

The Rajasthan Royals Co-Create Media With Players to Light Up Fan Engagement

Overview

The Rajasthan Royals has a reputation for increasing brand value through innovative fan engagement programs. The digital team knew that raising their athletes' personal brands through social media would continue to expand the club's global reach and influence while increasing each player's personal fanbase. Capturing authentic short-form media from their star athletes could enable them to create a more personal and intimate connection with fans.

When the 2020 global pandemic forced IPL tournament teams into a quarantine "bubble," the Royals staff put their ideas into action. Greenfly's content exchange network enabled the team to revamp their media asset workflows in just weeks to boost the impact of their athletes off the field.

Opportunity

Cricket is the world's second most popular sport, and fans are passionate about the success of their favorite team. They're equally hungry for the latest updates on their favorite clubs and athletes. In early 2020, The Royals' social channels already had strong followings, but the digital team saw how direct athlete-fan connections could help them grow and engage their social community even more. And they wanted to help players build their personal brands by putting them front and center for fans who sought their personal narratives about daily routines, performance insights, and their 'new normal' of living in a bubble.

At the onset of the IPL tournament, the staff needed an easy way to speed the capture of original quarantine moments from athletes and coaches and extend the reach of Royals brand and matchday content. The cloud storage system they were using to share media was confusing — and ineffective for collecting media. The Royals' digital team focused on finding a solution that could help their dispersed team efficiently move media to and from a central hub and enable timely content exchange with athletes.



The Rajasthan Royals is one of the world's premier cricket teams and a founding franchise within the Indian Premier League (IPL). The club continues to lead the sport by cultivating a passionate and diverse fan base, with supporters throughout India and a strong following worldwide, including the UAE, USA, Canada, UK and Australia.

Success Story | Sports

Partnership

The Royals shared their social strategy at the outset with players and coaches, so they knew how participating in content creation and sharing could benefit their public profiles. The digital team chose Greenfly's content exchange platform to help them manage media distribution and collection. They immediately ramped up co-creation of media, taking advantage of downtime while the athletes were in their IPL tournament bubble environment in Dubai. There, they became true content creators and storytellers, capturing daily photos and videos and publishing them to their social media accounts — all through Greenfly's mobile app.

The digital staff and their creative agency in Mumbai teed up requests for the players to create content while they were stuck in their hotel rooms. They selected the athletes' best workouts, yoga sessions, coffee mornings, and more to share on the Royals' social channels, giving fans unprecedented access to their favorite players. Not surprisingly, this exclusive and authentic content resonated highly with the club's followers.

During tournament play, the Royals' agency team also curated and routed galleries of photographer matchday content to the players directly through the Greenfly app. The players received instant app notifications at the end of each match, prompting them to select and share or download their favorite personalized highlights. With this efficient workflow, the team no longer spent valuable time fielding athlete requests for content featuring each player — it was already on their phones. And they could easily monitor the shared social content activity and performance through Greenfly's dashboard analytics.



Athlete-created content is now outperforming our longer-form produced content. With Greenfly, the power to connect the Royals brand with our global fanbase and partners through our athletes has been quite transformational. The players have become our best creators and built their own personal brands while increasing the team's brand awareness around the globe.

— Atishay Agarwal,
Head of Content, Rajasthan Royals

Greenfly made things super easy for us. The transition time from the games finishing and us receiving the match images on our phones was short, and the whole process was quite seamless. It really helped our social media channels that we were able to access images so quickly and immediately get them onto our accounts.

— Riyan Parag
player, Rajasthan Royals

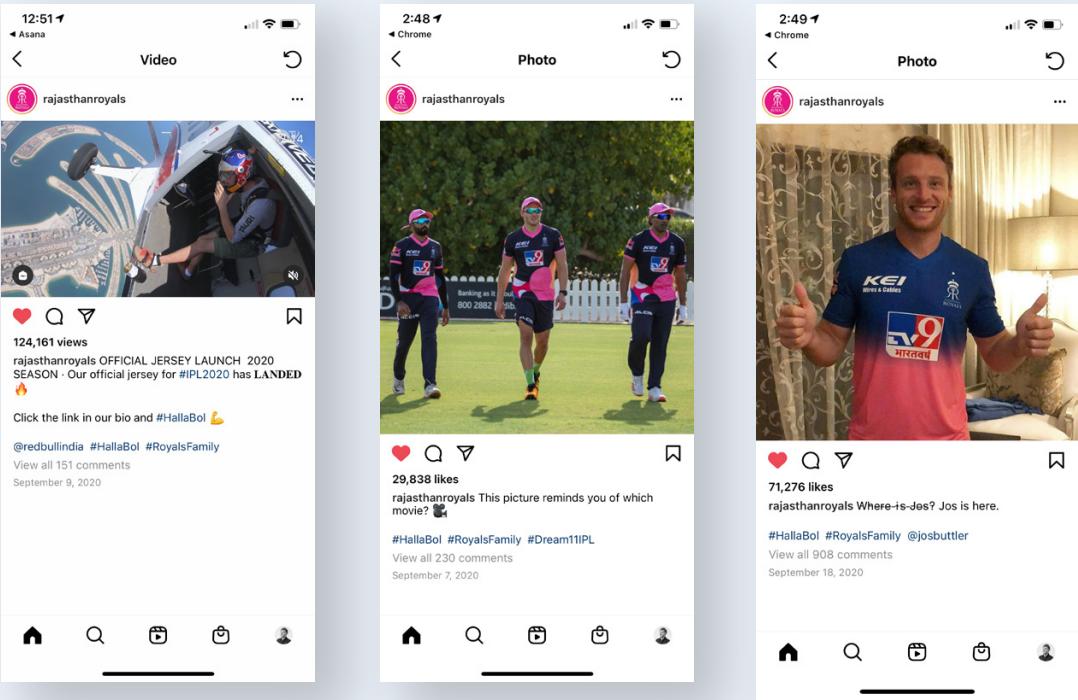
Impact

Greenfly has become the key driver in enabling the Royals’ digital team to develop their athletes into the club’s (and the IPL’s) top content creators.

During the IPL tournament, the Royals saw tremendous overall digital and social platform growth. Over 13,000 Royals gallery media assets flowed through Greenfly to support this momentum. More than 40 coaches and players, including Jos Buttler, Jofra Archer, David Miller and rookie Riyan Parag, now regularly share and create content through the platform. This activity has significantly expanded their profiles on social media; engagements from their content shares on Instagram alone grew by 158%. Video views (across FB, IG, TW and YT) and impressions both increased by more than 1000%.

Extending messages beyond the team’s social channels has helped the Royals staff amplify their partner programs and social impact work and bolster those valuable initiatives. And fans have engaged more deeply with the memorable moments that the Royals and club athletes now share with them. With this success, the Royals digital team has also onboarded 22 fan ambassadors, the “Super Royals,” that help market the club on social media and create content in the off-season.

The Royals team sees more opportunities to enhance their sponsor and media partner programs with athlete-driven content in the year ahead. They plan to build on the success of this market-leading approach that delivers engaging and inspiring media to their cricket fans everywhere.



Results

40+

athletes & staff became content creators

13k+

gallery media assets distributed

+185%

in Instagram social engagements using Greenfly*

+20%

in sponsor media value**

Greenfly’s brand advocacy software platform and mobile app enable organizations to transform their advocates into brand builders by harnessing the power of digital media.

Sources: Greenfly; *CrowdTangle, a public insights tool owned and operated by Facebook, Aug-Dec 2020, compared to the previous 4 month period. **Rajasthan Royals — by measuring player-published content that included sponsor logos.