



#### INTERVIEWED

- ▶ **Gordon Hinkle,**  
CESI President

#### INDUSTRY

- ▶ Esports

#### CHALLENGE

- ▶ To create and advocate for student participation, education and engagement with esports.

#### SOLUTION

- ▶ CESI hosted five different events in its first year, drawing in college players and students from around the world. Students were able to connect, learn and compete on professional equipment like ViewSonic ELITE™ gaming monitors.

#### RESULTS

- ▶ Students who participated in events were able to compete for thousands of dollars in prizes.
- ▶ Parents who were previously skeptical of esports became advocates after seeing their students' interest in esports as a pastime and career opportunity.

## ViewSonic Partners with Esports Event Group to Promote Career Pathways

#### COMPANY

College Esports International (CESI) is a strategic production group focused on elevating the esports industry and college competition by creating national and international events that emphasize education, networking and safety.

CESI events support and encourage the development of college students by helping them expand their abilities and providing insight into a variety of trending global markets.

#### CHALLENGE

The main challenge for scholastic esports is educating students, families and schools about the myriad of ways that esports can serve as a foundation for their future.

Although esports is a 198 billion dollar industry, many administrators and students remain unaware of the abundance of opportunities available in the field.

Digital marketing, logistics, game development, event planning and broadcasting are all components of competitive esports and potential career pathways for today's students.

Students who participate in esports often experience improved academic performance and self-esteem, along with decreased negative behaviors like truancy and illegal drug use. School-based esports also fosters the development of social-emotional skills in a cohort that is often less inclined to participate in social activities.

---

*"We're not just offering access to a game or tournament; we're providing a way for students to learn about and develop their passions; to meet leaders in the industry that may one day become mentors or employers"*

— Gordon Hinkle, CESI President

---



**RESULTS** (continued)

- ▶ Students also learned about different career pathways in esports.
- ▶ CESI is now helping different schools and universities across the country with implementing esports programs.

At both the high school and college level, participation in organized esports provides a place for students interested something other than playing. This includes activities like shoutcasting, technical setup, game development and marketing.

“Esports creates an exciting convergence of the tech world and competitive gaming,” said CESI President Gordon Hinkle, “It’s a lot more than just a video game.”

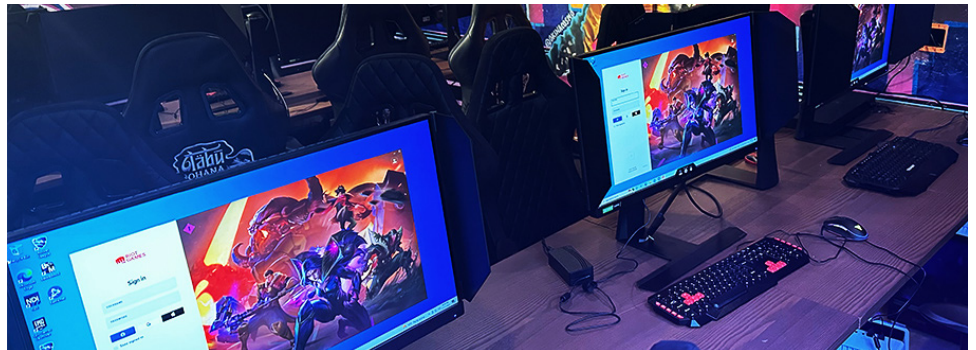
**SOLUTION**

Founded by former entertainment professionals, CESI was created to provide a platform for college students in esports – one which centers a career-oriented education as much as it does entertainment and competition.

“It’s still pretty much the wild west out there when it comes to college esports competition,” said Hinkle. “We are laser-focused on providing events that offer a safe space, education on career opportunities and introductions to industry leaders like ViewSonic, who has been an outstanding partner for us since day one.”

Thanks to the energy, experience and resources Hinkle and his partner Margaret Wong brought to CESI, the organization was able to hold five large-scale events in its first year.

Participants were able to use equipment like ViewSonic ELITE™ gaming monitors - the same gaming monitors used by professional esports teams across the country - for tournaments, training and events.



“Our events aren’t just about showing up, playing the game and leaving,” said Hinkle. “They’re about showing students, families and higher education personnel that there is a bigger ecosystem connected to esports. An ecosystem with many pathways to career success.”

That, said Hinkle, is what excites him the most about what CESI has to offer.

“We’re not just offering access to a game or tournament; we’re providing a way for students to learn about and develop their passions; to meet leaders in the industry that may one day become mentors or employers.”

**RESULTS**

Five large events within a year speaks to the success of CESI as an event production company. The structure of these events reveals the organization’s success at connecting students to a broader network of related career paths.

“We offer so much more than just competitive participation,” said Hinkle. “At every event we facilitate in-person social interactions and educational activities with industry leaders. We get students there with the excitement of competition and while they’re there, we introduce them to ideas to get them thinking beyond the short term.”



**ViewSonic®**  
**GAMING**



The Second Annual CESI Championship tournament held in Sacramento exemplified this unique approach. 22 teams from universities in California, Oregon, Utah, Arizona, Colorado and New York battled for \$50,000 in prizes, bringing over 2,000 spectators to the Golden 1 Center. Another 5,000 logged in to watch the livestream.

CESI welcomed registered participants with a message highlighting their mission:

“Congratulations on your team’s successful registration!... The 2022 CESI Tournament will not only create an exciting environment for your team to interact in a healthy esports tournament... more importantly, [it] also provides a creative platform for interactions with other great teams and numerous business and community leaders - to share, learn and inspire!”

As with all CESI events, the activities kicked off with an in-person bonding and networking event - in this case, tickets to a Sacramento Rivercats baseball game.

Competition began the following day after students had participated in two educational activities. First up was a one-on-one conversation with Hinkle and Sharon Gill, founder of Purpose Centered Leadership and an esports strategist. They discussed leveraging esports as a means of developing student leadership, team building and career development.

Next was a panel of four industry insiders who discussed the growth of the esports industry and different career opportunities. The panelists broke down misconceptions about esports and ways in which participants can overcome stereotypes associated with gaming.

“Our panel of participants ranged from Ruben Caputo of ViewSonic Gaming, who founded the very successful CSUDH esports league, to a former Intel and General Motors executive with extensive expertise in AI and complex data solutions, to an award-winning event producer and director that works at the intersection of performance and technology,” said Hinkle. “We encouraged them to share insights from their personal experiences and roles, which we hope was meaningful and inspiring to the student participants.”

Also unique to CESI events are the students they enlisted to help develop, set up and run the tournaments.

“We have students manage the livestreaming of events and tournaments,” said Hinkle. “We let them produce content themselves, allowing them to use and showcase their skills.”

In addition to hosting events and competitions, CESI works with colleges and universities to help implement their esports programs. Recent examples include the University of Colorado, Butler University and the University of Las Vegas, which is looking to expand its globally-acclaimed hospitality school to include esports.

“Each university has different needs. Some have big programs and are trying to nail down specific objectives. Others need help getting started or growing an existing esports club. Often, they want help getting buy-in from their administration,” said Hinkle.

“We offer our expertise and operate as an advocate for esports, helping schools demonstrate the ways in which esports can impact students in a positive way. We’ve seen amazing responses when faculty and administrators understand the wide range of opportunities it presents for students.”

Just as esports represents a unique convergence of technology, gaming and entertainment, CESI connects esports, education and business. This positions them as a key resource for schools and students looking to make a mark in this rapidly growing industry.



“We’re building personal relationships with students, schools, university clubs and so much more,” said Hinkle “We become a trusted source for them. I have students calling me, asking for letters of recommendation, asking what CESI can do to help. We are thrilled to get those calls.”

Producing successful events is undeniably rewarding, said Hinkle. But being a catalyst for positive student growth is the most satisfying part of what CESI does.

“Anyone can put on a tournament,” says Hinkle. “Bringing that educational component, introducing students to esports leaders and business leaders, opening their eyes to the entire ecosystem of gaming – that’s what excites me the most.”

Helping parents get on the bandwagon is a close second. Many start out decidedly anti-esports, like the parent Hinkle met at a reception following the first day of competition at the 2021 CESI Finals.

“This parent pulled me aside and told me that he was planning to encourage his child to stop playing games and focus on his studies,” said Hinkle. “But then he said that he had come to realize how much the esports community provides to his son, who now wants to study technology and pursue a related career. He told me that since joining the esports club that his son was more enthusiastic than ever about school and he wanted to thank me!”

Next up, Hinkle and Wong plan to expand on their West Coast success and have been asked to consult with colleges and universities in New Jersey, Atlanta and more. They are likewise connecting with K-12 schools and adult-learning organizations that recognize the potential inherent to the esports industry.

“Many schools want to learn more about the educational side of esports – about the benefits and career pathways,” said Hinkle. “Eighty percent of college students consider themselves gamers and only about a half percent ever go pro. There’s huge potential there for helping students of all ages cultivate their interests in a future-focused way.”

