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**Digital Transformation in Sports Industry**

**By**

**Snehasish Kumar Paul**

**200103155**

**Company Name:** Sports 365

**May – June 2021**

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**Digital Transformation in Sports Industry**

**By**

**Snehasish Kumar Paul**

**200103155**

**Under the guidance of**

Ms. Upasana Bhat Prof. Kasturi Das Prof. Sachin Choudhary

Sales, Manager Professor Professor

Sports 365 IMT Ghaziabad IMT Ghaziabad

**May – June, 2021**

**Certificate of Approval**

The following Summer Project Report titled ‘Digital transformation in sports industry' is hereby approved as a certified study in management carried out and presented in a manner satisfactory to warrant its acceptance as a prerequisite for the award of **Post-Graduate Diploma in Management** for which it has been submitted. It is understood that by this approval, the undersigned does not necessarily endorse or approve any statement made, opinion expressed, or conclusion drawn therein but approve the Summer Project Report only for the purpose it is submitted.

Summer Project Report Examination Committee for evaluation of the Summer Project Report

Name Signature

Faculty Mentor Prof. Kasturi Das

Faculty Mentor Prof. Sachin Choudhary

**Certificate from Summer Project Guides**

This is to certify that Mr. Snehasish Kumar Paul, a student of the Post-Graduate Diploma in Management, has worked under our guidance and supervision. This Summer Project Report has the requisite standard, and to the best of our knowledge, no part of it has been reproduced from any other summer project, monograph, report, or book.

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**Abstract**

The success of any company depends on how quick it reacts to the changes or challenges in the market that emerge due to unavoidable circumstances. Successful companies are those which are versatile and dynamic. The summer internship with Sports 365 includes sales generation, Social- Media pages handling and project on understanding how digital equipments & Technological Innovations are transforming sports industry. To understand this both primary and secondary research has been done. It involved identifying the factors which are responsible for changes in the sports industry.

Sports 365 was established in 2012. It is recognized as India’s first professionally run Sports and Wellness merchandise company. The aim of the company is to bring sporting revolution in India and become the prime member for sporting needs across the country. It owns various online portals like Tennis365.in, Running365.in, Sports365.in. The company also provides one stop solution for all sporting related requirements of institutions like clubs and Academies, schools, colleges, corporates etc. Services offered to these Institution are Sports equipments, development and distribution, sports infrastructure, sports merchandise design, events and consulting.

**Problem Statement**-

Development or Innovation is not new to the sports but represents everything that's new and embraced to encourage a competitive advantage. Innovation in sports industry are portion of the developing worldwide sports and recreation industry, and at the individual level, technology development is changing the way that we practice and connect with sports. This study will help us to-

* Understand why changes are required in sports.
* Understand the perception of key stakeholders (such as sport managers, coaches, athletes, and science and engineering researchers) to examine needs for innovation in sports.

**Methodology-**

* Primary research regarding customer demographics and their opinions on technological innovation in sports industry.
* Primary research regarding customer preference whether they like this change or not.
* Primary research through discussions and interviews of coaches, athletes and sports managers.
* Secondary research to collect information on customer viewpoints regarding technological innovation.
* Developing a method to find out the changes according to the research.
* Deploying the recommended changes during sales generation.

**Key Findings**

* Around 60%of respondents believed that sports are changing rapidly because of digitalization.
* The results indicated that performance measurement tools required upgradation to prevent injuries and analyse the athlete’s performance.
* Fitness can be achieved by working out at home through Online health monitoring Apps and video platforms (videos lessons shared by fitness instructors)
* The results show that fantasy league games keep you much more interested in the sport.
* Also, the results show that sports is changing rapidly because of digitalization and they believe it will continue to change for good.

**Recommendation**

* The results showed that more and more youngsters are attracted towards online mode of gaming. So, Sports 365 can partner with gaming platforms and offer services to its customer base (mostly schools and colleges).
* Also, the results indicated that participants think that the same level of fitness can be achieved by working out at home, so Sports 365 can either launch a fitness app or partner with a fitness expert and provide online video instructions to do home exercise to its customers.
* When interviewed coaches and athletes they agreed on fact that more high level equipments (like hawk- eye in cricket) are needed and they are ready to implement this in their game or coaching arenas, so sports 365 can offer such equipments to sports club or Organizations who are looking for sports related equipments.
* Similarly, like fitness apps, Sports 365 can also collaborate with fantasy league games and offer its services to its customer base. The main target audience for this will be teenagers (people under the age of 30).

**Acknowledgment**

The accomplishment of this study was made with the help and direction of Ms. Upasana Bhat, Prof. Sachin Choudhary and Prof. Kasturi Das, who have always been supportive and have helped in solving the confusion. They also guided me to draw inferences from the study. Above all this, Prof. Kasturi Das is a wonderful person who has been a support system for me. Without her encouragement, I wouldn't have able to beat the work pressure and finish the project.

Prof. Kasturi Das

(Signature)

Prof. Sachin Choudhary

(Signature)

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**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Introduction**

Sports are large business, and it is an integral part of lifestyle and culture in almost every nation – surely, sports are an unavoidable piece of the human condition. The development in the size as well as the intricacy of the game’s economy reflects the genuine economy, and partially this is causally related. Advancements in materials advances (like composite strands) and communications advances (like digitalization) have shifted from industrial to sports applications. The sports economy has increased by a large amount in recent years, and this is not only in size but also it has diversified throughout the globe. There are numerous new games (most outstandingly the "outrageous" sports) and enterprising manifestations (for example crossfit, e-sports) that draw in better approaches for contemplating the games economy. Some are the outcome of new standards and administering foundations while others created from the chances managed by new innovations and (potentially) social designs (Thomas, 2018).

There are in excess of 3,000 documented sports on the planet today. Some of them are thousands of years old but almost half of them have evolved over the last 40 years (Farmer, 2003). The study related to sports and the sports businesses is moderately new and is divided – over social science, health, culture and humanities, engineering, and business. In business, it is divided across the disciplines of sports financial aspects, sports promoting, sports the board, and even media and communications. Because of all these different specialization sports or sports industry as a whole is not studied. The study of sports right now is like science without nature, or financial matters without macroeconomics. There is at this point no broad or integrative way to deal with seeing how sports develop or evolve (for example why this game develops and why it breakdowns), also taking their related enterprises with them. From the worldwide strength of a couple of mega pro athletics (football) to the ascent of new games (for example kiteboarding, drone-hustling, extreme frisbee), or new games cliques (for example skating), or semi games (for example Pokemon Go, e-sports), and the breakdown or decay of different games (for example bullfighting, windsurfing, boxing), these can have critical, social, social, wellbeing, and monetary outcomes. However, we have no hypothetical comprehension of why this occurs (Thomas, 2018)

**1.2 About the Company-**

Sports 365 was established in 2012. It is headquartered in Bangalore conjointly it is supported by leading US based investment companies like Zolon Ventures and Powerhouse. It is recognized as India’s first professionally run Sports and Wellness merchandise company. The aim of the company is to bring sporting revolution in India and become the prime member for sporting needs across the country.

Sports 365 owns various online portals like Tennis365.in, Running365.in, Sports365.in. The company also provides one stop solution for all sporting related requirements of institutions like clubs and Academies, schools, colleges, corporates etc. Services offered to these Institution are Sports equipments, development and distribution, sports infrastructure, sports merchandise design, events and consulting.

Sports365 has its business outside India also. It partners with sports and fitness brand to assist them saddle the genuine potential of Indian markets. A few of the key brand accomplices for Sports365 incorporates likes of Wimbledon, Hero Cycles, Mizuno, Victor, Lumo, V22 and more. In a really brief time span since its inceptions, Sports365 has taken the shaft position within the sports fragment in India. The company has gotten a few awards and has been recognized as one of the Best 50s start-ups of India.

**1.3 Business Problem-**

Development or Innovation is not new to the sports but represents everything that's new and embraced to encourage a competitive advantage. Innovation in sports industry are portion of the developing worldwide sports and recreation industry, and at the individual level, technological development is changing the way that we practice and connect with sports. With rapid technological innovations across sectors, sports industry is also witnessing a change. Sports365 is already trying to figure out the requirements in this industry. This project will help in gathering viewpoints of different stakeholders of the game to understand their perspective and apply them accordingly in future sales. Also, due to covid pandemic, the whole situation changes. So, this will help us in moving forward about how to progress and to predict what the future looks like.

**1.4 Scope of the Project-**

The project aims to understand the perception of key stakeholders (such as sport managers, coaches, athletes, and science and engineering researchers) to examine the need for innovation in sports. And to understand what changes must be made so that they get much better experiences in the future. After getting these insights deploying the recommended changes during sales generation.

**1.5 Mid Term Deliverables-**

* Understanding current transitions happening in sports industry.
* Understanding the perspective of key stakeholders.
* Understand what long- term and short- term changes need to be carried out.

**1.6 Final Term Deliverables-**

* Deriving insights from the study conducted.
* Deploying the insights in sales generation.

**2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The expression "innovation" can be characterized as improved process or product or a new (Tan, 2017). To measure the performance of athletes in terms of functionality it is very important to innovate (Marlon Meier, 2018). Technological innovations have quickly advanced sport and are instrumental to giving competitors an upper hand (Caroline Ringuet-Riota, 2014). Specifically, innovation has progressed both individual and group activities, and the presentation of competitors in preparing and serious conditions. For example, lately new programming has been applied in game to improve the game. Competitor performance is observed utilizing software’s and the resultant information are utilized to improve individual and group capacity across a wide scope of sports (Caroline Ringuet-Riota, 2014). The Hawk-Eye framework for cricket, for instance, give exact and precise replays of matches (or match fragments) to help in decision-making and lessen the level of human blunder. Such innovation has been a significant segment in deciding if a group wins or loses (Bal & Dureja, 2012). Nonetheless, the application or appropriation of innovation in sport is profoundly reliant upon the ability of a sports organisation to help a development which is regularly impacted by the association's monetary construction (eg accessibility of financing, supporting and organization) (Erdmann, 2009).

**Technological innovation in the sports industry**

The overall innovation cycle can be separated into two distinct methodologies, the Technological Push and the Demand Pull. In the first approach that is Technological Push, the hotspot for innovation is addressed by the maker, for example R&D department. Research and science assume a significant part in this methodology and a development needs to go before an advancement. This implies that logical developments lead to modern innovative applications, which, in turn, lead to advancements (Marlon Meier, 2018).

On the other side, for Demand Pull innovation the hotspot for innovation is addressed by the consumer. This implies the productivity of the innovation as far as satisfying the buyers' requirements and wants is the principal driver of the development process (Gerke, 2016). Here, outer elements "pull" the innovation into the market. The development process in the games business is impacted by a mix of those two methodologies, with the principal hotspots for innovation being the shoppers and internal sources of the firm (Marlon Meier, 2018).

**Prevention of Injuries and Rehabilitation**

The probability of getting harmed is one of the hard certainties of each game. Competitors risks their bodies and their prosperity for the entertainment of avid supporters, yet additionally for the wonder of winning, and we can't fault them. Playing at the highest levels requires applying the most exertion, and a physical issue is a potential result of this extraordinary obligation to contest.

Fortunately, technological innovation has made it possible to keep away from injuries across different games. For instance, there are cutting edge mouth guards which use sensors and decide if impact is big or small and based on that further action should be taken to deal with it.

Besides, innovation has made it conceivable to restore wounds better, for example, using computerized displaying, which takes into account the finding of a source of wounds to body parts like the elbow and the arm, with the goal that appropriate treatment might be affected at the earliest opportunity (Asthana, 2020)

**Quick Review/ Replay Technology**

It might seem like instant replay has been a piece of sports since the time the majority of us began following our favourite teams, however there was a period where instant replay didn't exist or was at inferior quality and argumentative calls just became themes for banter for the years to come.

With the present instant replay innovation, what's going on the field can be seen from different points and surprisingly in slow movement. Thusly, sports classes can guarantee exactness on what's going on and the refs are more ready to keep the game as reasonable as could be expected (Asthana, 2020)

**Different Fantasy Leagues**

Supporters of the game can be an intense group now and again. Sometimes, watching the actual game isn't sufficient, and fans need a more vivid encounter that will keep them snared to their favourite game. Joining a fantasy leagues is a typical method of improving the experience as fans have to use their skills to construct their own teams and pick their key players for the match.

The internet has simplified it for any avid supporter to join a fantasy league, and with only a couple clicks, a fan turns into a glad GM of a dream group. Through dream, fans are urged to keep a nearer watch of their number one game, and they may even turn out to be more contributed with their dream group than their neighbourhood significant alliance group.

**Computer or Video Games**

Over time fans become crazy about their favourite teams or favourite player, in spite of the fact that there isn't any innovation yet that will put fans in their favourite players shoes, fans can at any rate reproduce their favourite game and play as their favourite team in computer games, considering an extraordinary and vivid sports experience.

Computer or video games can even fill in as a passage for players to become enthusiasts of a game they didn't use to follow. Somebody who's ignorant about the game can play a round of games and acknowledge how exciting the game can be, and before you know it, he's becomes addictive to the game.

**3.0. METHOD AND DATA COLLECTION**

In this study to understand how the digital transformation is happening in sports industry a qualitative research was conducted. This research aims to understand the perception of athletes and coaches regarding this transformation and what further changes to be made in future.

**3.1. Participants**

The participants selected for this study are athletes who are playing the sport for atleast 2 years and are in the age group of 18- 30 and sports coaches or managers who are in this business for atleast 5 years. Other criteria for choosing the participants were that they should be residents of either Nagpur or Delhi.

**3.2. Methodology**

The research was conducted using Survey forms and In- Depth interviews. Online survey forms were floated to the target population through WhatsApp and E- mail and In- depth interviews were conducted via either telephone or google meet.

**3.3. Data Collection**

A questionnaire was prepared with reference to the topic to collect the data from our target population.

While designing questionnaire follow steps were taken-

* Secondary research was done to identify the key points which were the factors behind change and then questions were formed based on those points.
* A pilot test was done on the questionnaire to check the flow of the questions, language and simplicity.
* Few changes were made in the questionnaire based on the pilot study.
* The questionnaire was shared with the target population.

**3.4. Survey Questions**

The questions were formed to understand the perception of athletes and coaches regarding technological innovation in sports (Appendix C).

Some of the questions asked during the in- depth interviews were-

* What sports they have played till now and which game they have played for atleast 3 years?
* What do they think about the equipments used in the game?
* How would they rate the equipments used in the game on the scale of 1- 10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)?
* Which equipments or aspects of the game can be further improved?
* Did they think that game is changing rapidly because of digital transformation in sports? Justify your answer.
* What are your thoughts about online gaming? Have you ever played it?
* Do you think that online gaming will take over traditional sports?
* What are the motivating factors which is leading young generation to use apps and technologies as an alternative to traditional sports?
* According to you what are the advantages and disadvantages of using digitalization in sports?
* Do you think that Fantasy league games keeps you much more interested towards the game?
* Do you think you can attain as much fitness from home if you are not going for gym or outdoor sessions?

**4.0. RESEARCH FINDINGS & RESULTS**

**4.1. Participants**

Of the 148 responses to the survey, we got 131 valid responses who have played the game for at least 3 years. Of the 131 respondents, 122 were males (93.1%), and the rest 9 were females (6.9%) (see Figure 1, Appendix A). Of which only 6 were having age between less than 16, 68 were having age between 17-24, 46 were having age between 25-30, and 11 were having age above 30+ (see Figure 2, Appendix A). Of all the respondents, 76 were Diploma/ Graduation, 21 were Post Graduate, 25 were educated to higher secondary level and 7 were educated to secondary school (see Figure 3, Appendix A). I have also looked at the income of the family, 30 were having income in the bracket of 0-5 Lakhs, 47 were having in the range of 5-10 Lakhs, 40 were having between 10-15 Lakhs and 14 were having above 15 Lakhs (see Figure 4, Appendix A). Also, when looked at current occupation of the respondents 62 of them were private employees, 46 of them were students, 10 were government employees and remaining 13 were unemployed (see Figure 5, Appendix A).

**4.2. Findings from the Survey**

The survey results indicated that about 76 % of participants agreed that they are satisfied with the types of equipment used in the game. In contrast, only 7.6 % said they are not happy with the types of equipment, and the remaining 16 % were neither agreeing nor denying (see Figure 6, Appendix B). About 40 % of respondents said they were satisfied with the equipment used to measure their performance, but the remaining respondents said more innovation is required in this field (see Figure 7, Appendix B). Around 36% of participants agreed that more technological innovation is required in the sport they play (see Figure 8, Appendix B). Around 65% of respondents agreed that fantasy league games keep them much more interested in the game (see Figure 9, Appendix B). Also, about 65% of respondents agreed that fitness can be achieved by working out at home (see Figure 10, Appendix B).

**4.3. Findings from the Interviews**Interview of athletes and coaches were taken to for this study. The interview helps in identifying their perception towards the game. The results of the interviews were that coaches and athletes were on sync on some aspects of digitalization but there was different thinking associated among some aspects. Also, it was concluded that almost all of them were agreeing that there is a need for more technological innovation required in the game currently being played on. The equipments currently being used to measure performance requires more innovation. Also, it has been found that participation of candidates for a particular sport is declining. They believed more and more youngsters are attracted towards technology which is the reason for this declination.

**4.3.1. Interview results from Athletes**

When interviewed athletes, they were pretty happy about the types of equipment used in the game. Most of the athletes believe that the current types of equipment used are good enough to play the sport and more innovation in equipment means changing the original game, which they think is unnecessary. But some athletes also believe that the types of equipment used to measure their performance should evolve as they didn't get the whole idea of how they are performing, they only hear from coaches and friends, so if they can view their replay of the matches, it would give them more insights about their performance. Athletes reported the requirements for input systems (eg concentration checking or activity replay, fatigue indicators) to improve overall safety. One member highlighted the require for a multi-functional input gadget that enables athletes to get data in numerous designs that caters for all learning styles (i.e. visual/ sound-related/ tactile/ reading- composing inclinations). Also, when asked about whether they can attain the same fitness level by working out at home instead of a gym and outdoor sessions, some of the participants agreed to it, and some are not, so there is not a unanimous outcome for this. The athletes who agreed to it believe that Apps and online instructors give you the direction to be fit. Apps also monitor your performance, so according to them, it is possible to attain the same level of fitness as achievable by a gym and outdoor sessions. The other group believes that they feel less motivated while working out at home and easily get distracted. Also, pieces of equipment are missing. These are the reasons they think that the same level of fitness cannot be achieved. Also, they believe that online gaming has enormous potential and can attract more viewership in years to come. But at the same time, they also think that traditional sports will also evolve, and there will be equal demand for both sports. They also believed that fantasy games keep you more interested in sports. Most of the athletes play fantasy league games, and some of the athletes also told that there are games they were not interested in, but because of fantasy games, they started showing interest, and now they watch them regularly.

**4.3.2. Interview results from Coaches**

When interviewed coaches, they were moderately sceptical about the types of equipment used in the game. For example, in cricket, they were sceptical about the ball (which often gets softer after some time) and helmets (the ball enters through the grills). Also, athletes tracking gadgets for indoor sports were distinguished as a critical requirement by coaches. Indoor GPS innovation that does not require the use of satellites would facilitate execution by giving exact data on athlete’s acceleration, speed, distance, and location. They were pretty happy with the current system being used for performance measurement in outdoor games, so they don't think any changes are required in those aspects of the game. According to the coaches, participation is declining over the years, and due to covid, they were quite sceptical about how to take the game forward. They believed more and more youngsters are attracted towards technology which is the reason for this declination. They also believed that fitness can be achieved at home also but requires some equipment to achieve it. When asked about online gaming, they were unsure about its impact on athletes. They concluded that athletes are playing the game, but the passion with which it is required to play is missing on some fronts, which needs to re-look at. They believed if marketed well, traditional games will never be out of fashion. When asked about fantasy league games, they were not happy about it. They said it is like an addiction, so there should be some limit to it. Otherwise, people playing it might have serious repercussions.

**5.0. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

**5.1. Recommendations**

* The results showed that more and more youngsters are attracted towards online mode of gaming. So, Sports 365 can partner with gaming platforms and offer services to its customer base (mostly schools and colleges).
* Also, the results indicated that participants think that the same level of fitness can be achieved by working out at home, so Sports 365 can either launch a fitness app or partner with a fitness expert and provide online video instructions to do home exercise to its customers.
* When interviewed coaches and athletes they agreed on fact that more high level equipments (like hawk- eye in cricket) are needed and they are ready to implement this in their game or coaching arenas, so sports 365 can offer such equipments to sports club or Organizations who are looking for sports related equipments.
* Similarly, like fitness apps, Sports 365 can also collaborate with fantasy league games and offer its services to its customer base. The main target audience for this will be teenagers (people under the age of 30).

**5.2. Conclusions**

The study focusses on understanding the perception of coaches and athletes about how digitalization is changing the sports and what changes to be made to further improve the sports. The findings appear that the sports industry is facing a stage of change. In specific, the findings affirm that fitness apps and video platforms are a substantial elective for exercise centres from the young consumer's point of view. The results also suggest that more innovations are required in tools to measure the performance of the athletes. In addition, the innovation itself is still advancing, meaning that there's still room for change. As a theory-building qualitative study, this study gives some insights which may be further tested using quantitative research. As sports is continuously going to evolve in the coming years, it will be more important for researchers to understand the phenomenon better and do the research practice in the innovative and competitive sports field.

**6.0. KEY LEARNINGS AND CHALLENGES**

**6.1. Key Learnings**

* Interaction with different business process owners to have a better understanding of their problems. This entails laying out the major issues and developing a strategy for moving forward.
* Understanding the work that is currently going in Sports 365. This entails comprehending the importance of numerous processes as well as their impact on company's goals and operations.
* Understanding the numerous aspects required in executing a successful sales generation.
* Gaining a thorough grasp of how Sports 365 functions across several business sectors.
* Insights on the organization's current Salesforce automation and Distributor management systems.
* Throughout this internship, I have learnt different project management skills like effective communication, taking responsibility, strategy formulation, time management and negotiation.

**6.2. Challenges**

As every opportunity comes with its own challenge, this internship with Sports 365 was also somewhat challenging. I have been assigned to generate leads for the Kochi (Kerala) region, where I have faced language problems. The customers didn't understand Hindi and English, and I don't speak their native language. Another challenge that I have encountered during this internship is that it was an online internship, and there isn't enough work to do. Overall it was a good experience working with Sports 365 as I have learned the process of sales generation, and I have been able to build good networking with my colleagues, which may help me in the future.

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https://www.sports365.in

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Demographics**

Figure 1: Gender

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Figure 2: Age

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Figure 3: Education

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Figure 4: Family Income

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Figure 5: Occupation

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**Appendix B: Findings from the Survey**

Figure 6: Tools or Equipments used in the game.

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Figure 7: Tools or Equipments used to measure performance.

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Figure 8: Need for Technological Innovation

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Figure 9: Fantasy League Games

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Figure 10: Fitness

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**Appendix C: Survey Form**

**Graphical user interface, text, application, email

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