

There's a plane flying around New York with a 'subscribe to PewDiePie' banner



Just one day after Felix “PewDiePie” Kjellberg called for fans to end the “Subscribe to PewDiePie” meme, a plane sporting a banner with that exact message is flying around New York City.

Kjellberg watched the plane zip around New York with more than 21,000 fans on DLive, a streaming site that he entered into a partnership with earlier this month. The promotion, which was put together by fans in celebration of Kjellberg’s ninth anniversary on YouTube today, happened despite Kjellberg calling for an end to the meme yesterday following multiple incidents where it was used for hateful purposes over the last few months.

“The meme is over. Don’t take it the wrong way.”

In March, a mass shooter in New Zealand live-streamed an attack on two mosques, which left more than 50 people dead, and referenced the “Subscribe to PewDiePie” movement in the live stream. Prior to that, the phrase was etched into the

side of a World War II memorial in a Brooklyn park. In a video yesterday, Kjellberg said “the ‘Subscribe to PewDiePie’ movement should have ended” after the mass shooting.

Despite a call for the meme to end, Kjellberg celebrated the banner flying around New York with his fans. He told viewers while streaming on DLive that he didn’t consider it a malicious use of the meme, adding that it’s “a nice little wrap up.”

“Just to be clear they planned this for a very long time, so obviously they couldn’t change it,” Kjellberg said on stream. “They would have if they could, but it’s a good intention. The meme is over. Don’t take it the wrong way. Of course someone will, as always.”

The banner and flying time cost more than \$4,500, according to a poster for the celebration event. Another description on the poster claims the cost was “crowdfunded by the 9-year-old army,” a reference to what PewDiePie fans jokingly refer to themselves as. Five camera operators are positioned in New York City to live stream the event.

Many creators, including H3H3’s Ethan Klein, also disavowed the meme after the attack in New Zealand, saying the joke was no longer funny. While some people within the YouTube community see the meme as a stance on current YouTube culture – a David versus Goliath fight between Kjellberg, an independent creator, and T-Series, a mega Bollywood corporation that recently overtook him in subscribers – critics have called out Kjellberg for playing into the racist connotations the meme took on with a pair of diss tracks he released to promote the subscriber race. Kjellberg addressed the accusations in his video about the meme, saying that while he meant it as “fun, ironic jest,” he still offended people.

“They were not meant to be taken seriously,” Kjellberg said. “This negative rhetoric is something I don’t agree with at

all, and I want it to stop.”

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/4/29/18522720/pewdiepie-subscribe-meme-plane-banner-new-york-city-anniversary>