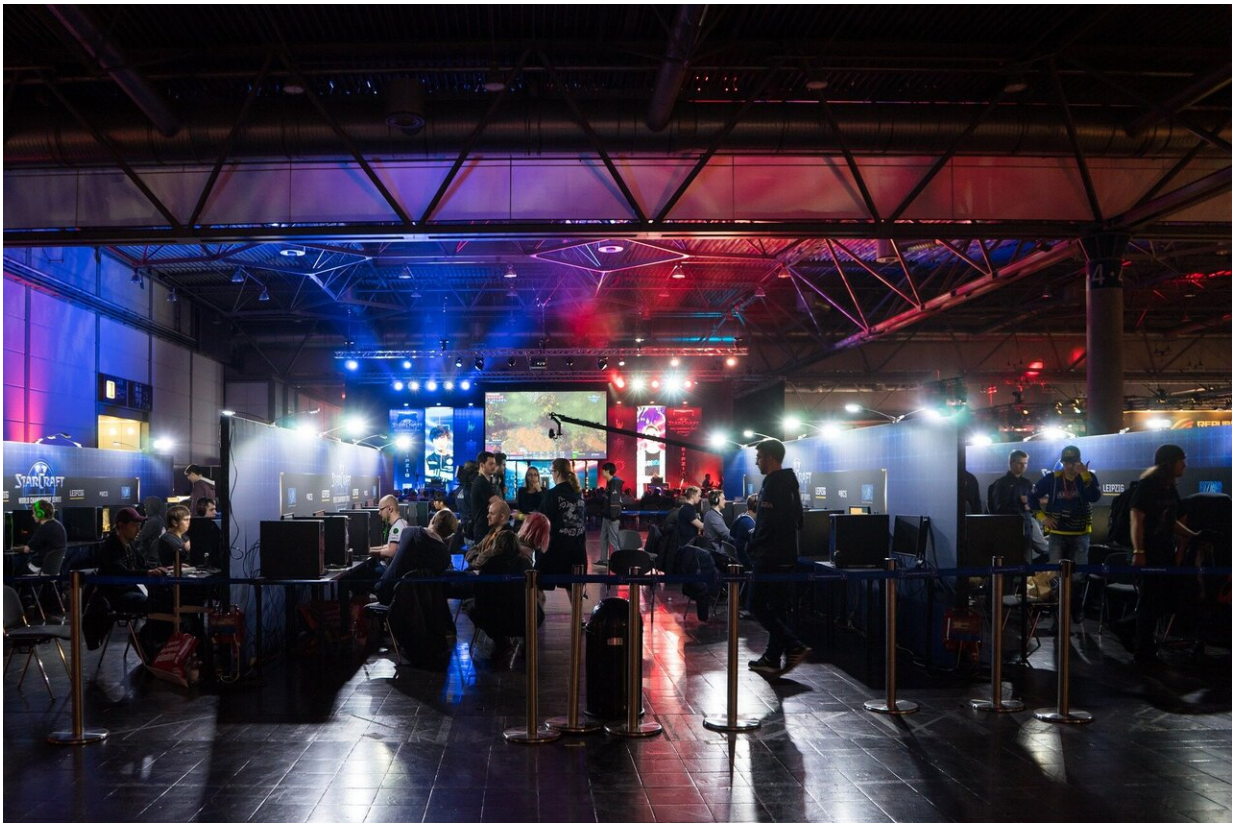
Overwatch 2 illustrates challenges facing esports industry

October 12 2022, by Christopher Munoz



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Blizzard Entertainment positioned its popular shooter Overwatch as a major player on the esports scene. But the company has hit some stumbling blocks and faced criticism as it launches a sequel, Overwatch

2, including problems merging accounts and server issues.

Chris Hanson is a Syracuse University professor and faculty advisor for the university's Esports Club. Prof. Hanson says the launch of Overwatch 2 clearly demonstrates how hard in can be to capitalize on a successful esports game, particularly when compared to other types of video games.

"Releasing more content for a lucrative media product with an established fanbase is certainly a familiar strategy in other entertainment industries such as the patterns of sequels to successful Hollywood films, or the renewal of television shows with large audiences. It is also common practice in video games, with some of the most profitable franchises like Call of Duty or Assassin's Creed releasing sequels on a regular basis."

"But releasing a sequel for an esports game is an entirely different matter, as even minor changes could have profound impacts on gameplay and thus the professional players who play these games."

"Imagine the absurdity of the prospect of the NBA deciding to create 'Basketball 2' or the NFL launching 'Football 2' with new versions that completely upend the existing games and their rules. As in these and other analog sports, rule tweaks and other fundamental changes do occur, but they tend to be implemented through gradual and iterative processes via formalized procedures in official structures such as leagues and players' associations."

"The landscape of esports continues to rapidly evolve, but esports game companies, players, and their nascent leagues and player unions may yet have some things to learn from the successful professional sports and their related institutions that have been around generating revenue for a bit longer."

Provided by Syracuse University

Citation: Overwatch 2 illustrates challenges facing esports industry (2022, October 12) retrieved 9 April 2024 from https://techxplore.com/news/2022-10-overwatch-esports-industry.html

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