



What is Working RIGHT NOW in Sports Marketing

Work In
SPORTS
Powered by iHire



Sports Betting as a Marketing Channel

“Marketing essentially comes down to two parts, how do you engage a current fan and attract a new fan? Sports betting is at the intersection of both these concepts. Our current fan base engages with these new opportunities, and new fans are intrigued to learn more and take part. The bottom line is that sports betting leads to engagement, which leads to increased viewership and ratings, which becomes a high tide that lifts all boats. This is a huge commercial opportunity for all stakeholders.”

Scott Warfield, PGA Tour VP of Gaming



The Growth of Athlete Marketing

“Player marketing and sponsorship used to be all about the dollars, ‘How much money are you offering for our guy to show up and pitch your product for you?’ Now it is much more robust. It’s not just, ‘Hey athlete, do you like this beverage? We’ll get you a bag of cash to promote it.’ Instead, we ask, ‘Will being associated with this brand help your foundation and humanitarian efforts? Does it fit your lifestyle? Are there bigger opportunities in play, like an equity stake in the company?’ The overall sports marketing picture is much wider than it used to be.”

Mike Neligan, VaynerSports Chief Marketing Officer



“The athletes and brands that end up breaking through the noise on social media are the ones who tell their story authentically, organically, and in editorial form. Athletes used to be hesitant to jump into certain lanes of content, but with the right guidance, athletes can use their platform to take on meaningful issues. The next generation of athletes is empowered to speak up. There is no more ‘shut up and dribble;’ there is authentic storytelling about themselves and their points of view.”

Neeta Sreekanth, INFLCR Chief Operating Officer





Do NFTs Align with Revenue and Branding Strategies?

“ Our executive team is all in on innovation. We have stakeholders who are so enamored with NFTs, Bitcoin, fan tokens, or whatever else that we almost have to reign them in. The fact is, NFTs and some of these initiatives are not huge revenue generators for us yet. They may be in the future — we see the value in them — but from a day-to-day business perspective, they can be a little bit of a distraction for staff. The NBA teams can use players in the NFTs, but we don't have that advantage in the NHL which hampers how much time and effort we put into it. ”

[Sam Doerr, Florida Panthers Chief Strategy Officer](#)



“ Anybody that says they know what NFTs will be in five or 10 years is just guessing. What you're seeing now is a lot of NFTs having to be supplemented by autographs and experiences and game jerseys, which makes you think, what is the value of the NFT if you have to throw in a lot of additional perks? At Octagon, we've been very particular; we don't want to do anything just to do it. I think it's exciting, I'm a fan of it, but it's an unknown world for sure. ”

[JB Greer, Octagon Director of Player Marketing](#)



The Shift in Content Marketing

“ We see a bigger response on content from individual athletes than the teams. People want to have one-on-one connections with the players, which is why we are asking for more athletes to share what they do between the games, behind the scenes, and in their lifestyles. Unfiltered moments humanize these superstars and draw in an engaged audience. We all see the highlights — our focus tends to be on 'what else?' ”

[Nicole Williams, Snapchat Lead Sports Producer](#)



“ We believe you take an artistic approach to sports, especially women's sports, focused on the games' intersection with music, fashion, culture, and activism rather than just X's and O's. The blueprint for covering men's sports and women's sports is different, and you have to approach them differently. Our biggest focus is storytelling and original content series without constraints and with a full appreciation of what makes the women's game special. ”

[Camille Buxeda, WSLAM Director](#)



A Community-First Approach

“ We so often think of marketing on a massive scale, but at the Braves, we also think hyperlocal and community-based. The Los Bravos brand is a piece of the baseball world in Atlanta that has energized our fan base, our community, and our culture like no other initiative. We put a voice to our Latino players and connect directly with the local culture, and now a few years into this initiative, we are seeing incredible engagement from the international community who are adopting the Braves as their team. When you lean into and listen to your most passionate fans, you end up with the most connected campaigns.”

[Laura Estefenn, Atlanta Braves Diversity Marketing](#)



Creativity in Marketing Partnerships

“ The pandemic forced more creativity in marketing and partnerships than ever. MLB and the NHL were forced, in a good way, to think differently about new partnership assets that could be at our disposal. Virtual logos inside the blue line in hockey, virtual signage behind the batter in baseball. These concepts are living beyond the pandemic years because marketers are always coming up with creative solutions that work.”

[Molly Wurdack-Folt, Ilitch Sports and Entertainment VP of Partnership Activation](#)



The Staying Power and Influence of Names, Image, and Likeness

“ I don't see this market slowing down. College athletes speak to a younger demographic and are active on social media, and that creates a market that is attractive to brands. As more brands and athletes get comfortable with what they can accomplish, the opportunities will grow. There is massive scalability here. Right now, NIL is a shiny object everyone is talking about. In the years to come, there may be less news and less buzz, but the deals won't slow down.”

[Ishveen Jolly, OpenSponsorship CEO and Founder](#)

WorkInSports is part of the iHire family of 57 industry-specific talent communities.

www.WorkInSports.com | 1.855.220.5627

PROUD PARTNER OF  **HASHTAG SPORTS**

**Work In
SPORTS**
Powered by iHire