



120 WAYS

TO ENGAGE WITH FANS
WHEN THERE ARE **NO GAMES**



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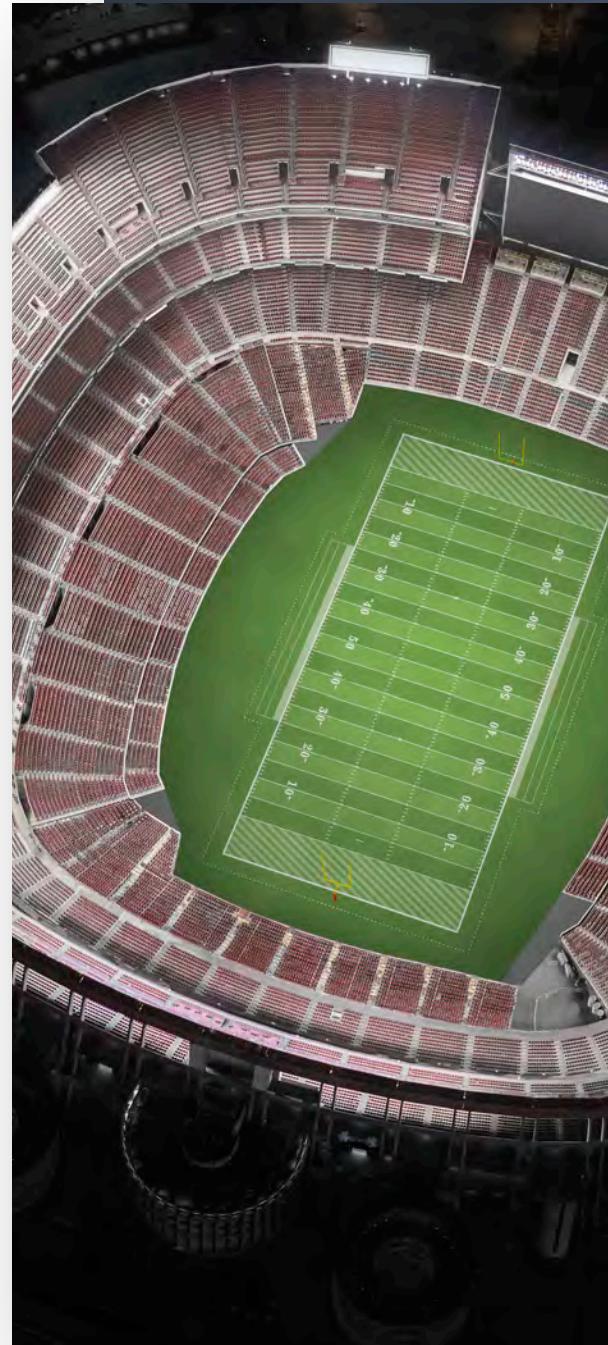
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Introduction

Sports teams and leagues are facing an uncertain time right now, with games postponed for at least the next few weeks, if not longer. While the global coronavirus pandemic certainly puts sports in perspective, it also highlights how much fans appreciate sports and how sports have become a part of their daily lives. And, almost nothing would make isolated fans happier than the distraction, connection and engagement with their favorite teams, athletes, and their fellow fans at this time.

For sports organizations, this is a time for your creativity to reign. While remaining sensitive to the nature of circumstances, teams and leagues can help fans pass this time by continuing to engage them, even without games.

So, to help inspire digital marketers, social media managers, and your creative teams, here are **120 ways to continue engaging fans through digital and social platforms during this time.**



Lean into Storytelling with Your Fans

Collect videos and photos from prompts you present to get unique, authentic, passionate content from fans to share with fans. Some ideas to get this kind of content from fans:

1. Have fans share photos, videos or memories of their first game (seeing the team and/or seeing the sport).
2. Ask fans to describe their most memorable game seeing the team or sport.
3. Request for fans to submit a story and/or photo and video of a memorable athlete encounter.
4. Invite your fans to reply with stories, photos or videos to a “Where were you when...” prompt (i.e. when a famous play happened, a player was acquired via draft or trade, etc.).
5. Ask fans to tell about who their favorite all-time player is and why.
6. Request stories and content from fans from a time they were featured on the video board at the game, and what they were doing.
7. Ask fans to share the team / player poster they had on their wall growing up (or have up at home now), and to send in photos.
8. Have your fans submit fan fiction, short stories or comics they've created about the team.

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Engage and Share with Your Super Fans

Find your biggest fans and let them demonstrate or prove why they're #1:

9. See who can wear the most team apparel in a single pic. (There's a *Friends* reference in there somewhere).
10. Discover which fan has the best collection of tchotchkes from the team when they submit photos or videos showing off their collection.
11. Try to find which fan has the best fan cave or team shrine by requesting photos.
12. Ask your fans directly what kind of content they want during this downtime.



Lean into Nostalgia

Break open the archive and share some of those memorable moments with fans, players, and former players.

13. Share full games from years past, even live-stream and hold a digital watch party for fans.
14. Watch classic games with players, alumni, coaches, and/or broadcasters providing commentary.
15. Dig into the photo archive and pull out old photos from years past and have some fun with them, such as guessing which game they're from, trivia questions about the players in them, etc.
16. Share memorable old newspapers or (written or video) interviews with players or coaches.
17. Take video of current athletes talking through memorable plays or events; do the same with former players, coaches and broadcasters.
18. Share photos, videos and stories of old team apparel (uniforms and fan merch); tap current players to share their opinions of these old threads on their social networks.
19. Share 'This Day in (Team) History' — since it's the middle of the season for many, there should be plenty of games and moments to revisit (and so much potential for engagement around these games, milestones and moments).
20. Ask fans to submit their memories or content related to those games, moments, stories or milestones referenced in #19.

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Double-Down on Content Fans Love to Share

Some content and memes never get old on social media. Engage your fans by asking for this type of content, then ask them to repost the best:

21. Ask fans for pictures of their pets wearing team gear.
22. Request photos from your fans' kids and babies (can you find the cutest or youngest fan?).
23. Do a roll call with fans checking in from around the globe (how many countries can you find fans from?).
24. Ask fans to submit their best photo or a video from a game that they have saved on their camera roll.
25. Challenge your fans to submit their best lip sync of a given event broadcast call (a TikTok-ish challenge of sorts).
26. Challenge your fans to recreate an in-game or player photo, or newspaper / magazine spread photo.
27. Ask your fans to recreate an amazing play with the team/player on a video game (find those talented gamers!).



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Let Fans Speak to Players

Let fans create video messages meant for players to see, with ideas like:

- 28. Ask your fans to recount a time they met a given player and thank him/her.
- 29. Request fans give their take on a player that has improved the most this year or past year and why.
- 30. Have fans describe their favorite memory of X player.
- 31. Ask fans to submit a nickname for player X and convince other fans that's the best choice.
- 32. Have fans request things they'd like to see from players during the quarantine.

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Co-Create with Your Fans

Activate your talented fans and help them create and ideate:

- 33. Share a photo or multiple photos with fans and have fans to submit their best edit or graphic.
- 34. Do the same as #33 but with a video highlight.
- 35. Produce “Shark Tank” for game entertainment -- invite fans to submit their best in-game contest or video board fan cam ideas.
- 36. Try “Shark Tank” for the sport – invite fans to submit their one wacky or real rule change for the sport and why it’s a good idea.
- 37. Have fans submit their best artwork and let fans then vote on which should become a poster or t-shirt.
- 38. Ask fans to create their best sign / poster that they can take to a future game and have fans vote on the best.



Engage Your Players

Your fans are most connected emotionally to players. Keeping that connection strong feels good for the fans (and the players), and is great for the vitality of the team and brand.

- 39. Invite players to submit videos or photos of themselves or their family.
- 40. Have players tell the story of their first game or their most memorable game.
- 41. Ask each player who their favorite athlete was while growing up.
- 42. Ask players to tell a story about a coach that inspired them.
- 43. Invite players to show their most prized possessions.
- 44. Have players share photos or videos of their pets.
- 45. Ask athletes to post photos of their bedroom or trophy room or man-cave.
- 46. Produce “Shark Tank” for player entertainment -- ask players to submit their pitches for things they want to do to entertain fans during the quarantine (cooking show, video game live stream, X's and O's lesson, etc.).
- 47. And try “Shark Tank” for in-game elements -- the best pitch [from a player] for fan cam ideas, contests, etc.
- 48. Go Live alongside a player on Instagram Live for an interview or fan Q&A
- 49. Ask players to share their ‘Welcome to the pros’ moment.

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Engage Your Players

(Continued)

- 50. Have players send in or post photos and videos of their car(s), a peek inside their fridge, or a glance at their bedroom (basically 'Cribs').
- 51. Create a player talent show, showing their other skills or passions (singing, dancing, art, stupid human tricks, etc.).
- 52. Ask athletes for tips to give to aspiring pro athletes.
- 53. Record player X cooking or eating lunch.
- 54. Request players to send photos/videos showing the inside of their closet, wardrobe, or shoe collection.
- 55. Request players to send in or post video of their fitness routine or stretching routine while stuck at home.
- 56. Start a Netflix club with a player or player[s] to watch a show or movie and review each episode or experience it with fans.
- 57. Start a book club with a player or coach -- select a book and reflect on it with fans.
- 58. Help your gaming-inclined players set up and promote a Twitch stream or join a Twitch stream you host.



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Engage Your Alumni

Many of the same ideas discussed above for current players can apply to your alumni, too. Fans love hearing stories from the former players they loved cheering for.

- 59. Have alumni retell the story of their memorable games or debuts or championships.
- 60. Get them to provide you with their old photos from their pro days, or their youth.
- 61. Invite them to share their thoughts on how the game has changed over the years.
- 62. Ask them to submit their stories about road trip experiences -- roommates, sightseeing, etc.
- 63. Solicit fan questions for alumni to answer.

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Engage Your Staff

Your staff have the ability to contribute great content now (and all the time, really).

- 64. Ask your PR staff or broadcasters about their most memorable moments with players.
- 65. Have your creative staff share content that never saw the light of day - maybe the team lost, a milestone wasn't reached, a different version was used instead [if you're bold enough].
- 66. Invite your game entertainment staff to tell about their most memorable moment, fan contest, or video board moment.
- 67. Have your sponsorship team describe their favorite activation or wildest fan sponsorship event.
- 68. Have your coaching staff or front office leadership give tips about working in sports, or their journey to becoming a pro player or coach.
- 69. Use your broadcasters to do mock 'calls' of everyday videos that fans or players submit (i.e. play-by-play of folding clothes or a pet doing a trick or a baby playing with a toy, or any number of scenarios that could be fun!).
- 70. Engage coaches or management to update fans on potential prospects for the organization.
- 71. Have your GM tell their favorite draft story.
- 72. Ask your community relations director to talk about what fans can to help with donations right now.
- 73. Get cooking at home tips with the venue's lead chef (if possible).



Educate Your Fans

Your team and its staff are full of resources, and their experience, knowledge and lessons learned could help fans improve their own skills.

74. Ask your creative staff to give quick tips or tutorials on creating graphics, photography, video production, etc.
75. Have a coach run through the X's and O's of a highlight or play.
76. Engage your team's medical staff / nutritionist to share tips for health, exercise, and nutrition.
77. Have your coach offer tips for coaches of youth teams, such as practice drills or general advice.
78. Collaborate with your team's operations staff and have a staffer talk about a unique stat or analytic measurement.
79. Get your broadcaster(s) to talk through their game prep and show a photo or video of what their notes look like during a game.
80. Have your dance team coach or members teach a dance move or talk about their prep for games.
81. Work with your team reporter or external beat reporter to give their tips on interviewing.
82. Get your social media staff to give advice and tips on using social media (i.e. how to have fun with TikTok).
83. Get training and workout tips from the team's strength coach.
84. Have the team psychologist offer recommendations for fans coping with this difficult time.
85. Work with your HR staff to give resume and interview tips.
86. Have your broadcaster teach fans the meaning of various jargon used in the sport.
87. Engage your foreign players or staff to teach sport-related words and cheers in their native tongue.

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Engage Your Partners and Sponsors

It's important to be sensitive around activating partners and sponsors right now, but they can still help provide unique value to fans at this uneasy time.

88. Invite partners to offer relevant advice on how to practice safety during this time (e.g. restaurant could advise on ways to get food or food prep safety; travel partner on travel safety; health care partner advice; insurance partner advice, etc.).
89. Work with your charity and community partners around donations, child care, food donations, etc. and help drive awareness of their own creative campaigns.
90. Have fans submit artwork, select the best to display at the sponsor's website or stores when things return to normal.
91. Collaborate with beat reporters covering your team to talk about memorable stories they've written, interviews they've done, or how they're helping their customers and staff through this difficult business climate.
92. Have your players, fans, and staff submit videos thanking your healthcare partners for working hard during this time.



Help Fans Connect with Each Other (virtually, of course)

This is an isolating and tough time, and it's hard not to be energized by other fans, let alone people in general. How can you encourage fans feeling connected and create that sense of shared experience?

- 93. Run a community trivia or video game tournament.
- 94. Invite superfans to tell their stories and brag about why they're the #1 fan.
- 95. Invite fans to take video to show off their best trick shots (or whatever applies to one's sport).
- 96. Host a virtual Zoom chat or webinar for groups of fans and lead them to engage with each other around topics or content.
- 97. Help fans of similar interests connect
 - those with young kids
 - those that like to play pickup
 - fans that tailgate before games
 - fans that are older or have been going to games for decades
 - fans that live in another country
 - fans that enjoy fantasy leagues
 - there are many more ways to drive digital connections, and it can grow more when the time is right!

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Help Your Fans Create Cool Content to Share

Fans want to post and share content, they want to engage, and show off their fandom, so how can you help satisfy that need? You might even lighten the mood and tastefully invoke the quarantined nature of life that we're all enduring at the moment.

98. Create new Snapchat filters for fans to use for fun content.
99. Create an Instagram effect to help fans create cool content.
100. Update your GIFs or GIF stickers for fans to use.
101. Create some team-themed Mad Libs with your fans.
102. Try some TikTok-like 'challenges' with your fans (use a prize incentive if it helps) or even crowdsource 'challenges' for the team to spread to fans.
103. Always a fun one: Try a fill in the blank with a prompt like "You know you're from (home team city) when ____" or "You know you're a fan of (home team) if ____."
104. Similar to above, "You know you're a (sport) player when ____" or "You know you're a (sport) parent when ____."
105. Instead of "Wallpaper Wednesday" for a phone or desktop background, create some cool custom backdrops for your fans' Zoom calls.



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Play Games with Other Teams and Players, and with Your Fans

We're all in this together, so whether it's another local team or a competitor you can't face in a game or match, there is still fun to be had with other teams and your players on social media.

- 106. Take on a local or in-league rival in a Twitter game of Connect Four, Tic-Tac-Toe or the like.
- 107. Have your player(s) take on a rival player(s) in a live-streamed game on Twitch.
- 108. Pit fans or athletes of opposing teams against each other in a trivia competition or game show variation.
- 109. Create a 'game' for your fans to play. (word search, crossword, 'Name That Player', etc.)

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Go a Mile Wide and a Mile Deep with Your Team

Often an offseason endeavor, a lot of great stories and content can be uncovered by going in-depth on every person on the team. The more fans know, the more they feel connected.

- 110. Create a highlight package for each player on the team with their best plays from the past season with the team, or in their career.
- 111. Share a collection of fun and unusual facts about each player on the team.
- 112. Share a progression of photos of players showing how they each have changed over the years.
- 113. Curate the best photos of Player X and have fans vote on their favorite (even better, have the player himself/herself give their video reaction and take on it).
- 114. Work with your team broadcaster or reporter and have them give an analysis of each player's history and highlights.



Curate Content

Use your media repositories and content archives and deliver for fans who are eager to consume anything and everything about the sport they love.

- 115. Set up unique, curated playlists on YouTube for fans to enjoy.
- 116. Livestream archived games or feature stories and interact with fans during the livestream just like during a live game at the venue
- 117. Livestream archived feature stories or highlights, then have players or broadcasters give commentary or chat during the stream.
- 118. Dig through your bank of content and identify the most popular (highest engagement rate) and re-share it on social and/or send it to any relevant player to post. Then create derivative content to post, too.
- 119. Pull up archived podcast interviews and clip fun and memorable stories or responses and repurpose them to build enhanced video content around them.
- 120. Re-promote your full podcasts (and put them on YouTube) for fans that missed them the first time around.

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Summary

Months from now, fans won't be commenting about a night of lame matchups. No one will care about a live game going late. And, not a single fan will mind disagreeing with a play call or managerial move — as long as sports are back in their lives.

While fans, teams, and leagues wait the coronavirus out, fan engagement doesn't have to stop. It lives on 24/7/365, quarantine or not.

At Greenfly, we want to help you continue to keep the flames of fandom blazing during this difficult time. We know the Greenfly media delivery platform can play a pivotal role in gathering and organizing video and photo content from athletes, staff and coaches. That content will keep you connected with your fans. We're seeing great examples and ideas play out every day now among our customers in pro sports, sports media, and entertainment.

We'd love for you to learn more about Greenfly and how it can help you bring any of these ideas to life. Let's chat about how we might be able to help you in this time of uncertainty.

You're invited to check out a gallery of examples of fan engagement during this COVID-19 outbreak, and please share with the community any examples that you discover or produce. Just download Greenfly and enter in the invite code **FANENGAGE**.



Co-founded in 2014 by MLB All-Star Shawn Green, Greenfly is the world's leading content delivery platform, helping organizations harness the brand building power of their advocates.

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