# #chatsportsbiz Recap: Hot Topics in Sports Sales: “Social Selling”- July 14thth, 2016



The topic for this week’s #chatsportsbiz is social selling in sports, which allows industry people to develop relationships online with potential clients. Social selling can happen on any social media network: Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, or Pinterest. Social selling makes the sales process more comfortable for both parties involved, you’re putting a photo and personality to a name instead of a blind call. It’s easier for someone to reply to an @ on Twitter then spend 20 minutes on the phone. Bob Hamer (@SportsBizBob) asked Twitter their thoughts and advice for social selling, check out some of the responses below.

**Q1: How can a salesperson in sports benefit by being active on social media?**

“Utilizing social channels allows salespeople to uncover prospects that aren’t currently in the company database”- **Josh Young, Director of Group and Inside Sales of Cleveland Browns** (@josh8young6)

Many people who use their friend’s tickets or get invited out to a game by their company may not be in the team’s database. But a quick search on Instagram for the stadium’s location or on Twitter for a trending hashtag of the game can give salespeople a new lead that has already shown interest in going to games.

“Track prospects, follow customers, learn their business, get ideas. I could go on and on”- **Mike Mahoney**, **Sponsorship Sales with Carolina Panthers** (@Mahoney)

By being involved on social media you can learn so much from your audience. You could learn about a client’s passion and how to integrate that passion into the game experience. It’s no easy task, but if you put that time in you can reap many rewards from being active on social media.

“It is a who you know business, SM is one of the best ways to keep in touch & meet new people on a daily basis”- **Dan Werly, Sports Lawyer and Managing Editor of the White Bronco** (@WerlySportsLaw)

Social media is one of the best ways to make connections without having to deal with geographical boundaries. It also allows you to stay up-to-date with connections, even if you don’t have a daily conversation with them you can follow along as they post what’s going on in their life.

Other Notes: Social platforms also allow salespeople to create another initial contact point for potential leads. There is a whole new set of demographics that salespeople can reach online compared to traditional outlets.

**Q2: How do can you create a following on social that you can leverage to help you sell?**

“Share content that is relevant and interesting. Not just sales pitches or special offers”- **Mike Dellosa, Director of Season Ticket Sales and Inside Sales, Arizona Diamondback** (@MikeDellosa)

People are on social media to be educated or entertained, not necessarily sold to. Engage your audience with something they’re interested in, that way you can build a genuine audience. Too many links or deals will make your account about selling tickets and not about you.

“Add value. Easy to unfollow an account that is only sales pitches. Provide useful content to build brand”- **Griffin Ward, Student at Ohio State University and Brand Ambassador at Columbus Crew SC** (@griffinward)

All it takes is one click to lose a potential lead due to too many impersonal sales pitches. Remember you’re running your personal account, not the team account so be a person and not sales robot.

Other Notes: Be the best you! Be engaging with your audience, respond to people’s posts/tweets with genuine interest. People want to be heard and by replying to them they know their voice is being heard. Also, you can engage with people by asking them questions either about their experience or what they would like to see changed. Include lots of positivity and try to keep the negativity to an absolute minimum, no one likes a negative Nancy.

**Q3:** **When attempting to connect with a potential prospect via social, what’s important to remember?**

“Do your research. If you find someone on LinkedIn, see what they share on Twitter & try to make a personal connection”- **Geoffrey Blosat, Digital Analyst for Washington Redskins** (@GeoffTBlosat)

Research, research, research! If you have the resources to learn a little more about a potential prospect do it! Find what they’re interests are and try to bring them to the table during your conversation. When you do reach out to them, do it with a common interest as a hook line.

“Similar to any intro. Get their attention and personalize”- **Josh Young, Director of Group and Inside Sales of Cleveland Browns** (@josh8young6)

No one wants to be approached with a generic opening and sales pitch. It’s very easy for someone to just ignore a message on social media if it doesn’t spark their interest. Don’t feel like you have to reinvent the wheel with your approach, but do make it approachable.

Other Notes: Make the initial contact about an interest that you have in common and then make the transition into a business conversation. After the connection is solid, don’t be afraid to ask for a call or a cup of coffee, make the next step offline.

**Q4: How can a job seeker use social to help them get a job in sports?**

“Keep LinkedIn profile up to date and with relevant info. Reaching out to hiring mgrs before job is posted”- **Andrew Sidney, Manager of Group Tickets and Inside Sales for Hoston Rockets** (@Andrew\_Sidney1)

Many hiring managers looks at an applicant’s LinkedIn page before an interview, that is their first impression of you before you even walk into the interview. Keep a professional photo and tone to your page. Send a note to the hiring manager, make it personable and unique.

“They also need to make sure their social presence doesn’t HURT them. I research all applicants online”- **Joey Harvey, San Antonio FC Ticket Sales Manager** (@joeyharvey)

No one wants to see a photo of you doing a keg stand from your college spring break trip to Destin, if a hiring manager can find it so can potential clients. Keep the negativity to a minimum, and never bad mouth previous jobs or bosses!

“Search LinkedIn profile of sports execs for any common interest or connections before reaching out”- **Mike Dellosa, Director of Season Ticket Sales and Inside Sales, Arizona Diamondback** (@MikeDellosa)

People like to talk about their interests and passions, it makes the conversation easier and more enjoyable. Opening with a common interest that you can elaborate on will make you stand out from the crowd of other applicants.

Other Notes: Use your best judgment when creating your personal brand online. If you have to think about whether its offensive or hurtful, it probably is. If you do make a connection with a hiring manager or other industry professionals make sure you also reach out to them with a personal note. They can’t give you a recommendation if they only know what’s on your LinkedIn page and not what you’re like as a person or future employee.

**Q5: What’s your favorite social media channel and how do you use it to grow professionally?**

“Twitter is my fav due to the hashtags that can be used. You can reach w/ multiple in the industry” –**Drew Olstead, University of Wisconsin-Madison 2015 graduate** (@drew\_olstead)

Hashtags are a great way to find a Twitter chat, or follow along with a conference that’s happening across the country. A quick search of #sportsbiz on Twitter and you can find industry professionals across the world that could be beneficial to follow.

“All of them (video preferred). Engage clients/business all while growing personal brand. Keeps you interactive with fans”- **Dustin Toms, Account Executive for Sacramento Kings** (@Dustin\_Toms)

Video is a great way to connect to an audience, it shows your face and personality, two very important components of social media.

“Twitter. Chats where experts share thoughts. Easy to connect w/ pros. Place to master how to share points concisely.”- **Geoffrey Blosat, Digital Analyst for Washington Redskins** (@GeoffTBlosat)

This is my favorite thing about using Twitter, you really have to focus in your message that you want to send out to your audience. It allows people to get rid of the clutter and unnecessary ideas and get straight to the point.

Other Notes: Twitter definitely seems to be the favorite among the people participating in our chat. It’s short and to the point and accessible by everyone’s phone. Even with 140 characters, people have gotten extremely skilled in creating a story or interesting content with a limited capacity. Be up-to-date with the different platforms and creative ways to use them, you never know when you might go viral.

That’s our recap for this edition of #chatsportsbiz. Don’t forget to join us on Twitter next time on Thursday, July 28th at 6pm PST. Make sure you’re following Bob Hamer (@SportsBizBob) to catch our next topic!

-Jordan Wetherbee

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