“Julie Haddon: For starters, we’re very fortunate because the NFL games are refresh in of themselves. I mean the pure exhilaration that comes out of a Sunday or a Monday or a Thursday, these competitive match-ups and what’s happening on the field and what’s happening every game, every minute, every play… there is this electricity in our product. We are really lucky in that our product is always fresh. I think the other way I look at it is how do we keep the brand fresh?

Number one is the players because they are a key part of our team, our franchise, and our brand. There are so many remarkable stories of who these guys are with helmets off and how they show up in the community as leaders, as fathers, and as husbands. They are larger than life personalities, but beyond being elite athletes that we see on TV, these guys are remarkable humans and there are so many wonderful stories for us to tell our fans.

Second is the generations that we have. We’re in our hundredth season at the NFL and a hundred years of this game. There are so many things that have happened over these hundred years that touch all generations of fans. For example, I think about the Superbowl spot that for the Hundred Year Game where we featured iconic players like Mean Joe Greene and Jim Brown juxtaposed with today’s modern stars like Saquon Barkley. These players bridge generations of fans and connect the game for fans of all ages.
Third is influencers. You know, football is a way of life and is woven into pop culture. We look at the “influencers” around industries like fashion, gaming, fitness, and music to infuse that fresh culture into football and our game and vice versa. As an example, in our Superbowl spot, we featured Ninja as a cameo, who is one of the biggest stars in e-Sports. Things like this show our commitment to these kinds of mashups at this intersection of sports and gaming and pop culture.” – Dave Knox

If you want to learn more about Julie Haddon and the NFL, you can read the full article here.

WHY NEW ORLEANS PELICANS ROOKIE ZION WILLIAMSON IS THE NBA’S HOTTEST PROSPECT

“Let’s Dance!” That was the simple message Zion Williamson had for New Orleans Pelicans fans on draft night after the franchise made him the first pick of the 2019 NBA draft. While the city of New Orleans never needs encouragement to have a good time, the statement perfectly summarized what the long-struggling organization was getting in the 19-year-old superstar.

With Zion, it’s apparently not enough to just succeed; he wants to have fun while doing it and to achieve his goals as part of a team and community. Following a successful surgery
on a torn meniscus that will sideline Zion for the next six to eight weeks, the South Carolina-raised phenomenon is set to embark the most hyped, and anticipated, rookie season since LeBron James joined the league more than a decade ago. But whereas LeBron was a household name for basketball fans during his time in high school, Zion’s celebrity is at another level, thanks especially to his social media presence.

By the time he arrived at Duke University in the middle of 2018, he was already famous. With more than a million Instagram followers and numerous mixtapes that were YouTube viral sensations, Zion was the talk of the basketball world. Drake wore Zion’s high school jersey and the athlete’s AAU summer games became some of the hottest tickets in basketball.” – Keith Gordon

If you want to learn more about Keith Gordon’s story on Zion Williamson, you can read the full article here.

College football | Chris Spielman seeks to expand lawsuit filed against Ohio State

Chris Spielman, a former Ohio State and NFL linebacker, is seeking to expand a lawsuit in federal court filed originally against his alma mater to cover all current and former major
college football players who have had their likenesses used by universities and colleges during the past 10 years.

At the same time, Spielman wants to dismiss Ohio State as an individual defendant, though it would still be included in the expanded suit.

To continue reading the article, click here.

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**Grand Rapids Griffins Case Study**

The Grand Rapids Griffins AHL hockey team wear several specialty jerseys each season. The Griffins administration was looking to engage the fan base and ask for suggestions for a new jersey design through their social media channels. They chose to partner with Hockey Jersey Concepts, a jersey design company, to assist with the distribution and collection of the contest submissions in the summer of 2015. The following case study outlines the development of a contest where young and old could submit their designs to be considered for the jersey. We sat down with Marissa Malson, Digital Marketing Manager for the Griffins who provided us with the following.

**Objectives**

- To engage their current fanbase on social media and the web.
To extend reach to the general hockey fan who enjoy design work.

Pick a design for a specialty jersey that the players would enjoy wearing and that the fans would want to purchase.

Details

- The Griffins sat down with Hockey Jersey Concepts who planned out the three week contest.
- The contest was advertised on Hockey Jersey Concepts website and the Griffins social channels for fans to access.
- The artists had complete freedom to design the jersey as they chose.
- A blank jersey template and the official rules were posted on the entry page.
- The winning artist received a personalized jersey that they created and tickets to the Jan 23rd game, which is when the jerseys will be worn by players.
- All game worn jerseys on the 23rd will be signed by players and auctioned off after the game to fans and season ticket holders. All proceeds from the auction goes to a variety of non for profit organizations.
- They heavily posted on their social channels at the beginning, halfway and towards the end of the contest. This strategy aligned with their content calendar for the summer of 2015.

Results
• With 76 quality entries this season in the three week contest, the Griffins were very happy with the results. The winner of the contest was chosen and posted to their website and social channels for all fans to see.
• Social engagement had a considerable increase due to the contest being done in the summer.

How it can be applied elsewhere

“Social media is all about two-way dialogue, so hosting a contest where the fans are in control is a great way to show them that you value their opinion and appreciate the support they give your team, as well as create new relationships with people who may just be a fan of your sport. Whether you partner with an outside organization or host the contest internally, it’s a fairly easy promotion that teams of any size can put into action.” said Malson

Two pointers Marissa stated to watch out for that the Griffins came across:

• Many fans used previous winner’s designs or the Griffins current logo, so in the future they will make it more clear that they want a unique design.
• In the future they will host the contest over the summer again, both for submission numbers and also because their content calendar is more open at that time.

“The ease of doing a contest like this with the assistance of Ryan at Hockey Jersey Concepts was irreplaceable. We were very
Georgetown Hoyas Case Study

Program Description

The Georgetown Hoyas of Washington, DC, needed a new court design for the Verizon Center this upcoming basketball season. Their administration came up with the idea to engage the fan base and ask for suggestions for the design through their social media channels. The following case study outlines the development of a contest where young and old could submit their designs to be considered for the court. We sat down with Chris Grosse, Director of Marketing for the Hoyas who provided us with the following.

Objectives
– Engage current fan base through all social media channels
– Analyze the submissions to identify what logos and images come to mind when they envision the Georgetown Basketball brand.
– Pick new design for the Georgetown Basketball Court

Details

– The contest was well received because of the lack of direction they gave the designers. The designers were free to design the courts as they wanted without restrictions. It allowed them to be more creative and they produced some excellent work.
– They initially posted a blank court template, it was just the one color court with the lines for people to follow.
– The Hoyas marketing team developed a press release and social media posts to announce the contest.
– They would pick the top submissions and reward them with tickets to a basketball game. If they actually decided to use someone’s submission for the court, they would win season tickets.
– Graphic design message boards also picked up the story, which helped bring talented designers into the contest.
– As new designs came in, they were shared on the Hoya’s Facebook page for other fans to see.

Results

– Received great feedback from participants and administration. They shared the work on their social media channels and that in turn produced more interest in the contest.

– Between 150-200 submissions were received. You can view the designs here: https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.913362078707657.1073741844.143255019051704&type=1

– The following story outlines the winning submission:
The image below is the winning submission.

How it can be applied elsewhere

“We received great feedback and social interactions because of the contest. I can see it working for schools and teams at all different levels. On the social side, we posted galleries of the submitted courts on Facebook, and tweeted out some of the great designs as we received them. These posts engaged our fan base and helped promote the contest even more. Schools and teams can even open up the contest to a vote by fans to choose the design. With our contest, we wanted to make sure we had final say in the winner, because we needed the court to comply with NCAA and Big East rules. “ Said Grosse.

Two pointers Chris stated to watch out for that Georgetown came across:

– Watch out for rival school fans picking up the contest and submitting their own work – It may cause some “friendly” commotion on your social media feeds.
– The highest area of feedback came from contributors who liked how open the contest was, and how they could feel free to express their own creations without having to follow a rulebook.

Contact Information.

Chris Grosse
Dir. Of Marketing
Durham Bulls Case Study

Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, The Durham Bulls Athletic Park has been enjoying its recent major renovation. The renovation was a project that began at the very end of the 2013 season. The Bulls had plans to begin that renovation going into the 2014 season as soon as the 2013 season was over. Due to the Bulls lengthy playoff run in 2013 that eventually lead to a championship, the project, as a whole, was just going to have to wait until the Bulls were done playing. As soon as the season was over in 2013, the Bulls broke ground on the massive renovation project.

Objectives

– Modernize the park and to really bring the experience up to a major league level, while making sure that they didn’t take away from the aura that we had this special place to begin with.
– Build an open concourse that overlooks the field.
– Make the ballpark viable as an event space for the entire calendar year.

Details

– Created a new area called “Jackie’s Landing” which is named for Jackie Robinson. It’s a 10,000 square foot landing space, where there’s a fully functioning bar, concession stands and now bleachers for standing room only. The installation of drink rails where people can not only watch the game, get their food, but also acts as a social hub for attendee’s.
– Installed a wi-fi network in the ballpark, which can hold 8,000 simultaneous users.
– Upgraded the in-field video board to a board three times the size of the old one.
– Upgraded all 10,000 seats in the stadium to a wider, more comfortable seat.
– Enclosed all suites overlooking the field and attached access to the main club area to add an upscale feel and value.
– Upgraded all concession stand equipment and built three new concession stands around the park where they were needed.
– The creation of the PNC Triangle Club, which is a 5,000 square foot event space up on the suite level of the ballpark. It allows us to now have a venue at the ballpark to host events all year round.

Results

– Broke game day attendance records in 2014 (533,033 Fans)
– Feedback came in droves as people from all over came to see the upgrades.
– Large portion of positive feedback about how we utilized the new video boards and how we integrated our social media through them.

“If we had to go back and look at it, whether there was anything that we may have held off till the off-season to do it in pieces, but we ended up getting it all done for the All-Star Game, so it was well worth it once we got around to that marquee event.” – Scott Carter

How it can be applied elsewhere

Carter stated the following: “Be careful of what you’re going to bite off in one off-season. Try to be realistic about what you want to accomplish in a certain amount of time, because we always know that we have weather delays and snow delays and things that you don’t typically account for, and to have back-up plans if things aren’t going to be completed in time.” He
continued: “You can build all the bells and whistles that you want in your ballpark, but your staff is going to have to be able to back it up. For a lot of smaller market teams, you can put in a big giant video board and you can say it’s the biggest video board in minor league baseball or North America or professional sports or whatever you want to say, but your staff has got to be able to provide content and make sure that that video board looks as great as it possibly can.”

What new this year?

– Brought all concessions operations in-house.
– Partnering with more local vendors.
– Brought in a wildly popular donut shop in Durham called “Rise” to partner with, so they’ve got a kiosk on the ballpark.
– First minor league ballpark to have a personal brewery on-site called Bull Durham Beer Company. They actually started brewing their first batch of beer on opening day, so it’s actually not ready yet, but hopefully it should be ready in the next week or two weeks. Feedback is very positive.

Contact Information

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Ottawa Senators Case Study:
Club Bell

This month’s case study features the Ottawa Senators of the NHL. Geoff Publow is the VP of Strategic Development for the Senators and took the time to provide the following information on Club Bell, a club level renovation to enhance the premium experience, and to meet the ever-growing expectations of corporate customers.

Program Description

Club Bell is a 20,000 square foot renovation on the club level of the Canadian Tire Centre. The Club starts at Row 8 in the bowl seating, and moves up, back through the lower level seating and the lower level suites, moving into the open concourse and then through some concession space and finally into some office space that’s behind the existing concessions. The Club seats are divided into three sections: Luxe Suites, Loge Suites and Victory Suites.

Objectives

1. To create a new premium product offering to corporate customers who are looking to host smaller groups.
2. To create the best premium experience in the National Hockey League.

Details

– The experience is going to start with a new premium parking experience. On the way into the venue, the customer is going to come up to a new exterior entrance that we are creating, so you will be coming from the parking lot directly into the club.

– When you arrive at that gate, you will valet park your car. You will enter in through this new private entrance, and then through the first or the second period, one of our staff will
bring you your keys, and you’ll be free to leave at any point. Sort of to avoid some of the post-game congestion that the valet experience tends to have when you have a venue like this, where everybody is leaving at the conclusion of the game.

– The dining experience is going to be served by a new open kitchen, sort of chef-attended action stations, small plates, and lots of different variety from game to game. You will have the option of a pasta bar, sushi, seafood, prime rib and charcuteries.

– The open concept of the bowl is another important component of the design and something new, where fans will be able to dine while they’re watching the game.

– Fans will be able to sit at a bar in the club and see right out into the bowl, so it will really create a connection from center ice rink back right back into the club.

– We’re installing a Wi-Fi system so that any users in the club will be able to access a Wi-Fi network.

– There’s going to be a couple of tablets built into each four-seat loge suite. Adding touch-screen tablets in the loges and in the victory suites, bring the users the experience to get access to stats, and video feeds and camera angles, gives a great enhancement to that fan experience.

– The victory suites range from six to ten tickets in each of those packages. The price point of those seats, including all the benefits that are described above, sit at about $14,000 a seat. A four-seat loge is between $45,000 and $50,000 for the four seats, so it is about $12,500 to $13,500 per seat. The Luxe seats are $10,000 a seat. They are club seats that offer an all inclusive experience, designed for sending a potential client to the game at your expense. The experience offers food and beverage, private valet service, private entrance to the arena and special promotions. Some of the seats include a few
rounds of playoffs and some of them include access to purchase the playoffs.

Results

– Launched the sales process in early November
– Launched the club and the sales of the victory suites initially when the only product available for purchase was the victory suite.
– Those sold out in less than three weeks
– Had fourteen available, and they have been sold out since the first of December.
– Launched the next phase, which was the loges, in mid-December. About 50% sold out of the loge product.

“We just started selling the luxe seats about two weeks ago, and those have been really well received, as well. Our goal is obviously to be sold out prior to the start of the hockey season in October, but it looks like we’re on track to be done well in advance of that.” – Geoff Publow

How it can be applied elsewhere

Publow stated the following: “You really have to understand your own market and your own customers, in the example of a premium product renovation, really, your corporate customers and what their needs are, what the demands are, so you get the size of the club right. You get the pricing right and you get the benefits that you’re offering them right.”

Montreal Canadiens Case Study

This month’s case study features the Montreal Canadiens of the NHL. Justin Kingsley is the Chief Socialist for Sid Lee, a
communications agency based in Montreal, Quebec. He and his group have been working hand in hand with the Montreal Canadiens marketing and creative team to produce a unique and interactive loyalty program. We spoke with Justin and he provided us with the following:

**Program Description**

Club 1909 is a website (www.club1909.com) named after the Canadiens founding year in the National Hockey League. Club 1909 is also a loyalty program designed to unify Montreal Canadiens fans all across the globe and reward them for their passionate support even when they may not be able to attend games or watch them from their location.

**Objectives**

1. Unite the Montreal Canadiens brand and influence among fans worldwide.
2. Enable the club to connect to this diversified fan base in a unique way.
3. Reward fans for their passionate support and acknowledge them for engaging with the team.

**Details**

– Club 1909 is a membership based loyalty program that rewards fans for their digital involvement with the team and is free to join.

– Fans join by going to the website and entering their name
and e-mail address.

– Points are awarded to users who actively participate in game-day events, watch the games on TV, tweet about the Canadiens or use Instagram to post photos and other forms of engagement.

– The points go toward rewards that money can’t buy. For example, a game day used puck, locker room nameplates, autographed merchandise, photos and more.

– There is an option to pay to be a member of Club 1909. When you pay a one-time fee of $29.99 you will receive a personalized RFID chip-enabled card with an embedded piece of an authentic game-worn Canadiens jersey.

– Every fan that has signed up for Club 1909 has their name embedded underneath the ice surface. This has never been done before in the sports industry and is in place to connect fans with the players, on ice level.

Results

• The program was launched at the start of the 2014-2015 NHL season.
• Over 1000 unique users per day are registering to become members of Club 1909.
• They have an estimated membership base of 80,000 (December, 2014)
• They have connected with fans from all over the world: Thailand, China, South America, parts of Europe and more.
• Millions of membership points have been awarded to fans for their acts of faith towards the team.

How it can be applied elsewhere
Here are three questions Kingsley suggests you should ask yourself:

1. Have I successfully acknowledged and rewarded my fans for their loyalty and continued support of my franchise?
2. Do I have a budget to reward my fan base?
3. Is my social media talking with my fans? Or is it just talking to my fans?

Even if you don’t have the budget or the time to develop a customized reward program just remember a simple acknowledgement or a thank you goes a long way with your fan base. Ensure that your entire front office staff understands and applies this principle.

“They’re not looking for money, they’re looking for access, feedback or a response. They want to feel important to the club.” said Kingsley.

Contact

For more information and a closer look into this program, visit http://www.club1909.com/ and join the conversation!

Jacksonville Jaguars Case Study

This month’s case study features the Jacksonville Jaguars of the NFL. Chad Johnson, Senior VP of Sales and Shahid Khan,
Owner, developed a unique solution for the problem that many of us deal with; turning some not so desirable seats into a sellable property. We spoke with Chad and he provided us with the following.

**Program Description**

Convert a section of their North End zone that was previously covered by tarp into an experience that is unique, highly desirable and entertaining. This was accomplished by changing the seats into a stage area that consisted of 20 cabanas and 2 pools and 38 stand up tables.

**Objectives**

1. Create a fan experience that is unique to the climate of Jacksonville, Florida
2. Previously this area of seats was unsold and fans perception was they could not sell out. They wanted to change this perception.
3. Measure and track the incremental revenue as a result of this program.

**Details**

- The seating area consisted of 7,500 seats that were previously covered by a tarp.
- This entire area was converted into a fully functioning party deck.
- The party deck consisted of 2 stretch pools and 20 cabanas.
- Each cabana is sold as an individual package.
- 12 of the cabanas seat 20 and 8 seat 50.
- The area has the same services as their suites.
- The 20 person cabanas are sold for $3,500 each.
- The 50 person cabanas are sold for $12,500 each.
In addition to the cabanas 38 tables were installed each seating 4. Each table sells for $470 per game. The product was sold primarily by sales people but supported by a PR program designed to educate and inform the market.

Results

- All of the cabanas and tables are sold out for the entire 2014/15 season.
- The Jaguars collected 1.7 million dollars in incremental revenue since the program’s inception.
- By selling out this area this changed the fans perception.
- In less than 1 season they exceeded their forecasted ROI.

Next Steps

- Due to the success of this program the Jaguars continue to develop unique fan experience opportunities.
- They believe that each year they can develop unique properties that enhance the fans experience.
- “We are proactively searching the building to find new or unique space to further the team’s growth.” Said Johnson.

How it can be applied elsewhere

Take a look around your stadium and try and fill your seating gaps with something that can create a unique fan experience that works in your market place.

“Something like this is an experience, the experience is a story that you’re telling so put your resources into sales people that can tell the story. These products do not sell by using media alone, we used our media to help drive people to
the stadium to see the construction process and better understand our vision.” said Johnson.

Contact

For more Information, contact:

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And take another look at their website for more visuals of the Cabana’s.
http://jaguars.io-media.com/#/vr/Section/POOLW/1/1/d