

# TEAMS<sup>®</sup>

## CONFERENCE + EXPO

### First-Ever eSportsTravel Summit to be Held at TEAMS '17 Conference in Orlando

***The growing impact of eSports events on destinations and venues will be discussed in a series of education sessions***

The explosive growth of eSports and its impact on the travel industry will take center stage this fall at the first-of-its-kind eSportsTravel Summit. The eSportsTravel Summit will be held as part of the TEAMS '17 Conference & Expo, October 30–November 2, in Orlando. TEAMS is the world's largest gathering of sports-event organizers.

"We are assembling an impressive presenter roster for this inaugural summit," said Timothy Schneider, founder and chairman of the Sports Division of Northstar Travel Group, which publishes *SportsTravel* magazine and organizes the TEAMS Conference & Expo.

"Event organizers, destinations and suppliers who want to gain a better understanding of the impact of eSports should make plans now to attend the eSportsTravel Summit at TEAMS '17," said Schneider.



Included with TEAMS Conference registration, the eSportsTravel Summit will begin with an educational session on October 31 on the similarities and differences of organizing and hosting eSports competitions. With eSports events filling venues from Madison Square Garden in New York to Staples Center in Los Angeles, the session will focus on the unique considerations of eSports events in the areas of venue selection, accommodations, security and merchandising. The session will be moderated by Nathan Lindberg, director of global eSports sponsorships for Twitch, and will include Ryan DeVos, director of eSports for the Orlando Magic.

The eSportsTravel Summit will also feature a session titled "The Digitalization of Sports: How AI, AR, VR and eSports Will Affect Your Events." The session, which will be part of one of the TEAMS Conference Super Sessions, will be held on November 1 and will provide sports-industry professionals with insights into how artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality and eSports will transform the sports-event industry. Confirmed presenters include Scott Gutterman, vice-president of digital operations for the PGA Tour, Tobias Sherman, former global head of eSports for WME-IMG, Manny Anekal, founder and CEO of Versus Sports, and Rahat Ahmed, co-founder of TrinityVR.

The eSportsTravel Summit will conclude on the afternoon of November 1 with an educational session that will examine the launch of the NBA 2K League, which the NBA sees as a platform for the engagement of the next generation of sports fans. Confirmed presenters for the session include Aaron Ryan, senior vice-president of business operations for the NBA 2K League; Ted Dalton, senior vice-president of corporate partnerships and business development for the Boston Celtics; Alex Martins, chief executive officer for the Orlando Magic; Josh Barney, director of eSports and technology for the Utah Jazz; and veteran broadcaster Bonnie Bernstein, founder of Walk Swiftly Productions. The session will be presented by The Next Level, the leading eSports business industry media company, and will be moderated by Manny Anekal, founder and CEO of The Next Level.

"Just as eSports represents the evolution of the sports-event industry, the eSportsTravel Summit represents the continued growth and evolution of the TEAMS Conference & Expo," said Schneider. "We've been tracking the growth of eSports in *SportsTravel* and at TEAMS for the past few years but now the phenomenon of eSports is maturing into a powerhouse for the travel industry. Attendees at TEAMS '17 will play a part in the evolution of our industry—and that's something that will only happen at TEAMS."

For more information or to register for TEAMS '17, which includes the eSportsTravel Summit, call (877) 577-3700 or visit [TEAMSconference.com](http://TEAMSconference.com).

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**Northstar Travel Group** is the owner of well-known brands including Travel Weekly, TravelAge West, Business Travel News, Successful Meetings, Meetings & Conventions, Travel Weekly China, Incentive, M&C China and SportsTravel. The company produces the annual TEAMS Conference & Expo and more than 50 face-to-face events in 13 countries in retail travel, corporate travel, travel technology and the meetings industry. In addition, Northstar owns Phocuswright, the leading research, business intelligence and event producer serving the fastest growing segment of the travel industry, online travel distribution. Northstar is also the majority shareholder in Inntopia, the leading SaaS e-commerce software provider serving the mountain destination, activities and specialty destination travel markets.