

Five Challenges Facing the Sports Industry

The World Of Sports

Sports have been popular for many, many years. Yet with the rise in popularity also comes the rise of challenges and adversity. Outlined in this article are a few challenges the sports industry currently faces.

Millennials

Now more than ever, the sports industry is faced with an uphill battle of finding ways to entice millennials to actually attend games. The rise of technology has made it exponentially easier to view sporting events from the comfort of their own homes. Not to mention, professional sporting groups such as the NBA and NFL have also made it easier through mobile applications and their own TV stations (NFL Network, for example). It's hard to say why millennials just [don't go out any more](#). Still, this age group will continue to challenge the sporting industry in years to come.

Technology Integration

One other challenge the sports industry faces is keeping up with the pace of technological advancements. Many fans connect with their favorite teams through social media, which puts pressure on teams to constantly keep updating their Facebook timelines and Twitter feeds. Likewise, venues must also keep up with the pace. Not having wifi can be a major turn off for fans who want to stay connected throughout the game. Thus, if teams are not proactive with social media and do not have the capability of enticing fans with modern technology, fans will simply not follow them nor go to games in person.

Gameday Experiences

If technology wasn't difficult enough, the sports industry is faced with the challenge of finding gameday experiences that simply cannot be experienced at home. This includes pregame shows, halftime entertainment, and postgame celebrations. Not to mention, coming up with in-game experiences are just as important, whether it be the t-shirt gun, kiss cam, chants, or anything else they can come up with. Many business professionals and marketers might feel like everything has been done already. Also, teams might compete for the same entertainer. Finding the necessary funds for in-game experiences can be tough especially if no one shows up for the games.

Hyper Focus On Negative Stories

One challenge the sports industry will always face is the hyper focus on [negative stories](#) surrounding athletes. For some reason, news reporters (such as TMZ) have shifted towards being the first one to break the most recent scandal. People thirst for these negative headlines. For example, the Dallas Cowboys running back Ezekiel Elliot has recently been criticized for pulling down a woman's shirt in public; this not only creates a negative image for the Cowboys, but also for the NFL. On a similar note, the NFL is being heavily criticized for its lack of research on head trauma, specifically from concussions. These negative stories will always be challenging for the sports world.

Predicting The Future

The world is constantly changing. Thus, the sports industry is faced with the challenge of trying to predict the next trend, the next big idea that will capture their audience. Coupling this challenge with that of technology, it's clear that some sports teams and venues will always be at odds. For example, a venue might just catch up with the current times only to find out that something new has come into play. While the future is nearly impossible to predict, it might be worthwhile for the sports industry to study trends and attempt to predict what will be popular in the future.

Overcoming Odds

Even with these challenges, the sports world will continue to thrive. While some teams might fail, others will find ways to make sure they stay in business.

<https://www.sports-management-degrees.com/lists/five-challenges-facing-the-sports-industry/>

<https://www.sbibarcelona.com/newsdetails/index/105>

CURRENT CHALLENGES IN SPORTS FACING COVID-19: TRAINING, STADIUMS AND BUDGET

The long inactivity due to the forced quarantine has taken a long time to be accepted by all of the economic sectors. The process has not been different in sports, and until the second week of March the Serie A league did not suspend its activity, then LaLiga, Champion League and Premier League stopped, and finally the NBA because two of its players tested positive for coronavirus. Soon other tournaments and leagues followed this path, and one week later this halt turned from temporary into indefinite. The Olympic Games was one of the last sports events to announce its cancellation, but when postponing until 2021 they sent a strong message: the interruption in the competition is going to be long and their restart dates are still unforeseen.

It is a pause that makes us address the repercussions of COVID-19 and the strategies that can help overcome this situation. It's a time to rethink before sports retake the central role it has in many people's lives once the pandemic is over. Many people have been deprived of that injection of happiness a match convey, and they will cry out for this emptiness to be filled again when the quarantine finishes. Will we be prepared? Whether the answer is an emphatic yes, or a maybe, it will depend on how we face four fundamental aspects of this inactivity.

1.- Players' training and fitness

As mentioned in a previous article, FC Barcelona's, physical trainers have prepared [new strategies](#) for this new unusual situation. The normal decrease in VO2 Max and blood pressure that lead to lower oxygen consumption, as well as a loss of muscle mass in confinement, are being alleviated with all teams and athletes through daily monitoring and routines at home. Apart from that, NASA and the European Space Agency astronauts have warned that one of the most important aspects under confinement is the psychological one. Athletes will feel the stress caused by the fear to feel they are not fit, and they will show signs of fatigue undergoing repetitive training sessions. Staff members must be imaginative for this to not take place. Appropriate management of these fears and how to address them fast can reinforce resilience, using this quarantine as one more mental training exercise to adapt to extreme situations. Being realistic will also be indispensable, admitting that part of the team's coordination will be lost due to not being able to train as a group. The return to play may not be as different from that after the summer holidays.

2.- Managing closed stadiums

Teams from all over the world have lost revenue from their tours for visitors, shops and museums and also those that complement ticket sales. As an example, only in 2019, the Allianz Arena had a turnover of almost €7 million for the beers, sausages and soft beverages sold during the match and €10 million for the visits to the FC Bayern Museum. These figures can give us a clear idea of the money clubs lose when playing closed-door matches, as it was done at the beginning of the crisis. Not only does it affect economic matters, but also the psychological aspect: players usually remind us how difficult it is to concentrate without the

reactions of their fans at the stadium and the coldness they feel after they make a great play. In the stands, the visible and audible emotion of a game is produced, and without it the television stations lose interest in broadcasting. The question is whether these events will be authorised once the quarantine is over.

In Italy, where the first major contagion in the West took place, a match played should serve as a warning for local authorities around the world. At San Siro, Valencia FC-Atalanta played a game and it could have been a biologic bomb that helped spread the epidemic. Not only because of those who went to the stadium: 35% of the Valencia team tested positive for COVID-19, then positive cases in the Atalanta squad appeared and also among the journalists who travelled to Milan. But also, the fans that met in bars, streets and at home, which in the following days and weeks would expand exponentially.

It is easy to foresee that governments around the world will take the San Siro case into account, limiting, maybe for months, mass meetings and specifically sports events. That would condemn leagues to play without its supporters perhaps until summer, as the Premier League intends, starting again in June. But even if that was the case, scientists say that there might be a new outbreak in autumn, as it happens with common flu. It might then happen that leagues would be stopped again, and the temporary halt would now pass from being an exceptional situation to a recurrent one.

And when would things go back to normality? Ideally, when there is a vaccine and it is shared with the population, for which the best forecasts suggest we are still a year behind this scenario.

3.- Economic loss

For the uncertainty we have just mentioned, there's no doubt this is a complex situation for teams. In the worst-case scenario, the reduction in salaries can help alleviate this situation. The NBA has a clause in its contracts that allows to deduce 1% of the amount of each player's contract per game not played. If that is not enough, teams will have to sit down to negotiate with their players and coaches, just like many football clubs are already doing. Which leads us to consider the distribution of their budgets.

Besides elite athletes, there's the coaching staff, whose role is fundamental for the work of the players and whose economic survival may be more complicated. In this situation, big clubs might find opportunities by taking advantage of their financial power, being able to attract new talent from professionals who are redundant. This can underly a big danger because of the small and medium teams disappear from competition, the essence of football and the leagues themselves vanishes from the collective mind. Employment regulation, the search of governmental help and bank loan lines, will have to be completed by all parties, with the involvement of all of the teams to share a common solution for the benefit of the game.

The next article we will discuss media and fan engagement: the uprise of new opportunities due to this halt.

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