

CASE STUDY

How the Cleveland Cavaliers reimagined & executed Goodyear's social & digital strategy

OVERVIEW

The Cleveland Cavaliers, with more than 27.5M social media followers (as of Sep 20, 2021), have a passionate fan base across Cleveland, Akron, and Canton in addition to the US and globally. During the pandemic and 3-month sports timeout, social media became more important than ever to grow their fan base and showcase sponsors. The Cavs' IG account from March 2020 - Sep 2021 gained more than 2.2M followers and has since surpassed 10M total followers. The team also has a long-standing partnership with marquee sponsor and current jersey patch partner Goodyear since the summer of 2017. The Cleveland Cavaliers and Blinkfire Analytics teamed up to review the team's social media and sponsorship performance during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 seasons.

CHALLENGE

COVID-19 presented challenges, unforeseen and unexpected, in the sports and entertainment spaces. From make-goods to new content series, teams looked for ways to continue showcasing sponsors and driving engagement. The Cleveland Cavaliers have used Blinkfire Analytics sponsorship and data platform since 2016. With make-goods, unused inventory, and limited fans in stadiums, the Cavs needed to shift focus to the digital and social space. The digital and social teams worked to keep the quality and standard of their channels high, even with the number of posts increasing. The organization also wanted to figure out the best way to highlight Goodyear in an impactful, engaging way despite a shortened season, reduced fans, and few nationally broadcasted games.



When the pandemic hit and the world essentially shut down, we had to pivot to more social and digital activations. For some of our partners, this is still a bit of an unknown area. Blinkfire accurately measured the media value and quantified the exposure and engagement. Working with an established entity – a team who understands the ins and outs of the space – was invaluable for us. We could immediately trust their analysis and insights without any second guessing, and confidently share that value with our partners.

Wincy Wong
Director, Corporate Partnership Marketing, Cleveland Cavaliers

SOLUTION

Because of Blinkfire Analytics' robust platform, the Cleveland Cavaliers used numerous reports and automated searches to help build the best strategy and execution for Goodyear, focusing on video content and new digital assets.

1. Benchmarking & Ideation Using Blinkfire's **Report Builder**, the Cavs scoped out the sports landscape and brainstormed how to evolve their digital channels.

2. New Inventory Opportunities The Cavs used Blinkfire's **Asset & Scene Report** to gauge the Walk-in-Wall's future valuation for Goodyear (highlighted during player arrivals into the stadium), since the tiremaker replaced Tissot during the 2020-2021 season.

3. New Content Series *The Wall Series* and *From Garage to Glory* were pivotal pieces of content for Goodyear. One of the social team's focuses for the season was integrating Goodyear content (outside of the jersey patch) with the Cavs brand.



4. Asset Report With the NBA's new court-side signage for the 2020-2021 season, the Cavs depended on Blinkfire's real-time computer vision technology to detect assets (LED, seat cover, etc.) in video and images for Goodyear.

5. Sponsorship Report The social and digital team aggregated data in real-time (metrics: valuation and engagements) following viral moments and new content series. The data helped Goodyear track exposure on assets like the jersey and in-stadium signage.

6. Video Content + Social Media The pandemic offered the Cavs the opportunity focus more on video content, including the rise of TikTok. Using Blinkfire, the social team tracked their video content and benchmarked against other teams in the NBA and regionally.

RESULTS

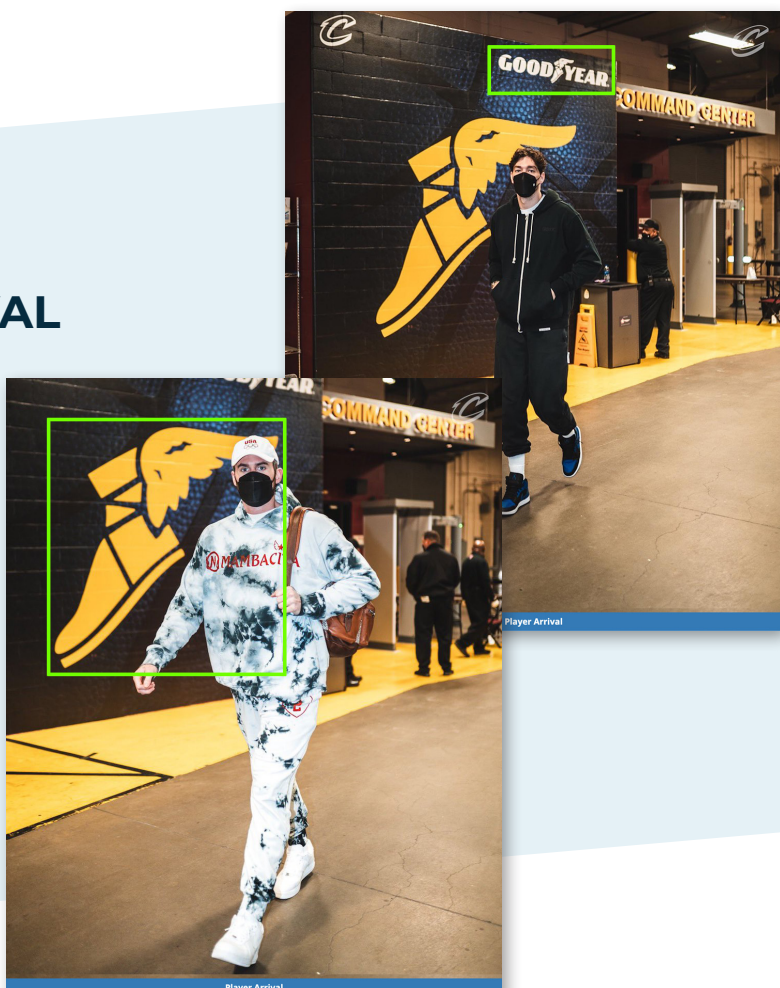
During the 2020-2021 season, the Cleveland Cavaliers owned and operated social media channels drove **24% more sponsorship value** and **18% more engagements for Goodyear** versus the 2019-2020 season.

Media company posts referencing the Cavs and showcasing the Goodyear brand (whether on the jersey, in-arena asset, or social/digital asset) **increased 24% compared to the 2019/2020 season.**

NEW ASSET: GOODYEAR + PLAYER ARRIVAL

GOODYEAR

The Cavs added a player arrival wall backdrop with Goodyear branding before the 2020-2021 season to ensure the Goodyear logo was front and center in photos.



BY THE NUMBERS

Social media growth across TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube

491% increase in views
725% increase in engagements

When the pandemic hit during the 2019-2020 season, and then lockdown followed, **YouTube video views and engagements increased 491% and 725%** from the previous season.

The Cavs carried the social media momentum from the 2020 NBA Bubble into the 2020-2021 season and continued to accelerate their growth on YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok.

TikTok follower growth accelerated 3000%.

Instagram gained **more than 1 million new followers, a 49% increase in growth** compared to last season.



Blinkfire Analytics is the leading business intelligence & marketing analytics platform to evaluate sports, media, and entertainment sponsorships across social media, digital, and Advanced TV. Using artificial intelligence, machine learning, and proprietary computer vision technology, Blinkfire Analytics measures media value and impact – allowing rights holders, players, influencers, agents, and brands to better engage their fans and sponsors across multiple platforms. Many of the world's top teams and leagues rely on Blinkfire Analytics' real-time, always-on platform for sports and entertainment sponsorship evaluation to quantify engagement and sponsorship dollars.

To learn more about Blinkfire Analytics, email at bizdev@blinkfire.com or visit www.blinkfire.com.

