

Chapter 20

Sports Marketing and Social Media

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, we are going to focus on the impact of Social media to change the marketing world in every industry. Social media marketing (SMM) has had a particular impact in the field of sports marketing. Social media in sports has effectively rendered a new style of communication with important implications for the field. The fans' connection to sports is changing and social media is creating a whole new channel for the fans to interact and be a part of the action beyond that which they may hope to achieve by physically being present at the stadium or the ballpark. Sports organizations today are reliant upon social media for their continued success and growth. This chapter describes how social media is being used amongst sports organizations and how it has changed the sports industry.

INTRODUCTION

Sport is not just a game. Ever since the first book-keeper took the first bet from the first punter on a game's result, sport has been a business. Sports constitute big business. For instance, the combined, the four big leagues in America, National Basketball Association (NBA), Major League Baseball (MLB), the National Football League (NFL) and the National Hockey League (NHL) generate approximately \$23 billion in revenue over a typical year; and, that's just the tip of the iceberg. U.S. sporting equipment sales at retail sporting goods stores are \$42.6 billion yearly, according to U.S. government figures. The myriad

avenues for profit in the sports industry contribute its complexity; these include ticket sales, sports video games, licensed products, and copyrights, sporting goods, sports-related advertising, Sport Media, stadium naming fees and facilities income. Social media can be an effective solution to increasing revenues by targeting the various avenues for profit effectively (Plunkett, 2012)

What Is Social Media?

According to Wikipedia, social media is defined as internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information among human beings. The term 'social media' is the combination of two words:

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‘social’ and ‘media.’ Media commonly refers to advertisement and the communication of ideas or information through publications or channels. Social represents the interaction of individuals within a group or community. Taken together, social media refers to communication and collaboration platforms which are sustained generated by the interpersonal interaction of individuals through the privileged tool or medium (Szu, 2014).

Social media is the social interplay among people, through which they share, or create information and opinions in virtual communities and social networks. Media for social interaction is using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques (Wysocki, 2012). Social media is the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue. Kietsmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre (2011) stated “social media is comprised of mobile and web based technologies that provide interactive platforms for the public to share, create, discuss, and modify content”.

Generally Social media enables us to watch and share videos and photos, engage in online conversations, read and write blogs, and post on social network sites or comment on others’ postings. Thus, it can be gathered from the diversity of these activities that social media is a vast term for multifarious platforms, tools and content that enable people to exchange, create and use information (Mohammadkazemi, 2013).

Classification of Social Media

Social media has many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, social networks, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. By applying a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-presentation, self-disclosure table 1), Kaplan and Haenlein created a classification scheme (Table 1), with seven different types of social media (Haenlein, 2010).

1. Collaborative projects (for example, Wikipedia).

Projects research focuses on technology that affects societies groups, organizations and communities, for example, text chat and voice mail and text chat. It has improved from collaborative work study of supporting people’s work activities and working relationships (Klieber, 2009).

2. Blogs and microblogs (for example, Twitter).

A blog is a Web page that serves as a publicly available personal journal for an individual. Commonly updated daily, blogs often reflect the personality of the author. A microblog varies from a traditional blog in that its content is generally smaller in both actual and aggregated file size (Humphreys, 2010).

Table 1. Classification of Social Media by social presence/media richness and self-presentation/self-disclosure

| | | Social Presence/Media Richness | | |
|--|------|--|--|---|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Self-presentation / Self-disclosure | High | Blogs | Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) | Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life) |
| | Low | Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia) | Content communities (e.g., YouTube) | Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft) |

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