CELEBRATING SPORTS

How sports teams and fans are winning with analytics

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No matter where in the world you live, sports sustains us in times of change. Why? Because sports are a representation of societal values. Sports have the power to bring us together. And it's logical that sports and teams have dedicated fan bases. Sports fans have always been … well, fanatical. And athletes have always been ambitious, rising ever higher to achieve what we thought impossible to the delight of fans. Now with analytics, teams have more ways to capture fan voices and measure athlete competitiveness. Find out more about the teams that are leading the effort to incorporate analytics insights into this highly competitive world.

A MODERN PERSPECTIVE ON A CLASSIC GAME

SAS® is a slam dunk for Orlando Magic

The Orlando Magic couldn't be where they are today without data analytics. Having a low number of wins in their early years, it was evident that something needed to change – it just wasn't clear what. While there are many ways to go about trying to find the solution, the organization found data and analytics to be the most effective.

Watching a basketball game through a statistical lens certainly gives the viewer a unique experience. David Bencs, Director of Basketball Analytics, had this realization when he was just a kid. He notes that his job didn't even exist 10 years ago and that now, every NBA team has an analytics staff. The Orlando Magic are analytics trailblazers, reaping the benefits both on and off the court. For example, the team uses an integrated marketing solution from SAS to help attract and reward its loyal fans. The software establishes a new digital marketing hub to unite large amounts of data from online and offline channels, helping the team deliver a consistent, relevant customer experience for millions of fans worldwide.

Analytics offers the perfect assist

Professional sports teams in smaller markets often struggle to build a big enough revenue base to compete against their larger-market rivals. By using SAS Analytics, the Orlando Magic are among the top revenue earners in the NBA, despite being in the 20th-largest market. The Magic accomplish this feat by studying the resale ticket market to price tickets better, to predict season ticket holders at risk of defection (and lure them back) and to analyze concession and product merchandise sales to make sure the organization has what the fans want every time they enter the arena. The club has even used SAS to help coaches put together the best lineup.

"Solving problems is very satisfying to our team. You know, we're trying to predict the future. We're trying to make recommendations that make the team better. Every time we succeed, it's a great feeling."

David Bencs, *Director of Basketball Analytics, Orlando Magic*

USING DATA TO SUPPORT THE STADIUMS

How AEG uses SAS® to improve fan experience

At a live sporting event, it's essential that the customer not only enjoys the game, but also the experience. The sense of community among fans, friends and family – and let's not forget the food – is key to a memorable outing. SAS AI and analytics allows companies such as the LA Kings, the LA Galaxy and the Ontario Reign to digest fan data, model it and continuously improve the fan experience to create lasting memories.

SAS allows organizations to analyze their data quickly to make them more efficient in their processes. Something that might take weeks or months manually takes hours or minutes with SAS. Another advantage is that you can track which marketing effort brought in more customers. This allows vendors time to prepare enough staff and resources and forecast their revenue. Using AI, vendors are also able to establish more optimal ticket prices because AI can crunch large data sets, take in the constant change of information and factors, and pinpoint the best price. This helps ensure that customers get the best price while also allowing the company to grow revenue.

"We're creating data visualizations from combined data sources, and we're building out statistical models – all of which help us solve business problems, like predicting the likelihood of somebody attending a game. This enables us to better control our staffing levels at a particular venue and better forecast revenues."

Aaron LeValley, *Senior Vice President of Business Operations and Strategy, AEG Sports*

New customer expectations

When COVID-19 is behind us, fan expectations will certainly have shifted. It is important for AEG to know who is willing to come back and make sure whoever does feels safe. SAS allows survey data to be condensed so this process is seamless. Using SAS forecasting capabilities also reduces the stress of having to quickly adapt when the fans return – allowing everyone to focus on the excitement of live events and cheering fans.

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ONE STROKE AHEAD

The British Rowing team uses SAS® Analytics to stay a top competitor

Every athlete knows that to play your best, you must constantly monitor and improve performance. The British Rowing team uses SAS Analytics to do exactly that. SAS allows the team to track times and physical capacities for holistic and individual evaluations, ensuring success on both levels.

When it comes to competition, the British Rowing team is tough to beat. Its determination to win, combined with analytics, makes it a difficult target for other countries. Using SAS Analytics allows team members to see where they need to improve to beat their competitors – and stay on the team.

SAS tracks every part of the training process, even gym workouts. This gives the team a well-rounded view of habits and goals so that if something goes wrong, it can go back and pinpoint changes that may have caused a decline in performance. This could include anything from the mechanics of boat movement to the power output of each member.

It's a complex analysis that helps the team see how it stacks up to competition, helps individual team members hold themselves accountable and tracks improvement compared to past medal winners. The 360-degree view allows the team to always stay one stroke ahead of its competitors.

"It [data analytics] informs our support staff so they can keep a really close log and can understand the journey that we've been on so that they can give us better advice and we can train better."

Jessica Leyden, *GB Rowing team athlete*

CONNECTING WITH FANS

KNVB and RBFA use SAS® Customer Intelligence 360 to create personalized experiences

Two of the largest sports organizations in the world, KNVB and RBFA, use SAS Customer Intelligence 360 to create individualized experiences for their fans, provide clear information about their organizations and boost their ability to reach the right audience with the right message at the right time.

As one of the largest sports organizations in the region, the Royal Dutch Football Confederation – KNVB – has quite the reputation. It includes over 3,000 different soccer clubs and has 1.2 million registered members. Close behind is the Royal Belgian Football Association (RBFA) with an impressive 500,000 members.

As you can imagine, both organizations have a large amount of data to process. While data of this size might overwhelm some organizations, KNVB and RBFA both use SAS Customer Intelligence 360, which makes data segmentation and analytics easy, and helps these organizations achieve more personalized marketing by allowing for changes in tone and channel depending on who the user is. This increased personalization improved KNVB's click ratios by 35%, and RBFA has been able to create a unique, engaging fan experience, making SAS a win for both teams.

"Our fans and members deserve the best experience when we communicate with them. SAS is the perfect partner for us to take the engagement and interaction with our fans to the next level."

Michael Schockaert, *Marketing Manager, RBFA*

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"When it comes to analytics, you won't find anything with a better performance in the market than SAS. The opportunity we had to establish a real partnership with SAS enabled us to make big strides forward, fast."

Marion Massop, *Marketing Intelligence Manager, KNVB*

CANADA'S COMEBACK

SAS® allows Canada's team to excel using analytics

SAS Analytics has supported Canada's Olympic athletes tremendously, keeping them competitive and healthy throughout COVID-19, and helping them in prior years as well. Glenroy Gilbert, head coach for Athletics Canada, talks about the tremendous ways analytics aided them in the Olympics. These examples show how data can be used in unexpected ways.

Learn more about how SAS helps Team Canada gather sports data and draw insights from David Shoemaker, Chief Executive Officer & Secretary General at the Canadian Olympic Committee.

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DATA DRIVES DIVERSITY
The Special Olympics used SAS® to ensure athlete safety

The Special Olympics has been (and continues to be) a melting pot for inclusion and diversity. To prevail as a dedicated place for athletes with health conditions all around the world, it is vital that the Special Olympics' No. 1 priority is the health and safety of the athletes. Using SAS technology, the Special Olympics ensured that all the athletes and audience had the best possible care — and were able to celebrate incredible feats by spectacular people.

The Special Olympics used SAS artificial intelligence solutions to streamline health data to predict when health issues might occur. This allowed for personnel and equipment to be placed in strategic positions in case of emergency. AI was also used to data stream ticketing, travel, accommodation and guest management systems. This ensured an entertaining and uncomplicated user experience for everyone in attendance. SAS Analytics played a large part as it helped coordinate the activities of thousands of athletes, coaches and volunteers. The result? More than 90% of athletes reported that they had more self-confidence in their abilities since competing in the Special Olympics. As an organization that values inclusion, the Special Olympics saw that as the ultimate win.
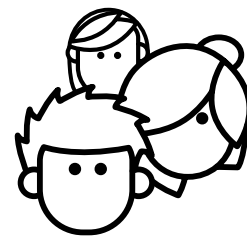
Who showed up?

7,500
Athletes

190
Countries Represented

500,000
Spectators

It's a big job handling so many people, especially when many have diverse cultures and languages. SAS was able to provide analytics that coordinated flight status and arrival times, weather conditions and customer experience to create a successful and smoothly operated event.

"Using the latest data-gathering methods to monitor our athletes and other constituents enables us not only to deliver excellence at the World Games, but it creates a legacy of valuable data that will help us redefine the future of the Special Olympics movement."

Peter Wheeler, *CEO, Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019*

SAS® Analytics can help you discover new ways to tap into and use a variety of data sources: in-game data, coach and referee reports, panoramic feeds, biometric data, new player performance tracking, ticket sales, fan comments on social media – and more.

The result? You'll perform predictive analysis of players and rankings, analyze play-by-play effectiveness, and attract more fans to your gates.

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> Learn more about SAS for sports analytics

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