LEARNING MADE EASY

2nd Edition

Twitch®

for dummies®

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Take your stream live with the right gear

Go live from gaming consoles, PCs, smartphones, and VR headsets

Stream video games, music, sports, or any live event

Tee Morris

Content creator since 2005; video gamer since 1980

Foreword by Emme Montgomery (@negaoryx)

Twitch

2nd Edition

by Tee Morris

FOREWORD BY **Emme Montgomery**
(@negaoryx on Twitch)

for dummies®
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Twitch® For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

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Foreword

When I began streaming in the summer of 2016, I had never so much as watched a single Twitch stream before I installed OBS and went live for the first time. I didn't know what moderators were, or alerts. (I tried to search how to set them up by asking "How can you make follower names pop up on your twitch stream" because I didn't know they were even called alerts in the first place.) In hindsight, it's a wonder I stuck with streaming at all as I was so lost in those early days.

I fell into a steady rhythm of streaming shortly thereafter, but my struggle to learn the ropes on the fly was constant and stressful as I embarked on a whirlwind of a ride that would end up becoming my long-term career. I wish I had access to a wealth of knowledge like the one before you, carefully curated by a long-term industry professional like Tee, when I started out.

I'm Emme Montgomery, although you may know me better by my online handle *negaoryx*. I've experienced the highs and lows of being a full-time Twitch streamer: I've gone viral multiple times, partnered with incredible brands for sponsored campaigns, had a billboard promoting my Twitch channel in Times Square, and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for various charities from fundraising live on my Twitch channel. I've also dealt with streaming through devastating personal loss and intense burnout and struggled through tech troubleshooting more times than I could possibly count over my six years on Twitch.

I met Tee through a mutual streamer friend and was immediately impressed not only by his dedication to his own content but by the clear passion he has for helping

others begin their own streaming journeys, as well. When he reached out to me with the possibility of writing the foreword for this revised edition of *Twitch For Dummies,* the first thing I did was pick up a copy of the first edition. I had never read it before and, to be honest, was unsure how valuable such a book could be in the age of the internet, when a seemingly infinite wealth of knowledge is constantly at our disposal. I didn't realize how wrong I'd be until I began reading.

Maybe you're someone who's interested in starting streaming but hasn't taken the plunge just yet. Maybe you're an up-and-coming streamer who's looking to level up your content. Or maybe you have a loved one who's getting into streaming and you just want to understand their field better (in which case you're my *favorite* kind of person — good on you for being so supportive). No matter why you've picked this book up, I'm confident that creators at any stage of their journey can take away something valuable from this text.

Streaming is still an emergent industry deeply rooted in tech, which means that changes and advancements happen quickly over time, as new equipment and features are rolled out on a frequent basis. In this revised edition of *Twitch For Dummies,* Tee guides you through the fundamentals that are valuable for any streamer to know, along with the up-to-date information to catch you up to speed on how Twitch operates today. From deep dives into social media and networking with other streamers to technical setups, Twitch etiquette, and everything in between, Tee thoroughly and concisely walks you through each step you'll take as you carve out a space for yourself online.

The note I'd like to end on is a friendly reminder to remember that everyone utilizing the same information

and advice doesn’t mean everyone ends up making the same content. Take the guidance and knowledge given to you in this book and implement it with your own perspective and voice to make your stream something wonderfully, uniquely you. Never stop learning and growing.

I’ll see you on Twitch!

— Emme Montgomery (@Negaoryx)

Introduction

If you play video games — regardless of your age, your platform, or your preference for first-person shooter or massively multiplayer online games — you may have noticed they offer a feature for sharing your gameplay. *What is that?* you might wonder before jumping into your game. Weeks later, that Share Your Gameplay option is still nagging at you. The only way you can quell your curiosity is to go online and do a little digging, where you discover this thing called *streaming*.

Now, if you've been involved with content creation for as long as I have (see Wiley's *Podcasting For Dummies* for all the details), you know that, in the early days of podcasting, streaming was taking hold despite many technological barriers. Processing speeds. Graphics cards. Internet connections. If the stars aligned, you *might* get a video feed on your computer matching the quality of a convenience store security camera. In 2005.

Then technology evolved. New computers performed not only faster but more efficiently. High-speed internet became more common. And developers who created the hardware and software for streaming made the technology more accessible. Then along came Twitch.

I'm sure my own reaction wasn't too different from yours. *Twitch? Sounds serious. Have you consulted a physician?*

Twitch For Dummies, 2nd Edition, takes a deep dive into an exciting entertainment platform that's known for featuring video games but offers so much more. Beginning with the question at the forefront of your mind — *What is Twitch?* — this book guides you through the processes of how to stream, how to present yourself, and

how to effectively get your word out to audiences everywhere.

About This Book

My own journey with Twitch begins with *another For Dummies* book I wrote about podcasting. It was at the end of 2004 when I was introduced to podcasting by Michael R. Mennenga and Evo Terra, the hosts of a science fiction literary talk show, *The Dragon Page*. Both of them were telling me about this amazing new thing coming to the internet called podcasting. Audio and video content could be distributed easily to anyone in the world, through either a computer or a portable device like an MP3 player.

With Mike and Evo's help, I launched *MOREVI: The Chronicles of Rafe & Askana* on January 21, 2005. Since then, I have been podcasting a variety of material, ranging from fiction, to podcasting tips, to D&D sessions. Nearly two decades of content creation and four editions of *Podcasting For Dummies* (penned with Chuck Tomasi) later, I'm looking for new and interesting technology and techniques that challenge my creative abilities.

Along came another friend of mine, Matthew J Drake, who suggested I take a look at Twitch.

Matthew patiently explained to me — *repeatedly* — what Twitch was all about. As the host of a *StarCraft* channel at the time, he had me intrigued — until he mentioned the "S" word: *streaming*. I knew streaming, be it audio or video, to be incredibly twitchy (pun not intended, I swear) and dependent on your computer's processing power. Even with cutting-edge hardware, results might not be what you would expect if your internet service was subpar. The only trusted streaming services were

available from media companies charging six or seven figures for the capability to stream an event live, and even then, watching these streams remained device-dependent.

"That was *then*," Matthew insisted. "Technology has changed." I remained skeptical. But when I returned to playing video games, Matthew again urged, "You should get on Twitch." And he said it again. *And again.*

So this journey I find myself on — and this particular title — is all his fault.

How to Use This Book

Twitch For Dummies, 2nd Edition, should be these things to anyone who picks it up and reads it (straight through or by jumping around in the chapters):

- A user-friendly guide on how to assemble a studio, become a producer, and stream video games, creative projects, product demos, or self-help sessions
- A terrific reference for choosing the right hardware and software to put together a professional-looking stream
- The starting point for the person who knows nothing about working with video and audio; editing, recording, and hosting streams; or turning a computer into a broadcasting studio
- A handy go-to "think tank" for any beginning streamer who's hungry for new ideas on what goes into a good stream
- A really fun read

There are plenty of answers in these pages, and if you find the answers too elementary, I provide you points of reference to research. As with any *For Dummies* book,

my responsibility is to give you a foundation on which to build your channel and grow from there. I offer, alongside other streamers, a thorough guide to streaming.

I feel the need to also mention that I feature just a fraction of the streamers that are on Twitch. You may not know, and you may think, *Why didn't you talk to [insert favorite streamer here]?* While you may not know the streamers featured throughout this title, I do, and what I've learned from them I hope to pass along to you.

Icons Used in This Book

So you're trekking through the book, making some real progress with developing your stream, when suddenly these little icons leap out, grab you by the throat, and wrestle you to the ground. (Who would have thought streaming was so action-packed, like a Bond movie, huh?) What do all these callouts and icons mean? Glad you asked.

TIP You see this a lot on my own stream: I'm in the middle of a discussion and I suddenly have one of those "Say, that reminds me" moments. Tips are handy little nuggets of knowledge that are good to have in a toolbox and may even make your stream a little tighter than average.

REMEMBER If a moment in this book is something akin to a "Seriously, you can't forget this part!" factoid, I mark it with a Remember icon. You're going to want to pay close attention to these puppies.

WARNING Sometimes I interrupt my own train of thought (again, something that happens often on my stream) with a *"Taihoa, Bro"* moment — and this is where I ask for your undivided attention. Warnings are reminders to not try this at home because you'll definitely regret it.

Beyond the Book

If you're looking for a quick reference either while reading or after finishing this book, you can get a little more helpful Twitch-related information on www.dummies.com, where you can find a Cheat Sheet for Twitch. Go to www.dummies.com and type *Twitch For Dummies* in the Search box.

In addition to the *For Dummies* website, this book is written by someone who streams on a regular schedule. If that doesn't come as a complete shock, I'll blow your mind yet again: This writer would love to talk to you.

From your browser of choice, visit https://twitch.tv/theteemonster and follow or subscribe to me, Tee Morris. While I'm live, I'll be more than happy to answer your questions. *Within reason, of course.* For example, if I'm in the middle of a *Destiny* raid or if I'm facing off with one of Khan's patrols in *Ghost of*

Tsushima, and you pop into my Chat and say, “I’m new to streaming and I’m trying to figure out if I should invest in an Elgato Stream Deck or a new microphone first,” it will take me a red-hot second to talk to you about it. Still, I invite you to pay me a visit with any questions about content creation.

Where to Go from Here

At this point, many *For Dummies* authors say something snappy, clever, or even a bit snarky. Chuck and I did that often throughout the editions of *Podcasting For Dummies* (Wiley), and I continue that tradition in this book. But my best tongue-in-cheek material is saved for the pages inside, so here’s a more serious approach …

If you want to hop around the book, that’s your decision, but I suggest planting yourself in front of a computer and starting with Chapter 1. I recommend a few links you should check out, show you how to put together a bare-bones Twitch channel, and then help you start working on that stream of yours. Along the way, I talk to other Twitch streamers and ask their advice and suggest streams that can educate, inspire, and enlighten you. Through it all, I work with you to create engaging, original content.

Where do you go from here? Out into the Great Wide Open, my friends. So, buckle up. It’s going to be a heck of a ride.

Part 1

Getting Your Game On

IN THIS PART ...

Set up your Twitch account and creating a complete profile.

Explore the Twitch platform by watching and following those who are already established on Twitch or working to do so.

Put together a simple streaming setup using your gaming console.

Launch your Twitch Channel, setting schedules for your stream and notifying people you are live.

Critique your first streams and consider the options for you and the content you create.

Chapter 1

Welcome to the World of Twitch

IN THIS CHAPTER

- **Discovering what streaming is**
- **Finding out what Twitch is**
- **Creating a Twitch account**
- **Following and subscribing to Twitch channels**

You ever look around and think, *How did I get here?* I know — that's a fairly deep question to kick off a *For Dummies* book, but I've been doing this a lot lately. Technology, on the whole, is pretty awe-inspiring in how it evolves over such a short amount of time. When you find your niche, it's also amazing to see how advancements that were considered out of reach, if not impossible, are now plug-and-play or a quick click of an OK button away.

Maybe that's how you're feeling right now about this copy of *Twitch For Dummies*. How did I get here? Maybe you've heard of Twitch before, and you quickly dismissed it because you're not a gamer. Or maybe you are very familiar with Twitch, and you're thinking, *"Yes, It's my time."* On the surface, Twitch may appear to be a gamer's haven reserved for mouse-and-keyboard warriors with lightning-quick reflexes. Look a little deeper, beyond the *Call of Duty* and *League of Legends* channels, and you will find streamers who have made some impression in society by raising money for charity,

teaching audiences how to cook carnitas, recording podcasts on science, politics, or pop culture, and even helping others in their creative or personal development endeavors. (See Figure 1-1.)

Whatever the reason, you're here. You are ready to get your game, your passion, or message out to the world. So I'm going to help you set yourself up on the platform that takes content creation to another level.

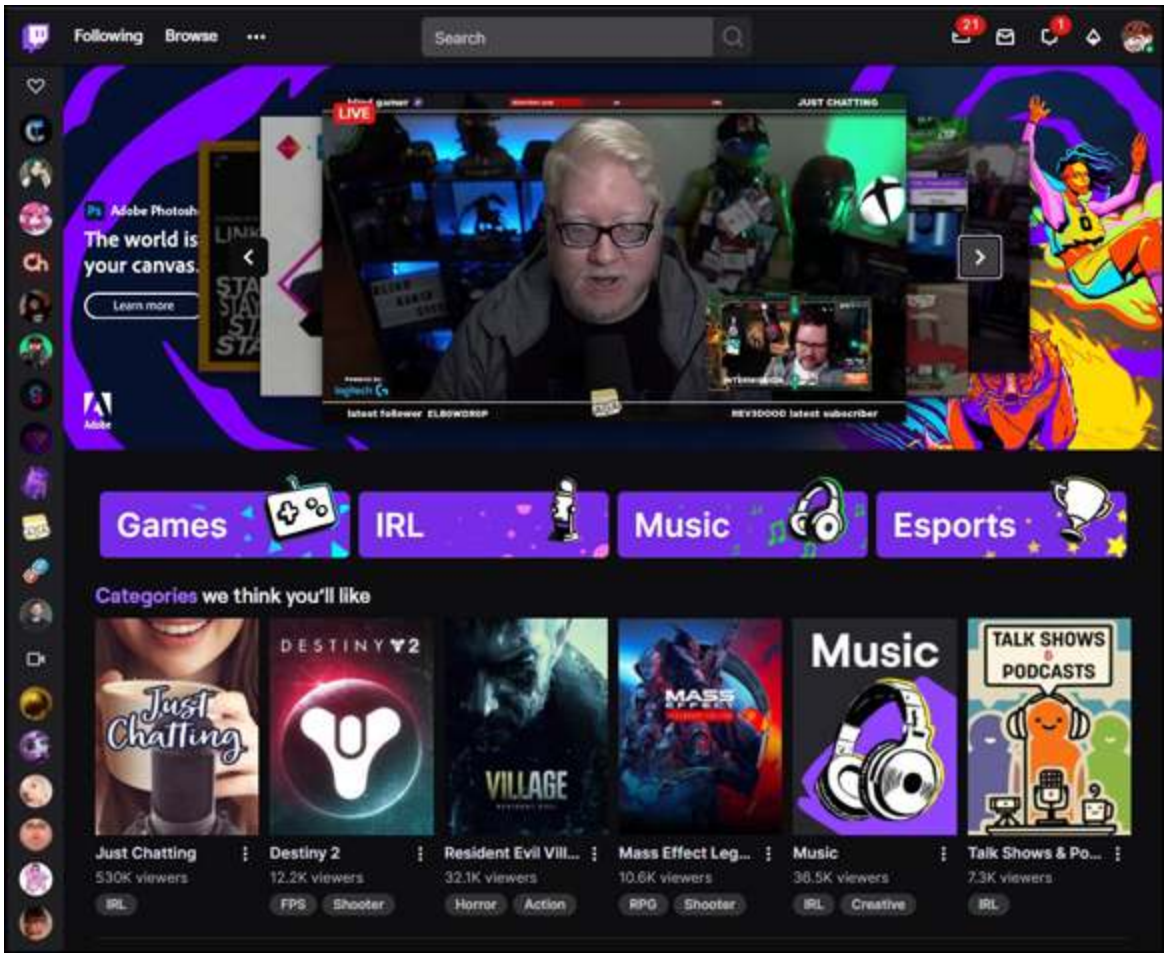

FIGURE 1-1: Twitch is known for gaming, but it also features creatives of all backgrounds sharing their passions on an interactive platform.