

The iMedia Playbook



Interactive Media Consulting for Your Sports Franchise

“We talk a lot about the fabric that is sports and how it is weaved throughout the daily routine of our lives. Whether we like it or not, we all have some type of passing interest in sports and our communities – either on a local, regional, national, or international level. Face it, if sports didn’t mean anything it wouldn’t be a section of the newspaper. It wouldn’t have it’s own segment on the local nightly news and it wouldn’t dominate our attention every four years, or every Sunday in the fall” (Meyer).

It's 2010 ... do you know where your fan base is?

As more and more individuals migrate to the online world, sports have to rethink their media strategies, accounting for new interactive media technologies, to stay in touch with their fans and grow the fan base – going to where the younger fans are, engaging them on their playing field – the basic goal always being to get "fans in the stands."

Just using interactive media for the sake of having it is not enough. Ineffective use, lackluster design and overall poor execution of an interactive media strategy can keep teams and leagues from reaching their goals as much as it can help.

A thorough examination of interactive media technologies to weed out what works, what doesn't and what ultimately will be beneficial to achieving the team/league core goals – increasing revenue, growing the fan base, promotions, et al – is essential before embarking on an interactive media strategy. With all that it takes to run a professional sports team or a multi-billion dollar league, who has the time for that level of research?

That's where we come in.

Welcome to ***The iMedia Playbook***.

Congratulations! You have taken the first step in effectively leveraging interactive media for your sports franchise.

What is compiled here is a ‘master-list’ of sorts, a main reference that will be used to lay the foundation for every customized playbook we build here at ***TiMP***. Everything from what is interactive media to defining and demonstrating examples of exceptional use and client success stories can be found in this booklet. Compiled from countless hours of research, examination and analysis, the components that follow are the base on which ***The iMedia Playbook*** is built.

What We Will Do For You:

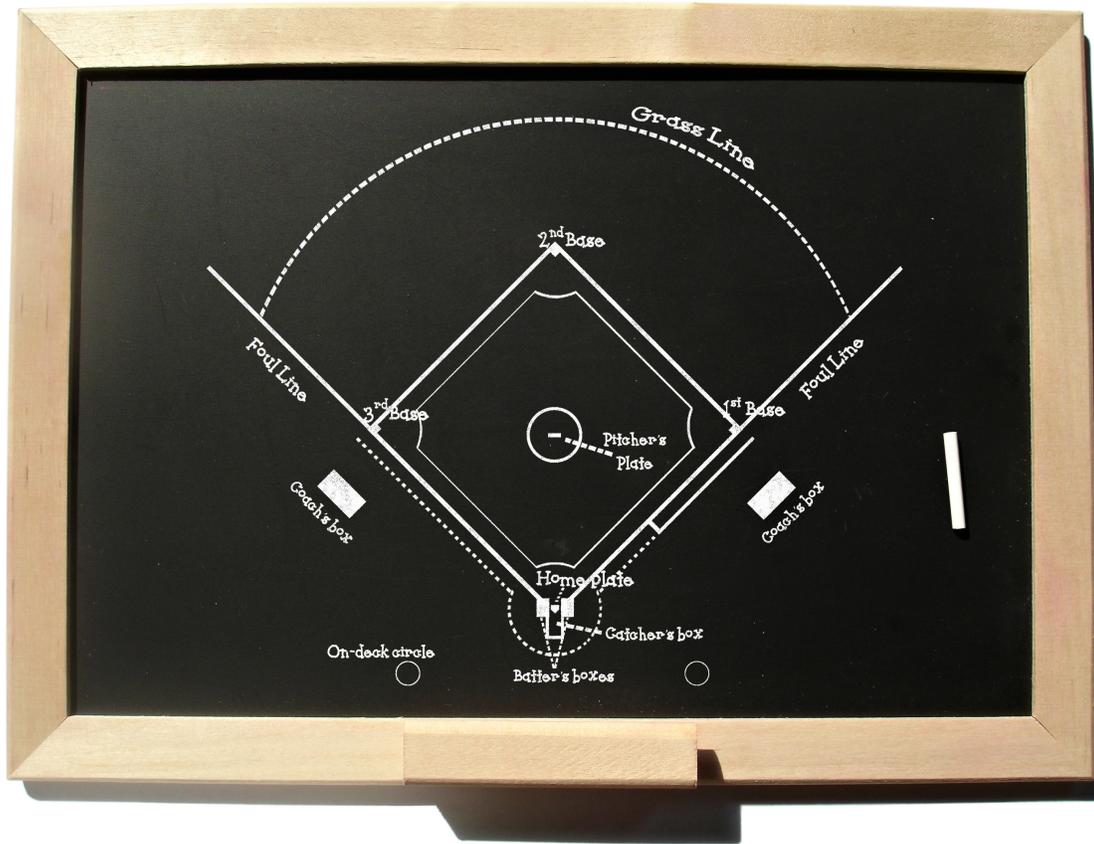
We here at ***The iMedia Playbook*** will start with an in-depth analysis and conversation with you about your franchise’s needs and goals when it comes to leveraging interactive media. It is crucial to have a clear picture of what you are expecting to gain by using interactive media and a way to measure accomplishment. We will thoroughly research your fan base, not only for demographic information but to determine their needs and wants with respect to their relationship with you. We will collaborate with you and your franchise to ensure that interactive media is the right set of tools to satisfy your goals and the needs of your fans. We will script the plays for your sports organization, charting a course, outlining what interactive media technologies we will utilize and how we will leverage them in the most effectively way possible. What your franchise will receive is a comprehensive game plan, a customized playbook for your interactive media campaign, a unique iMedia Playbook tailor-made for your franchise to maximize its effectiveness.

Why This Matters To You:

It's all about keeping up with the changing landscape. More and more people, including your fans, are living an increasing amount of their lives online. To remain relevant and visible in that changing media landscape, one has to be able to meet those fans (especially the next generation of fans, the younger fans) where they are working and playing, and more often than not it is online. With that increased amount of online living, their expectations for what they will experience shift in an Internet-like direction -- one where they are in control of what they look for, what page they go to next and who and how they communicate. To catch their attention and bring them into your fan base, you have to engage them on their field, on their terms. With the right strategy, you can effectively leverage the interactive media tools and technologies to position your sports organization for incredible marketing and growth potential.

The Basics

Mini Camp meets Spring Training



What is Interactive Media?

Seems like an important question, right? We should know what we are dealing with before we begin to tackle the task of leveraging it for your sports franchise. You came to us knowing enough about interactive media to know how important it is to your franchise and its future.

Just so we are all on the same page:

Interactive Media, or *iMedia*, is a *two-way system of communication*. Instead of the usual communication setup where a sender transmits a message to a receiver, interactive media is defined by the *back-and-forth* nature of the communication, the ability for the receiver to send a message back to the sender. So, key to interactive media is *active participation*. The audience is simply not a passive receptacle, but an *engaged, active participant* in the process. Finally, an important component to interactive media is giving the audience *choice and control*. Giving them options in what they do and how they do it draws the audience out from its lean-back, passive stance, bringing them into a lean-forward, active position.

Terms2Know

Here are a few key terms to keep in mind as we move forward. A complete glossary, courtesy of Sports Media Challenge (www.sportsmediachallenge.com) and their publication "Winning Fans with Social Media, Version 1.0" is included in the appendix.

New Media -- term meant to encompass the emergence of digital, computerized, or networking information and communication technologies. It revolves around the concept that there are new methods of communicating, characterized by collaboration and participation. This makes it easier for people to have a voice in their community and even in the world. Sometimes used in conjunction with *interactive media* or *multimedia*.

Online Community -- a group of people that interacts and communicates using online tools such as e-mail, instant messaging or message boards as opposed to face-to-face communication. People participate in online communities often for social reasons, but also for professional and educational reasons. Can coalesce around a particular topic or interest, such as a local team or league.

Viral -- designed to spread. If a project or video is viral, it has a strong component of word of mouth communication. People attempt to create viral videos that are unique and interesting so that people will share them with others, but sometimes they just spread spontaneously. Sometimes referred to as being *spreadable*, the content having a quality that makes people want to spread it around to others.

Web 2.0 -- term used to describe the changing trends in the way the world wide web is being used. Web 2.0 aims to increase creativity and collaboration, while allowing for secure online sharing. It is marked by the emergence of blogs, wikis, social networking sites, and video sharing sites.

Champions -- advocates who are passionate about telling and spreading stories about your brand (team). These people tend to appreciate recognition for their efforts, but virtually always do it for free because they love your brands, product, services, etc. AKA evangelists.

User Generated Content -- unedited content contributed by ordinary people on blogs, discussion boards, video sharing sites and social networks. When specific to sports, may also be referred to as *Fan Generated Content* or *Fan Generated Media*.

RSS -- abbreviation for Really Simple Syndication. Usually referenced as an *RSS Feed*, a format that delivers frequently updated content such as blogs and news. Provides a way to stay informed by pulling the latest content from multiple sites and compiling it in one place.

The Social Conversation

“What makes social media so attractive to powerhouse companies is the realization that more and more people are resorting to popular social destinations like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter to get their daily dose of their favorite brands and athletes. In addition to this, these sites come with major audiences and give brands a huge boost and a way to reach millions of consumers. As an added bonus, these sites give brands the viral, online hype that they've been searching for in their audiences and their markets. In addition to this, it's cheaper than spending millions on TV, billboard and print campaigns, and they can get real-time results in relation to how many people are engaging in these sites and taking advantage of their promotional offers.”

“The consumer has changed and companies have finally recognized that they need to be where the consumers are most responsive. Is social media the advertising vehicle of the future, replacing more traditional media? Probably not, but it may run an effective second.”

*Robert Speyer
ezinearticles.com*

“In the downturn, I think the only way to keep a brand in front of customers and the message relevant is to use social media. Marketing dollars work at dramatically higher multiples when consumers help create your message and pass it along.”

*Reggie Bradford
CEO, Vitruve Inc.*

The Social Conversation

"Social media is the sunshine and water that helps grow the passion of fans ... it also provides the shortest distance between, in our case, the league and the fans."

*Michael DiLorenzo,
Director of Social Media and
Business Communications for the NHL*

When someone mentions interactive media or Web 2.0, more often than not, you think of social media. Arguably the most visible and widely known of the interactive media tools, social media is the likely starting point for any interactive media campaign. A high number of participants increases the odds of a successful venture into interactive media -- more people means a better chance of getting a decent ROI.

As we mentioned before, interactive media is about the back and forth nature of communications, having that conversation with fans or facilitating it amongst them. "This conversational aspect of social media is crucial to understanding social media marketing because you can't fake a conversation and you can't automate it" (Henderson). "Social media content and marketing should be more about the conversation than "selling" at the very start. As you commit to providing content and information, the selling eventually comes but this takes time because you need to build trust and your customer needs to trust the information you provide [Which is why] when using social media marketing the quality of your content is crucial: the better it is the more likely it will be shared around" (Henderson). "What's working in social media is that it's a great way to engage your customers and have a real dialogue with them" (Calbreath). It is essential to have true, authentic interactions and honest conversations with fans when using social media platforms. Fans using these tools are expecting it and will turn away if they do not find it.

“Social networking sites are most popular among 18-34 year olds. They tend to spend 4.3 times [more time] on social media than with TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and books combined” (Henderson). Having a positive and effective presence in the social media arena, cultivating relationships and having conversations with the users, turns those 18-34 year old users into ticket-buying, jersey-wearing fans.

“Social media should be viewed as a fantastic compliment to sports that is good for both fans and the TV networks, but at the moment, it seems that’s anything but how it’s being perceived.”

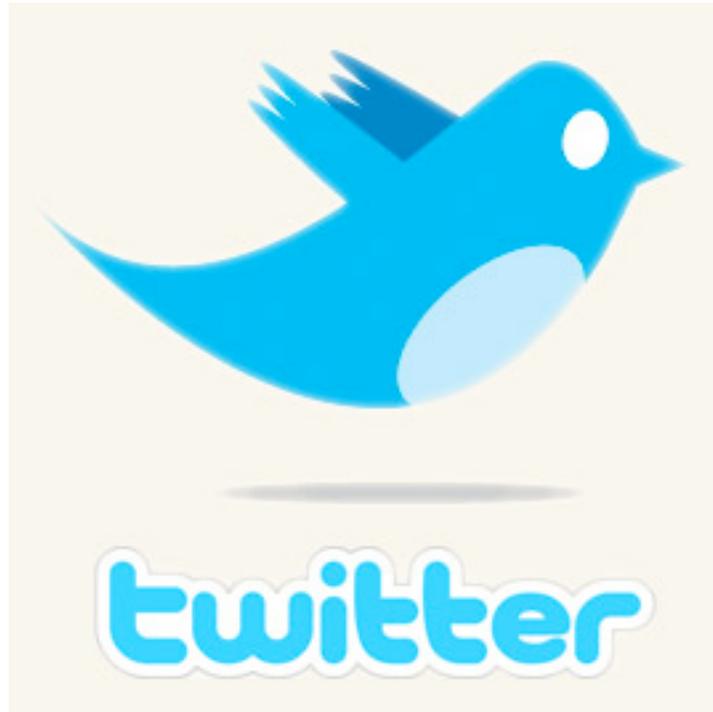
*Adam Ostrow,
Editor-in-Chief, Mashable.com*

One driver behind the use of social media is it giving organizations the ability to pull an end-around on traditional media, allowing them to present their message on their terms. In addition, it is a means to enhance brands, building and strengthening a connection with fans that is irresistible to sponsors. By helping fans connect to one another, in turn adding value to fans' online experiences, you strengthen and deepen their connection with the team. “[S]ocial media has blurred the line between spectator sports and participation sports yet strengthened the lines of communication from athlete to fan” (Wurst). "There is no better return on investment than to build your fan base utilizing social media ... individual passions for teams, players and leagues will create millions upon millions of social actions acting as megaphones to cost effectively build awareness on the back of your most passionate fans” (Bradford).

“We are beginning to see a change in the way our society communicates, as more and more people are beginning to use these social media outlets as a means to communicate with one another The potential market that can be reached through social media has sky rocketed in the past couple years League officials need to begin to start adapting to these changes, which

will further ensure the success of their teams in the coming years” (Lee). “Sports and social media are at the cross roads of fan participation like we have not seen at any other point in time (in) sports. Look for it to continue to escalate with even more user generated content and platforms created to showcase that content. With that being said, look for the voice of the fan to become more and more prominent in the industry of sports” (Meyer).

Twitter



“It’s no secret that athletes love social media, especially Twitter. By leveraging social tools & applications, professional, amateur and collegiate teams can build stronger fan loyalty.”

*Rich Brooks
fastcompany.com*

What is Twitter?

A free social messaging tool that lets users participate in social networking and micro-blogging. This service allows users to send and read updates that are only 140 characters long (known as tweets). Third-party applications do exist that allow for longer messages.

Definition from "Winning Fans with Social Media, Version 1.0" from Sports Media Challenge in Charlotte, NC. www.sportsmediachallenge.com

“Twitter has become the perfect vehicle to take rabid NASCAR fans on a wild reality show ride, with their favorite drivers as the directors. It’s a new-age NASCAR family in the making, with entire families tweeting to NASCAR Nation.”

*Lisa Horne
foxsports.com*

Twitter has caught on like wildfire in recent years. “Overall, according to figures from comScore, [Twitter] jumped from 4.3 million visitors in February to 9.3 million in March” (Evans). Legacy media is increasingly asking viewers, listeners and readers to send in their tweets. A growing list of celebrities and athletes signing up, increasing numbers of smart phones and spreading Internet access coupled with the fact that Twitter is free (a definite plus in difficult economic times), and you have what was once a quirky application now thriving in the mainstream of everyday life.

Attribute some of Twitter’s rise in popularity to its format. Quick bursts of information, 140 characters at a time, provide that instant and personal contact fans crave. According to Michael DiLorenzo, Director of Social Media and Business Communications for the NHL, the league and teams use Twitter to “satisfy the emotional craving fans have to be directly connected” to their favorite teams (Wurst). A short tweet from an athlete on the way to practice or after the game from the locker room gives fans the sense of being there, getting behind-the-

scenes access from the players themselves. By keeping fans active through engagement over Twitter, those fans' relationships to the player and team are deepened, their (parasocial) connections strengthened, all to the benefit of your organization.

Take for instance the example of NASCAR Sprint Cup Series driver Juan Pablo Montoya. He's used Twitter to post pictures "that include his child asleep in a Target shopping cart (can Target ask for better advertising than its driver actually shopping at Target?), pictures of his remote-controlled airplanes, and where he ate dinner with his family. Montoya's followers are seemingly with him wherever he goes, all in a non-invasive way" (Horne). You cannot buy that level of connection, that type of positive exposure.

You say "nitch," I say "neesh"

In an oversaturated sports landscape, trying to break in without the aid of mass coverage provided by traditional media outlets, can prove to be a daunting task. The micro-blogging service is gaining major traction with the leagues that don't receive the mass media attention. Professional leagues like the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) and Women's Professional Soccer (WPS) are turning to new media technologies like Twitter to build communities, grass-roots style.

In fact, Women's Professional Soccer passed the 200,000 followers mark on Twitter earlier this year (2010), putting them at number five behind the NBA, NFL, MLB and NHL in number of followers (Hueter 2010). "The overarching reason WPS achieved the 200,000 fan milestone is because *they built social media into their communications program as a fan-engagement mechanism*" (Hueter 2010). Here are a couple of key points Hueter singles out as the secret to their Twitter success:

- 1) *They participate* – “... WPS actively participates with and contributes toward ongoing conversations,” developing relationships by actually talking to people, relationships that turn into loyalty ... into word-of-mouth ... into increased sales.
- 2) *The provide value* – content of the league’s tweets is actually valuable, not just “overtly pushing their own agenda ... posting links to where consumers can buy tickets and pushing it down their throats everyday”
- 3) *They’re human* – “... WPS shows who they really are as people and teams. They also do an excellent job of cross-promotion; the league actively promotes the Twitter accounts of various teams. ... sometimes, they use Twitter as a way to communicate between each other” (2010)

Hilary Shaev, VP of WNBA marketing, states: “We talk so much about how inclusive we are, this really takes it to that next level. ... We believe, as with many companies, that it’s important to go where your fans are ... we haven’t replaced anything [marketing-wise]. It’s five hours less sleep for me, focusing on digital and social media” (Evans).

That last part is a key piece to focus on. More often than not, tools like Twitter are being used to compliment and extend existing marketing and promotions activities rather than replace them. It is all about reaching out to new audiences, providing different avenues for fans to connect and follow your team, converting that *fan* into a *fanatic*.

Not so fast

With all the potential that lies ahead in utilizing Twitter, there are some downsides to consider. It may be an incredibly convenient and powerful tool, but the immediacy and

availability of Twitter raises the risk of tweeting something you may come to regret. Behind every tweet is a human, and mistakes can happen; people don't always think before they tweet and organizations can find themselves in the crosshairs for tweeting the wrong thing.

One such example is Swin Cash, a forward for the Seattle Storm of the WNBA. In April 2009, she posted a tweet after her brother was involved in an incident with police in Pennsylvania – “McKeesport Police beat my 24yr old brother last night,” going on to describe his injuries as “face swollen, broken nose, one eye closed, needed stiches” (Evans). Cash later deleted the posts and the McKeesport police chief told the local paper no one filed a complaint; however, Cash’s brother did get a cut on his forehead (Evans). “You ride the emotional highs and lows with things,” Cash said (Evans). “It [the tweets] did make me more sensitive to the fact that when you speak about things on Twitter, it’s not just you you’re speaking about. But I wanted people to see that athletes are human. We can have bad hair days and different stuff that’s going on” (Evans). In the heat of the moment, hearing news about her brother, Cash published her feelings for anyone to see.

Cash is not the only one to tweet without thinking ahead first. Gilbert Arenas of the Washington Wizards (NBA) and Larry Johnson of the Kansas City Chiefs (NFL) also got into a bit of hot water over their tweets. Miami Heat forward Michael Beasley set off a controversy over a Twitter photo “with what looked like a bag of marijuana in the background” (Liss). Tony LaRussa, manager of the St. Louis Cardinals (MLB), sued Twitter “because someone created a fake account using [his] name” (Liss). “The presence of athletes in social media has almost been unmatched in the entertainment/celebrity world, but this hasn’t come without a price & some lessons learned the hard way” (Gleason).

Tweeting without thinking isn't the only issue some people have with Twitter and its social media cousins. The issue of communication between recruits and college coaches is of particular importance to the NCAA. With an increasing number of coaches online, the chance of contact with potential recruits increases. Athletic programs have to be particularly mindful of the rules – recruits can follow coach, be coach can't directly chat with them. Steve Robertello, Washington State associate AD for NCAA compliance, explains it this way: "It's hard to legislate against technology. ... You never know when a new one is going to pop up that's not addressed that we've all got to scramble and figure out how we're going to deal" (Evans).

Some critics of social media point to its potential to distract athletes and players, knocking them off their game. Barbara Meyer, sports psychologist and professor at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, worked with eight Olympic athletes at the most recent Olympics in Vancouver. She explained "In Turin (the 2006 Winter Games) we were dealing mostly with e-mail. ... In 2002, it was mostly phones, like land lines" (Fauber & D'Amato). "But the popularity of Facebook, Twitter and texting can put an Olympic athlete [or any athlete] just a few keystrokes from distractions that can hurt his or her performance. ... Her advice ... shut down the social media" (Fauber & D'Amato).

Mind the Generation Gap

Concerns over posting something only to regret it later isn't the only hurdle Twitter and the rest of the social media clan have to overcome. There is a definite generation gap when it comes to adoption of Twitter and other social media. Social and other interactive media technologies tend to skew to a younger demographic, with those on the older end of the scale slower to being using, if at all. Randy Adamack, Seattle Mariners' VP of Communications,

expresses that sentiment: “I’m too old for that stuff. ... We’ve got a few people who are actually discussing it. Once we’re comfortable that we’re doing the right thing and why we’re doing it, we’ll start marching down that road” (Evans).

In many organizations, there is the perception that interactive, social and new media technologies are explicitly for a younger crowd, and are only effective in reaching that young demographic. Others may see the tools as a passing fad, a waste of time or not worth the trouble of learning how to use them. Typically the best means to counter those sentiments is using facts. Having some measurable statistic, proof that using the interactive and social media tools had a positive effect – increased attendance, increased merchandise sales, an increase in fan satisfaction, whatever the case may be. Having an old school result to put the new technology into perspective can go a long ways in winning over critics, showing that time and effort spent in interactive and social media pays dividends.

Title IX

Women’s sports are increasingly turning to interactive and social media as a means to expand coverage of their teams and leagues. “If there’s a little more focus on everybody’s individual story and telling that, we can start to generate more attention. ... [I]t’s a little different with the guys. They are so well followed. The trick [for women] isn’t going to be quantities of numbers. But to get these women doing it themselves, having it be their own voice and be very genuine and transparent. That’s where they’re going to succeed” (Hueter 5/5/2009).

Yet, not everyone is convinced that Twitter and its social media brethren are the saviors of women’s sports. “Could it be possible that social media, like Twitter, is just another means to replicate the ways in which traditional sport media marginalizes and sexualizes female athletes?

Twitter's existence does nothing to challenge the status quo or existing structural inequalities between men's and women's sports ... especially since it is an "opt in" platform" (LaVoi 5/5/2009).

'Cavalier' Attitude Toward Twitter

For a fine example of how social media was used effectively to enhance the live game experience with real time fan participation, we head back to college, to the University of Virginia.

For the first game of the 2009 football season, a contest between the Cavaliers and William and Mary, UVa turned over the Jumbotron display to the Cavalier fan base via social media. Early in the contest, the public address announcer "invited fans to use Twitter to tweet text and pics during the game" (William). Making use of a special hashtag for the game (#WMvUVA), fans could see their tweets displayed in close to real time on the screen at the stadium (William). The previous year, UVa made use of a text message system, where fans could text their messages to a 5-digit number and see their messages show up on the Jumbotron (William). The advantages of Twitter are that fans can also send pictures along with a message, all tweets submitted are public and searchable, and fans at home can get in on the action as well.

The big takeaway from this anecdote is this: "the pent-up demand for more fan interaction" (William). By using a simple, free tool available to everyone, the University of Virginia turned what was an upset loss to William & Mary into a positive experience for some of the fans in attendance. Fans who may have lost interest in the game (since the home team was losing) were re-engaged into the game atmosphere using a simple social media technology. Those disinterested fans that may have left early because of the upset loss, may instead have

stayed a bit longer, enjoying the messages on the Jumbotron, reconnected to the event through a different channel.

Facebook

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font with a registered trademark symbol (®) to the right, set against a solid blue rectangular background.

“Developments in the sporting world happen fast, and Twitter and YouTube are ideal tools for keeping up with franchise-changing trades, career-ending injuries and season making plays as they happen. Few experiences are more social than going to a Super Bowl party or packing into a stadium with a community of like-minded fans. And if you can’t be there in person, cheering and smack-talking via Facebook are the next best thing.” (Colaizzi)

What is Facebook?

One of the world's most popular social networking sites. Users can join networks organized into categories, such as school, city, region, and workplace. Members interact with others through options including adding friends, posting comments on profile walls, joining groups, and updating personal profiles. Once strictly the domain of college students, Facebook has exploded in popularity, reaching the 300 million user plateau in 2009.

Definition from "Winning Fans with Social Media, Version 1.0" from Sports Media Challenge in Charlotte, NC. www.sportsmediachallenge.com

What Facebook Brings to the Game:

- *Self-identification* – fans choose to follow or like their teams, voluntarily identifying themselves as fans, in the same way that donning a jersey or placing a sticker on their car identifies them as fans
- *Fan page administrators get a level of analytics* – number of fans added, comments, likes, visits delivered through weekly reports [details about demographics, longer-term growth and engagement trends through the Insights feature]
- *Possible contest platform* – drive traffic to the Facebook or team page, offering something more to those fans already engaged with your organization
- *Free to sign up and use*

How Facebook Can Go Wrong:

- *The immediacy of Facebook* – raises the risk of posting something you come to regret
- *Behind every Facebook page is a human* – mistakes can happen; players and teams can find themselves in the crosshairs for posting something others view as 'questionable'

- *Facebook's open nature* – you may be tagged in other's photos, posts and pages are linked to and preserved longer than anticipated

Online game, on track action

An excellent example of a sponsor leveraging Facebook to enhance its involvement in a sport can be found by examining Tornados, a snack brand from Ruiz Foods in Dinuba, California.

Using the Facebook Idea Challenges application from Bulbstorm, Tornados is promoting its inaugural season as a team sponsor in NASCAR with the *Tornados Skin It to Win It Challenge*. “Tornados fans submit images of items they’d like to see skinned or wrapped like the #39 Tornados [Chevrolet, driven by Ryan Newman on the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series]. Fans will then rate, share and comment on submissions for points. The winning submission [gets] two tickets to a NASCAR race and \$1000. All fan can redeem earned point for skinned prizes, autographed merchandise and coupons” (Lunkenheimer).

“Social media is about more than fan count; it’s about engaging with and listening to your fans,” said Bart Steiner, CEO and President of Bulbstorm. “A fan’s ideas for a brand are important, not only to the fan but also to the brand itself. Idea Challenges enables brands to simultaneously grow their Facebook presence *and* engage with fans in a meaningful way – around their ideas” (Lunkenheimer).

“Social media have become the performance-enhancers of [minor league] teams’ marketing campaigns, except instead of being frowned upon, social networking is becoming accepted as the best and fastest way to get a message to your fans. Direct mailing campaigns are being replaced by Facebook and Twitter pages, where fans can actually interact with the team. Streaming video gives fans more access than a basic Website or message board ever did.”

*Josh Leventhal
BaseballAmerica.com*

Title IX II

When it comes to women’s sports and using Facebook, the “the biggest opportunity is ‘network with other platforms’ – with the consumer industry for females being as huge as it is, and with official sponsors in the mix, professional organizations like the WNBA or Women’s Pro Soccer can strategically get this done, providing mutually beneficial contracts with all parties involved” (Hueter 64). “The only thing I’d add is to make it personal. Because female athletes are real people (and likely have personal Facebook accounts – if they don’t, they should), I challenge players to become “fans” of their own leagues and teams, and contribute to it frequently by posting discussions and interacting with fans” (Hueter 3/31/2009). “Now that more female athletes are on Twitter, their updates should automatically feed into their Facebook status, enhancing that ‘personal feel’ that people want to see/hear. Use Twitpic to show what it’s like in their locker rooms, overseas, or even in their own homes would help, too” (Hueter 3/31/2009).

Wow, that was a lot of suggestions/requests Hueter made to/of female athletes. Before you start to get concerned that you have to let everyone and everyone’s brother in to your home, posting pictures of your living room, take a deep breath. The key term to pull out of the preceding paragraph is *personal*. Fans that use interactive and social media like Facebook are

looking for more, a deeper connection than whatever they get during the game broadcast or on SportsCenter. The beauty of interactive media is choice and control – not just for the user but for the content producer (you, the athlete). With recent high-profile cases of stalking and obsessed fans, notably ESPN sportscaster Erin Andrews, concern over sharing photos or thoughts is natural (even without the high-profile cases, such concerns are perfectly understandable). The key is that the athlete, team or organization is in control over the amount that is shared, the level of intimacy. That can vary from person to person, team to team, but as long as fans feel like they are getting something in addition to what game broadcasts or highlights on the news gives them, you've got them. Sharing that extra something, letting the fans in on something that not everyone gets to know or see, engages them even more, deepening their connection to the team.

Pit Stop

Let's pause here for a second and refocus. By now you may be thinking to yourself, 'Sure, that is a lot a great information, but why should I even care? It may work in other places for other companies, but not my sports team.' Interactive and social media does have a place in the sports arena. It does matter, in large part because of one thing – fan engagement. "Once the fans become invested in you, you've created an audience. You've got a captive audience that wants to know what you're doing that's cool and different. It reflects a trans-national trend in freedom of information—the economy is becoming more transparent" (Lewis).

“Transparency is scary. It means that if somebody is going to call you on your shit, the entire world gets to see it. Long gone are the days of the private and personal “angry letter.” But I see it as progressive—athletic departments can’t hide behind desks in their offices, and pro teams can’t hide behind managers and owners, making the experience more valuable for the fans. And at the end of the day, isn’t that really what sports are all about?”

*Lisa Lewis
Columbia Spectator*

Flag on the Play

As discussed before with Twitter, Facebook and the rest of the social media family are not without their drawbacks. The immediacy and lack of control inherent in these interactive and social media tools can be a rather large deterrent to adoption.

“Some have called for athletes to stay away from Twitter and Facebook, but that’s crazy. Those same members of the media asking athletes to stay away from Twitter wouldn’t call for athletes to stop deal with traditional media merely because they said the wrong thing during an interview or press conference, right? Social media isn’t the issue, the issue is being smarter in how social media is used” (Gleason).

“[P]eople are scared to engage fully with their audiences on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, because word of mouth is completely organic—if your fans love you or if they hate you, they make it public information. This instant feedback mechanism is an opportunity for any brand to grow and become more responsive to the market, but it’s also threatening, which is why professional sports leagues have adopted policies limiting what athletes say to the public” (Lewis).

League Push-back

“[S]ome sports leagues have run screaming from the idea of allowing their assets – that is, the players – to tell the world what’s going on *right this minute*, especially if this minute is happening during a game or at a team’s facility” (Cheng). Ever-evolving technology has left leagues scrambling to put in place policies for using new interactive and social media. Some highlights of league policies regarding social media:

National Football League

- players can not tweet during the game, the 90 minutes before and after a game or (presumably) halftime
- coaches, officials and press must stay away from their phones too
- fans who are watching the game are not prohibited from any use

National Basketball Association

- Players, coaches and team personnel forbidden from using cell phones other handhelds during games (45 minutes before to 45 minutes after locker room open to press after the game, includes halftime and timeouts)
- each team can adopt its own policy when it comes to practices, meetings, other team events and team time

In contrast, the National Hockey League has “taken a more welcoming approach to social media” (Cheng). The league has helped organize Tweetups, where Twitter-using fans meet to watch games. Also, the NHL used Twitter to run a contest to give away tickets to fans (Cheng).

As of late 2009, the NHL hadn't yet announced an official policy allowing or prohibiting use of social media.

Major League Baseball is trying to ride the fence when it comes to social media. The league has its own iPhone application that has social media, as well as an active twitter account (Cheng). MLB also promotes player's Twitter accounts on the league site. The main issue Major League Baseball is trying to combat is "real-time reporting on games from reporters" – be it through blog posts, cell phone pictures, whatever (Cheng).

Blogs



What is a blog?

A type of website maintained by an individual or group. Blogs feature comments and other material that can include links, news, graphics and video. Posts are displayed in reverse-chronological order with the most recent at the top. The ability for users to leave comments is an important interactive aspect. Often referred to in relation to the *blogosphere*, which is the collective term for all blogs on the Internet.

Definition from "Winning Fans with Social Media, Version 1.0" from Sports Media Challenge in Charlotte, NC. www.sportsmediachallenge.com

Blogs coming from sports tend to be one or more of the following three types: (1) a platform for press releases, an online stream of official team news, (2) a journal-style, behind the scenes, personal thoughts sharing experience and/or (3) fan-driven, using posts and comments coming from fans.

What Blogs Bring to the Game:

- *Can feed fan appetite* – more information, more interaction, more behind-the-scenes content while still allowing the author of the posts to control the level of intimacy
- *Flexible format* – allows for videos, links and photos
- *The ability to ‘subscribe’* – getting alerts via RSS every time the blog updates
- *Highly customizable and personal means of engaging your fans*
- *Can be launched with little or no cost*

How Blogs Can Go Wrong:

- *Requires a certain degree of writing ability to be effective*
- *Behind every blog posting is a person* – always the risk of sharing too much, spilling a team secret or generally posting something one may come to regret later, particularly an issue with journal-style blogs
- *Difficult to monitor and regulate postings* – especially fan-driven and journal-style; run the risk of being associated with something inflammatory or potentially libelous
- *Can get personal* – blogs, particularly the journal-style, require a certain comfort level with writing and sharing information to walk the line of behind-the-scenes and diary

Seconds From Disaster

Increasingly, organizations are incorporating use of interactive and social media tools as part of their crisis management plans. And like it or not, sports franchises are not immune to having to deal with crisis. Player injuries, athletes in legal trouble and accidents on-site are just a couple of the potential situations franchises will have to be ready to handle in the event they do present themselves. From the tragic death of a trainer at the hands of a killer whale at SeaWorld in February 2010 to the sudden death of LPGA golfer Erica Blasberg mid-May 2010, how a sports organization handles crisis situations now has to include a plan for their interactive and social media channels. Fans check social media channels “not just for mentions of the issue, but to see how the [franchise] is responding or if it even has an account” (Monty).

Take for instance, the aforementioned sudden death of LPGA golfer Erica Blasberg. When news of her unexpected death broke, her Twitter account had been inactive for sometime prior to her passing. Visitors to ericablasberg.com, only saw a plain text page with a message

stating the site was taken down out of respect for Blasberg and her family. It is not anyone's place to say whether or not the choices Blasberg's people made regarding her online presence following her death are right or wrong. Yet, shutting down those channels, leaving only news reports as the means of releasing information, left a considerable amount of questions unanswered. That uncertainty undoubtedly led to speculation, rumor and innuendo as to the cause of Blasberg's death – none of which served any purpose. It is easy in hindsight to say leave the channels open, keep the information coming, allow fans to pay their respects on her site. All anyone can say is Blasberg's representatives acted in what they deemed to be the best interest of Blasberg and her family.

“Anytime a crisis hits, it's a good idea for a company to have a hub where information can be posted quickly to address misinformation, provide clarity and exhibit some semblance of control over the situation. In today's world, there is no time for weeks or even days of war gaming and message creation. Companies need to be prepared to act within a matter of hours, if not quicker” (Monty). That is why it is key for your franchise to already establish itself in the social space instead of waiting for a crisis to hit before starting a blog or Twitter account. (Monty). “In short, it's important to have a crisis preparedness plan and a rapid response strategy in place, using the tools that effectively allow a company to get messages in place and respond where the conversations are happening. And as channels are being created, it is important to understand the implications of potential negative stories and how those channels might be affected. In a crisis, a popular channel that needs to be silenced is of no use to anyone” (Monty). The key is awareness, knowledge and understanding – knowing what means of communication are out there, what channels you are already established in and which of those are going to best serve your needs during a crisis.

Emerging Technologies



Emerging Technologies

While we may have devoted a lot of real estate to social media – Twitter and Facebook – as well as the blog format, those aren't the only games in town when it comes to fans engagement. “It's time they [teams] start to look beyond only utilizing the major platforms (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook) and really start to embrace more emerging and niche platforms (Ustream, Tumblr, Flickr). Every platform offers something different and therefore appeals to different types of people” (Read).

Let's define these three emerging technologies and highlight an example of their use:

Ustream – live interactive broadcast platform that enables anyone with an Internet connection and a camera to engage their audience immediately. Uses a one-to-many model, which means that the user can broadcast to an audience of unlimited size.

[<http://www.ustream.tv/about>]

Example – [Janel McCarville](#): “instant access to an elite female athlete” (LaVoi 61); broadcast in question, McCarville in bathroom, cutting her own hair; debate on if such access is good access, or if there is ‘no such thing as bad publicity’

Tumblr – a blogging platform that allows users to post text, images, video, links, quotes, and audio to their tumblelog, a short-form blog. Users are able to "follow" other users and see their posts together on their dashboard. Users can "like" or "reblog" posts from other blogs on the site. The service emphasizes customizability and ease of use.

[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tumblr>]

Example – [New York Knicks](#): huge potential because it offers a great way to find and share information; used mainly as a way to share videos, short blogs & promotions (Read).

Flickr – an online photo management and sharing application, with the goals of (1) We want to help people make their content available to the people who matter to them and (2) We want to enable new ways of organizing photos and video. [<http://www.flickr.com/about/>]

Example – [Manchester City FC](#): give fans the chance to see all the latest images from the clubs official stream as well as inviting them to share their own images and get involved in discussion (Read)

“[N]iche and emerging platforms allow teams to build up closer relationships with fans and also open up many new engagement and participation opportunities. Teams can choose to share images on Flickr, post short blogs on Tumblr or run live chats or showing live training sessions on UStream – there’s plenty of potential and opportunity out there” (Read).

Online Communities



Online Communities

“These social sites are making money and building gigantic market caps along the way, clearly demonstrating that there can be good business in user-generated content and online community” (Coyle 4/13/2009). Fan communities give teams the opportunity to reconnect with the ‘displaced fans’ (those living outside the television market, less likely to buy tickets to home games). Using the Web and social media, those fans that could only watch passively on television can now be just as informed and connected as fans in the home market. “In fact, these fans are not displaced at all. They’re connected. They are part of a team’s fan base, which is the most valuable asset any team can have” (Coyle 4/13/2009).

The task of moving into the realm of online fan communities can seem a bit daunting. Yet, most teams already have an online foundation – ticket sales. “Beyond tickets, teams can sell merchandise, fan club memberships, access to premium content, fan travel and other premium fan experiences through the Web. The potential for this business grows in direct proportion to the size of the team’s Web site audience” (Coyle 4/13/2009).

“Online sponsorship is the other big revenue opportunity created by the Web. Once a team has built a Web audience through publishing stories, video and statistics, it can grow this audience through savvy use of social media [that’s where ***The iMedia Playbook*** comes in]. The goal here should be to maximize the numbers of visitors to the team sites, and to increase the number of page views consumed by fans. Team revenue potential once again rises in direct proportion to the size and engagement of the online fan base” (Coyle 4/13/2009).

In short, done properly, online fan communities can become revenue streams for franchises, as well as being an invaluable source of fan research information. “Here’s the formula: Teams create communities. Sponsors buy access and participate directly with fans, and

leverage this participation into new business. Ultimately, a three-way partnership forms between the team, its fans and its sponsors. All three make investments and all three earn profits” (Coyle 9/6/2007).

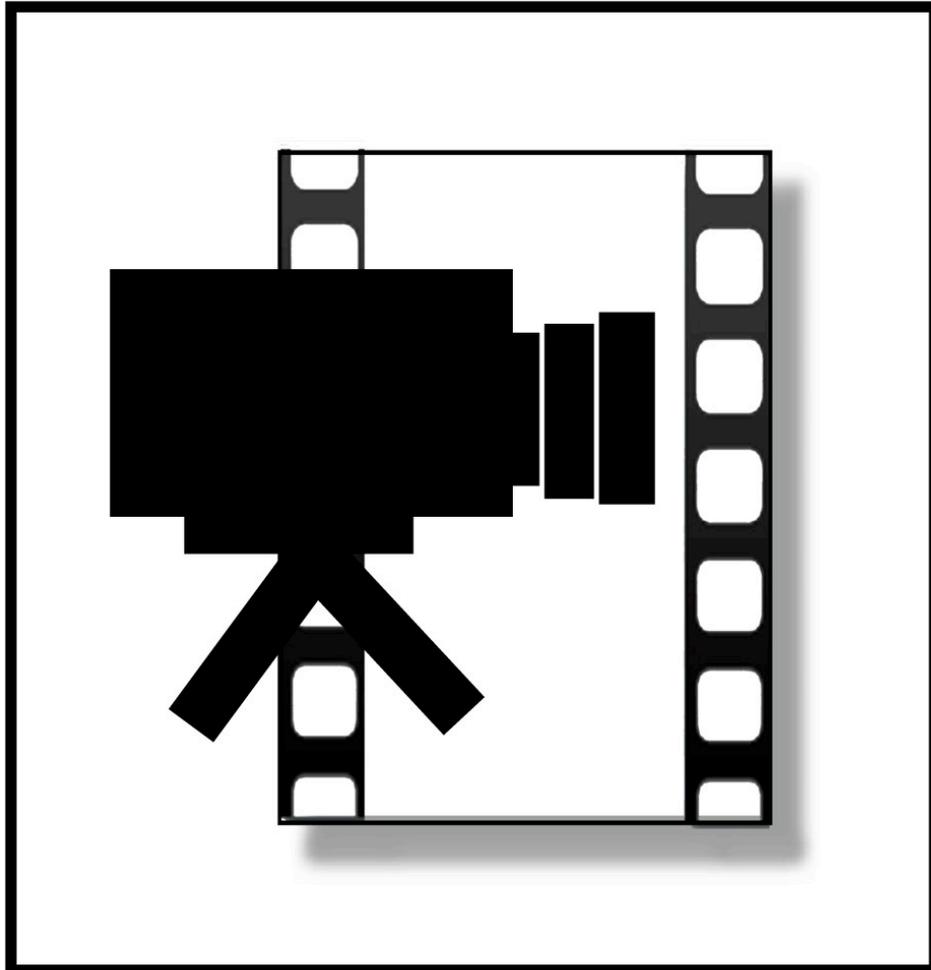
A few key points to keep in mind when it comes to building online fan communities:

- First goal has to be helping fans to connect with each other
- When fans are connected to each other, they are more strongly connected to the team
- Stronger connection means they are less likely to defect and are ultimately a greater lifetime value to the team
- Do focus on building the fan community instead of being concerned with having the latest bells and whistles
- Once you have built the online community then comes the monetization (e-commerce – sell a little bit to a lot of fans)

*“There is a **huge** opportunity to tap Facebook and Twitter in combination with team social communities in order to add value to the fans’ experiences, create opportunities for sponsors and make money for the team. ... So far, most teams do not have anyone running their digital channels. I think that needs to change if teams are going to tap the full potential of digital.”*

*Pat Coyle
Coyle Media*

Multimedia A/V



“If you bring the game day experience to fans outside the stadium, they’ll get even more excited when the next game day arrives.”

Multimedia A/V

While all the focus may be on the 'newer' new media tools like social media and blogs, any effective leveraging of interactive media cannot ignore a pair of long-running, solid performers in the media universe -- visuals and audio.

Just like the other interactive media tools and technologies we have outlined in the playbook so far, online video and audio have guidelines of their own to keep in mind as you are building your interactive media strategy. Those include:

- As a general rule, the shorter the better. Think commercial (30-60 seconds) or news segment (2-3 minutes). Longer is acceptable, but there has to be quality content, a reason for the fan to sit and watch the video for five minutes or more.
- Have it large enough for visibility, but not overpowering the entire website, overshadowing your other features.
- Ensure the player has an intuitive interface – clear ways to play, pause and skip videos, obvious volume controls
- Embed visuals and audio when possible instead of popping-up in a new window, given the regular use of pop-up blocker software
- Consider a ‘media room’ section, where fans have one-stop access to all photographs and videos on your team’s web presence
- Keep consistent specifications from video to video – definition (you’ll want to go HD if possible), size, file format

Title IX



Title IX III

Throughout this reference playbook, we have sought to highlight some areas where women's sports are taking advantage of interactive media technologies – many of the examples listed in Appendix A are from women's sports leagues. On the most basic level, men's and women's sports tend to draw different kinds of fans/audiences, so the means and techniques used to engage them will differ to some degree.

Arguably, at the root of the difference, is coverage. Typically women's sports do not receive the mass market coverage, and when they do, it “is often in ways that highlight femininity – rather than athletic competence” (LaVoi 6/26/2009). This had lead them at times to be more innovative when it comes to marketing, promotions, growing their fan base and increasing awareness of their presence.

“As with many kinds of coverage about women, even those instances in which women are sources or the focus of news or stories, they often remain subjects, spoken or written about; their story presented through the view of media persons instead of their own voices. Otherwise, they are reported on in relationship to men, as girlfriends or wives of famous athletic celebrities. There is also little diversity in the coverage of women in sport. In both print and electronic media, coverage is limited to women in sport who have attained a very high level of achievement...” (Mwambwa). “[T]his unbalanced coverage reinforces the stereotype that sport is for men only and if women engage in sport it should be for fun only, not as a profession. ... [B]y not covering women in sport, it appears as though women are not engaging in sport. They become inaccessible, rather than acting as role models and sources of inspiration for other women and girls” (Mwambwa).

Pardon the ‘soapbox’ moment, but I included Mwambwa’s remarks to illustrate a point. While the rhetoric may be charged and passionate, it does reflect a mindset that exists. Women’s sports are using the alternative means of broadcasting, promotion and marketing – new, interactive and social media technologies and tools – as a means of overcoming the imbalance, perceived or otherwise. Through new media technologies, female athletes are connecting with and engaging their fan bases, providing a unique and positive experience for them. They are offering something fans may not get from more popular, mass audience sports – a personal experience, a deep connection to the player and team, to the sport as a whole. Reaching fans on that level tends to turn the casual fan into a loyal fanatic.

Time Out

As mentioned before, not everyone is totally convinced interactive and social media are cure to what ails women’s sports. According to Nicole M. LaVoi (5/5/2009), “... [I]t [social media] is good if it changes coverage patterns of female athletes, but I would add it is bad if it expected that female athletes have to be partially or largely responsible for promoting themselves as well-rounded “girls next door” through social media as a way to “save” their leagues or bolster their own “brand” ... why isn’t it just enough for Candace Parker to play basketball to the best of her abilities? The NBA doesn’t ask Kobe Bryant to be more than a great basketball player do they?”

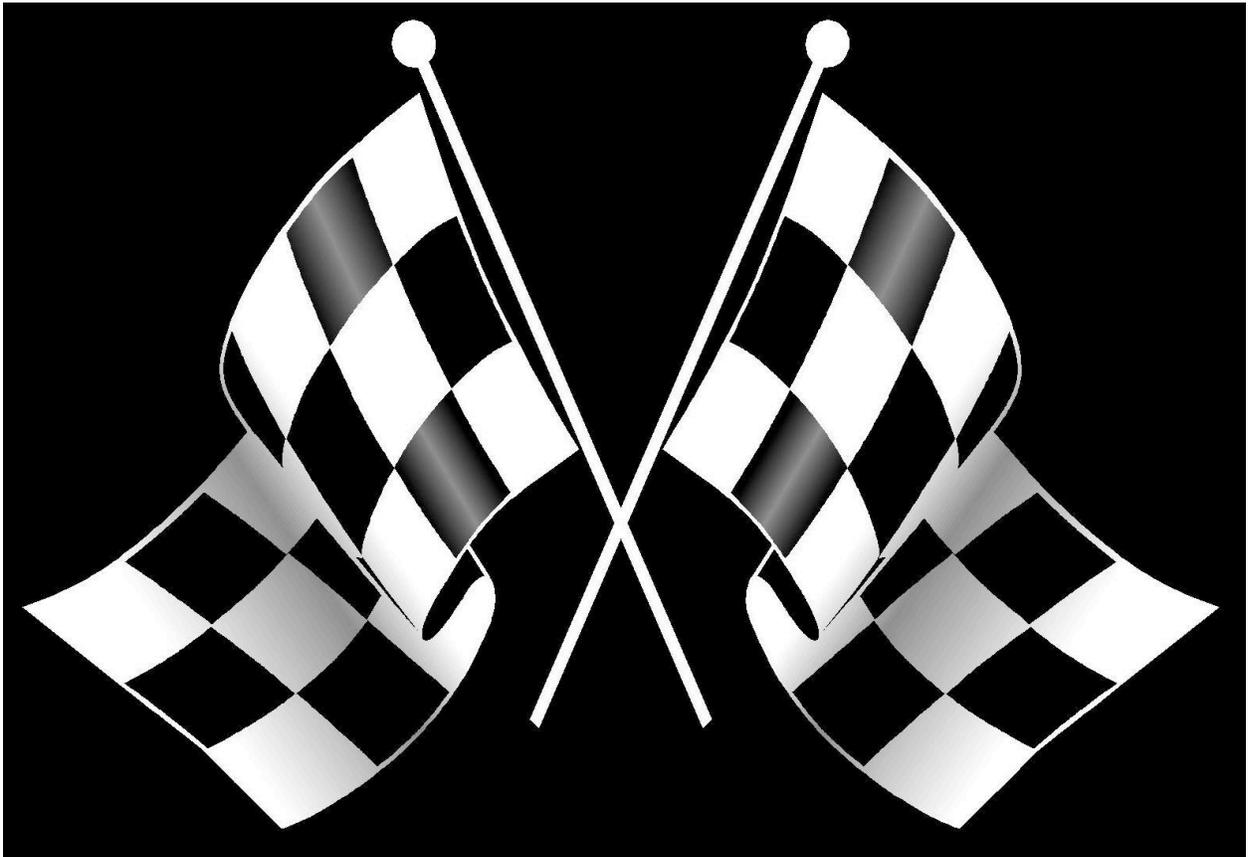
LaVoi (5/5/2009) also asks the question “how are female athletes and professional leagues presenting themselves on [platforms like] Twitter?” She points to the 2009 WNBA draft and the tweets posted by the league, draftees and others in attendance. Her point of contention is the topic was appearance and how everyone looked, not playing ability.

If you'll pardon the 'commentary' moment there, I include LaVoi's criticism to illustrate a point. It is vital to understand how interactive and social media work. Awareness of the potential repercussions of every tweet, Facebook posting, blog entry, Flickr photo, and so on, is essential to successfully leveraging interactive media for your franchise. The thing is, for every jersey-wearing fan, odds are there is someone like LaVoi; for everyone that appreciates and gets value from the extra effort to share over interactive media and social media channels, there are people who study those channels, looking at what is communicated with a critical eye.

Two Minute Warning/

Bell Lap/

Checkered Flag



What's the reason?

With the amount of time and effort interactive media takes in order to leverage it effectively, there has to be a payoff.

To put it simply – engagement.

In order to catch the attention of potential fans and bring them into your established fan base, you have to engage them on their field, on their terms. As we have seen, using interactive media is far from being a simple issue. Every tool, every piece of technology carries with it positive potential and negative consequences. Being aware of what the technologies can and cannot do and what the effects are when they are used is vital to constructing a winning playbook. With the right strategy, you can effectively leverage the interactive media tools and technologies to position your sports organization for incredible marketing and growth potential.

“Almost every team ... is interested in social media. Some are already investing heavily in it, some are dabbling, but many remain inactive. The inactive teams, like the inactive brands, give two main reasons why they are hesitating: Either they're afraid that fans/consumers will say bad things about them, or they're not convinced social media will pay off economically. [T]he longer these teams and brands wait, the harder it will be for them to catch up with the leaders. ... the teams that are already cultivating their online fan communities are building a strategic advantage over those that are waiting on the social media sidelines. And this advantage should begin to pay off within the next 12 to 24 months as fan behavior evolves, and sponsors are forced to get in the game” (Coyle 1/4/2010).

The broader adoption of new interactive media technologies will impact future players, coaches, owners. “[F]or athletes who are digital natives, social media will be old but dealing with reporters will be new. The former will shape the latter, where today it's the other way

around. Now throw in the fact that sports' biggest stars have always made their own rules. And remember that in time, our new waves of athletes will be joined by agents, league officials and others who are themselves digital natives. I also think those athletes will engage with fans far more than today's athletes do. Today's Bengals fan on Twitter can hope Ochocinco might say something to him ... it might be expected in the future" (Fry).

So here is your charge – “Sports teams, your next step is to actively engage fans online. ... use your Facebook status to post questions and start conversations. Seek feedback and ideas from fans. Don't just tweet about upcoming games and scoreboard updates. Reply to tweets and get to know your fans better. Retweet fans' comments to your followers ... offer them rich media” (William).

That's why you came to us. *The iMedia Playbook* can help.

What time is it? Game time!

Appendix



Appendix A – Links to examples of interactive media use around the Internet

Twitter:

[NBA](#) & [Shaquille O'Neal](#)

[Chad Ochocinco](#)

[Juan Pablo Montoya](#)

Blogs:

[LFL](#) – **LFL Unlaced** on league page, some players make use of a third-party site,
[playerpress.com](#)

[United Football League](#) – **UFL Buzz** with blog posts from several contributors, but hidden under the [News](#) navigation tab

Facebook:

[NBA](#)

[Tornados Skin It to Win It](#) (Contest)

[Miss Sprint Cup](#) (Sponsor leveraging via personalities)

Video:

[NBA.com](#) – dedicated, comprehensive video page; [YouTube](#) channel (no obvious link to YouTube channel from league page, but link to league page from YouTube channel)

[Lingerie Football League](#) – consistent placement, clean and intuitive interface

[NHL.com](#) & [Women's Professional Soccer](#) – dedicated video section

Use that could be better:

[National Pro Fastpitch](#) – small screen on home page, inconsistent format from team to team

Online Communities:

MyColts.net – online community for the Indianapolis Colts of the NFL

NASCAR.com – community section for fans to join, fans of all things NASCAR

Women's Professional Soccer – dedicated *Fan Corner*, integrating multiple interactive media platforms

Appendix B –

Lists of tips and tricks regarding social media, interactive media, marketing

10 neglected interactive marketing best practices, courtesy imediaconnection.com, 2/24/10

1. *Take risks* – we should take more risks, like we used to when it all began
2. *Invest a portion of the marketing budget into marketing R&D* – if you want to capitalize on the new opportunities that social media and mobile provide, you need to invest some time in exploration
3. *Think about people* – we spend all day thinking about what people can do online, and far too little time thinking about how the experience makes them *feel*
4. *Take lessons from best practices in more-established communication disciplines* – traditional advertising has always pursued the big idea ... big ideas are memorable long after an endless stream of web pages is forgotten
5. *Get on the same page* – establishment of standards, a foundation
6. *Equip yourself with a range of tactical responses to what the interactive future might hold*
7. *Engage with your customers at all stages of the relationship – before, during and after the sale* – if we listen, they will speak
8. *Have a clear understanding of what can be achieved with the resources available* – often, marketers do not have a clear understanding of what can be achieved ... Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither was a cross-browser perfected website that integrates with XYZ in 10 languages
9. *Know your real goals* – all about the numbers; set out with what they want to do, not what they want to achieve ... mistake; make the business case, show the ROI criteria, evaluate & improve
10. *Pay attention to the digital contribution to your brand's heritage* – heritage is a part of the brand's story that we can tap into and take home with us

5 tips for successful sports marketing social media campaigns, courtesy sportsbusinessdigest.com, 1/29/10

1. Know your target base
 - a. Twitter – trending topics
 - b. Facebook, LinkedIn groups – particular topic
2. Know your options
 - a. Do your research ... sometimes the biggest or most obvious option isn't the best fit for your campaign ... don't be afraid to use some of the smaller sites or blogs for your campaign if those are the options that fit your niche
3. Network. Network. Network
 - a. Going to ask person X to blog to promote your thing ... do your best to get to know that person beforehand
 - i. Comment on their blog, RT their tweets, email them, etc.
4. Utilize the athlete/know your contracts
 - a. The athlete's fan base is the best form of target marketing because you assume that anyone following the athlete is a fan ... at least will be interested in your product, buy that athletes product
5. Be versatile
 - a. You've done 1-4, stuff still isn't working
 - i. Continuously monitor your social media campaign
 - b. Social media and media generally, is constantly changing, since you are using social media for your campaign, only makes sense to frequently check you work
 - i. Always have a back up plan
 1. Contest giveaway
 2. Bundle product with something else

Six Things Sports Teams Can Do with Social Media to Engage Fans, courtesy fastcompany.com, 10/1/09

1. *Show tweets on the score board* – make use of hashtags (#) and encourage fans to tweet to see their message displayed, likely will require moderation in some form
2. *Leverage Flickr and Creative Commons to help local sports bloggers* – access to practice, game, profile photos through a sharing service with appropriate licensing; creates good will with local bloggers, helps them have more polished blogs; link system back to team page, drives up search engine/online visibility
3. *Get athletes to tweet more, not less*
4. *Run biggest fan contests on YouTube*
5. *Find, follow & engage local tweeps*
6. *Build robust, team-specific communities* – place where fans, athletes, coaches and even the front office could connect; to improve discourse, ban anonymity

Bonus options – Facebook fan pages, sports-centric LinkedIn groups, podcasts

Point of caution – be wary of sharing too much; policies need to be drawn up about how, when and where to share

Three keys to successful social media marketing, courtesy patcoyle.net, 3/9/10

1. *Uniqueness* – teams need to provide content that is only available for those engaged with their social media outlets
2. *Authenticity* – users want real, original content; relaying info from others sources is a less effective use of social media
3. *Personalization* – provide fans with personalized content – whether it be personal offers to Twitter followers, location-based offers (e.g. special in-venue offers for those fans with the team iPhone application)

Five Social Media Tips for Professional Athletes, courtesy prinsportsblog.com, 1/10/10

1. *Behind the scenes* – The most popular features are ones that give behind-the-scenes access
2. *Fan engagement* – Can get away with not following back or directly engaging, but then what's the point of just sending out messages? Take moments of time to @reply, follow back and directly respond to fans – it will pay dividends professionally and personally
3. *Where's the beef?* – It doesn't matter where it is, don't air your beefs/complaints in your social media
4. *Develop a comprehensive plan* – An athlete's social media plan should consist of more than a Twitter feed and a Facebook page. Use the main website to host most content (news, events, community outreach). Provide links to the main site in all social media activity. Links to follow, friend and subscribe should be throughout the main site as well
5. *Get trained* – Most professional leagues require traditional media training at the beginning of each season. If social media training isn't a part of that, athletes should ask team PR, their agent or hire a consultant – training is a must

Coaches Quick-Start Guide to Social Media, courtesy riotsportsmarketing.com, 3/8/10

1. *Start a Facebook fan page (not group)*: Thousands of your fans are already on FB & getting their news there (and yes, you have thousands of fans). Pages have tons of functionality that you really don't need to worry about until you get over 100 fans.
2. *Get a Twitter account*: Some recommend do it just so no one else can register your name and use it erroneously. There is a conversation going on in the Twitterverse about your sport, your program, your community. You should have a voice there too.
3. *Start a blog*: Blogs not just for political junkies, techie geeks and business people – they are there for you and your fans too. Blogs are a simple means of posting news quickly in a chronological order.

1. *Transition to social from traditional* – companies will invest in growing their communities, engaging their fans, and providing unique experiences
2. *The rise of online video* – we will be able to connect more intimately than ever before, but will the space become over saturated by novices blasting their messages?
3. *Hyper-localization* – teams will begin experimenting with disruption models intended to inform local markets, ‘direct traffic,’ and provide on location calls-to-action; example: can game day tweet-ups and last minute discounted ticket sales entice people eating in Uptown Charlotte, or maybe working late, to walk a few blocks for the Bobcats game?
4. *Personal athlete branding* – increase relevancy and offer up an additional platform or value-add for sponsors might
5. *Increased restrictions/less free-flow of information* – we’ll continue to see increased restrictions and more rules and procedures coming from the executive brass
6. *Real-time interactions (increased fan interactivity)* – fans want to connect with athletes, they want to connect with each other and they want to do it all the second they think of it
7. *More best practices* – with increased adoption across the board and more teams and brands trying different things, some of them are bound to be successful
8. *Specific goals & refined methods* – with more best practices and proof of concept, teams, athletes ... will all start trying to “swim with a purpose”
9. *Increased attempts to monetize* – showing positive cash flow as a result of your social media efforts gets the big boys to buy in and open their wallets to try new ways to continue engaging fans; where there’s fans, there’s usually sponsorable content
10. *Fine tuned measurement* – no longer is throwing stuff against the wall and seeing what will stick an appropriate strategy; with clearly defined goals, it’s critical to have measureable objectives (won’t necessarily equate to dollars)

Seven Social Media Tips for Sponsorship Sales, courtesy sportsnetworker.com, 12/3/09

1. *Don't assume your audience is the same* – consider the variance between your audience on-site, your broadcast audience and your audience online
2. *Encourage sponsors to tailor activation to the medium*
3. *Manage sponsor expectations*
4. *Leverage networks for sponsors leads*
5. *Expand your marketing platform* – You may not have an event or broadcast this month, but social media provides the perfect medium to keep in touch with (allow your sponsors to tap into) your fan base during seasonal lulls.
6. *Call to action* – every sponsor loves a good call to action opportunity that translates to sales; social media by its nature allows for sponsors to learn, be flexible, tailor and adapt their activations to shifting business conditions
7. *Measurement* – Make sure your sponsors know how to properly measure (and credit you for) the social media tactics that they're incorporating into their sponsorship platform.

Twitter Etiquette, courtesy digitaldialogues.blogs.com, 2/21/10

DO

1. Apply common sense
2. Draw on talented commentators in your organization
3. Create guidelines for use of social media

DON'T

1. Censor
2. Prohibit
3. Allow your employees to confuse official and private communications

Secrets to Planning Your Social Media Contest, courtesy Leonard Scales, 3/5/10

1. *Identify business objectives*: any program needs clear objectives for what's to be achieved; defining objectives needs to be specific
2. *Have a solid contest activation idea*: unique, compelling contest theme relevant to brand; excite users about interacting; well-conceived contest will have administrative tools for monitoring content; provide easily shared widgets, Facebook application, or at least advertise on social media
3. *Target your users where they are*: use opt-in email lists you have and other user contact resources; most program awareness building will be done online, important to reach users where they travel online, unobtrusively
4. *Reward all stakeholders*: reward all participants in the contest, not just winners and runners-up; give everyone a reason to interact with the contest, not just contestants; rewarding all participants increases general activity, engagement & viralness of program; announce winner on the contest site, really feature the winner, discuss the brand and why winner was chosen
 - a. most contests run 30-90 days, with 60 being about ideal; video contests, length is usually less than one minute (can be as high as 3 minutes)
5. *Measure, analyze & share results*: contest can serve as an excellent market research tool
6. *Use proven applications for contest technology*: ideally with ability for people to vote
7. *Contest checklist*: be sure to consider contest features, social media marketing aspects of your contest, viral distribution for contest uplift, administrative tools, analytics

Five Elements of a Successful Facebook Page, courtesy mashable.com

1. *Networking with other platforms*: Key takeaway – connecting multiple social platforms and a hub from the brand website, can help funnel consumers throughout the network
2. *Creating a resource*: Key takeaway – offering a resource page that allows a brand to target a new demographic, outside of those that already know and love the business
3. *Creating contests that include participation*: Key takeaway – offering something to consumers to join can help build a large community. Examples of things to offer: coupons, free shipping, weekly deals.
4. *Empowering pre-existing pages*: Key takeaway – taking over unsanctioned Facebook fan pages isn't always the best idea. Instead, rewarding dedication can inspire others to do the same
 - a. example: Coca-Cola – Facebook fan page for Coke created by two users; instead of taking over the page, Coke rewarded the fans by bringing them to Atlanta, giving them a tour; the fan page remains theirs, now they have the blessing and help of Coca-Cola
5. *Targeting the proper demographic*: Key takeaway – some brands cannot expect huge followings on Facebook. Brands or product lines targeting the demographic most prominent on Facebook tend to see the quickest growth.
 - a. Quantcast estimates – Facebook skews towards female youths, 53% of users have kids and make over \$60K/yr, over 50% are college kids; demographics that make up Facebook changing quickly (more moms join, college market becomes saturated)
 - b. examples: Seventeen Magazine – their demo is the most prominent on Facebook (female youths); Victoria's Secret – focus on the PINK line (aimed at college students)

Six Ways Social Media is Changing the Business and Culture of Pro Sports, courtesy
theyoungandthedigital.com, 12/4/09

1. *Personal branding* – athletes use social media as a self-promotional tool, a way to package themselves for fans; many use to announce public appearances – a direct appeal to fans that is social, casual and personal
2. Lifestreaming – who needs VH1, MTV or FOX when you can create and stream your own life through the explosion of social media channels?
3. *Intimacy with fans* – a number of athletes are using social media as a way to connect with fans on a more personal level; “social media ... takes the mantra made famous in the sports biz by legendary television producer Roone Arledge, “up close and personal,” to new heights”
4. *Civic engagement* – use social media to promote various social causes and philanthropic efforts they join; social in this arena is a civic tool
5. *Empowerment* – athletes using social media to express displeasure, alternative views, personal views
6. *Me-journalism* – social media gives athletes a tool to tell their own stories and directly challenge what they perceive as biased reporting

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Basich, T. (2010, February 26). Social Media Analysis: The 2010 Winter Olympics. *Mashable* , *The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from

<http://mashable.com/2010/02/26/social-media-olympics/>

Article examines the Facebook and Twitter presence of four big organizations involved with the Olympics -- the IOC, VANOC, USOC and NBC. Critiques each on their use of Facebook and Twitter, offers suggestions on what could have been done differently.

Bradford, R. (2009, March 6). Sports and Social Media , Game On!. *Vitruve: We make brands social*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://vitruve.com/blog/2009/03/06/sports-and-social-media-%E2%80%93-game-on/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. Since sports are inherently social, using social media is a natural fit, and is growing among fans and leagues.

Brooks, R. (2009, October 1). 6 Things Sports Teams Can Do with Social Media to Engage Fans. *FastCompany.com - Where ideas and people meet | Fast Company*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.fastcompany.com/blog/rich-brooks/social-media-strategies-small-business/6-things-sports-teams-can-do-social-media-en>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. As its title suggests, covers 6 ways teams can use social media tools to engage fans.

Brown, F. (2010, February 24). 10 neglected interactive marketing best practices. *iMedia Connection: Interactive Marketing News, Features, Podcasts and Video* . Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.imediaconnection.com/content/26005.asp>

Lists and briefly explains 10 things to keep in mind for proper interactive marketing.

- Burrowes, B. (2009, March 4). Rugby Website On The Ball. *Marketing-interactive.com*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.marketing-interactive.com/news/11245>
Post touches briefly on Sevens Rugby and their efforts to be more interactive. New interactive media channel -- Ultimate Rugby Sevens, with live text commentary, diary, blogs, live video and Twitter. Talks about the "global community of fans."
- Calbreath, D. (2010, February 25). Evaluating the value of social media. *San Diego News, Local, California and National News - SignOnSanDiego.com*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/feb/25/evaluating-the-value-of-social-media/>
Discusses briefly ways firms are measuring impact of social media campaigns. References social media in general.
- Catone, J. (2010, March 29). How Startups are Using Social Media for Real Results. *Social Media News and Web Tips , Mashable , The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2010/03/29/startups-social-media-results/>
Addresses the use of social media from a business perspective. Discusses how smaller businesses can leverage social media in measurable ways. (Possible parallel to minor league teams or second-tier sports leagues)
- Chapman, C. (2006, August 7). MTG #12 Transcript. *New Media Podcast - Managing the Gray*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://www.managingthegray.com/2006/08/20/mtg-12-transcript/>
Transcript of a podcast dealing with sports marketing and new media. Discusses a couple of hypotheticals involving Second Life, podcasting.

Cheng, J. (2009, October 26). Tweeting from the field: Sports meet social media. *Ars Technica*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://arstechnica.com/web/news/2009/10/sports-leagues-largely-striking-out-with-social-media.ars>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Goes into how leagues and those in charge have sought to regulate when and where players, etc. can tweet and what they can tweet about.

Colaizzi, M. (2010, February 16). Professional sports are ahead of the game in social media. *Smartblogs.com Blogs*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://smartblogs.com/socialmedia/2010/02/16/professional-sports-are-ahead-of-the-game-in-social-media/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. Talks about the ability of the tools to connect fans with the team, how the NHL is proactive in embracing social media, pros and cons of athletes using social media.

Coyle, P. (2007, September 6). Why would a sports team want a social net?. *Sports Marketing 2.0 | Pat Coyle*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.patcoyle.net/2007/09/06/why-would-a-sports-team-want-a-social-net/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. Discusses the benefits of a team-centered social networking site/community.

Coyle, P. (2009, April 13). Social networking can help teams find way to fans' hearts. *Street & Smith's SportsBusiness Journal*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/article/62213>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Talks about how teams can use social networking to help fans connect to each other and build an online community supporting the team.

Coyle, P. (2010, January 4). Teams active in social media build a strategic advantage. *SportsBusiness Journal*. Retrieved March 14, 2010, from <http://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=article.main&articleID=64509>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Covers the need of leagues and teams to be in the mix, building their online presence and communities. Talks about the benefit to team sponsors, getting involved in social media.

Coyle, P. (2010, March 9). MIT Sports Analytics Conference on social media. *Sports Marketing 2.0 | Pat Coyle*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://www.patcoyle.net/2010/03/09/mit-analytics-sports-conference-on-social-media/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. Lists tips for successful social media marketing. Social level of sports brands also discussed in a separate post.

Evans, J. (2009, April 30). Other Sports | Sports go mad for online pastime Twitter. *Seattle Times Newspaper*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/sports/2009140879_twitter29.html

Discusses the rise of Twitter use among members of the sports world. Points to the "addictive real-time updates" that complement fan's interest in knowing more. Gives examples of leagues that use Twitter, possible roadblocks to adoption.

Facebook and Twitter Making a Major Impact on Purchase Decisions [STATS]. (2010, March 16). *Social Media News and Web Tips, Mashable, The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2010/03/16/facebook-twitter-purchase-decisions/>

References a study examining the buying habits of people who follow brands on Facebook and Twitter. Shows that those who are following are more inclined to buy what they are following. Includes a graph.

Fauber, J., & D'Amato, G. (2010, February 21). Social media could get athletes too fired up. *The Norman Transcript*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://normantranscript.com/sports/x568428110/Social-media-could-get-athletes-too-fired-up>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Talks about how the outside distractions of social media could impact athletes performance and concentration.

Finch, D. (2009, March 13). How to Introduce Social Media to Youth Sports Programs. *Social Media Explorer, Social Media Consulting, Public Speaking and Education*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://www.socialmediaexplorer.com/2009/03/13/how-to-introduce-social-media-to-youth-sports-programs/>

Looks at social media from the point-of-view of youth sports. Examines ways local youth sports can utilize social media for a more rewarding and interactive experience.

Flarup, T. J. (n.d.). NCAA Public Relations Manual: Promoting Women's Intercollegiate Sports. (pdf). *ERIC, Education Resources Information Center – World's largest digital library of education literature*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED202835>

"The successful women's sports publicist communicates the legitimacy of women's intercollegiate athletics to the media and to the public. Because the field of women's sports has not had the amount of media exposure compared to that of professional sports, collegiate men's revenue sports, and high school sports, the women's sports publicist must rely on the usual and the unusual methods of advancing and reporting women's sports events. The news release containing "hard" news items (as opposed to feature articles) is the main communicative tool for the publicist. However, the feature story with an interesting angle is the best assurance of highlighted program coverage. Coaches and athletes can support the women's sports program by participating in radio discussions, writing columns for local papers, and by being accessible to the media at

sports events. Although many women's sports programs lack the funds for advertising, increased spectator interest can create greater sports coverage, making public service announcements, radio giveaways, community calendars, and other low-cost publicity efforts necessary." [Taken from abstract]

Fry, J. (2010, February 8). Coming to a Locker Room Near You: Athletes and Social Media. *National Sports Journalism Center*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://sportsjournalism.org/sports-media-news/coming-to-a-locker-room-near-you-athletes-and-social-media/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. How there is a shift happening, and up and coming athletes will be more used to dealing with press on a social media level than the tradition media.

Gleason, B. (2010, January 10). 5 Social Media Tips for Professional Athletes. *PR in Sports*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://prinsportsblog.com/2010/01/10/5-social-media-tips-for-professional-athletes/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. As its title suggests, outline 5 things for athletes to follow for successful social media use.

Grant, J. (2010, February 26). 2012 Olympics: What it will mean to the BBC | Digital television. *Latest news, comment and reviews from the Guardian | guardian.co.uk* . Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/digital-television/2012-olympics>
Article touches on how interactive TV may affect the broadcasting of the 2012 Olympics Games by the BBC. With their 'red-button' interactive technology, BBC plans to broadcast every event live. Talks about TV over the Internet. Possible future for television.

Gregson, T. K. (2009, July 10). Jockipedia: Sports & Social Media Mix. *TechStartups.com*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.techstartups.com/2009/07/10/jockipedia-sports-social-media-mix/>

Touches briefly on how many of the most popular users on Twitter are athletes.

Harshaw, J. (2010, March 8). Coaches Quick-Start-Guide to Social Media. *Riot Sports Marketing*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://www.riotsportsmarketing.com/blog/post/show/id/61-Coaches-Quick-Start-Guide-to-Social-Media>

As the title suggests, offer up three key points coaches need to keep in mind/follow as they enter the social media arena.

Heine, C. (2010, March 25). Facebook Fan Pages Evolve Into CRM Channel for Big Brands. *ClickZ - News and expert advice for the digital marketer since 1997*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://www.clickz.com/3639873>

Looks at Facebook from a more business perspective. Touches on the growing trend of companies using Facebook fan pages as pieces (or the center) of their customer relationship management (CRM). Cites a few examples.

Henderson, M. (2010, March 10). Take social media 101 seriously!. *marketingmag.com.au*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from www.marketingmag.com.au/blogs/view/take-social-media-101-seriously-1989

Gives a very high-level, broad overview of social media and why it is important, why it should be taken seriously.

Horne, L. (2010, February 25). NASCAR drivers relate to fans via Twitter - NASCAR News. *FOX Sports on MSN*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://msn.foxsports.com/nascar/story/NASCAR-drivers-relate-to-fans-via-Twitter>
Article discusses use of Twitter by NASCAR drivers increasing. Cites examples of increased interaction and behind-the-scenes access. Tries to weigh pros/cons, uses Dale Earnhardt Jr. (and his not being on social media) as an example, with Earnhardt Jr. citing the enormous time commitment.

How to use Twitter responsibly (or NOT). (2010, February 21). *Digital Dialogues*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from http://digitaldialogues.blogs.com/learning_technologies/2010/02/how-to-use-twitter-responsibly-or-not.html
Discusses the use of social media. Particular addresses uses of Twitter. Points out some pitfalls and some best practices. Ends with a do/don't listing.

Howes, L. (2009, September 13). Does Sports Need Social Media? . *Sports Network | Sports Marketing | Sports and Social Media*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2009/09/13/does-sports-need-social-media/>
Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Touts the (obvious) benefits of sports teams and athletes being on social media.

Hueter, M. (2009, March 31). Women's pro sports: Facebook awaits you. ...*Because I Played Sports*. Retrieved March 14, 2010, from <http://becauseiplayedsports.com/2009/03/31/womens-pro-sports-facebook-awaits-you/>
Post discusses uses of social media by women's sports. Focuses on Facebook and what to do to have a successful Facebook page. Includes five points with key takeaways.

Hueter, M. (2009, May 5). Twitter: A huge hit in sports, especially for women. ...*Because I Played Sports*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://becauseiplaysports.com/2009/05/05/twitter-a-huge-hit-in-sports-especially-for-women/>

Post discusses uses of social media by women's sports. Touts the possibilities and benefits of engaging fans online in the social media arena. Seen as a area to capitalize on fan interest and grow the sport.

Hueter, M. (2010, January 10). Women's professional soccer engages over 200,000 Twitter followers. ...*Because I Played Sports*. Retrieved May 14, 2010, from <http://becauseiplaysports.com/2010/01/10/womens-professional-soccer-engages-over-200000-twitter-followers/>

Post marks the fact that Women's Professional Soccer (WPS) has hit the 200,000 followers benchmark. Examines reasons behind WPS success using Twitter.

Jasra, M. (2006, August 7). Interactive Media: Good or Bad?. *Search Engine Guide: Search Engine Marketing and Social Media Marketing Advice*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.searchengineguide.com/manoj-jasra/interactive-med.php>

Briefly goes over interactive media and its relationship to search engines and search marketing. Concludes interactive media will be around for a while as new technologies and protocols are developed making interactive media content readable by search engines.

Jones, E. (2010, January 29). 5 tips for successful sports marketing social media campaigns. *Sports Business Digest*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://sportsbusinessdigest.com/5-tips-for-successful-sports-marketing-social-media-campaigns/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. As its title suggests, outline 5 things to keep in mind when developing a sports marketing social media campaign to make it successful.

Kumnick, B. (2009, September 4). Sports and Social Media Part 2: Why the New Policies Won't Work - Football - Tarnished Twenty. *FindLaw Blogs*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from http://blogs.findlaw.com/tarnished_twenty/2009/09/sports-and-social-media-part-2-why-the-new-policies-wont-work.html

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Goes into how the recent attempts of sports leagues to regulate use of social media are destined to be ineffective.

LaVoi, N. M. (2009, April 13). Got Milk? Dara (I mean Dairy) Torres does. *Nicole M LaVoi.com*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://nicolemlavoi.com/2009/04/13/got-milk-dara-i-mean-dairy-torres-does/>

Brief post discusses the "Got Milk?" ad featuring Olympic swimmer Dara Torres. Author takes issue with the use of double entendre and referring to Torres as 'Dairy' Torres, stating the depiction of her in the ad trivializes and sexualizes her as opposed to highlighting her achievements.

LaVoi, N. M. (2009, October 30). Things That Make You Go Hmmm: More on Social Media & Women's Sport. *Nicole M LaVoi.com -- One Sport Voice*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://nicolemlavoi.com/2009/10/30/things-that-make-you-go-hmmm-more-on-social-media-womens-sport/>

Post discusses uses of social media by female athletes. Uses example of a UStream broadcast of Janel McCarville, depicting her getting ready in her bathroom. Questions whether or not social media is being used properly by athletes. Debates 'good access' vs. 'things that make you go hmmm.'

LaVoi, N. M. (2009, May 5). The “success” of Twitter in promoting women’s sports: ‘Show me the money!’. *Nicole M LaVoi.com -- One Sport Voice*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://nicolemlavoi.com/2009/05/05/the-success-of-twitter-in-promoting-womens-sports-show-me-the-money/>

Post discusses uses of social media by women's sports. Focuses on leagues and players that are using Twitter. Questions how teams will be able to measure whether or not their use is successful. Questions if its use will change coverage patterns of women's sports or replicate existing marginalization, particularly how female athletes are presenting themselves on online channels.

LaVoi, N. M. (2009, May 13). Does Sex Sell Women’s Sport?. *Nicole M LaVoi.com*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://nicolemlavoi.com/2009/05/13/does-sex-sell-womens-sport/>
Brief post discusses the notion of using sex appeal to promote and sell women's sports. Links to research that appears to refute the claim that sex sells women's sports. Sex sells sex, not women's sports (Zirin).

LaVoi, N. M. (2009, June 26). The Sport Media’s Role in Promoting Femininity: An Example in Women’s Tennis. *Nicole M LaVoi.com*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://nicolemlavoi.com/2009/06/26/the-sport-medias-role-in-promoting-femininity-an-example-in-womens-tennis/>

Brief article uses a picture of a female tennis player gripping a ball with nail polish to launch into a series of pieces on how females are covered in sports media.

Leberecht, T. (2010, February 1). Social media and sports: Sony Ericsson's Twittercup | Matter/Anti-Matter. *Technology News - CNET News*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from http://news.cnet.com/8301-13641_3-10444816-44.html

Brief article discusses Sony Ericsson leveraging Twitter during the upcoming World Cup. The Twittercup collects and counts fan tweets about their national teams, setting up a competition between participating countries.

Lee, J. (2010, March 1). Benefits of Social Media in Sports. *National Sports and Entertainment Law Society*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://nationalsportsandentertainment.wordpress.com/2010/03/01/benefits-of-social-media-in-sports/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Cites a couple examples from the NBA on how social media has been leveraged successfully -- behind the scenes videos, stat trackers, contests, etc.

Lewis, L. (2010, March 5). Social media has a place in the sports world. *Columbia Daily Spectator*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://www.columbiaspectator.com/2010/03/05/social-media-has-place-sports-world>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Makes an argument for the use of social media by sports as a means to get creative in their marketing and promotions, opening new channels of connectivity.

Liss, S. (2010, February 1). Sports franchises should be leading the way in social media innovation. *The Sun Sentinel*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2010-02-01/sports/fl-slcol-seth-social-media-in-sports-20100131_1_social-media-facebook-fans

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Discusses the use of social media by some leagues, like the NBA and NFL. Also touches on non-main stream sports, like UFC, using social media to gain exposure.

Lunkenheimer, B. (2010, March 7). New Promotions App Drives Growth, Engagement on Facebook. *Frontstretch.com: The best seat at the track... the best view on the net!*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://www.frontstretch.com/ncpr/28802/>

Article discusses a Facebook App being implemented by Ruiz Foods and their Tornados brand snacks. A new sponsor in NASCAR, using a contest on Facebook to drive awareness and engage fans. Possible sign of future marketing campaigns incorporating online social media contests.

Marobella, Jr., P. R. (n.d.). Social Media In Sports: The Athlete. *SlideShare: Upload & Share PowerPoint presentations and documents*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.slideshare.net/marobella/social-media-in-sports-the-athlete-1151579>

"Social Media in the arena of sports is a natural. Given the passion and advocacy of the fans across all sports, social platforms and applications allows people to get closer than ever before their heroes. This paper presents ideas, best practices and thoughts on how athletes can leverage social media." [Taken from description]

Mathis, K. (2009, December 3). 7 Social Media Tips for Sponsorship Sales. *Sports Network | Sports Marketing | Sports and Social Media*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2009/12/03/social-media-and-sponsorships/>

As the title suggests, outlines seven points for salespeople to keep in mind for using social media to drive sponsorship sales.

McCahill, W. (2010, January 17). Reasons Every Sports Fan Should Be Into Social Media. *Newser | Headline News Summaries, World News, Breaking News, and Local News*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.newser.com/story/78399/social-media-sports-fans-best-friends.html>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Lists several benefits for fans when it comes to social media and sports.

McKee, C. (2009, April 15). The Impact of Social Media on Sports Marketing. *Direct Contact*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://directcontact.ca/2009/04/15/the-impact-of-social-media-on-sports-marketing/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. Touches on some work by Pat Coyle. Deals primarily with the how the social media tools and communities can be leveraged for sales.

Meyer, M. (2008, November 30). Sports and Social Media. *Direct Marketing Observations*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://directmarketingobservations.com/2008/11/30/sports-and-social-media/>
Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Cites a couple examples from around the web of sites that have launched to tap into the market of sports and social media.

Miller, G. (2010, March 5). Who Should be Ordering off the Social Media Menu?. *Vitruve: We make brands social*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://vitruve.com/blog/2009/03/05/who-should-be-ordering-off-the-social-media-menu/>
Briefly discusses how people are coming to expect companies to have a social media presence, even restaurants.

Monty, S. (2010, February 24). The Social Media Marketing Blog: When Crisis Attacks. *The Social Media Marketing Blog*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.scottmonty.com/2010/02/when-crisis-attacks.html>
Addresses at length the issue of crisis management and what role social media can play. Outlines key points and uses the example of the death of a trainer at SeaWorld.

Mwambwa, L. (2009, June 29). Media can promote women in sport. *Gender Links - Gender Links for Equality and Justice*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/article/media-can-promote-women-in-sport-2009-06-29>
Article addresses how the media can play a role in elevating women's sports. Highlights areas that can be improved upon, points to unbalanced coverage.

O'Keefe, C. (2010, February 23). The 'Twitter Olympics'? Not with taped delay.. *Past The Press Box*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from <http://www.pastthepressbox.com/2010/02/articles/twitter/the-twitter-olympics-not-with-taped-delay/>

Article touches on how Twitter can be used for sports. 2010 Olympics was being called 'Twitter Olympics' because of loose restrictions on social media. In actuality, not really. The use of tape-delayed coverage for the 2010 Olympics has hampered the ability to have a 'conversation' since people are seeing the action at different times.

O'Keefe, C. (2010, March 8). Oscars, live events, illustrate why sports broadcasts have most to gain from social media. *Past The Press Box: Colin O'Keefe of The American Sportswriter*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.pastthepressbox.com/2010/03/articles/television-broadcasts/oscars-live-events-illustrate-why-sports-broadcasts-have-most-to-gain-from-social-media/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Talks about how other live event broadcasts have made use of social media to generate 'water cooler' talk, and sports can and should follow suit.

Ostrow, A. (2010, March 18). Facebook Starts Sending Page Admins Weekly Stat Reports. *Social Media News and Web Tips* , *Mashable* , *The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2010/03/18/facebook-page-reports/>

Brief posting on the news that Facebook will be sending fan page administrators stat reports. Mentions how that could be beneficial in social media marketing campaigns.

Parr, B. (2009, April 22). Social Media Home Run: MLB and Citizen Sports Team Up. *Mashable* , *The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2009/04/22/mlb-citizen-sports/>

Article talks about the partnership between Major League Baseball and Citizen Sports (developer of social networking and iPhone apps). At the center of the partnership is advertising and commercial ties. Possible more leagues partnering with social media.

Read, A. (2010, February 25). Should teams look beyond Facebook & Twitter?. *Sports Network | Sports Marketing | Sports and Social Media*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2010/02/25/should-teams-look-beyond-facebook-twitter/>

Looks at alternatives to the larger platforms of Facebook and Twitter when it comes to social media. Touches on Flickr, Tumblr and Ustream.

Reed, F. (2010, January 11). Sports Marketing In The Age Of Social Media. *Breaking News, Business News, Technology News | WebProNews*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.webpronews.com/blogtalk/2010/01/11/sports-marketing-in-the-age-of-social-media>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Interview with Pat Coyle of Coyle Media regarding how teams can make use of social media to market themselves.

SMU Launches New Virtual All-Sports Guide. (2010, February 18). *SMUMUSTANGS.COM - The Official Site of SMU Athletics*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://smumustangs.cstv.com/genrel/021810aab.html>

Article talks about the new media guide published by Southern Methodist University Athletic Department. Incorporates embedded video clips -- interviews, tours of facilities, etc. Part of a larger integration with the official website and social media network.

Safran, S. (2010, February 9). Using social media to promote local sports. *Lost Remote -- A blog about local online and mobile media, hyperlocal, geolocation, local search, augmented reality*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.lostremote.com/2010/02/09/using-social-media-to-promote-local-sports/>

Post looks at the Washington Capitals of the NHL and their presence on Facebook and Twitter. Points to strategy of reaching out to younger audience, future ticket buyers.

Saleem, M. (2010, March 18). The Current State of Twitter [INFOGRAPHIC]. *Social Media News and Web Tips*, *Mashable*, *The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2010/03/18/twitter-infographic/>

Small description and clear infographic outlining the 'hidden truths' about Twitter and its users. Stats, chats and graphs.

Scales, L. (2010, March 5). A Social Media Marketing Approach That Works!. *Leonard Scales, Sales Reminder*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://leonardscales.wordpress.com/2010/03/05/a-social-media-marketing-approach-that-works/>

Applies tradition notions of marketing into a strategy for marketing via social media. Extensive list and examples accompany the tenets well.

Speyer, R. (2010, February 4). Major Player in the Field of Sports Marketing. *EzineArticles Submission - Submit Your Best Quality Original Articles For Massive Exposure*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://ezinearticles.com/?Major-Player-in-the-Field-of-Sports-Marketing&id=3700997>

Discusses what social media is, how sports is crossing over into the new media. Addresses how social and new media is changing the way business is done.

Sports Enthusiasts in Social Media (pdf). (2009, February 16). *Lotame I.D. Reports*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.lotame.com/resources/report/23/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Study with graphs and figures, discusses use of social media by sports fans, their actions, interests and participation levels.

Stelter, B. (2010, February 24). TV Ratings Rise, Maybe With Internet's Help. *The New York Times - Breaking News, World News & Multimedia*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/24/business/media/24cooler.html>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Goes into how sports needs to make use of the social media technologies to generate that 'water-cooler' chatter online.

Stephens, R. (2009, December 24). Top 10 Sports/Social Media Trends of 2010. *Sports Network | Sports Marketing | Sports and Social Media*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2009/12/24/top-10-sports-social-media-trends-of-2010/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. As the title suggests, lists ten things on the horizon for sports and social media.

Stephens, R. (2010, March 8). Sports Debate: What Athletes Should Be Using Social Media?. *Sportsnetworker.com*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2010/03/08/sports-debate-what-athletes-should-be-using-social-media/>

Examines the use of social media by athletes, attempting to answer if there is a particular type of athlete that could benefit more from using it than others. Contrasts marquee athlete's vs. up-and-comers.

Taggart, S. (2009, December 1). Social Media Report Card -- The MLB. *Sportsnetworker.com*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from <http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2009/12/01/social-media-report-card-the-mlb/>

Examines the use of social media by Major League Baseball. Looks at visibility, player involvement, fan interaction and overall use.

Taggart, S. (2010, March 25). Minor League Teams and Social Media. *Sports Network | Sports Marketing | Sports and Social Media*. Retrieved March 29, 2010, from

<http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2010/03/25/minor-league-teams-and-social-media/>

As the title suggests, addresses the use of social media by minor league teams in the marketing and promotions campaigns. Uses minor league baseball and the NBA D-League as examples.

Tiongson, R. (2010, February 18). NASCAR Young Gun: Tradin' Paint with Tiff Daniels, Racer, and EGR Team Engineer. *Bleacher Report | Entertaining sports news, photos and slideshows*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://bleacherreport.com/articles/348215-tradin-paint-with-tiff-daniels-nascar-racer-and-egr-team-engineer>

Post gives an example of how social media can be used. Discusses Tiff Daniels, member of the Earnhardt-Ganassi Racing team, how she is connected with fans on Facebook and Twitter. Points to possibly this being a new direction for sports fan interaction.

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Twitterball: Tiger Woods, Lance Armstrong, Ochocinco and the Future of Sports. (2009,

December 4). *The Young and The Digital*. Retrieved March 15, 2010, from

<http://www.theyoungandthedigital.com/sports-and-social-media/twitterball-tiger-woods-ochocinco-lance-armstrong-and-the-future-of-sports/>

Addresses directly the intersection of sports and social media. Examines the changing nature of sports and media, with social media gaining ground, altering how athletes interact with the legacy media and the fans. Lists 6 ways social media is changing the business and culture of professional sports.

Grove, J. V. (2009, September 5). Sports and Social Media: Where Opportunity and Fear Collide. *Social Media News and Web Tips, Mashable, The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2009/09/05/sports-and-social-media/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Touches on the positives and the potential negatives of using the technology.

Grove, J. V. (2010, March 17). Our Social Media Obsession by the Numbers [STATS]. *Social Media News and Web Tips, Mashable, The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2010/03/17/social-media-usage-stats/>

Multiple graphs present the various behaviors of people when it comes to social media -- from people checking it regularly to others who view electronic messages as interruptions.

Grove, J. V. (2010, March 18). What Social Media Users Want [STATS]. *Social Media News and Web Tips, Mashable, The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2010/03/18/social-media-sites-data/>

Four pie charts and a brief description go over the results of an examination by Chitika (an online advertising network) of what users want.

Grove, J. V. (2010, March 19). Social Networking Usage Surges Globally [STATS]. *Social Media News and Web Tips, Mashable, The Social Media Guide*. Retrieved March 25, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2010/03/19/global-social-media-usage/>

Chart and brief description show how usages of social networking has increased across the globe.

William, W. (2009, September 6). Social media is enhancing sports games with real time fan participation. *Daily Cavalier*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://dailycavalier.com/2009/09/social-media-is-enhancing-sports-games-with-real-time-fan-participation/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Explains how UVA made use of Twitter hashtags and encouraged fans to tweet and take pictures to be displayed on the Jumbotron.

Winning Fans With Social Media. (2009, February 23). *The Business of Sports - Sports Business News, Opinions and Discussion*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.thebusinessofsports.com/2009/02/23/winning-fans-with-social-media/>

"The guide reviews almost all of the common terms and concepts in social media, which can be a great help in exploring the different option available to you. The guide has two sections, one on the basics for true novices and an intermediate section for those further along. In addition, the guide provides 'sideline tips' to go along with all of the terms and definitions. Even if you think you know social media, you will find some useful tidbits by reading this paper." [Taken from description]

Wurst, M. (2010, February 5). From Sideline to Byline: Unleashing Social Media on the Sports World. *Social Media Week*. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://socialmediaweek.org/newyork/2010/02/05/social-media-sports/>

Addresses specifically the intersection of sports and social media. Touches on the NHL being proactive in adopting social media. Addresses the issue of control, giving some of that up to the fans through social media.