

Module 1

Unit 1: Data and SVC

1.0 Introduction

Data

Data has become an everyday word in the world of sport. From player performance to customer (or fan) communication, it is integral to how sports organizations operate. Data is at the core of how clubs generate revenue, whether it is analysing potential recruits for the first team to ensure you are getting value for money and potential re-sell value or understanding your season ticket holders behaviours. It is an ever-growing and increasingly important function. For the purpose of this course, we will focus on data that is collected from fans and customers.

Sports organisations have a multitude of opportunities to collect data from and about their fans. A data strategy must be designed for the purpose of offering better deals, better access, better content, better experiences and better service to fans. Otherwise, why would they provide express consent for use of their data? Sports organisations with a real commitment to the enhancement of their fan relationships will see the opportunity rather than any threat in this.

(Mulligan, 2017, para. 2)

Data is information stored and used by a computer. Information gets referred to as data when it is in the form of facts or statistics you can analyse.

Pull out box

Question: What do you think are good examples of data? Can you think of bad examples of data?

Segmentation is essential, so communication with fans is relevant and targeted. It is data that enables this. Let us see an example:

The British Olympic Association (BOA) used many innovative digital tools to collect fans' data ahead of the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016. Launched nine months before the Games, the Team GB Club app attracted

140,000 members (contributing handsomely to an overall Team GB fan database of 320,000) by offering exclusive content including discounted tickets, partner offers, competitions with unique prizes and behind-the-scenes content. (How can sports organization collect data to enrich fan engagement, 2017, para. 9)

Data used in the right context can be very powerful and deliver fantastic insights. On the contrary, if data has inaccurate information, then that corresponds to bad data. For example, if a person purchases their season ticket and in error, e.g. they leave off a digit, they give you a wrong number, and that number cannot be used to contact them. That is bad data.

On the other hand, an example of good data is a customer buying their season ticket and giving you their name, address, phone number and email. These are valid data points, and if used correctly, can be very valuable.

Let's look at the example of the email. A fan has purchased their season ticket and in the sign-up process has given you their email and ticked a box, allowing you to contact them with marketing offers.

How is this valuable? Well, now you can reach out to them with offers and information about your team and club.

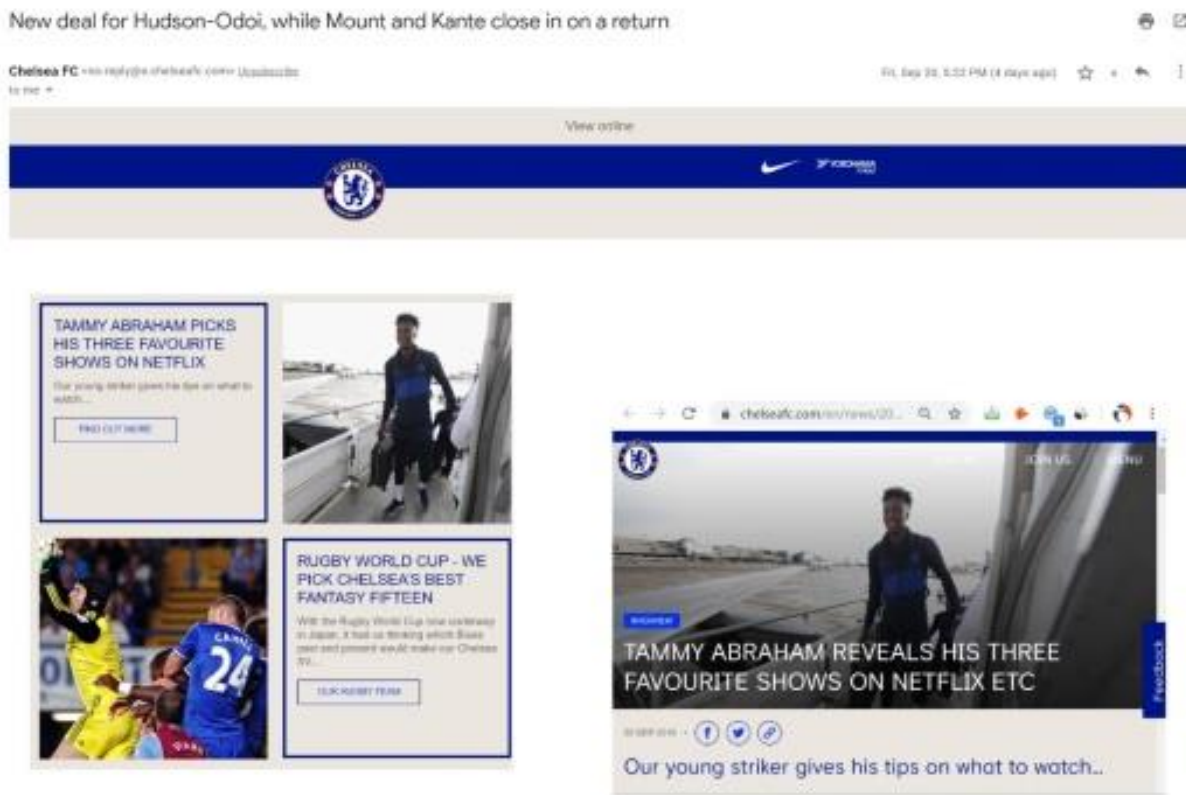
Newsletter tip: Make sure you track email open rates, unsubscribes, and click-through rates. Open rates are the percentage of people that open the newsletter, unsubscribes are the number of people that have opted not to receive future emails and click-through rates are the percent of people that have clicked on a link included in an email newsletter. It is important to ensure your landing page gives the visitor all the information they want following receiving the email.

- Open rate = $[\text{Number of unique opens} / (\text{Number of emails sent} - \text{Number of bounces})] \times 100$
- Click-through rate = $(\text{Number of unique clicks} / \text{Number of delivered emails}) \times 100$

Tracking the right email marketing metrics can help you understand which strategies work best for your business and which tactics do not work as well. With such data in hand, you can better prioritize your time and efforts on strategies that drive maximum results. You should, therefore, take the time to track metrics that provide you with actionable insights to make your emails perform better. (Barker, 2019, para. 7-8))

See the example below from Chelsea Football Club.

Image 1: Chelsea Football Club



Source: own production.

Areas to take note:

1. The unsubscribe button is very visible and clear to see. It is right beside the email address of the sender.
2. The subject line is designed to give you a sample of the information contained within, ensuring that you want to click to open and read more.
3. Chelsea Football Club has created content that is relevant for their fans:
 - i. The Rugby World Cup took place in September 2019. In their newsletter, Chelsea leveraged off the rugby loving element of their fanbase by creating content that was relevant.
 - ii. Tammy Abraham is relevant because of his goal-scoring form. He is also a young emerging player that the club want to build a brand around
 - a. Linking Tammy with Netflix shows they create content that is relevant.

4. When you clicked on the link in the email newsletter you were taken to the Chelsea website. This is a click-through.

That is just one example of how you can use the data collected. **Other examples of how you can use it from fans include the following:**

- Mobile Number - SMS marketing – Send an SMS message to fans to remind them of a game or offer.
- Address – Direct marketing – Send a letter or postcard to fans with an offer or to remind them of the season ticket renewal.
- Data of Birth - SMS/Email/Post – Contact fans on their birthday with a special personalized offer.
- Postcodes – Data Analysis – Learn more about your database by sorting them by postcode.

2.0 Getting into the Detail

Importance of Data

Data is very important to a sports team, and if used in the right manner, it can enhance sports partnership, generate more fan revenue and improve the stadium experience. As we know, fans do not just watch sports, it is now a second-screen experience. Fans in the stadium are sharing pictures and videos of key moments on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tik-Tok and other social channels, while those watching the game outside the stadium are critiquing and praising on the same social channels.

Data is helping sports organizations understand fan behaviour more than ever. Logging into a club website, for example, will help a sports organization understand what fans are viewing online. Mining data from social media will help the club understand their sentiment around players, partners, and the club, while electronic tickets (even retina/fingertips scanning in some stadiums) can help clubs understand fans' movements. When fans' movements are linked with their payments in the stadium (Contactless / club payment card), clubs can understand the true value of fans.

It is no longer good enough for organisations to think they know what their customers want. They need to know precisely what they want and provide them with it. For that, they need data. For sponsors, customer data is a goldmine. They are, after all, paying a rights-holder to target their fanbase and ultimately improve their business. Customer data enables them to do exactly that in a targeted and measurable way. (How data has become the heartbeat of fan engagement, 2017, para. 5-6)

This all sounds very one-way. However, when data is analysed, it helps the sports organization to enhance their online experience, communicate better with fans, give them the content they want and help them enjoy the games the way they wish to.

In relation to this, Ricky (2019) explains the following.

Sports organizations can detect patterns in digital engagement, such as online sports viewing, to understand what and when fans are watching via app logins and online video views. They are creating more immersive experiences via augmented reality. They can mine sentiment from social media streams to understand what fans are thinking and can use analytics to engage those fans via social channels. Social media is proving to be a great marketing ground for university teams to connect with millennials and market tickets using data-driven campaigns.

Data from customer engagement also extends into the stadium, where teams can use electronic tickets -- and even fingerprint or retinal scans -- to understand fan movements. We're already seeing these techniques among the more innovative teams. The New England Patriots track data ranging from what fans buy at the pro shop to when they buy tickets. By crunching those numbers with the help of the Kraft Analytics Group, they can predict everything from ticket pricing to staffing on game day. (para. 6-7)

Key tip: Understand the importance of GDPR

What is GDPR?

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a general digital privacy law that has unified practices of data protection across the UK and all EU member states, when it came into force on May 25th 2018. It is a legally binding directive that, if not adhered to, can result in large fines. GDPR applies to all businesses that handle personal data of European and UK residents.

On Chapter 1, Article 1, the general provisions of the law describes the subject-matter and objectives:

1. This Regulation lays down rules relating to the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and rules relating to the free movement of personal data.
2. This Regulation protects fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons and in particular their right to the protection of personal data.

3. The free movement of personal data within the Union shall be neither restricted nor prohibited for reasons connected with the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data. (GDPR. Subject-matter and objectives, n.d., para. 1-3)

Some of the key privacy and data protection requirements of the GDPR include the following:

1. Requiring the consent of subjects for data processing
2. Anonymizing collected data to protect privacy
3. Providing data breach notifications
4. Safely handling the transfer of data across borders
5. Requiring certain companies to appoint a data protection officer to oversee GDPR compliance. (De Groot, 2019, para. 4)

How can I be mindful?

Make sure that when you are collecting data from customers and fans, you give them the option to “opt in” to communication. Opting in allows the customer to decide if they want to receive a communication from the sports organization. It is usually a tick box that they must tick if they want to receive information. Once they have done this, you can contact them via their preferred channels, e.g. email, post or SMS. **If they do not tick this, then you cannot contact them.**

Other ways to be compliant

- Think about the data you collect.
 - Where is it stored?
- Ask yourself why you hold the data you collect.
 - What is its purpose?
- Identify key responsible people as data processors.
- Make sure you have consent from the person you are gathering data from.
- Make sure customers can access their data and delete if they wish.
- Make sure data is stored securely.

3.0 What Is SCV?

SCV is more commonly known as “Single Customer View”. Having a SCV of your fans and customers means aggregating all data you have on them and presenting it in a clear manner in order to understand them in relation to your business.

A single customer view (also called ‘360’, ‘360 degree’ or ‘unified’ customer view) is a method for gathering all the data about your prospects and clients and merging it into a single record. A SCV is where all the data held about by each of your fans/customers

is stored and consolidated into one single, easy-to-read record in your organizations database.

By consolidating every piece of information about your users in one centralized location, you get a powerful overview of every action they performed – on their mobiles, on your website, or even in your offline store (of course, depending on what types of data you gather to create the SCV). (Lubowicka & Matuszewska, 2019, para. 4)

An article from Experian reads the following:

A Single Customer View (SCV) is where all the data you hold about each of your customers is stored and consolidated into one single, easy to read, record in your database. . (What is a Single Customer View?, n.d., para. 1)

To do this, sports organizations must roll out client relationship management (CRM) platforms that link together the various databases, while providing tools to give the organization the ability to provide meaningful and actionable insights. A key component of the SCV is to ensure that content is timely and relevant to the end user, based on the data captured by the organization.

Customer relationship management (CRM) is a combination of people, processes and technology that seeks to understand a company's customers. It is an integrated approach to managing relationships by focusing on customer retention and relationship development. CRM has evolved from advances in information technology and organizational changes in customer-centric processes. Companies that successfully implement CRM will reap the rewards in customer loyalty and long run profitability. (Chen & Popovich, 2003, p. 1)

Without a single customer view and real-time insights, sports organizations struggle to deliver the quality experiences that fans are looking for today. It gives sports organizations the ability to analyse past behavior in order to better target and personalize future fans interactions.

We have all had customer service interactions where we had to repeat the same information at every interaction, sometime multiples times!

Unfortunately, most sports teams are struggling with legacy systems and data residing in separate databases. They have no way to arrive at a single customer view, which is necessary to fully understand each fan/customer and provide them with a personalized experience.

A single customer view is achieved when sports organizations are able to do the following:

- Capture each fans activities across all digital and traditional channels and devices



- Unify fans data across all internal systems/databases
- Use this information to seamlessly engage with each fan across all touchpoints

Barriers to establishing a SCV approach at a sports club or federations

1. Organizational Silos: When the entire sports organization is not focused around the fan/customer and instead is individually thinking of their own KPIs, channels and metrics, no one is thinking of delivering a superior experience across the entire fans journey. This environment is not conducive to building a single customer view. Sports organization need to align their KPIs and targets so that all your teams/departments are incentivized to pull in the same direction—towards the fan. This will encourage employees to take a more customer-centric view and make an effort to unify your fans data, so you can deliver a better fan experience.
2. Poor quality of data: Poor data quality regularly hampers efforts to create a single customer view. Without accurate and reliable data, the effort to create a single customer view is wasted. Data also becomes redundant or outdated quickly. It is important to monitor your data sources over time to ensure that the quality of data is not deteriorating. Online forms, face-to-face discussions, and call centres all collect data that needs to be kept clean of duplicate records to maintain the SCV.
3. Legacy systems: Sports organizations today have access to an unprecedented amount of fans data. Many sports organizations have in place applications using different vendors or software for different marketing channels, such as ticketing database, membership database, and online shop database. Data, therefore, resides in isolation and each fan's interaction is viewed independently rather than as part of a bigger fans journey.

PULL OUT

A single customer view can be created by pulling together all fans data available from different touchpoints. Fans data can include (but not be limited to) the following elements:

- Demographics of the fan
- Web and mobile browsing activities
- Fan/customer support team interactions
- Ticketing interactions
- Social media
- Merchandising transactions
- Club/fan club membership data



Data-focused sports organizations need to ensure that they have the key tools in-house to take advantage of the data that is being collected. Knowledgeable staff that has data analytic skill sets is vitally important to ensure SCV is properly implemented.

3.1 Benefits of Implementing SVC

Better targeting

By improving targeting to your database, you improve the chances of success. Having a detailed single customer viewpoint means you better categorise and classify fans, thus ensuring a more focused communication.

Wilson (2018), in his article “How Dutch Club AZ Alkmaar are using data to drive engagement with their fans”, presents AZ Alkmaar as an example of how beneficial it is to implement a data-driven marketing approach:

AZ Alkmaar is a top-tier club playing in the Dutch Premier League. With two national titles and 4 national cups, AZ has traditionally been the main competitor of the traditional top 3 (Ajax, Feyenoord and PSV). Amongst the most notable players are Jozy Altidore, Sergio Romero, Ron Vlaar, Vincent Janssen and Moussa Dembele and the club has been coached by Louis van Gaal, Dick Advocaat and Marco van Basten.

AZ is a club that had suffered setbacks during the economic crisis. Now, years later, the club has successfully recovered and has quickly become one of Holland’s most innovative football organizations on-pitch. The club is known for its outstanding Academy which is being visited by top European football clubs like Real Madrid. Having won many international awards for its outstanding performance, the AZ Academy has produced many football talents thanks to an innovative data-driven performance approach. In 2017, the club has started to also install a data-driven approach on its marketing side. With the recent appointment of sports marketing consultancy Two Circles, the club has set focus on improving fan communication, fan engagement and the stadium experience.

“We have set focus on improving fan communication, fan engagement and the stadium experience”

AZ is currently in the process of transitioning the traditional marketing approach to a data-driven marketing approach. As part of this transition,



AZ has adopted a model which helps to structure the fanbase. The model, shaped like a pyramid, divides different fan purchase behaviors over three layers. This then provides strategic guidelines on how the club's fanbase strategy should be executed and which segment deserves focus per match. The top layer of the pyramid contains all the season members and ideally should be slightly less than half of maximum stadium capacity. In this way, the model leaves room for general admission tickets, which are economically more valuable. The mid-layer of the pyramid represents fans that visit 2+ matches per season on general admission. The bottom layer of the pyramid are the fans that occasionally visit the club once a season. Ideally, the entire registered fanbase contains 8x the stadium capacity. In this way, optimal conditions for maximum stadium revenue can be achieved.

"The database model provides structure and strategic guidance for marketing the fanbase" (para. 1-5)

Improve the customer experience

Having a single customer view of your fans and stakeholders means you should have a complete record of all communications they have had with the club, which includes phone calls, emails and even tweets. This means that when they get in touch, you have all the relevant information about them. With all of this data in one place, when fans get in touch in the future there will be no missing pieces. Your customer service agent, or front office staff, can get up to speed on everything quickly, so that the fan does not have to explain things for a second time.

Anyone who has dealt with a call centre before (probably, all of us) can imagine how much this could improve our experience.

In the following link, you can read an article titled "How the Patriots use data to try to improve the Fan Experience":

<https://www.wbur.org/morningedition/2016/12/22/kraft-analytics-group>

Make it easier on staff

SCV can help when it comes to understanding fan behaviour. We know that already. If you are in the club shop, you can see what the last item they purchased, likewise the marketing team can see what the last communication they received was. There is no need to make phone calls or send emails to one central point, all teams have the information to hand, improving staff efficiency.



A good example of this is the San Francisco 49ers:

With the help of software giant SAP SE, the National Football League franchise is gathering game-day information, culling the data and executing new, real-time plays to quickly clean dirty bathrooms, beef up hot dog sales and more. While that won't directly help the on-field product, 49ers leaders hope teaming tech and customer service will drive more fans back to Levi's Stadium — win or lose — and score more revenue. (Leuty, 2018, para. 1)

Personalization

An important part of the customer experience is personalization. By understanding fan data, sports organizations can create unique and relevant experiences for fans, which, in turn, holds fans attention for longer and creates an even stronger bond between the fan and the club. Make the most of every message to your fanbase.

Why should we do it? Personalization increases loyalty to a brand and holds a fan's attention longer. It shows you care. If you understand the content and products your fans interact and engage with, then you can create valid content and product recommendations that will appeal to them. From a marketing point of view, a personalized call to action will potentially lead to a better conversion.

Spotify and Netflix are two examples of platforms that do this very well. They make suggestions based on the music you listen to and the shows you watch. The result is that you continue with your subscription and increase brand loyalty.

Boost customer service and support:

Access to a single customer view can dramatically improve customer service levels, mainly by improving efficiency levels of customer service or front office staff. Examples of situations that are avoided for the customer are having to re-explain an issue following an initial telephone contact, being transferred from one department to the other due to not having all the information at hand. Naturally, fans want to interact with a sports organization and want the club or federation to be knowledgeable about their issue. However, this is getting harder because they are now contacting sports organizations through website, mobiles, phone, chat, Twitter and communities to initiate a service.

Provide data for additional insights

When you unify fans data, a sports team can more easily classify the fans into behaviour-based segments. This enables you to assess the impact of each segment on



key metrics and KPIs as well as to determine the optimal engagement strategy for each fan. With a more holistic overview of your fan's behaviour, you will stop making marketing decisions based on pure assumptions and replace them with decisions based on data, such as site visitors' habits, their clicking behaviour on your website, their purchasing history, etc.

Better retention and increased loyalty

Creating a more personalized experience and an improved customer service for fans will help you to retain fans and build loyalty. Engaging with fans with the right message at the right time through their preferred channel will be important not only at present but also in the future.

5G and fan engagement

<https://bit.ly/3k2rxj0>

Potential obstacles when starting down the road of implementing a SCV

They vary in terms of:

- budgets,
- legal compliance,
- siloed data,
- internal politics,
- poor quality data,
- incompatible systems,
- lack of skills within the club or federation, and
- culture

Tip: Use relevant imagery in your communication. For example, if your fan has a young family, then use pictures of families enjoying the game, or if the fans are a senior/retired couple, tailor your image to appeal to them.

Tip 2: If you know the age group of your database (**you should!**), tailor your communication. If it corresponds to a younger audience, a good option is to use emojis, while if the audience you are targeting is 55 plus, consider the font and font size you use.

CRM

"Technology tools, such as customer relationship management software, are increasingly essential to the ongoing success and management of professional sports teams across leagues" (Scott, 2018, para. 1).



Many sports organizations rely on CRM software to help them create, build and manage fan relationships. Why? Because it helps to keep fans engaged!

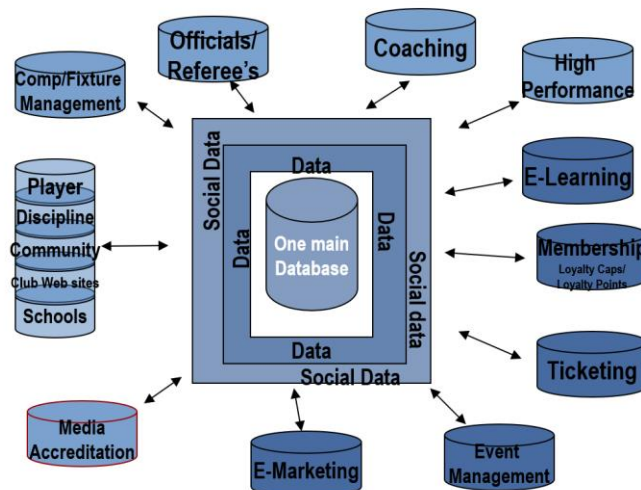
Image 2: CRM benefits

Customer data sharing throughout the organization resulting in:	CRM innovative technology:
Superior levels of customer service	Extends capability to the customer for self-service and Internet applications
Opportunities for cross-selling and up-selling	Attracts existing and new customers through personalized communications and improved targeting
Vast information about customers' habits and preferences	Integrates customer and supplier relationships
Integrated and complete view of the customer	Constructs metrics to analyze common and unique customer patterns
Improved targeting to segments and individual customers	
Efficient call centers/service centers	

(Chen & Popovich, 2003)

Image 3: CRM

CRM; Overview of a System: One view!



CRM systems & personalization:

Having a single customer view is very important when it comes to personalization. A single customer view involves collating all the data points in the sports organization (season ticket/ticket sales/online merchandise sales/food and beverage sales) and



mixing this with social media activity and channels in order to create a clear profile of the fan.

By putting fans at the centre of your CRM strategy, you focus on individual customers (in a mass environment) and give them what they want and when they want it. A strong customer centric CRM system means that you deal with your customers individually in a personalized manner as often as possible. A good CRM system allows you to organize everything you know about your fans, including social media profiles, history of all interactions and contact with the club and support information, such as demographics, in one place.

Attribution

A single customer viewpoint can help you understand what exactly took for them to renew their season ticket, buy the replica jersey, or download an app. Social media, traditional marketing, online advertising and all the other touch points a fan experiences are now easier to understand with all the information in one place.

4.0 Where to Collect Data?

There are a number of areas where you can collect data. It is recommended to collect data through these areas because of two reasons:

- Having access to fans is easy (it is easy to gain direct access to the fans without the need of involving a 3rd party).
- Fans are already at the venue, in store or on your digital channels.

The list below outlines a number of basic areas where you can collect data, namely:

- Match-day surveys

Having staff do match-day surveys is a way to help grow your database and learn about your fans experience. Make sure your questions are relevant and provides the insight required.

- Online Surveys

Like match-day surveys, online surveys can help grow your database but instead of surveying fans at the stadium, you are reaching out to existing databases for additional information or surveying social audiences to gather new data.

- In-Store

Capture email addresses from cash customers in-store by asking them whether you can email their receipts instead of printing them off. Fans could also hand over their data if they are rewarded with a discount on future purchases.

- Competitions

Running competitions on social, websites, or in-stadium will allow you to capture information from fans. Fans will be comfortable handing over data if there is a reward element to it.

- Transactions

Data can be captured during ticketing, club/supporter membership, and/or through the online merchandising shop. Key data such as name, membership ID, full address, and transaction purchased should be captured and entered into a central database.

- Login to the stadium/venue Wi-Fi

Many stadiums or venues now have Wi-Fi installed. Fans logging in to the Wi-Fi network is a good opportunity to capture key data such as first name, postcode and email address. Please, keep the data capture to a minimum and do not forget to ask permission to marketing to the fan in the future.

5.0 Keeping Data Updated

As a club, you have invested a lot of time and money to ensure that your data is accurate, consistent and substantiated. Therefore, keeping your data relevant is very important. Here are some tips to keep your data appropriate:

1. Make sure you are collecting standardised data across entry forms, online purchases and in-stadium purchases.
2. Create unique IDs to link data across departments.
3. Appoint a data manager to oversee the data collection and management.
4. Do not take short cuts by buying or renting lists.
5. Make sure lists are cleansed and data is up to date.
6. Establish a procedure for cleansing data on a regular basis.

6.0 Case Study Cricket Club

The challenge:

A County Cricket Club wanted to use 6 years' worth of data to create key supporter segments, analyse fan acquisition, and understand ticket sale trends. The aim was to create a data-driven personalized marketing campaign.

The work:

Working with an external agency, the data lists were audited with discrepancies removed. All data was collated to create a single customer view. Based on the



cleansed data and working from a single customer view, all fan interaction was mapped focusing on the following:

- Timing of ticket purchases
- Factors affecting ticket sales
- Types of ticket purchased
- Number of new fans who were captured and the type of ticket they bought
- The way form affected loyalty
- Identification of lapsed supporters
- Determination of life-time value of fans

Data was blended against historical fixtures lists and results as well as against third party data, in order to geo-code postcode data and determine geodemographic data.

Supporters were segmented into key groups, using a combination of historical sales data and geodemographic data. In all, fans were filtered into over 50 microsegments.

Achievements:

Following the data deep-dive and the application of a data-driven strategy, the club achieved the following results:

- Most ever advance sales (year on year growth of 39%)
- Highest ever average attendance (year on year growth of 11%)
- Highest ever aggregate attendance
- Nominated for a BT Sports Industry award
- Best Domestic Campaign winner at Business of Cricket Awards

Unit 2: Resource

1.0 Introduction

Importance of Hiring the Right People

Employees are the backbone and heart of your sports organization; without them you will not succeed. They are the main factor in growth for any business, so it is vitally important you understand the roles needed for each section/division and hire the right people.

Employees deal with your fans. Having quality and effective employees are an extension of your brand and are core to helping the experience your fans and partners have.

What do you need to do when you are hiring staff?

1. Clearly understand the role you are recruiting for
2. Define the roles requirements
3. Understand the bandwidth salary in the market
4. Make sure the hiring manager is well informed about the needs of the business
5. Understand what the candidate brings to the company
6. Have a clear hiring process, e.g.
 - a. Online application
 - b. 1st Interview (background and skills focused)
 - c. 2nd Interview (aptitude focused)

Important note: Making the wrong decision in the recruitment process can lead to stress, impact negatively on other staff, slow the progress of a club/federation, and ultimately lead to a loss of revenue, sales and wages.

2.0 Getting into the Detail

2.1 What are the Benefits of Hiring the Right Staff, First Time Round?

- Hiring staff is expensive and takes time away from day to day tasks. Getting it right can save on costs.
- A good hire will reduce the workload of others.
- The hire will blend into the corporate culture easier.
- The right hire will be alert and in tune with the requirements of the job.
- The right hire will blend right in with other staff.
- The right hire is committed to the values of the club.

Develop a long-term plan around what future roles you will need. To do this, you need to understand trends and what sectors are emerging.



2.2 Skill Set Audit

One of the key things a sports organization needs to know and understand is the skill sets and knowledge of their staff. To do this, clubs need to engage with their employees, since knowing this helps the club meet its off-the-field goals.

It also helps the club/federation understand what areas they need to improve on, what training and what development plans are needed. Besides, it identifies the recruitment gaps that exist within the club.

A skills audit is carried out to identify the skills gaps that exist internally. The outcome then leads to potential training or recruitment of additional support staff.

The skills audit can be conducted one-to-one or via a questionnaire. Then, you have to identify potential knowledge gaps which might affect the long-term plans of the sports organization or the growth of the individual.

By regularly assessing the knowledge that already exists within your workforce, you can help develop existing employees and improve staff retention rates.

2.3 What Does a Skills Audit Achieve?

- An understanding of the existing skills and knowledge of staff
- Gaps that currently exist in the club
- Staff that require training and development

2.4 Why to Carry Out a Skills Audit

A skills audit can help you do the following:

- Understand the skills required and gaps the sports organization currently has
- Create a list of staff members who need development
- Develop the skills base of your existing workforce, which can lead to their improvement and to more easily meet their work goals. The sports organization should enjoy a far more capable, engaged and productive workforce.

It is critical that a sports organization be aware of the skills needed to deliver the goals and objectives set out in the strategy and marketing plans as well as know whether the staff have those capabilities. Besides, in order for sports organizations to continue to be competitive, they need to plan their workforce and skill requirements over the following 3 years, especially when things move so fast in the digital sphere.

2.5 Skills Gaps Checklist:

The skills audit template for managers



- List the roles within the club, such as commercial and communications roles.
- List the current core competencies within such roles. The next step is to list the skills needed for each of these roles. Start with a Job Description section under each role. What skills are stated in the Personal Specification section?
- List the skills (technical or soft) that your team will need in order to support the sports organizations growth in the future.
- Create a survey. This survey will be in the form of either a questionnaire or a 1:1 meeting.
- Communicate with your team. Before you send out your skills audit survey, make sure you make the time to talk to your team. Reassure them that the data is secure and confidential and let them know the reason for the skills audit. It is a good idea to appoint someone that they can direct any questions to.
- Ask your workforce to complete the survey (either through a questionnaire or a 1:1 meeting). This essentially means you need to keep it short and not ask the same question twice. To achieve this, the survey should group together each of the major roles, i.e., marketing, technical departments, among others.
- Compile the results.
- Review and analyse the results. Once all the meetings have been conducted and the skills audit survey have been returned, you will have a far clearer picture of where the training in-house needs to take place, and which areas will require new roles/skills sets.
- Moving forward with employee training. Now that you have a full picture of the skills within your team, you can begin to look at types of employee training, i.e., in-house training, external trainer, online courses, etc.

Table 1 – Draft Survey Template (for 1:1 meetings). Please note the same questions can be used in the online questionnaire.

Staff Member Name:	
	Answer
What skills are outlined in your Job Description (JD) (under Personal Specification)?	
Do the skills outlined in the JD align with the current post/role which you are performing now? If not, please explain further.	
Please list other skills which you have which are not mentioned in the Job Description section, for example, video editing skills.	
What skills do we need in the future regarding this role?	
What skills are required/missing within the wider organization?	
What training is required in order to gain the new skills?	
Do we need to hire individuals who have a certain skill set? (skills missing in the current department.)	

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