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Duolingo: a mascot as a marketing engine

Public company · Language-learning app · Facts as of November 3, 2026

64.9M
daily active users, Q3 2026 (+29% YoY)

13.1M
paid subscribers, Q3 2026 (+14%)

50.9B
XP earned to "revive" Duo, Feb 2025

$309M
Q3 2026 revenue (+14% YoY)

What the brand does well

- One voice: Duo behaves like a creator, not a logo
- Comments and fan jokes shape what gets posted
- Stunts ask people to use the product, not just watch
- Duo now appears in other brands' games

Watch-outs

- Q3 2026: users +29%, bookings only +12%
- Adjusted margin fell to 25.5% from 29.5%
- Attention is not the same as paying customers
- Years of trust earned the right to be weird

Borrow the playbook

Duolingo move	Small-business version
Duo's consistent personality	Pick 3 words for your brand voice and use them everywhere
Comments as the brief	List the top 5 things customers say in reviews; write to them
"Do a lesson" as the call to action	Ask for the one action that matters: book, try, visit
Streak Revival	A one-time welcome-back offer for lapsed customers

Bottom line

A mascot builds attention and habit, but the best campaigns ask customers to use the product. Find one consistent voice, write to what customers actually say, and make every call to action the one that matters.

Independent analysis based on public information. Aristeia Innovations has no relationship with this company. This is not investment advice. Company names are used only to identify the subject. Facts are as of November 3, 2026.

Sources: Duolingo, Q3 2026 shareholder letter (Form 8-K exhibit), November 3, 2026 · Duolingo, Q2 2026 shareholder letter (Form 8-K exhibit), August 2026 · NPR, "Duolingo's owl mascot is alive after all," February 26, 2025 · Adweek, on Duolingo's Duo-led social strategy

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