

APP ENGAGEMENT PLAYBOOK FOR COLLEGIATE SPORTS



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CHAPTER 1

HOME GAME



INTRODUCTION

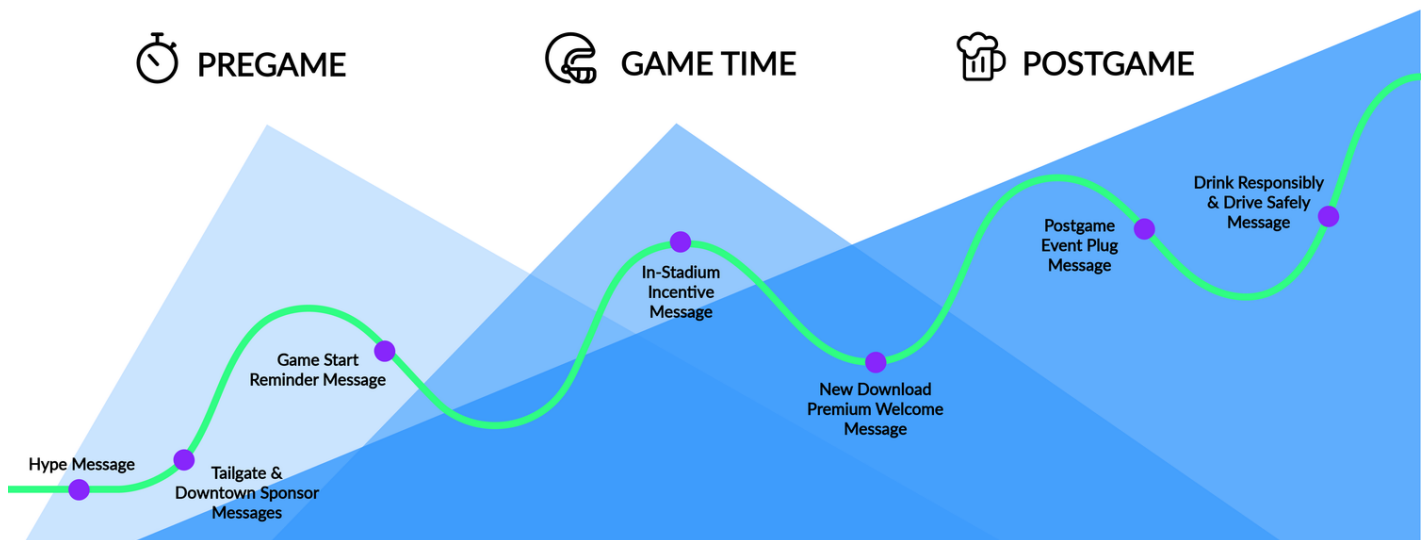
Sport's marketers are always looking for the next best thing to enhance the reach and reputation of their brand. Whether you are a college team game day marketer or in charge of sponsor partnerships, the advantage of location-based app push notification is prominent throughout the entire sport's advertising space.

This playbook has put together some of the most profitable touchpoints for a team to reach their fans during a home game. These suggestions offer solutions for user install increases, expanding sponsorship opportunities, and lifting user engagement to a whole new level. Whether two messages fit your goals or all of them benefit your app strategy - this playbook promises significant results.



FAN HOME GAME JOURNEY AT A GLANCE

Push notification touchpoints for fans throughout a home game using your team's app.



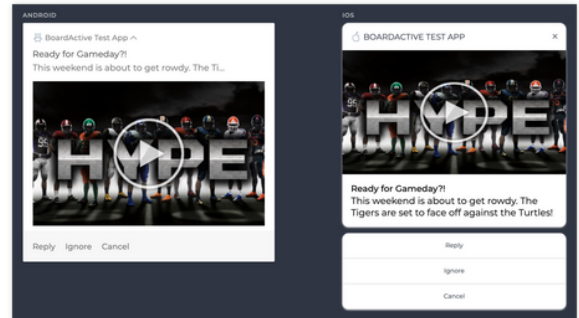


DAY BEFORE THE GAME

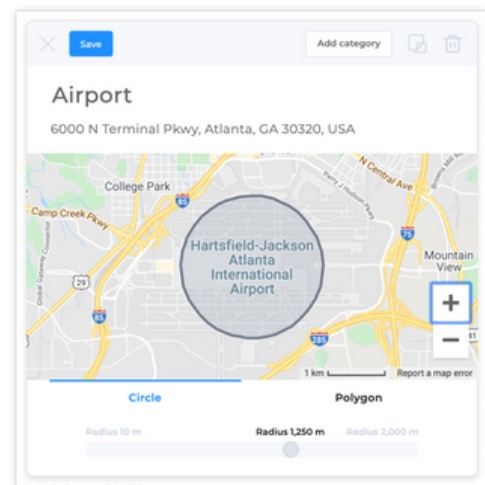
GENERATE HYPE WITH YOUR FANS

The day before your team plays, there is an energy that hits homes, communities, and campuses alike. This is the time to turn up the volume! With premier tactics for app to user engagement in black, and the plays to make in blue, let's run the field on collegiate app home game push strategies.

- Create a message that hits all users with the team's hype video a day early as an incentive for app downloads. *This would be a broadcast message sent to all users.*



- Push users at the airport with location-based welcome messages right as they land. Your message will be the first thing they see when the phone comes off airplane mode. *Geofence the airport and set the message to send when an app user enters the geofence.*



KEY TO BENEFITS



Engagement - Building communication and interaction with your app



Revenue - Building on existing revenue streams and creating new monetization opportunities with ads/sponsors



Downloads - Creating new opportunities for engagement and revenue by increasing installs

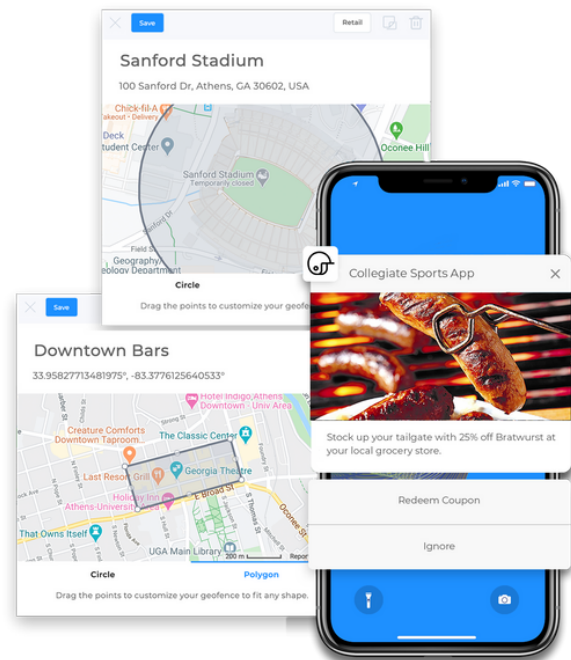


PREGAME

TURN UP THE VOLUME ON ENGAGEMENT

Game Day often offers a few different types of experiences for team fans. Segment your messaging to ensure everyone is reached with the information that relates to their ideal experience.

- Tailgating starts early in the day. Coolers, food, chairs, and tents fill the tailgating area, and team colors are proudly on display. This is a great time to personalize messaging with sponsor offerings that fit your users' current goals. Food, beverages, local retail, and radio sponsorship promotions sent to tailgaters pregame have a higher rate of redemption for those last-minute items. *Set geofences around the tailgating areas and schedule the messages to send at a specific time or right when they enter the area.*



- What about your downtown fans? You know, the ones that find the best bars and restaurants to socialize with friends and talk about the upcoming game. Send messages to reach these users when they enter the downtown area and promote the restaurant and bar sponsors to increase their game-day revenue, thus adding value to their sponsorship position. This is a feature that will sell itself, as restaurants/bars would love the opportunity to be the downtown spot of their team. *Geofence the downtown area and set a sponsor promo message to send when fans enter that area.*





- Promotion options for downtown are not limited to the bar and restaurant promos, either. Consider the hype messages that will amp up rivalries and invite fans to post-game events. *Set geofences around hotspots for home team fans and schedule messages to send at set times or when fans enter.*



- As the time counts down and it's thirty minutes to game time, it helps to send a reminder message to all your fans that it is almost time for the game to begin. *Set a message to send to all users 30 minutes prior to the start of the game.*



For the tailgaters and downtown revelers alike, this reminder sets the tone for what comes next: game-time!

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GAMETIME

DELIVER SPONSOR PROMOTIONS &
INCREASE DOWNLOADS

As the game begins there are a few moments that can make the difference in the experience that a fan receives. Sponsors receive an added touchpoint with fans when you send offers to app users during the game.

- Adding in the extra incentive for in-stadium fans goes a long way, as well. Offer premium promotions for those that attend the games, and it's a guaranteed win! *Geofence the stadium and schedule messages to send at a specific time or when they enter the stadium.*



- Growing your team's app is essential. Driving that growth requires reaching fans at the right moment. What moment is better than when all the fans are staring at the jumbotron? Adding a CTA on the big screen to download the app in order to receive a high-level offering from one of your sponsors. The incentive will get them installed, and the user experience will keep them coming back for more. *Set the promotional message to send once the user has signed up between a specific time or date range.*



- Hype up the crowd with messages directing the fans to find the mascot hidden among the stands or detailing times for photo ops with the mascot. *Schedule a message to send at a specific time for fans within the stadium geofence. On a convenient note, once a geofence has been established around a place, it is saved for future use and messages. No need to create a new one!*



As the game nears the end and fans are either in celebration or disbelief, it's time to spread the word that the fun doesn't end yet. It's time for the messages that will leave a lasting impression - postgame!





POSTGAME

CAPITALIZE ON AN OUTCOME &
PROMOTE EVENTS

Right as the game ends, an outcome message can aid in the celebration or soften the blow of defeat.

- Offer sponsor promotions based on the outcome of the game right when it matters most. *Use the stadium geofence and send a message as fans leave the area.*



- Heading home? Thank fans for spending the game day with their team, and offer “free when you fill up” promotions to send them to sponsor’s gas stations. *Geofence the parking area and set a message to send when the fan leaves the geofence.*



- Drinking responsibly is important to all communities and schools. Navigate fans to uber/lyft pick up points, and where they can find local transportation to head downtown. *Use the stadium geofence and set a message to send after the time a game ends and when they exit the geofence.*



- The party doesn’t have to stop when the game is over! Let fans know what downtown establishments offer after-game specials and where each team’s fans are celebrating/wallowing after the game. *Using your downtown geofence, set a message to send once the fan re-enters the downtown area after the game.*



Implementing a sound strategy for engaging fans on a mobile level offers a form of communication that is personal to the fan’s preferred experience. From the moment they put on their team colors to the moment they head home, every touchpoint will offer a relevant offer and message to curate an unforgettable experience.

BoardActive is the mobile app solution that creates this next-level interactive experience between team and fans. Between the advanced push notification ability and patented geolocation technology, engaging and retaining users has never been easier.

Our experts have a wide range of offerings in response to partnering with collegiate sport’s teams and believe that there is power in seeing the technology yourself.

CHAPTER 2

AWAY GAME



INTRODUCTION

The challenge that sports marketers face with away games is creating an experience that is memorable and on par with the home game encounter. The solution? Allow your fans to feel as if they are traveling with the team instead of to them. Using mobile marketing tactics featured in this playbook, your app will increase downloads and engagement while creating opportunities to drive revenue no matter the location.



A note from our expert: I'd like to start by talking about a few best practices in sports marketing. Table stakes for successfully utilizing mobile marketing for your game-day strategy.

The first thing you need to do is promote your app wherever else you are marketing. So, on your website, in conjunction with ticket sales, digital kiosk advertising, during live events, etc. You should not only let your target audience know that you have an app, but also highlight some of the benefits of using it so they understand the value.

Secondly, there are certain benefits, perks, discounts, content, or merchandise that need to be only available in the app. The hype video drop in the home game playbook is a good example. This type of incentive really speaks to the desire fans have for a VIP experience.

Lastly, one of the in-app benefits should be a reward for sharing the app. A great coupon code for an exceptional discount is a good example.

Utilizing these tactics within your app strategy sets you ahead of the game and puts your app's best foot forward.

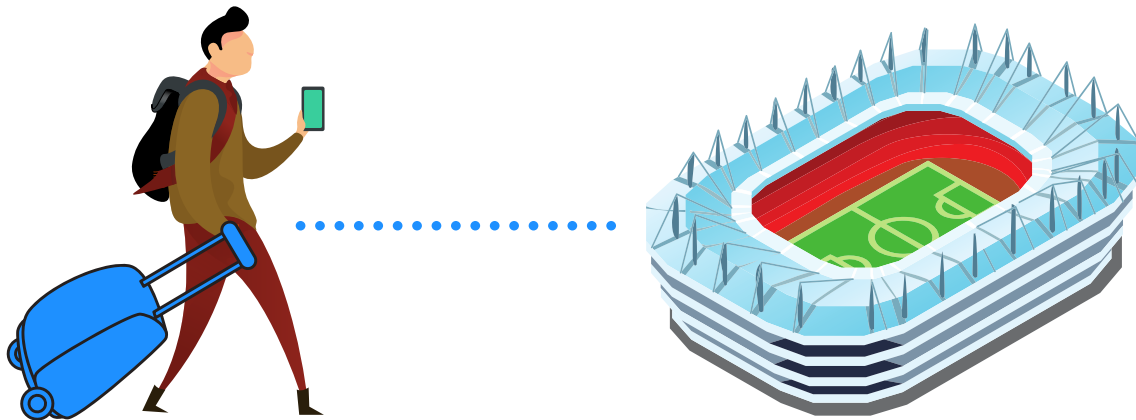


DAY BEFORE THE GAME

TRAVEL WITH THE TEAM

Leading up to the away game, build the anticipation for the rivalry between teams and the events in the town fans will be visiting when they attend the game. The best way to do this is to get fans right when they reach the city.

- Reach fans when they reach the city of the away game. Celebrate their travels to the game with a welcome message, and offer events and meetups that are happening for the team while in town. Provide links within the message to location maps for easy wayfinding. *Geofence the city of the away game and set the message to trigger when the fan enters the geofence. Set this message 1-2 days before the game for the early arrivers.*



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PREGAME

SPONSORS EXTEND THEIR REACH

All of the away game notifications your app provides are great opportunities for new or extended sponsorship. A major home game stadium sponsor or advertiser may want to extend their reach to away game fans. In fact, many stadium sponsors would jump on the chance to continue their advertising opportunities across multiple stadiums. Each away game is a chance for advertisers to sponsor the communication for those locations, as well. Give that VIP experience to fans who travel to the away games with incentives only received through the geolocation triggered messages in the away game's city.

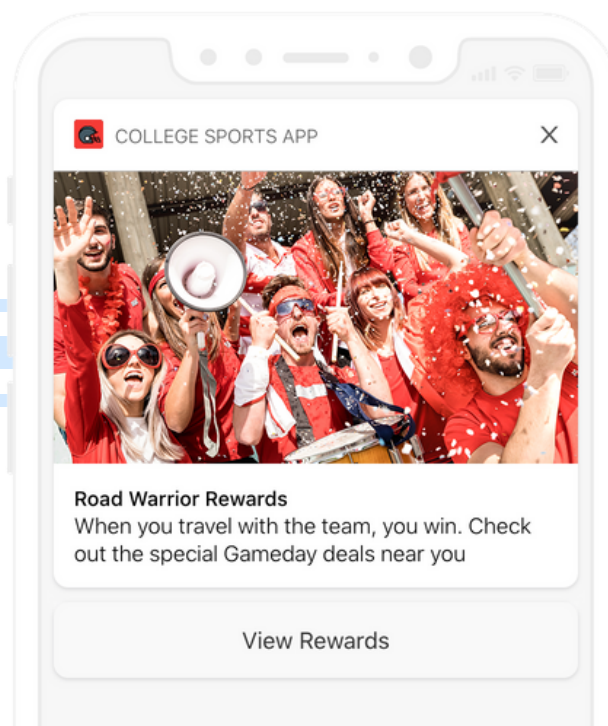
- Target tailgate areas to pump up fans in preparation for the game. Trash talking the rival team is totally permitted and welcomed for the added spice to get fans ready for kickoff. This is a great time to deliver the information for social content and videos to hype the game up. *Geofence the tailgate areas, and trigger a message to send when fans enter that location.*



- Send messages to all the fans that are in the away game area to incentivize attending the game. Utilize the away game and team sponsors to offer premium promotions that fans get only if they attend the stadium game. *Use the city geofence to send a scheduled message to the fans within that geofence.*



- Just as with the home game, let fans know when game time is getting closer. *Schedule a message to send 30 minutes prior to the game start time to all users within the city geofence.*

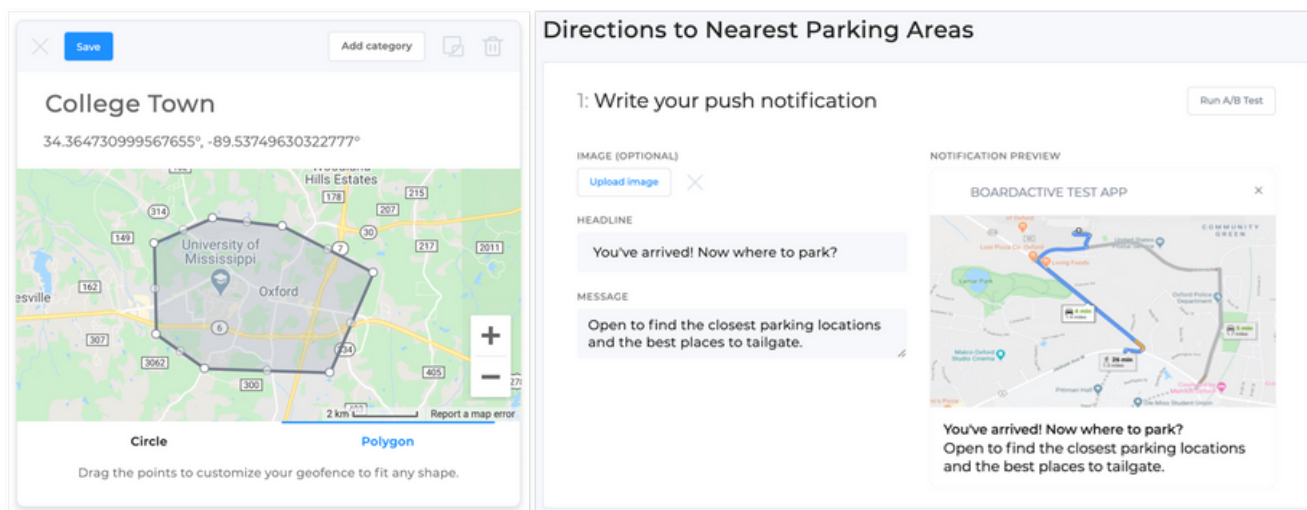




GAMETIME

HYPE FANS AT AWAY GAMES &
ENCOURAGE DOWNLOADS

It's time for the game to begin! Your app is the perfect tool to act as a local guide for fans that are in a new city attending away games. Increase downloads with game attendees, and provide instant access to team updates.



- Send fans directions to the local parking areas and ride-sharing locations to ensure no one has trouble navigating the new stadium. *Schedule a message to send a few hours before the game with the audience segmented to those who entered the city geofence that day.*



- Encourage new downloads by offering a referral link/QR code fans can easily share to earn an extra sponsor supplied incentive for both themselves and the new user. *Schedule a message to send during halftime with the shareable link/QR code to all fans.*



- Home game support is always heavy, so with your team facing a crowd of rival fans, it pays to entice some loud encouragement for your team. *Schedule a message to send at kickoff time to all players who visited the stadium geofence that day.*





POSTGAME

CELEBRATE THE WIN,
CONSOLE THE LOSS

The game has ended, and your team is either in celebration mode or it's time to console your fans. Send outcome-based messages to support your fan's experience. This is also the best time to reach out to fans to let them know the next opportunity to see the team play with revenue lifts enclosed. What does that look like?

- The final score is in. Did your team sweep the game? Was it close? Did you lose? Celebrate with the fans or console the loss at the right time to make it count. *Schedule a message to send based on the outcome of the game, and set it to send at a specific time.*



- The next game is right around the corner. Rile up the fans with another victory in the future or with a chance to redeem themselves with the next adversary. Include revenue opportunities with this message such as limited offer gear, high-level promotions from sponsors, and even options to purchase tickets. *Schedule a message to send within a specific time on this day.*



Away games are a perfect time to give fans the personalized experience that they want. The goal is to make them feel like they weren't there just watching their team, but that they are a part of it. The best way to increase engagement and downloads while creating new revenue opportunities is to provide a value that fans cannot ignore.

CHAPTER 3

SPECIAL EVENTS



INTRODUCTION

Special events are the sports marketer's golden goose. These events capitalize on the escalating excitement of fans, schools, and sponsors alike. Championships, Rival Games, and Conference tournaments draw in larger monetization opportunities and widen a team's fanbase. With the best tactics for hitting the best touchpoints in the fan's journey for these types of events, let's roll out the playbook.



"I think that [the playbook] is super great at getting across what's important to do and when to do it. I think it'd be great to have a chapter on an isolated sports event (like hosting a championship or qualifier) and getting engagement with that. Overall I think it's a great resource so far."

- *Morningside College Sports Marketing*



BEFORE THE GAME

- Merchandise
- Ticket Sales (Bundle Deals)
- Game Hype
- Team Events

"Wow! That was really good. I was in charge of the student section mobile app for UNCW and I could relate to just about all of this."

- *University of North Carolina of Wilmington Sports Marketing*



PREGAME

- Downtown Events
- Watch Parties
- Download Incentives
- Game Start Reminder



GAME TIME

- Unique Promotions
- New Sponsors
- Extend Local Sponsor Reach

"[The playbook] is very informational and highlights the different actions a marketing team needs to take thoroughly. I know my team has focused a lot on pushing our app downloads so mentioning that throughout the playbook was important and also realistic. I also like how it's split into pre-game, game time, and post-game in each section. It's easier to follow and allows a deeper insight! I know these are just the first few chapters but I think it is off to a great start!!!"

- *University of South Florida Sports Marketing*



POSTGAME

- End of Year Highlights
- After Parties



DAY BEFORE THE GAME

ESCALATE THE EARLY EXCITEMENT

The opportunities to reach fans before a primetime event are extended in comparison to an average game. For the weeks leading up to a championship game, conference, or a rival team game - fan hype is where it is at.

- Merchandise sells in droves for special events. Fans want to rep their favorite teams and making a statement on supporting a team is more important than ever. *Craft a message that offers app users a special gear incentive. Whether it is “free with purchase” or a percentage off, the fans appreciate the deal exclusive to them. Broadcast to all users.*



- Ticket sales for special events are typically higher than an average game. Utilize the demand and offer package deals to app users. For example, work with sponsors or partner businesses to group air, hotel, and tickets into one package at a slightly reduced rate. The fans that are hesitant to make an out of town trip may need that extra promotional nudge to turn wishful thinking into a plan. *Set your bundle message to send to all users after the game that leads to the special event. Fan’s minds are already on the upcoming game and they have a heavy dose of team pride to aid their purchasing decision.*



- Leading up to a big game, especially rival games, there is a lot of excitement, trash-talking, and team pride. These are perfect sentiments to accentuate with hype videos, messages from the team, and overall ambient content to keep the attitude going. *Send broadcast messages to all users.*



- The big events always have big fanfare. From pep rallies to event promotion, the game will generate subsidiary events that are the perfect moments to engage fans. *Set a geofence around the school and/or local communities. Trigger the message to send a few days before the event with ticket purchase options, directions to the event location, and sponsors of the event whenever the fan enters one of the geofences.*





PREGAME

**FEED FANS AN EXPERIENCE AT HOME
OR IN THE STANDS**

The day of the game has an energy that is unmatched. People are ready for what is to come, and the marketing for this day is integral to give fans the best experience possible. From watch parties for those that cannot attend in person to involving fans in the game day promos - there is a message for everyone.

- Many teams are not lucky enough to have a championship hosted in their home stadium. This means traveling for fans that want to attend. Even with a great deal, that is not always in the books for someone's schedule or budget. So, how do these fans receive an experience that matches? Watch parties. Messages with local downtown sponsor's offerings for game day watch parties are a great idea. A bonus if you include a deal for the app users specifically. Does the school host its own watch party in the stadium or theater? Promote the event the same way. *Use the community geofence to trigger the message to send with locations, deals, and event pricing (if applicable).*



- You can also target fans that are throwing their own watch parties with sponsor offerings for local catering, deals on party essentials, and more. *Use the same community geofence to trigger these "at-home" promotional messages.*



- Increasing downloads is always a priority for apps. With many fans turning to mobile engagement for their information and planning, express the value of the app's VIP experience. Incentivize fans with rewards for gaining new downloads. *Schedule a message to send to all users before the game that offers them free drink vouchers or a percentage off of gear with new downloads and include a download link they can share.*



- As with all pregame tactics, sending a reminder message when the game is close to starting is important. With food and beer on the brain, we all need a little reminder to get our heads in the game. *Schedule a broadcast message to all fans about 30 minutes prior to the game start time.*





GAMETIME

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SPONSOR'S
PROMOS & PARTNERSHIPS

Game time is the right time....to level up the fan experience. What is your team offering to make this an unforgettable impression on each fan? Are you marketing a unique promotional idea? Do you have some interesting new sponsors? More importantly, are you maximizing the reach of your existing sponsors?

- As the game begins, let attending fans know of the unique promo opportunities your team has. A free throw contest to win a signed swag item? Photo ops with the MVP after the game? You can even host a game-day gear auction with bids happening in the mobile app throughout the game. *Geofence the stadium and set promo messages to trigger when users enter.*



- Many team sponsors are local businesses. This is great for promotions within your own stadium, but how can you generate revenue and extend that sponsor's reach for large events in other locations? Easy. Offer special deals fans can use when they get back to town with proof of game attendance. This idea can be used for big events, even if your team isn't participating in them. If you have a team fan that is a huge college football fan, as well - getting promotions for their hometown favorites while at the game will give a very specific VIP impression. *Use the stadium geofence and set messages to send when the fan enters the area. Schedule a broadcast message to all fans about 30 minutes prior to the game start time.*





POSTGAME

END ON A HIGH: WIN OR LOSE

The game is over and it is either time to celebrate or to console. Outcome-based messages are integral to lead fans into the next event; whether that is the next season, hype for the next game, or opportunities for other sports to get some interest lift.

- Fans love a reminder of the all great moments the season has brought. Most teams don't have the bandwidth to construct personalized scrapbooks, so the digital option is definitely the way to go. After a championship game, send out a recap video that features the highlights of the season, ending on the best moments of the current game. *Broadcast the message to all of your fans a few hours after the game.*



- The game ends, but the fun doesn't. Celebrate a win and replace the bitterness of defeat with local events for your team's fans. Include the places that are hosting your team's after parties and special offerings for the fans that have the app downloaded. *Geofence the downtown area of the championship location, and set messages to send when fans enter the area.*



Special events in college sports are a pastime that will forever hold a special place in the minds of fans. People wait all year for the experience, and its sports marketers job to live up to and exceed the expectations of these fans. Adapt tactics to hit fans when it matters, and capitalize on the sponsorship your team has to leave a lasting impression. With a few key messages at the right time in the right place, your revenue, engagement, and downloads will hit an all-time high.

CHAPTER 4

BEYOND THE STADIUM



INTRODUCTION

We have walked you through the various touchpoints your fans take in various game experiences. From cashing in on home game hype to gaining traction with away game sponsorship opportunities - how can marketers reach their fans with the best content and strategies for the ultimate fan experience? Downloads increase, fans engage at a higher level and sponsorships build actionable threads to revenue when using tools that reach fans when it matters.

Outside of the game day impressions, what other touchpoints bring value? The final chapter of the playbook touches on the fan journey in the unusual situations we find ourselves in today, as well as the specific student and alumni moments that matter. Let's break it down.





REACH FANS AT HOME

ATTEND THE WATCH PARTY

Watch parties and at-home celebrations are nothing new. Multitudes of fans choose this option of celebration every season. With the current measures of social distancing during the pandemic, this choice of game viewing will most likely increase. So, how do sports marketers elevate this fan experience and bring more to the table in terms of engagement and revenue with these fans?

- First and foremost, reach fans where they are. Mobile communication efforts are at an all-time high with fewer people venturing out of their homes for nonessential trips. Send out messages to fans that reach them in their homes with the information they need on upcoming season details, changes in procedures, and event updates. *Geofence local communities to send out location-based information. Send broadcast messages to all fans with season updates and information.*



- Watch parties are where it's at. Fans and alumni plan huge events with all the bells and whistles that make a lasting experience. Team apps can capitalize on these events with focused content to these areas. Offer special promotions to the fans that hold their parties in sponsor's establishments or send information about the specific events in their area with links to last-minute gear purchases for the big day. *Geofence cities and send messages to users within them. Schedule messages to send within the geofences a week before the big day.*

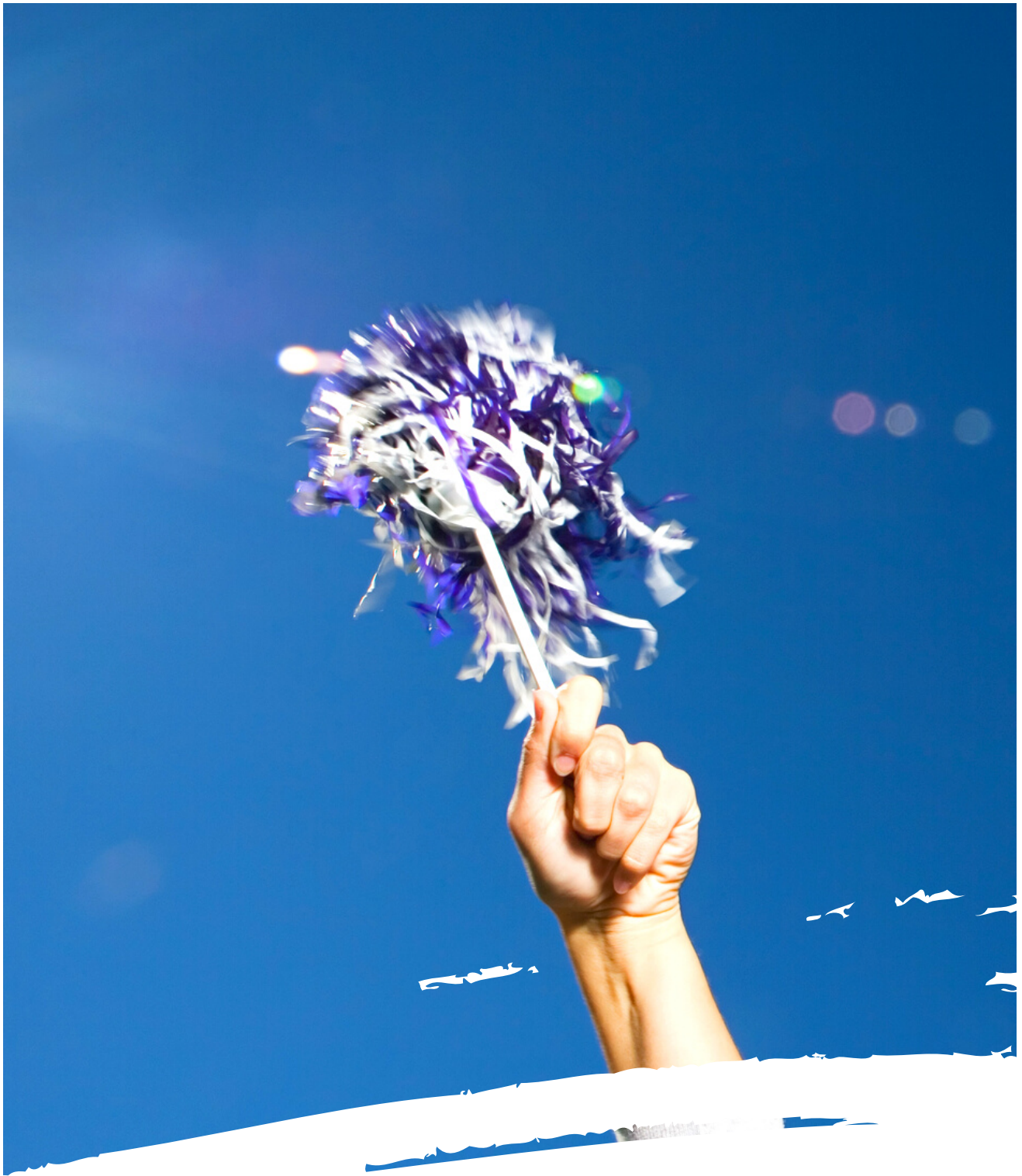


- Utilize social spheres to give fans an unexpected game-day experience. Create online galleries on socials and offer fans the ability to upload images of their game-day setups and gear with specific hashtags. Everyone loves a nice swag brag for their favorite team. Encourage fans on social media platforms to download the app to get in on the action. *Send messages to fans with links to social offerings and instructions to mingle with other online fans.*



- Sponsors will not fall to the wayside with fans watching the game at home or in a pub. Promote their offerings and keep fans updated with new specials sponsors market. Are some of the local restaurant sponsors offering game-day promotional deals on pick up and delivery? Hold a poll only the fans with the app downloaded can participate in. Ask for the guess of who will be MVP of the game or the best team chant with the winner receiving a sponsored limited time offer. *Schedule messages to send pregame and post-game with sponsor promotions and interactive value.*





SPIRIT-FOCUSED EVENTS

SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT

There is nothing that boosts game hype like a spirit-focused event. Overly excited, proudly decked out in team colors, and increasing volume on the team chant. Events meant to hype fans up host the best energy fans have to offer. These are lifelong memories in the making. Whether the events are held in person or via live stream, fans want them and expect them.

- The first step to a successful spirit event is letting your fans know what's up. Where will it be? Are there precautions in place for social distancing? If it is held online, provide links to the proper streams and let fans know what the schedule will look like and how they can participate. Share on socials to encourage app downloads. *Schedule a message to send a week before, and then another the morning of the pep rally.*



- Gamification is always popular with fans. Host sponsored contests with the “best-dressed” fan or how many times is the QB’s name mentioned during the rally to receive special gear, sponsor promotions, or exclusive prizes such as 15-minute zoom call with the player of their choice. *Geofence the location of the pep rally and send messages as they enter with links to participate in the games. For online rallies, the same message as a broadcast.*





CAMPUS-FOCUSED CALLS TO ACTION

REWARD LOYALTY

Some of the best fans a team can have are the students, staff, and alumni of the school. These fans should be given the opportunity to be the loudest and proudest at games and events alike. Incentivize participation and word of mouth will spread an app faster than the flu. What does that look like?

- Loyalty programs are nothing new, but they offer a host of rewards that both fans and a team can appreciate. Offer tickets at a discounted price for students who purchase through the app, and share any loyalty or reward programs that the students can cash in on with this purchase. A popular example is a point-system that offers custom swag at different point tiers. *Geofence a school and schedule a message to send a week before games when the student enters the school, reminding students of the deal and points offered.*



- Student fans already feel a sense of importance as a current representative of their team. Offer exclusive gear for only students on the app that they can purchase with or without points to wear to events. *Geofence the school store and send a message with the student gear deals when they enter the location.*



- A lot of schools have fundraising, spirit inducing, and celebration events for school teams. Keeping students in the know with these events ensures they will have the highest levels of participation. *Use the school geofence and send messages to students that enter with upcoming events that only they will have access to.*





ALUMNI CHAPTER REACH

CAPITLAIZE ON YOUR
CHAPTERS

Every team has alumni association chapters that are far-reaching and fun-seeking. The fans within these groups are what you would call, “die-hard” fans, and are some of the most engaged fans at that. Sports marketers have an opportunity to create a great revenue stream and target their ideal users.

- You alumni association chapter leaders know where all the local game-day meetup spots are. These bars and restaurant packed with fans are the perfect places to deliver engaging content or sponsored promotions. *Enable your alumni association chapters to upload their most popular game-day meet up locations, and schedule messages from pre-game to post-game.*



- Alumni are the perfect candidates for gear pushes. They tend to have a more stable financial backing, and their team spirit has had years to build. They want the newest items, the best looks, and anything they can personalize to show they are the ultimate fan. *Use the chapter region geofence and send messages to send with gear promotions and sponsor offerings.*



College sports are a world unto themselves. They envelop their fans with a sense of pride and entertainment that is parallel to none. Every point of a fan’s journey offers a new opportunity to engage, and current marketers are recognizing the value of reaching these fans where they are with the information that matters most.

Utilize the tools that create a personalized method of communication between a team and its fans. This is the next step to enriching the overall fan experience, increasing downloads, improving engagement, and developing actional forms of revenue. BoardActive provides a no hardware solution for location-based messaging, analytics, and attribution that is specifically suited to the sports industry. Reach out to see more.
