

# BUILDING AN ESPORTS PROGRAM



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**Dr. Haskell**  
Head Esports Coach,  
Boise State University

In the past decade, esports have grown from a niche hobby into a worldwide phenomenon. Professional esports players now rival their counterparts in the physical world with prestige, fans, and income. As a result, universities have seen a significant rise in the demand for collegiate esports programs among prospective and current students.

"Modern students view esports as a serious career path. Having a great esports program is an important tool for recruiting," explains Patrick Soulliere, Crucial's Global Gaming Marketing Manager.

Building an esports program from scratch can be a daunting task, particularly without any guidance or support. Soulliere recommends that universities take time to understand the market before immediately diving into the nuts and bolts of launching a program. "A great model of this is Dr. Haskell, head coach of the varsity esports team at Boise State University. When he was starting the BSU esports program, he traveled to numerous events and met with companies and sponsors to gain a deep understanding of the space."

This early preparation has yielded incredible results. BSU has the most wins of any collegiate varsity programs, as well as Mountain West championships in Overwatch and Rocket League. In addition to building an incredible track record in esports, Dr. Haskell also won a 2013 Innovator Award from the International Association for his approach to quest-based learning.

In his book *College Esports: What You Need To Know*, Dr. Haskell

remarks that "in order to get a university to move into the varsity space, it has to have a permanent advocate in place to lead that process." This champion of the project will not only coordinate between the various departments, but also outline a vision for the structure, funding, and alignment with the overall university goals.

To help realize that vision, Crucial has developed a comprehensive College Ambassador program. Starting at a handful of universities and expanding nationwide, the program aims to develop top-notch esports programs and build a passion for technology in the student body.

Every new member of the College Ambassador program receives two kits of RGB memory, a 1TB SSD, and a branded jersey. Crucial Ambassadors also receive extensive training on the Crucial product lines and technology best practices.

"Our support to the universities takes a variety of forms. In addition to high-end hardware and training, we constantly look for cool ways to help the community. This can include sponsoring tournaments, pro-bono events, or even flying influencers to a program," says Ben Lzicar, Crucial's Social and Community Specialist.

Crucial is committed to providing value to the esports community. "Esports have become integral to the college experience. Our aim is to foster long-term relationships with students and universities and help them realize their goals both in and outside of gaming," adds Soulliere.

**To learn more about Crucial's product offerings for the esports community, visit [crucial.com](https://www.crucial.com).**

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