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In today's ever-changing world, recent technological advances have made it easier and more affordable to be strategic and intentional in how to market to fans.

In addition to the standard forms of digital marketing like email messaging, text messaging and direct notifications, more and more colleges and universities are taking advantage of advanced technology like customer relationship management (CRM) systems, which provide organizations with the opportunity to aggregate the data they have on file for individual stakeholders (i.e. ticket information, birthdays) as well as their phone calls and in-person interactions in one place, providing a 360-degree holistic view of their stakeholders. This type of information permits organizations to individually personalize their marketing content to ensure its relevancy to the stakeholder.

In addition to CRM programs, organizations can also take advantage of marketing automation companies like Marketo and HubSpot that can track behavioral information (i.e. social media, web engagement), provide lead generation and can also automate workflows. The NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves implemented a lead generation program this season where they offered fans two complimentary tickets on/around their birthday and a 25 percent discount to their online team apparel store. Over 20,000 people signed up for the program which has generated a significant amount of new leads for the external sales staff. Useful data collection can also be tracked through sports loyalty programs like Fan Maker, Superfan, Hopscotch and Experience.

Several athletics departments have teamed up with video companies like Spiideo, which allow teams to capture practice and game footage from multiple angles, developing a panoramic virtual view of the entire field. The technology provides coaching staffs the ability to view every detail of the game, allowing staffs to focus on individual student-athlete development, tactical analysis and feedback for the entire squad.

Many colleges and universities are beginning to tap into the technological and analytical resources available on their campuses. At Georgia Tech, the athletics department has teamed up with the Institute for People and Technology and other departments on campus to develop the Sports Research, Innovation, and Technology (SPRINT) initiative, which focuses on athletics performance, fan engagement and game day/ticket operations. UNLV's athletics department has developed a partnership with the analytics company Switch, which will permit their department and other campus entities to collaborate on sports-science related research. Students in Wake Forest's Master of Science in Business Analytics program have teamed up with the athletics department to develop a website that has the ability to generate advanced statistics on the football program which is helping the communications staff save time and provide cutting-edge information to media and broadcast partners. Another example of collaboration between a university entity and an athletics department took place at Illinois earlier this year where a colloquium titled "Visualization and Data Analysis in Collegiate Athletics" was hosted by the athletics department and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA).