

FEMALE FAN.

A PLAYBOOK FOR SPORT

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FIRST

Four key strategies for creating better brand experiences for the highest-value, deeply underserved demographic in sports.

INTRODUCTION	04
BACKGROUND	06
THE PLAYS	08
WHAT'S NEXT	26
RESOURCES	29



CONTENTS

There's nothing "emerging" about female fandom, unless you count the market's recognition of her power.

INTRO- DUCTION



WOMEN ARE, BY ALMOST EVERY MEASURE, THE MOST POWERFUL CONSUMER DEMOGRAPHIC ON THE PLANET.



They have been for a very long time. And yet the sports industry, which has been a key beneficiary of the female dollar, spent decades actively designing them out of the experience. The math has always been there. The data has always been there. Women have always been in the stands. The industry just... didn't look. Or looked and didn't act. Which is somehow worse. Fast forward a few decades and suddenly, brands, leagues, and venues begin the mad rush to catch up - calling the female fan an "emerging opportunity." Which is kind of like calling gravity an emerging force. Just because you never thought about it before, doesn't mean it wasn't always there.



BACK- GROUND

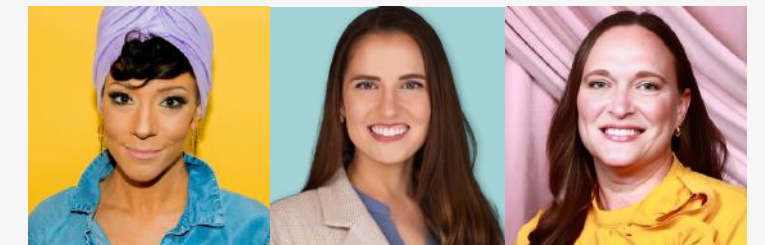
WE HAVE A POINT OF
VIEW ON THE FEMALE
FAN BECAUSE WE'VE
EARNED ONE

We've strategized and designed, fabricated and activated in more than twenty major sport venues across the country, leaning in to lived experience and deep consumer insight to create what turns fans of the team into fans of a brand. And when 50% of those fans manage 85% of the household income, you learn pretty quickly who you're actually designing for.

Beyond the portfolio, we have something most agencies don't — a team of female leaders who are fans and former athletes themselves.

We've felt the sting of being an afterthought. And we know the difference between what was designed for us with intention and what was designed to check the "And now, for girls!" box.

That difference is everything. It's built into everything we make. And it's what we'll share with you here.



PLAY

01.

PLAY 01.

DON'T FLINCH



Photo: My Profit Tutor on Unsplash



Photo: Atlanta United

Most brands don't fall flat when activating female fans because they aimed wrong... it's because they flinched at the finish line.



Photo: KQED

THE GAP

The brief was great. The strategy was right. Then someone calls women a 'niche audience' and wonders how we can shift the idea to make it more 'appealing to everyone.'

THE TRUTH

We all know that hedging creative to be 'universally appealing' is the quickest way to appeal to no one at all, but here's the part that nobody wants to say out loud: If women control 85% of household purchasing decisions and spend 5x more at sporting events than the average fan...**she is not niche, she is not a risk, she is the most valuable person in the venue.**



Photo: @NationalFootballWives

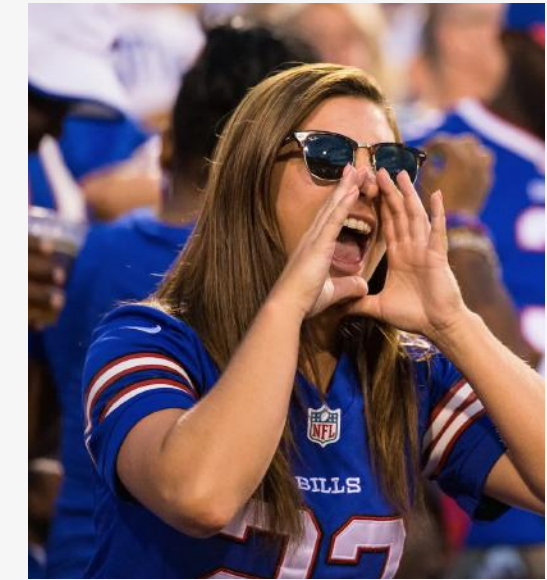


Photo: Marie Claire

TL;DR FOCUSING ON THE FEMALE FAN ISN'T EXCLUSION. IT'S STRATEGY.



Photo: USA Today

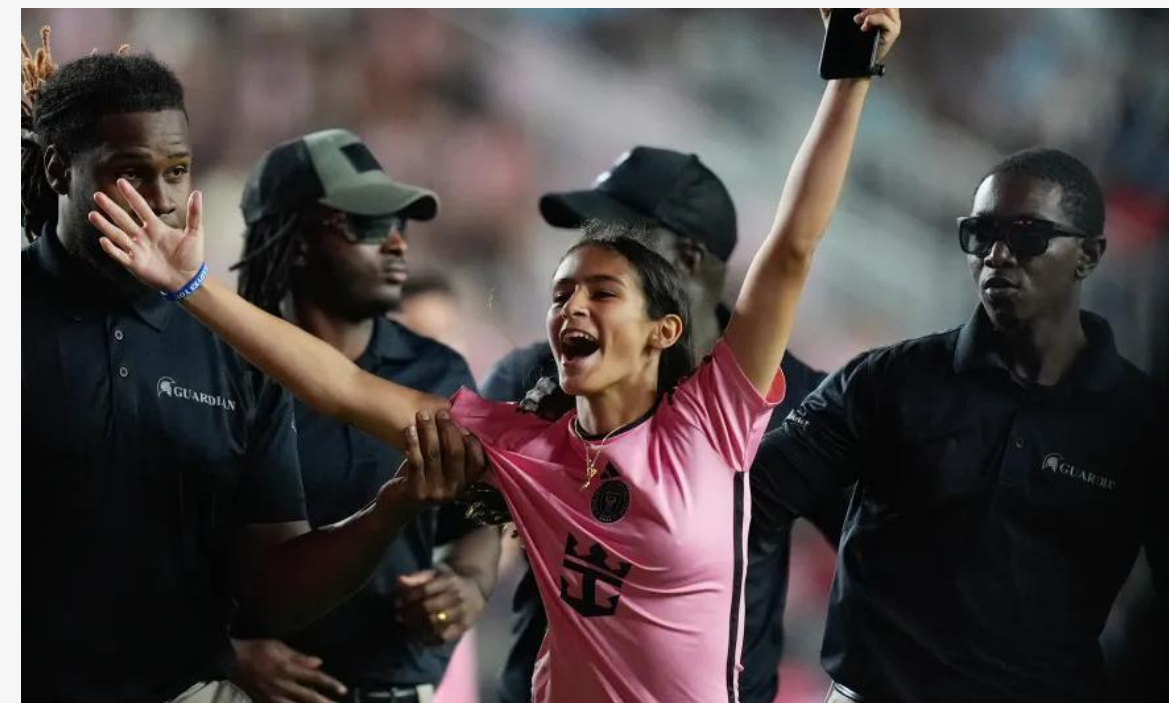


Photo: AP: Associated Press

THE PLAY

Write the brief for her and don't apologize for it. Build the activation around her experience at that specific venue, on that specific day. What does she need that she's not getting? Where does she go between plays? What would make her stick around longer, and tell three friends about it on the way home?

PLAY

02.



Photo: Fox Business

THE PLAYS | PLAY 02.

PLAY 02.

PRESENCE IS NOT A PLAY

Once you add in the \$15 nachos, she's spent a small fortune to come to the game. What is your brand providing that's a return on her investment?



Photo: Czarnowski Collective

THE GAP

Putting your logo on something and calling it a strategy is the oldest fumble in sponsorship. The female sports fan is actively looking for you to show up with something real.

THE TRUTH

Female fans are 16% more likely to notice brand experiences and pop-ups at sporting events. She's not passively wandering past your activation. She's looking for it. The question is whether it's worth finding.



Photo: @goals_sports_



Photo: @togethxr



Photo: Seattle Seahawks

THE PLAY

Donna Summer said, "She works hard for the money." Janet Jackson said, "What have you done for me lately?" Put the two together and you've got our ideal house cleaning playlist and the exact way you should be thinking about your audience of female sports fans.

- **Photo moments** that translate team colors and mascots into Pinterest-worthy aesthetics
- **Merch that's well-designed**, well-made and actually flattering on the female form (vs. make it pink and toss some glitter on it)
- **Giveaways that level up her experience:** like a hand sanitizer that smells like santal, instead of an ointment aisle

TL;DR DON'T JUST PUT YOUR STAMP ON IT...PUT HER STAMP ON IT.

PLAY

03.

PLAY 03.

YOU CAN'T OUTSPEND AUTHENTICITY

Create something she recognizes as being made with her in mind, not just marketed in her direction. The difference is obvious. And so is the payoff.

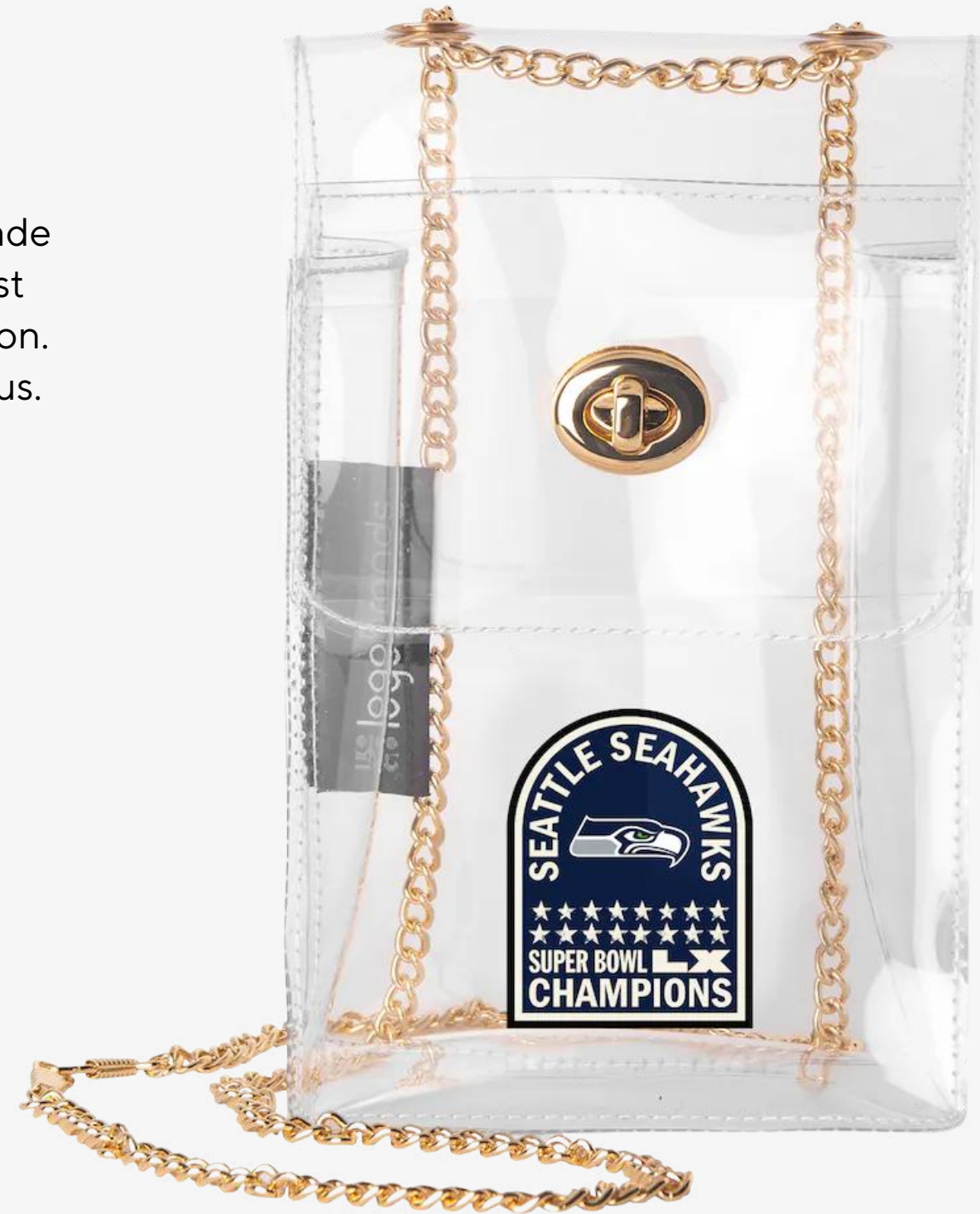




Photo: Mercedes-Benz Stadium

THE PLAY

If the romantic comedy genre has taught us anything, it's that what women want is an enigma that has consumed the minds of oddly handsome men for centuries. The solution, it turns out, is embarrassingly simple. Put more women in the room.

- Put female creatives and strategists at the center of the brief
- Partner with female athletes to co-create the experience
- Commission a female artist for the visual identity
- Source the giveaways from women-owned businesses
- Design merch that speaks directly to painpoints in the female stadium experience - like clear bags

THE GAP

The brands winning in women's sport aren't the ones with the biggest budgets. They're the ones with the most credible presence. Authenticity isn't a vibe. It's a strategy. She can tell the difference. And it starts long before the activation goes live.

THE TRUTH

58% of women are more likely to think positively of a brand that sponsors women's sports leagues – compared to just 38% of men. 68% are more likely to consider a brand that sponsors their favorite sport or team. She's ready to love you...now's the time to earn it.

TL;DR THE BEST THING YOU CAN SPEND MONEY ON IS FEMALE PERSPECTIVE.



Photo: People Magazine



Photo: WWD

PLAY

04.

PLAY 04.

IF YOU BUILD IT



Photo: Chicago Tribune

you know the rest. But isn't it about time that stadiums were built to accommodate the needs of the OTHER 50% of fans?



Photo: @interiordesignmag

THE GAP

The world wasn't designed for women. Literally. This isn't conspiracy. It's design default. And women have been quietly, invisibly accommodating the gap every single day without even realizing it. Sports venues are no different. They were built by men, for men, with women as a late addition to the seating chart. And right now, half the fans walking through those gates are female.



- iPhones were built to fit in larger hands (PopSocket, anyone?)
- Seatbelts were engineered for male bodies (making women 47% more likely to be seriously injured in a crash)
- Ever wonder why there's always a line for the ladies room? For decades, building codes allocated equal square footage all restrooms, even though urinals take up far less space than stalls



Photo: @AtlantaDream



Photo: NBA.com

THE TRUTH

- 47% of the NFL's attending audience is female
- More than 60% of women's sporting event attendees are women
- Female fans arrive at the venue 15-30 minutes earlier than men

If our math is mathing (and it is), that means she makes up at least half the room and she's in the building longer than almost anyone. If we're choosing a default to design for, we know where we'd be leaning.



Photo: Toledo Blade

THE PLAY (FOR GMS + OPS LEADS)

There's no denying it: the female fan is half your audience and for many of you, your infrastructure doesn't reflect that...yet. So let's start with the basics:

- Audit your restrooms – the line at the ladies' isn't a coincidence, it's a design failure
- While you're at it, add changing table stations to the men's restrooms
- Build mother's rooms on every level of your venue with clear wayfinding
- Light every nook and cranny of your parking deck until it can be seen from space
- Evaluate your sightlines - do they work for a fan who's average height is around 5'4"?

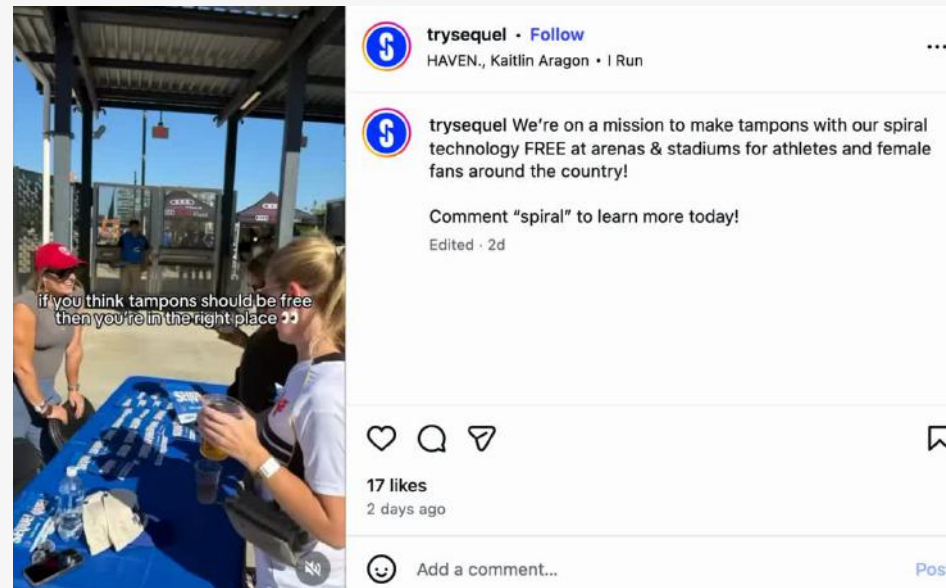
TL;DR THOUGHTFUL UPGRADES
PAY IN LOYALTY.



Photo: Aunt Flow



Photo: NookPodUSA



Video: @TrySequel



Photo: @CincinnatiReds

THE PLAY (FOR BRANDS + MARKETERS)

If she spent twenty minutes in a restroom line, couldn't find childcare, felt unsafe walking to her car, or was cold the entire game because the thermostat was set for someone else – no amount of beautiful brand moments fixes that.

The brands that win her loyalty aren't just building better activations. They're using their partnership leverage to advocate for a better total experience. Make it a contractual ask. Make it part of the brief. Make it non-negotiable.

TL;DR USE YOUR POWERS
FOR GOOD.

WHAT'S NEXT

**THIS IS WHERE THE PLAYERS
WORK BEGINS. WE**

WHAT'S NEXT

**BOOK ENDS AND THE REAL
DO THAT PART, TOO.**

WHAT'S NEXT



Czarnowski Collective has spent decades building brand experiences in and around stadiums, arenas, and sports venues from coast to coast.

We work with brands who want to show up meaningfully for the female fan; with venues and leagues who want to build environments she actually wants to be in.

We bring the same thing to every brief: a team of people who genuinely love sport, understand her experience inside it, and know how to build something worthy of her attention.

The playbook opens the door.
We can help you build what's on the other side.

[LEARN MORE](#)

RESOURCES

MORE FEMALE FAN-FIRST CONTENT

HOW FEMALE-FOCUSED BRANDS ARE WINNING IN MALE-DOMINATED SPORTS

THE SPORTS INDUSTRY HAS AN INNOVATION THEATER PROBLEM (AND WE HAVE RECEIPTS)

THE RISE OF WOMEN IN SPORTS MARKETING

SHE'S NOT THE FUTURE OF SPORTS. SHE'S THE PRESENT.

SOURCES

STATISTICS: CROWD IQ, NIELSEN IQ, DELOITTE, WASSERMAN: HER LOVE OF THE GAME, WASSERMAN: THE COLLECTIVE ECONOMY

GENDER DATA BIAS STATISTICS: "INVISIBLE WOMEN" BY CAROLINE CRIADO PEREZ

STOCK IMAGERY: LICENSED THROUGH FREEPIK

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