

# Module 4

## Unit 1: Fantasy Gaming

### 1.0 Introduction

#### Fantasy Gaming

According to the Cambridge Dictionary (as cited in Dorda, 2019), fantasy gaming is defined in the following way:

Games in which you choose a team of real sports players from different teams and win points according to how well the players play each week: The main point about fantasy sport is that it is nothing to do with football, or baseball, or ice-hockey, at all. (para. 5)

Fantasy game has enjoyed fantastic growth in recent years and is now across many sports, not just football, or baseball, or ice hockey. It has become an important aspect of everyday sporting day life. Fantasy gaming has evolved as a social aspect, as you comment with friends and random people to be the best fantasy manager. According to a Nielsen Company report (2017), there are over 15 million fantasy players in the US alone, while over 5 million players enter the Premier League fantasy competition each year.

In social media and digital marketing circles, the term “second screen” is often used. Fantasy gaming is perhaps a great example of fans using a second screen model when watching first. One eye is on the action, the other is on their fantasy team, and how it is performing.

Fantasy gaming has shifted the focus for the players involved, from following the exploits of an individual team to focusing solely on the performance of the players they have selected in their weekly fantasy squad.

### 1.0 Getting Into the Detail

#### How to play fantasy sports?

Most sports will offer a fantasy element to them. The Premier League, La Liga, Ligue 1, NBA, NHL, Formula 1 and NFL all offer their fans the chance to play fantasy games. While the sports differ, the core offering is similar.



Fans sign up on a dedicated site, they enter their email address and select a team name (remember crude names are now allowed.) Then they proceed to select their team/line-up. There will be certain parameters that they need to follow; these will include the following:

- A limit on the amount of money you can spend
  - A limit on the numbers of players per team
  - A limit of the numbers of players you can have in a certain position
- (In order to submit their team, fans must satisfy the above criteria.)

Fans must select a captain and have substitutes for their team. They can enter public leagues (playing against random people) or they can enter private leagues (playing against their friends.) They can also enter very specific leagues, for example, in the Premier League official game you can compete against other fans from the team you support or the country you are from.

**Image 1: How your team looks in the Premier league fantasy game**



Source: Own creation

Points are awarded based on the actions within a game. For example, a goalkeeper or a defender keeping a clean sheet in the game is worth a certain amount of points, with negative points accrued for conceding goals. In the NBA game you score points, for instance, by scoring baskets, three pointers, rebounds, blocks and assists. In the NFL game, you get points for offensive and defensive plays.

**Table 1 - An example, per the official NFL website, of offensive plays available and the scoring associated with each play**

	<b>Default setting</b>
Passing	1 point per 25 yards
Passing touchdowns	4 points
Interceptions thrown	-2 Points
Rushing	1 point per 10 yards
Rushing touchdowns	6 points
Receptions	1 point
Receiving yards	1 point per 10 yards
Receiving touchdowns	6 points
Kickoff and punt return touchdowns	6 points
Fumble recovered for TD	6 points
2-point conversions	2 points
Fumbles lost	-2 points

As you can see, there are multiple scoring options available within each game.

### **So, what does this achieve from a sport perspective?**

Fantasy gaming is about creating awareness of other players and teams in the league, outside the team you follow. It is about helping fans to be more active in their support of the overall league.

- Fans become aware of other teams in the league
- Fans become aware of other lesser known players
- Players can become cult hero as they generate fantasy points
- Fans follow the results of other teams and players specific to their team

### **2.1 Skills vs Chance**

Players of fantasy sports games have long argued that there is a skill and method to the game, and they are correct. A study by MIT in 2018 would appear to have backed that up by proving that skill and knowledge were key to fantasy sports success (Chu, 2018).



According to the report, advantages in fantasy sport were related to knowledge with those that did well, focused on elements such as statistics, rules of the game, which players are injured, and even effects of weather. The research analysed thousands of win/loss records for players over several seasons.

There are typically two ways to enter fantasy sports tournaments:

- Free to enter
- Pay to enter

### **Free to enter**

Free-to-enter games are games where you register your details and enter a team to compete against others, random fans and friends. The fantasy leagues are typically organized by an official league owner, e.g. Pro14 Rugby and Premier League. These games are season long. Players manage their team over the course of the season. Starting with their initial budget, they build a team and then tweak each week.

There are weekly, monthly and overall prizes for the best manager. These free-to-enter leagues are typically about capturing data and driving engagement.

**Tip:** If you are a marketing manager of a team and your team and players are involved in a league, you can create content around their performance in a game-week.

### **Content would be a mix of image and video, and would include the following elements:**

- A highlight reel of their performance and the number of points they contributed
  - In-the moment visuals that feature fantasy-type graphics
- (You can also do content around players to pick and captain each week.)

### **Content challenge: Make sure your content is inclusive – do not alienate certain members of the squad by focusing on star players.**

### **Pay to enter**

Pay-to-enter games are more focused on daily fantasy games. The concept and approach are similar to that of the season-long game; however, the focus is daily and weekly. There is usually a cash prize available in pay to enter games. In order to win that prize, you need to enter a stake, which is usually a monetary amount.

Pay-to-enter fantasy games are gambling properties and as such they are offered by licenced third parties. Fanduel and Draftkings would be considered two of the largest fantasy gaming sites worldwide.

**Tip:** If you are a marketing manager of a team, it is difficult to get involved in promoting paid for fantasy games. Nevertheless, there is a commercial partnership that could be



developed with these providers. Note you can only engage with an 18+ database if you partner with a pay-to-enter fantasy provider.

## 2.2 Case Study: Formula 1 and Fantasy Sports

In 2018, Formula 1 (F1) took a stake in an Irish fantasy games provider, PlayON. This investment marked the first time the company had taken an equity stake in an external company and showed the new long-term approach F1 was taking for its digital strategy. Two key changes have led to a wider adoption of fantasy games. One has been the launch of mobile applications and enhanced mobile capabilities, which has made it easier for users to play on the go without missing deadlines when submitting their teams. The second aspect has been reduced-data charges, which has helped drive the mobile engagement.

PlayON developed two games for F1: a traditional fantasy game, which was on the official F1 website, and the other operated the first Official Daily Fantasy Formula 1 game, which was operated on the PlayON website. The PlayON offering was cash-based with the official traditional game about engagement and awareness on race days.

### Image 2: Fantasy. PlayOn



[Untitled illustration of an advertisement of Fantasy in the 2019 season of Formula 1]  
Retrieved from [https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Dzsv\\_ICX4AUHnBB.jpg](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Dzsv_ICX4AUHnBB.jpg)

The offering for both games was the same. The games allowed you to become a team principal. You selected your team, devised your strategy and managed your team throughout the season, or on a race day.

You had to pick five drivers and one constructor team for each race. Points were awarded for finishing positions, positions gained and fastest lap, amongst others.

An interesting aspect of the structural setup of the two fantasy games was the lack of change. Both games, the official season and the daily one, were laid out in the exact same way. The aim here was to encourage fans to interact between the two.

The aim of the partnership was to allow Formula 1 to reach an even wider and younger audience, with Matt Roberts, Global Research Director at Formula 1, revealing in an interview with PSD Group that the decision to launch the game was to “drive consumption amongst the younger demographic.” (Roberts, 2019, para. 7)

It was also in part to create a ‘dual screening’ experience, which, according to Roberts (2019),

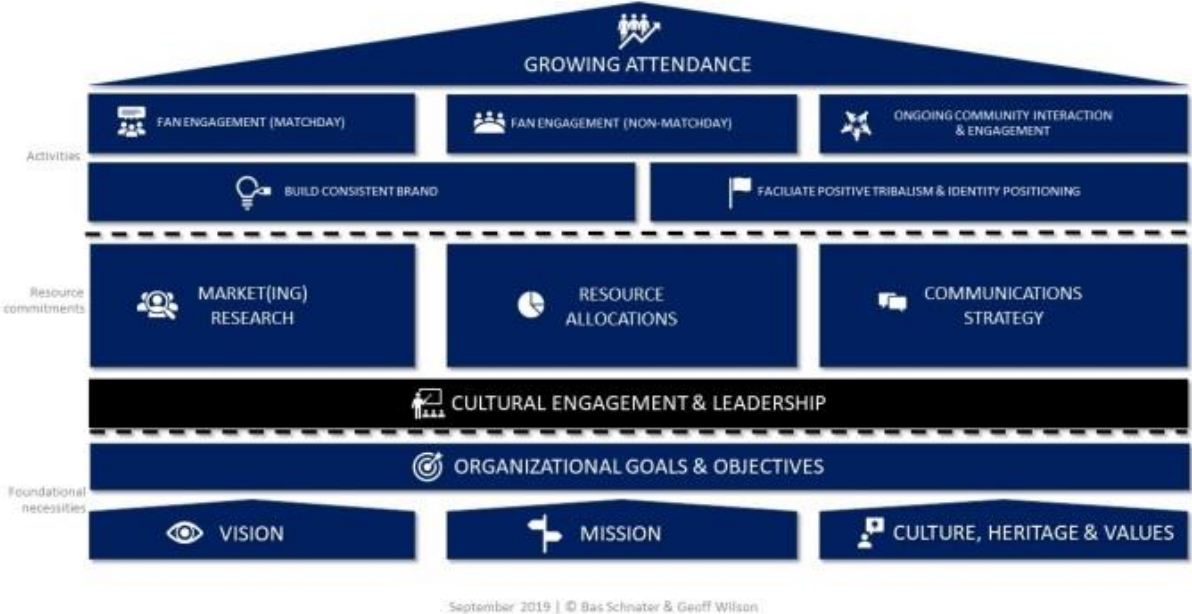
(...) has become more and more prevalent with fans consuming other content on other devices during the action. This highlights the importance of driving awareness of other F1 properties and products as we are competing for share of time of sports fans in a very competitive market. (Roberts, 2019, para. 8)

Read more: <https://www.psdgroup.com/revolutionising-formula-1/>



# Unit 2: Growing Attendance Model (GAM)

Image 3: Growing attendance model (GAM)



Source: Schnater & Wilson, 2019.

The purpose of this unit, is to provide football federations, leagues and clubs with a framework on how they can grow attendance on game days.

There is a general acceptance that achieving success on the pitch will have a positive impact in terms of attendance. Relying solely on results is a poor and unsustainable strategy to growing attendance, therefore we created this model. Admittedly, attendance can also depend on the opponent the team plays. In sports economics, this is called the drawing potential of the away team (Kesenne, 2014). This does have an impact on attendance but again, it is not a sustainable strategy as a team will only play against a top team a limited number of times at home per season (this also is the case for local derby games).

Why should a sport organization want to increase attendance? Apart from the obvious financial benefit (ticketing, food and beverage sales on game days), more attendees mean a more valuable proposition for sponsors/broadcasters as well helping to create the right atmosphere during home games.



This model is intended for use by football federations (national teams), leagues and clubs. The model can also be applied to other sports (like rugby, cricket etc.) who have regular league appearances over a sustained period though this is not included in the scope of this blog.

Sports organizations should focus on the elements that are within their control (e.g. pricing, customer service, stadium cleanliness, etc) and mitigate against the elements they can't control (e.g. other competitors, competitive imbalance of the league, weather, team performance, away team etc).

The model has been created by Geoff Wilson and Bas Schnater based on their own club and National federation experiences within the football industry. The model has been reviewed and supported by Mark Bradley ([www.fanexperienceco.com](http://www.fanexperienceco.com)), David Fowler and Dr Paul Blakey (University of Worcester) and has been tested with leagues and teams in terms of application and usability before publication.

The model is broken into three broad elements:

1. Foundation necessities
2. Resource commitments
3. Activities

### **1. Foundation necessities**

The first broad element that must be in place in order to realize sustainable attendance growth is to have a clearly defined vision, mission and culture & heritage.

A clear vision and mission provide clarity of purpose and direction for the entire organization across all departments. The vision statement clearly defines where you want your sport organization to be in the future. In essence, it states your ambition as an organisation, providing direction on where you are heading. (Wilson, 2019, para. 1-7)

What is a 'vision' statement?

A 'vision' statement expresses what the club or federation wants to be some years from now.

The 'vision' statement is a simple and inspiring statement that does the following:

- it defines the long-term view of the sports organization;
- it provides a clear decision-making framework;



- it should stretch the capabilities of the club or federation; and
- it gives direction to the future of the club or federation.

It can be a single sentence or a few paragraphs. It must be clear, ambitious but realistic, aligned to the organizations values and time-bound (usually, 5-10 years).

The 'vision' statement should engage with all stakeholders, exciting and motivating them, to achieve the organization's vision.

**Step one** - The following statement will help you formulate your 'vision' statement:

In 5-10 years, we will  
be:

In 5-10 years, we will  
want:

**Step two** - Now write your 'vision' statement in the box below:

The mission simply describes the current purpose and activities - what you do, for whom, and what are the benefits. A mission statement helps to clarify the role of the federation and activities with its stakeholders. It asks the question, why do we exist? The goals and objectives derived from this vision and mission will then guide the organization through this process. It is therefore important that growing attendance is an important part of the long-term agenda of the organization. This ensures all departments are aligned and justifies the allocation of necessary resources. Everyone should buy into what your trying to achieve in terms of sustaining or growing attendance at home games - it's not just the job of the marketing department! (Wilson, 2019, para. 7)

What is a 'mission' statement?



A 'mission' statement defines the *current* purpose and activities of a sports organization.

A 'mission' statement does the following:

- it describes the purpose of the club or federation;
- it describes the customers of the club or federations; and
- it describes the MA's responsibility to its customers.

The following statement will help you formulate your 'mission' statement:

**STEP One** – Fill in the following boxes

What do we do today:

How do we do it?:

For who do we do it?:

What is the benefit?:

**Step two** – Now write your 'mission' statement in the box below:

A club or national team must have a clear understanding of its cultural surroundings, which are deeply rooted in the team's history and heritage. Closely linked to this are the club's or national federation's values: this provides a framework on how staff and fans should behave.

Having core values allows fans to identify themselves with the team and brings the fans together in terms of their support. These core values express who they are as a group, what they believe in and what they stand for. Being part of the 'tribe or clan' is one of the basic human needs (Funker, et al., 2009) with the behaviour of staying part of the group through the highs and lows of the team's performance on the field, (a concept called performance tolerance) (de Ruyter & Wetzels, 2000).

A great example is the fans of the Northern Ireland International team. They have created a core identity (the Green and white army; GAWA) which combines a set



of values & culture which are portrayed in the stands during games – fun, passion, togetherness, inclusiveness. A club or national teams culture determines whether, for example, the focus is on fun or whether it promotes the club's history/heritage. The culture creates the atmosphere that permeates every aspect of the club or national team. Is the atmosphere relaxed or intense? Supportive or competitive? This should all be considered during this stage of the model when growing attendance. (Wilson, 2019, para. 8)

**Image 4: Fans of the Northern Ireland International team**



Fans supporting their team from the tribune. [Online image]. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/growing-attendance-model-gam-geoff-wilson>

The sport organization should identify with the values, culture, history and heritage alongside the fans so that a strong foundation is established of who they are, what they believe in and how it is portrayed on match day and non-match days (Wilson & Fowler, 2016). The fan culture ensures a sense of ownership and togetherness with the team.

If the organization is not 100% clear on why it exists, where it is heading and does not have a deep understanding of its cultures/values/history and heritage,

then whatever activity is planned is not grounded in a firm foundation (Draebye, 2017). Also, it will undoubtedly lead to internal communication inconsistencies which can result in external branding inconsistencies. It will make it more difficult for fans to connect themselves to the team as different interpretations about the brand will exist (Boyle, 2017).

## **2. Resource Commitments**

To grow attendance sustainably, resources must be allocated strategically. This includes:

1. Cultural engagement and leadership. The support of the Chair, CEO and/or Marketing Director are fundamental when seeking to grow attendance. It is strong leadership that not only will provide direction, but it will also ensure that implementation is operationalized and the necessary appropriate resources will be reserved (Elberse, 2013). Senior leaders must be fully engaged in the programme from the very start and commit appropriate resources to make it happen (Bradley, 2019). This includes growing attendance being part of strategic meetings. (...)

The culture within the organization must allow staff to safely share new ideas and programmes. Leadership should therefore develop a healthy working culture. It is this senior leader who then connects this to key elements such as heritage, history and organization values (ECA, 2018).

2. Marketing research. It is vital to conduct qualitative and quantitative research with your fans. It is important to get an overall evaluation on the quality of the fan experience. This will help to understand what improvements are needed. Analysis of transactional data (ticketing, merchandising, fob, data etc.) stored in a centralized CRM-system will help to construct an overall overview. It will expose opportunities on what to improve which can then should be reviewed each quarter. But for fully reliable results, qualitative research methods should also be considered. Have direct interactions with your fans to discover what they need when they visit the stadium. Methods to get this information could be via focus groups, interviews or surveys, D School methods or other customer experience measurement tools (Lindsay, van Leeuwen, & van de Peppel, 2017).

The impact of local competition from other sports and entertainment offerings must be taken into consideration. Who are they, what is their experience like? Are you both going after the same audience? Research must be conducted to understand the competition better as well as developing an appropriate action plan. (Wilson, 2019, para. 9-14)

The Competitor Analysis table will help you to identify your key competition, what they are good at, and to list 3 actions which you can implement to combat them.

**Table 2: Example of a Competitor Analysis**

<u>Who is our competitor?</u>	<u>What are they good at?</u>	<u>Actions</u> <u>(What actions can we take to combat the competition?)</u> <u>(3 actions)</u>
<b>Athletics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- They generate income through sponsorship.</li> <li>- They organize school events and tournaments. which are well attended</li> <li>- They have a stronger coach education system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build a relationship with the athletics organization. Share learning with each other.</li> <li>- Improve our grassroots program by creating a grassroots participation strategy.</li> <li>- Introduce a new coach education strategy.</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Template of the Competitor Analysis**

<u>Who is our competitor?</u>	<u>What are they good at?</u>	<u>Actions</u> <u>(What actions can we take to combat the competition?)</u> <u>(3 actions)</u>

- Who is our competitor? In this column, you will state your key competitors. This will include other sports as well as those in the entertainment industry (such as



going to the cinema, attending bingo etc). For example, if you are a football club, a competitor could be the local Basketball or Ice Hockey teams.

- What are they good at? In this column, you will state where the competitor is strong compared to your sports organization. This could include, but not limited to; fan engagement, event/competition/tournaments, participation programs in the community, strong club network, elite training, governance, administration, media coverage, use of technology, marketing and brand awareness, commercial and income generation, coach education, sports in schools etc
- Actions (what actions can we take to combat the competition). In this column, you will write 3 clear actions in order to help you combat against the competition or at least improve your overall product and service compared to your competition.

Finally, it is also important to conduct desk research. It is important to gain a deep understanding of your potential fan base. What are the different segments who you don't reach yet, what is the customer lifetime value assigned to each segment, how can these segments be reached? It is vital to conduct desk research regularly and then to create plans on how to gain access to these potential fans.

3- Resource allocation. Includes areas such as; training hours provided to ensure well-trained stewards, parking staff, friendly hospitality staff, bar staff etc. (Ferrand, 2017). These front-line fan contact moments all need to be staffed by people who have been given the right training i.e. customer service, dealing with families, security. Nothing is more negative to a fan experience than bad customer service from club employees.

An experienced marketing team must also be in place with the right marketing budget assigned to be able to connect to the desired audience. In addition, ongoing training in staff must be maintained alongside the recruitment of staff with the right skills and personality across the organization to employees who are in direct contact with fans. Also, budgets should be reserved to improve the fan experience.

As Formula 1 has shown, investments in fan engagement and the fan experience can result in increased revenues and therefore seem to be a commercially logical choice. (Wilson, 2019, para. 15-16)

The template below should be used to record the training provided for staff.



**Table 4: Example of the record of training**

<u>Staff name</u>	<u>Training provided, i.e. customer service</u>	<u>Training provided by</u>	<u>Date trained</u>	<u>Next training scheduled for staff member, i.e. customer service and date</u>
Geoff Wilson	Introduction to customer service training	In-house team	1/4/20	First-aid training planned for May, 10 2020

**Table 5: Template of the record of training**

<u>Staff name</u>	<u>Training provided, i.e. customer service</u>	<u>Training provided by</u>	<u>Date trained</u>	<u>Next training scheduled for staff member, i.e. customer service and date</u>

- Staff name: In this column you state the staff member who the training course has been provided for.
- Training provided: In this column you state which training has been provided. Examples would include customer service, first-aid training, among others.
- Training provided by: In this column you state who provided the training course. It can be an in-house or external consultant. You can also specify whether it is an online course?
- Date trained: In this column you state the date which the training was delivered.



- Next training schedule for staff member: In this column you state the next up and coming training to be provided for the staff member.

4. Communications strategy. A communications strategy focuses on areas such as: communications objectives, implementation plan, annual content plan, relevant platforms/channels to market for your various fan segments. A clear, simple and consistent message must be created which can unite fans and engage them beyond the matchday experience. In addition, compelling content which is delivered across a range of digital and non-digital platforms should be actioned.

As Fiona Green, managing director of Winners puts it, key is to “get the right message, to the right person, at the right time, on the right platform” (Green, 2018). This is where CRM can also be used. The sport organization should distribute this content in the right way via direct channels (social media, web, email, app, messaging,) and also via the channels of communication partners (influencers, digital media, traditional media etc).

Engaging and interactive content with a consistent tone of voice must be established. This content must be amplified through a wide range of partnerships such as external digital blogs/websites, the players channels or broadcasters. The content created should not only focus on the club/national teams’ history and heritage but also on the current team / players / legends / heroes. Especially in the age of social media, bringing the fans closer to the players will give them a stronger affinity to the club/national team.

It is vital to ensure the same creative message is communicated through all these channels regularly. To feed the appetite of the modern football fan living in an information society, strong storytelling techniques should be applied around game days to extend the game day experience to more than 90 minutes (Rein, et al., 2006). It will help fans to warm-up and to follow the team overall rather than just following the games.

Growing attendance does not mean you only focus on acquiring 'new' fans. Communication & Marketing strategies must be developed for the various sectors of your fan base such as the 'hard core' and casual fan. Retention strategies must be implemented alongside acquisition plans as the cost to acquire a new fan can be significantly higher than retaining an existing fan. (Wilson, 2019, para. 17-19)

The template below should be used when creating your fan retention (keeping your current fans) and fan acquisition (getting new fans or growing your fan base)



campaigns. This template should cover a minimum of one season or calendar year. It is recommended that you organize several workshops with the marketing team to scope out the various campaigns.

**Table 6: Template of a Communications Strategy**

<b>Fan retention campaigns</b>				
<u>Campaign name &amp; campaign details</u>	<u>Key actions required to implement the campaign</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Person responsible</u>	<u>Target/KPI to be achieved</u>

- Campaign name and details: In this column you state the campaign that you are going to launch as regards retaining or keeping your fans. Among the campaigns, we can mention the season ticket renewal campaign. You should include one line about what each campaign is about.
- Key actions required: In this column you state the key actions required to launch the campaign. Consider areas such as budget. Create a plan with key tasks assigned, campaign reporting, staffing required, etc.
- Date: In this column you state the date of the campaign launch.
- Person responsible: In this column you state who the campaign lead is.
- Target/KPI's to be achieved: In this column you state what your objectives are. Define SMART objectives.



**Table 7: Fan acquisition campaigns**

<b><u>Fan acquisition campaigns</u></b>				
<b><u>Campaign name &amp; campaign details</u></b>	<b><u>Key actions required to implement the campaign</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Person responsible</u></b>	<b><u>Target/KPI to be achieved</u></b>
Season ticket campaign (for new season ticket holders)				

### **3. Activities**

This element of the model deals with putting the activities in place to realize the strategic elements of the model.

As mentioned earlier, it is vital to have a consistent message across all platforms telling the same story. This will help in unified team identification and will stimulate positive tribalism and identity. This can be done through leveraging key moments in the team’s history. Sports organizations should facilitate this accordingly. The brand should therefore be consistent, not only in its messaging but in the overall delivery of the brand promise (Willems, 2017).

Another element how sports organizations can grow attendance sustainably is by allowing and facilitating positive tribalism to happen. A good example of positive tribalism is that of the Tartan Army in Scotland. The use of ‘the tartan’ provides a strong symbol that unites the fans for the national team – tapping into their history and heritage as a country. (Wilson, 2019, para. 20-21)



**Image 5: Tartan Army in Scotland**



Tartan Army in Scotland practicing tribalism. [Online image]. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/growing-attendance-model-gam-geoff-wilson>

The final strategic elements required to growing attendance include:

A. Improve the fan experience (Match day)

This pillar covers fan engagement on match days both at the stadium and away from the stadium. This focuses on the following areas:

- Customer journey to and from the stadium. Walking in the shoes of the fans is a great way to identify the customer journey on game days. (Schnater, 2016)
- Quality assessment of the physical match day product

Cleanliness of the stadium, price of tickets relative to the overall experience, fans activity at the stadium (quality of entertainment in the fan zones, etc.), quality of food and beverages, helpful/friendly and knowledgeable staff/stewards, access into the stadium (car parking, turnstiles access), experience of shop (range of products, quality of products), atmosphere inside and outside the stadium (this also includes fan songs and singing sections).

In many cases, the location of the stadium can be a hindrance, but this is where frequent transportation to and from the stadium comes into play. The stadium or venue plays an important part in growing attendances. For example, families might not come to the stadium unless there are clean toilets or "family areas", disabled spectators need specific facilities as do fans of an older generation.

Various ticketing options should be created by the sport organization to meet the needs of their various fan segments. It is important to find the right ticketing options that optimises attendance (ticket packages, pricing, various places to purchase a ticket).

Data can be used to identify key pain points in the fans experience. This insight should be used to improve or change the experience on game day. Also, regular market research will expose new trends which will become part of the fans' expectation. For example, esports is a great market trend but the concourses do need to have space to fit in esports pods. If the concourses are usually congested and you add more elements to it, it will have a contrasting effect. (Wilson, 2019, para. 22-25)

The template below should be used as a checklist for the CEO or senior management when they decide to 'walk in the shoes' of the fans. The purpose of this checklist is to provide the CEO or senior management with areas to consider during their fans journey.



**Table 8: Fan Experience: CEO or senior management Checklist**

<u>Area to review</u>	<u>Marks</u> <u>(very poor, poor, average, good, excellent)</u>	<u>Notes &amp; Evidence.</u> <u>What needs to be improved. What is already great.</u>
<p><b>Buying a ticket</b></p> <p>Either online or at the club / federation</p>		
<p><b>Journey from home to the stadium</b></p> <p>Areas to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transport to the venue</li> <li>- Parking at the venue</li> <li>- Access to the stadium (such as a turnstile access )</li> <li>- Welcome team/volunteers outside the stadium</li> </ul> <p>(friendliess, knowledgeable staff)</p>		
<p><b>Inside the stadium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access-gaining to the stands</li> <li>- Cleanliness of the stadium</li> <li>- Quality and range of food and beverage</li> <li>- Visit to the merchandising shop</li> <li>- Fan zone (such as a range of activities)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>In the stands</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stewarding to find a seat</li> <li>- Pre-game entertaining (Quality of PA speakers)</li> <li>- Cleanliness of the stadium</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Half time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Entertainment at half time</li> </ul>		



-Quality of food and beverages		
<b>Post game</b> - Ease of exiting the stadium - Communications from the club post the game		
<b>Rate the overall experience</b> (very poor, poor, average, good, excellent)  Besides, identify key areas which were really good and areas which need improvement.		

B. Improve the fan engagement (non-match day)

This pillar covers fan engagement outside match days both at the stadium and away from the stadium. This will include areas such as:

- attracting new events to the venue (esports, etc.)
- ensuring a high-quality experience for fans on museum/stadium tours
- use of the venue and stadiums for business
- retail and other uses during the day
- create unique experiences for fans (for example, train with the team, travel with the team, eat with the team or a player)

In addition to organizing activities at the venue, it is important to also include projects, programmes and activities away from the venue on a regular basis. This will strengthen the bond with the sports brand and will lead to increased interest in visiting a game.

C. Ongoing Community interaction and engagement

This pillar focuses on the constant engagement with the community. It is vital that community activities are not one-off programmes but foster deep engagement with the community performed regularly throughout the year (ECA, 2019). These programmes must seek to embed the club or national team into the community and therefore become a logical part of life. The club or federation must try to connect this with partnership activities which link into the overall strategic plan. Once the club or federation has become an integrated part of the community, attendance will grow.



## **Conclusion**

The aim of this model is to provide football leagues, clubs and national federations with key building blocks to help grow attendance at their matches. We understand that sporting performance also plays a part in growing attendance but as an industry we can't solely rely or focus on this. This model provides tools to help grow attendance sustainably. (Wilson, 2019, para. 26-30)

## **Overall Conclusion**

### **Digital checklist for sports organizations:**

- Invest in people with digital & data skills and strategic thinking.
- Keep ahead of the game. Follow key marketers or sports organizations that are doing it great on digital.
- Get close to the sports tech industry. See what technology is coming down the line.
- Have in place the right culture at your sports organization for embracing digital and digital transformation.
- Ensure a clear digital plan is in place.
- Make sure your sports organization understands data and data insight.
- Ensure you have a digital leader within your organization.

### **Key areas for sports organizations to focus on:**

- Love your sport and fans. Be passionate. Demonstrate this passion at your various events.
- Find a hero's key players and get them involved by meeting and engaging with fans.
- Maximize PR and digital opportunities as they arise.
- Produce great content especially in the form of storytelling.
- Embrace the difference in your sports organization, that is, what makes you different (tailgate parties.)
- Identify and embrace the fans culture (songs, fans groups, fans names)



## References

- [Untitled online illustration of an advertisement of Fantasy in the 2019 season of Formula 1]. Formula 1 cars in a race. [https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Dzsv\\_ICX4AUHnBB.jpg](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Dzsv_ICX4AUHnBB.jpg)
- Chu, J. (2018, November). Study: There's real skill in fantasy sports. *MIT News*. <http://news.mit.edu/2018/hosoi-study-skill-fantasy-sports-1107>
- The Nielsen Company. (2017). *The Esports playbook. Maximizing your investment through understanding the fans*. <http://niensports.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Nielsen-Esports-Playbook.pdf>
- Wilson, G. (2019, September). Growing Attendance Model (GAM). *LinkedIn Pulse*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/growing-attendance-model-gam-geoff-wilson>
- Wilson, G., & Fowler, D. (2016, September 23). Fan Engagement: from match day to every day. *LinkedIn Pulse*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/fan-engagement-from-match-day-every-geoff-wilson/>

