

The Rights Holders' Playbook

4 Winning Strategies
to Make the Most
of Your Content

Introduction

Throughout the year, sports media rights holders are presented with golden opportunities to create epic viewing experiences for fans around the world. But how do they make sure that they're truly leveraging their content to the fullest and extracting the most value from their media rights?

To reach untapped audiences and engage younger demographics, rights holders must harness a combination of personalization and innovation. But, with thousands of hours of live footage and countless additional hours of alternate angles, interviews, and fan-generated assets, digital content teams have their hands full.

In this guide, we'll dive into four impactful strategies rights holders can use to optimize their content strategy to drive unparalleled engagement for both their content and sponsors.

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- 02 Leveraging Vertical Video to Engage With Fans**
- 03 Finding Untapped Audiences with Google Search**
- 04 Developing a Flexible Content Strategy**





01

Personalized Content on Your Owned & Operated Platforms

We live in an age where video is king, yet distribution is fragmented, and consumers are flooded with options. Modern sports fans expect more. Not only do they want more content, they want to view it on multiple devices, in different formats and durations--and they want it to feature the players and plays that matter most to them.

To compete with Netflix, social media, and other platforms in a relentless fight for consumer attention, you must serve the right content on the right platform.

Putting out quality content is only half the battle.

Rather, it's delivering said content to consumers exactly where and when they want it most that keeps them coming back for more.

But to truly find the way into fans' hearts, rights holders must tap into their personalized viewing preferences. A strategic way to uncover these insights is through owned and operated platforms - a virtual home ground where fan engagement meets data analytics.

By having fans consume video highlights through the organization's owned and operated platforms, rights holders can gather valuable first-party data about each user's preferences, viewing behavior, and location.

From there, customized email and personalized push notifications can be created that serve content (highlights, images, articles, etc) of a user's favorite teams and players.

For example, if a user frequently watches short-form videos of their favorite player, the organization can use this specific type of content to remarket offers and promotions based on interest, such as tickets and discounts on new merchandise. This allows rights holders to deliver personalized experiences using their preferred player and type of highlight to do so, which is impossible on external platforms.

But the concept of personalized content isn't confined to just apps or OTT platforms. This is just one of many data-driven ways to cater to fan preferences, by serving the right content, in the right place, at the right time.



We've created a personalized highlights feed for our fans, where they have the ability to go in, identify their favorite player or their favorite type of play. Using the WCS Sports platform we're able to deliver those highlights in real-time to our fans through the Cavs mobile app.



Brandon Jirousek
VP Digital, Cleveland Cavaliers





02

Leveraging Vertical Video to Engage with Fans

Short-form content is no longer a nice-to-have. It's a necessity. Along with the rise of TikTok and Instagram Reels, short-form vertical video has become consumers' preferred content format for quick mobile content consumption.

75% of US adults

[spend up to two hours watching short-form digital video content each day.](#)

Without properly optimized 9:16 ratio video, keeping younger audiences, and the algorithms that feed them, happy is nearly impossible.

Consumers vote with their attention. It's your job to give them what they want.

This means using vertical video beyond the standard social media platforms. If you're already creating this type of content, it's important to leverage it across all content channels – owned and operated streaming platforms, team and league apps, search engines, and more.

Before the start of the 2022-23 season, the NBA introduced vertical video as the main element in the redesign of their mobile app and has since shattered all of their previous records in terms of views and app dwell time. Since the app's re-launch, the NBA has garnered **over 1 billion video views**, more than tripling their number from the previous season.



With our friends at WSC Sports, we've built clickable stories. For example, if you're opening the app and it's the third quarter of the Cavs vs Sixers game, you can click the live button and get a stories-like tab where automated highlights are created in a vertical format from the horizontal broadcast. You can click through those and catch up with the game live as it's happening.



Andrew Yaffe
SVP and Head of Social and Original Content, NBA

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03

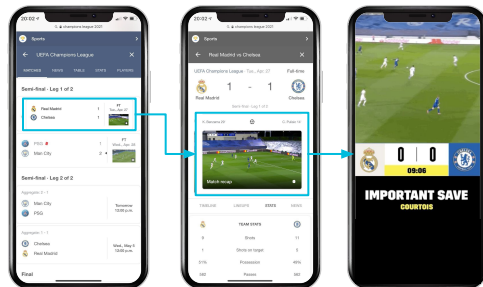
Finding Untapped Audiences with Google Search

In the ever-changing sports media landscape, search has become a key pillar of the content distribution mix. Google has long been a key player in this domain, supporting video highlights through its OneBox. This specially designed box appears at the top of Google Search and provides fans with quick and easy access to information such as news, scores, standings and more.

Recently, Google has developed its offering on OneBox to support Google Web Stories – a content medium that perfectly marries the rising trend of vertical video with the number one place where people go to search.

The ability to create rich, compelling, engaging story experiences, and publish them to Google OneBox, provides a new destination for rights holders, away from their typical distribution channels (social media, apps or websites). Here they can expose their content to more people, create new monetization opportunities and drive new signups on subscription and OTT platforms.

From Search to Watch in One Click



Unlike Instagram or Snap Stories, which expire after 24 hours, Google Web Stories remain available indefinitely, making them highly shareable and accessible anytime.

Rights holders must recognize the potential of this largely untapped content format.

They need to move swiftly to integrate Web Stories into their content strategies. By doing so, you can continue to cater to the modern fan's demand for vertical, short-form content, while also capitalizing on this organic traffic and the unparalleled reach and longevity offered by Google's search platform.



"WSC Sports has helped us to be there [Web Stories] when the game is happening in real-time...it's critical for us to appear there. The partnership between Google and WSC Sports is changing fans' behaviors. Before you would be searching and just get a live score, now you get a thumbnail with real live action. You can actually click on the story highlight straight from your phone."



Sergi Talavera
Head of SEO, DAZN Group





04

Developing a Flexible Content Strategy

The best content strategies are both proactive and reactive.

Winning content strategies are proactive in building a plan to grow engagement and deliver the content you think will resonate with your audience and then reactive in quickly doubling down on what's working.

During major live sporting events, this flexibility and urgency are even more important. The dynamism and unpredictability of live sports demand an agile, omnichannel approach to content delivery across all content channels. Rights holders need solutions that allow them to quickly feature their content in the right format and at the right time. They need to embrace new tools that can empower them further, to be more efficient and agile in being the first to bring fans the content they want to see.

Creating content at speed and scale to meet every fan on every platform is a must, not only to give fans what they want, but to maximize the monetization potential of your media rights. By scaling up your content output, in particular pre-event, you can create fresh opportunities to work with new sponsors and extract the most value from your media rights.

Following these principles and adopting the right tech will ensure that rights holders never miss an opportunity to engage their audience, whether in the lead-up to a game, in the midst of the live action, or in the post-game analysis.



We couldn't have scaled the way we have so quickly without WSC Sports. At times there could be close to 70 games in one night, and WSC Sports allows the team to spotlight the best moments from any game at any given time, which has resulted in significant growth across our social media platforms and most importantly a better, more timely experience for our fans.



Jeremy Loeliger
Commissioner at National Basketball League (NBL)



If you want to succeed in this space, you need to be good in three different things: The first thing is the production of on-demand highlights because that adds a lot to live consumption. The second point is ownership of the product...the viewers at home need to feel that they're getting a personalized experience. Third, at the end of the day, you need technology [that can] create a proper journey for fans.



Pierdamiano Tomagra
Head of Digital, Lega Serie A



WSC Sports in Action

WSC Sports helps over 300 sports organizations all over the world like the NBA, NHL, LaLiga and YouTube TV quickly generate personalized, automated video highlights, driving hundreds of billions of impressions and unlocking new monetization opportunities across all platforms.

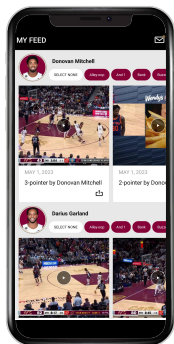
Using advanced AI and machine learning technologies, WSC Sports' proprietary platform analyzes live sports broadcasts, identifies each and every event that occurs in a game, and in real-time creates and publishes customized short-form videos. This enables sports media rights owners to make the most of their content, create new revenue streams, and deliver a personalized fan experience on every platform for every type of fan.

The following pages showcase some of the ways our clients are using our technology and the impact that it's had on their business.





Creating Personalized Video Highlights for the Cleveland Cavaliers App



The Cleveland Cavaliers use WSC Sports' automated AI technology to create and distribute real-time video content at massive speed and scale.

With the ability to create any video highlight in seconds, the Cavs' mobile app now lets users [create a personalized highlights feed](#), handpicking over 24 different types of highlights from their favorite players.

16,000+
Videos Created

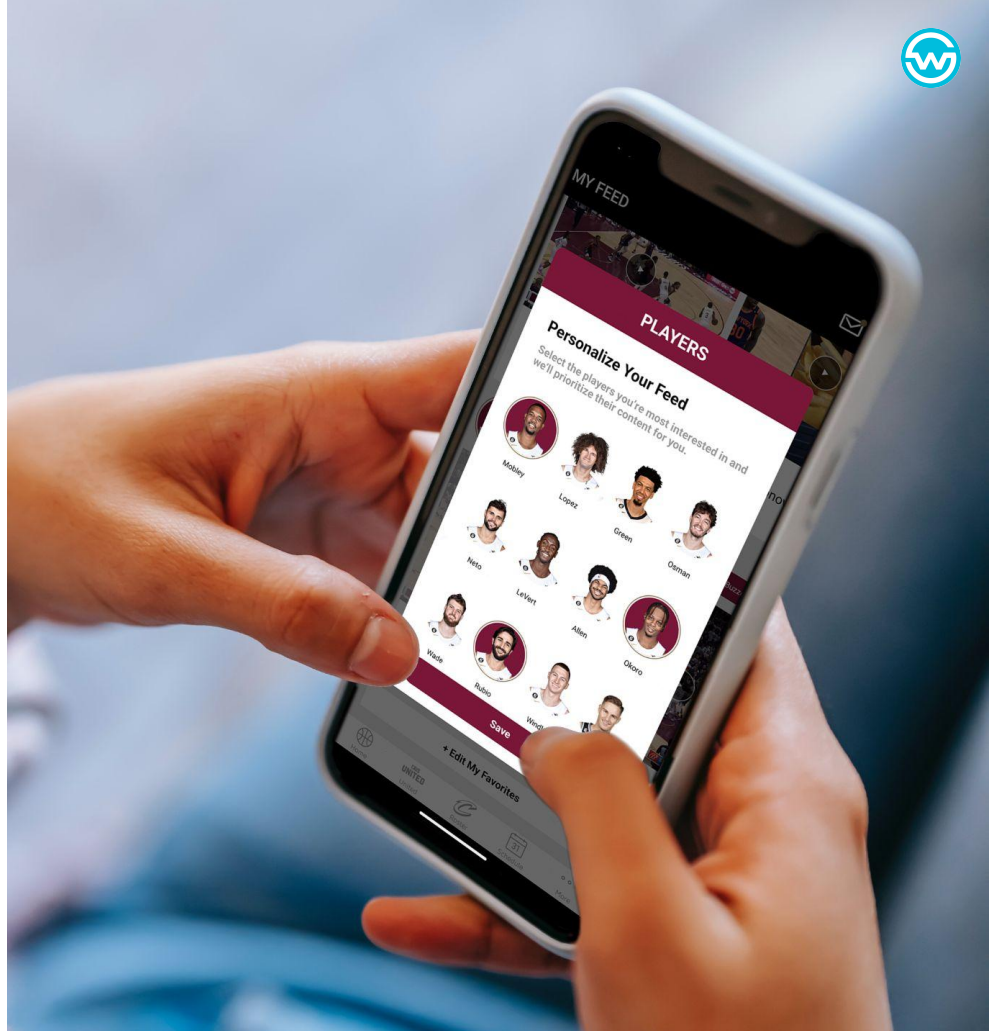
by the Cavs in 2022 using the WSC Sports platform

83% Increase
in App Downloads

since the launch of the personalized highlights feed

20 Minute
App Dwell Time

on average per user on the Cavs mobile app





A Brand New World Cup Viewing Experience

During the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, WSC Sports teamed up with broadcasters across the globe, to deliver a brand new viewing experience for the World Cup. SuperSport, Deutsche Telekom, NOS, TV2, and many other international broadcasters used the WSC Sports platform to automatically create and showcase live vertical video match highlights as Google Web Stories.

Before Qatar 2022, World Cup content had never been created and consumed in this manner.

The Results

365M+
Story Card Impressions

30%
Story CTR

Nearly every broadcaster directed traffic back to their native broadcasts, maximizing the value of their initial rights investments. Furthermore, brands such as AT&T, Samsung, Pepsi, and Adidas have already recognized the potential of advertising on Google Web Stories, collectively promoting campaigns that amassed **200 million sessions** and **1.6 billion page views**.

Numbers like these highlight a larger trend: Fans are actively seeking new ways to consume live sports content.



Award-Winning 'Key Plays'

At the 74th annual Technology & Engineering Emmy® Awards, WSC Sports' partner YouTube TV took home its first ever trophy in the category AI-ML Curation of Sports Highlights.



Our philosophy has always been that watching TV should always be easy, interactive and made for you. We couldn't have done this without our partners — and fellow winners! — over at WSC Sports.



Kathryn Cochrane
Group Product Manager, YouTube TV



Using WSC Sports' AI-powered automated highlight technology, YouTube TV allows viewers to catch up on all the action from a game, at any time, by offering highlights of all the 'key plays'. This feature is also used to bring viewers who tuned in late to a game, right up to the point of live play, through highlights of all the important storylines that may have been missed. Viewers can quickly catch up to the rest of the fans and see out the remainder of the action live. It's like they didn't miss a second of the game!

10M Watch Sessions

In 2022 alone, 'key plays' were used in over 10 million watch sessions on YouTube TV for sports such as baseball, basketball, football and hockey, as well as leagues and events including the NFL, Premier League, Olympics, and World Cup.





What helps me sleep at night is knowing that WSC Sports is watching these trends as closely as we are, figuring out what's next, and helping us prepare for it. They listen to their partners and they're also proactively evolving their technology at the same time. The product is ever-improving.



Matt Carstens
Executive Producer & General Manager of the ACC Digital Network



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Sports