



The Off-Season Playbook

Four Strategies to Create
Winning Content All Year Long



Introduction

The off-season. Does it exist? In an era when 24/7 sports coverage has become an industry standard on TV, radio, podcasts, and social media, there have never been more opportunities for sports organizations to create deeper connections with their fans.

Despite the dip in live action, they want updates on their favorite teams, leagues, and players—which is good news if you're marketing to sports fans. Research shows that content consumption correlates with higher fan spend. With that in mind, here are four strategies sports marketers can use to engage fans during the off-season and drive increased interest and revenue next season.



Survey of 15,000 Sports Fans

55%

say a year-round experience will make them more likely to purchase a ticket.

65%

want some content or information on a monthly basis.

Create a Connection Between Fans & Players

Your fans want to know the *people* behind their favorite players. That gives you plenty of options for creating great content, but consider what they really want and what leads to more spend. According to research, content like highlights, performance analysis, and stories about players' community involvement led to the highest average fan spend.

With the live action on hold, you can use this opportunity to repurpose content from the previous campaign, using your players to provide interesting insights for the fans. Let them pick and share their favourite moments, have them

create their own highlight compilations, adding their own commentary from the perspective of someone who experienced it all first-hand.

It's also likely that you'll have some new faces on your roster this off-season. Introduce them early to build hype and create a lasting relationship with the fans. You can showcase players skills, potential, and perhaps most importantly—their personality. In-depth content that gives fans a glimpse into their favorite athletes' everyday lives gets *huge* engagement. For a maximum effect, consider launching a new channel, like a podcast or social account.



Build Future Fandom with Evergreen Content

Iconic sports moments last forever and your archive is a treasure trove of stories waiting to be told. Reminding fans about memorable games, moments, and milestones allows organizations to showcase the history of their brand to younger audiences with content that's proven to attract eyeballs. Creating videos featuring "On This Day" content, or just reminiscing on seasons past can bring victories and historic storylines back to life, reinforcing your legacy and continuing to cement it in the minds of generations to come.

The best part, you can create content like this without relying on any live games or events. To engage younger audiences, repurpose classic content that's previously only been available in a traditional, 16:9 horizontal ratio and reformat it to 9:16. This vertical video is needed to serve younger fans on the platforms they use most, like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts.



“ Our new fans need to understand the history of the club...archives play a big part in educating them. We're trying to tell a story built on what's currently happening, but the archive has played a huge role being the link to past seasons. ”

Pierre-Olivier Bouche
Media Director, Tottenham Hotspur

Stay Relevant on Social Media

Everyone knows how important it is to create content for fans on social media—but to really make a difference, they need to engage with it. To be on-trend and get maximum reach, you'll need a multi-platform, multi-format approach.

This past year, sports content on TikTok exploded, reaching more fans and generating more reactions than ever before. Yet, despite the marketing potential of this platform, some sports organizations are hesitant to create an account. This off-season, take advantage of the lull in live games to try something new.

The challenge on social is getting creative with your content ideas, and optimizing videos for each platform based on a unique set of technical requirements. It could be worth looking into solutions that can automatically craft and cut content to a 9:16 aspect ratio needed on vertical apps like TikTok and YouTube Shorts—and 4:5 and 16:9 for platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook.

Pro tip: TikTok is perfect for showcasing off-season content like clips from training camp, and funny interviews with players and fans, in addition to game highlights.

Video view increases year-over-year:

+140%

#baseball

+128%

#cricket

+116%

#volleyball

+108%

#hockey

+92%

#basketball

+91%

#rugby

+86%

#soccer

(Global, non-US)

+66%

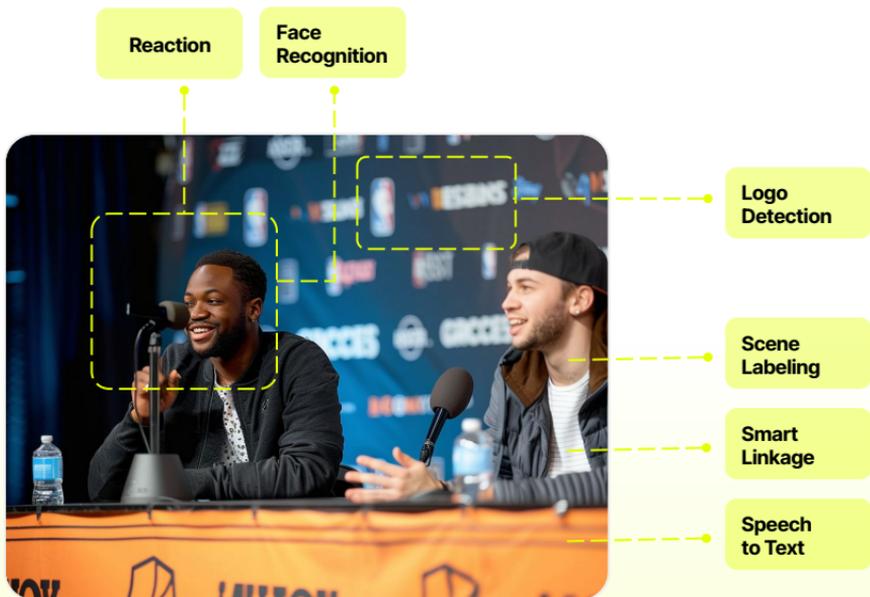
#soccer

(US only)

■ Create ‘Off the Field’ Content

The off-season is sure to be filled with rumors and updates about trades, transfers, new recruits, coaching changes, and more. While breaking news should definitely be part of your content strategy, there’s much more non-game footage you can share with fans, like press conferences, studio shows, and interviews. Better yet is the action from training camp—shots of work out sessions and practices can be used to create some of the best

behind-the-scenes footage to get fans excited about next season. Set yourself up for success by planning time in advance to conduct interviews and mic-up players during practice. In the near-term, you can use them as short-form clips on social media, and in the long-term you could have some excellent long-form content on hand for a documentary or more extensive profile of your organization.



Conclusion: The WSC Sports Perspective

A year-round content strategy is crucial to keep fans engaged and to increase interest next season. To execute the plan successfully, WSC Sports has a suite of products to help you streamline your workflow and keep the content engine running through the off-season.

The Essentials Suite has everything you need to quickly create game-related content automatically or on-demand. Simply ingest a broadcast stream into the platform and our AI-algorithms automatically index, tag, and rate every play, and allow you to build-out a rich library organized by type of play, player, team, and more.

To tap into historic moments in your organization's history, WSC Sports offers an **Archive** solution that automatically analyzes and indexes games from the past just like it does for current ones. Add the best moments to your library like you would for new games, and bring back videos that celebrate key dates, rivalry matchups, and past achievements to create some nostalgic moments for your fans.

While fans of a certain age might enjoy classic footage, your younger fans might not have been born yet. WSC Sports' **In-App Stories** solution, allows you to easily convert footage—old and new—to multiple aspect ratios, pre-formatted for YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and more. Build momentum for next season by solidifying your presence on social media and creating content in the formats that Gen Z and millennials consume most.

Finally, we spoke about the need to post content beyond just in-game footage. For that, WSC Sports recently released a new product, **Around the Game**, that includes expanded capabilities to automatically index and tag things like interviews, press conferences, studio shows, still images and logos to help you tell the full story, and build a deeper connection with your fans.

To learn more about our platform or how to create a winning off-season content strategy, reach out to your Account Manager.

