaming. He says that with the engagement levels comparable to traditional sports, gaming communities require a nuanced understanding and respect to ensure successful marketing integration.

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