



Precision Plays:

How Data Drives Fan Engagement

Background

With one of the widest reaches in professional sports, this major U.S. sports league manages an extraordinary number of advertising campaigns each year. From marquee events that draw global attention to regular season ticket promotions, its marketing operations demand seamless coordination across league headquarters, individual teams, and a vast network of partners.

For each team, the annual schedule release represents one of the most important marketing moments of the year — a chance to engage fans, boost ticket sales, and build anticipation for the season ahead.

With such massive scale comes complexity. Managing, tracking, and analyzing campaigns across so many stakeholders proved challenging. To bring greater consistency, efficiency, and insight to their marketing efforts, the sports league partnered with Claravine to transform how campaigns are created, tracked, and optimized.

Challenges

In 2023, the league's campaign tracking process highlighted several significant challenges, namely during their high-profile annual schedule release. This event is a key moment to engage fans and drive ticket sales, yet existing workflows created bottlenecks. For this release alone, the marketing team had to manually build hundreds of tracking links. This labor-intensive process was time-consuming and prone to errors due to the need to copy and paste campaign details.

Key obstacles included:

- **Elusive Attribution:** Only a tiny slice of ticket revenue could be tied to specific marketing efforts.
- **Chaotic Launches:** Tracking relied heavily on manual spreadsheets and ad hoc fixes. High
- **Stakes Stress:** Hundreds of links for one release meant long hours and a high risk of mistakes.
- **Shallow Insights:** Lack of detailed metadata made it difficult to analyze performance by channel, creative type, or audience segment.

The Solution

The league sought an enterprise-grade solution to transform its campaign tracking process, with a focus on centralization, automation, and metadata enrichment. The main objectives included:

Streamlined Link Building:



- Pre-built campaign links with rich metadata even before receiving base URLs from partners.
- Dropdown menus allowed quick updates once base links were available, reducing errors and saving time.

Centralized Metadata Management:



- Captured detailed metadata for each campaign, including team identifiers, channel types, creative attributes, and audience segments.
- Enabled integration with analytics tools for deeper insights, including first-touch and last-touch attribution.

Efficient Execution:



- Distributed hundreds of schedule-release links to marketing and PR teams within hours, ensuring readiness well ahead of deadlines.
- Easily accommodated last-minute requests without disruption.
- Automated metadata syncing to the data lake and directly into Adobe Experience Platform.

Advanced Insights:



- Utilizing detailed metadata around the channel, creative, audience, and campaign, combined with behavioral data, has allowed for deeper insights to optimize campaigns.

Results

Before implementing a sophisticated campaign coding system, <25% of revenue from key initiatives could be tied back to specific marketing efforts. With standardized data practices and structured campaign tracking, that number nearly doubled in just one year. This clarity has allowed the league to identify which channels and campaigns deliver the highest impact —

For instance, a fan's organic social media post unexpectedly became the top driver of engagement and revenue for a season kick-off campaign.

Personalization became a true competitive advantage—giving the team the ability to tailor offers, messaging, and timing to reach fans where they already engage. Instead of generic blasts, fans receive relevant ticket offers for the games they're most likely to attend, early access to premium seating or playoff presales, targeted merchandise promotions tied to favorite players, and in-app or email messaging aligned to recent engagement. For sports fans, relevance is everything; when communications reflect their loyalty, preferences, and behavior, they feel like a part of the team.

This level of insight positions the organization ahead of other leagues and teams that still rely on broad, one-theme-fits-all campaigns. Instead of guessing, leadership can confidently invest in the channels and messages proven to perform.



For example, year-over-year analysis from the most recent schedule release campaign revealed that **email marketing significantly exceeded expectations**—enabling the team to double down on personalized outreach while pulling back on less effective channels.

The impact is felt directly by fans. More accurate targeting means fans receive timely updates, ticket offers, and content aligned to their interests—creating a more connected, less intrusive fan experience. At the same time, improved speed-to-market allows the marketing team to quickly activate time-sensitive campaigns, such as schedule announcements or game-day promotions, without sacrificing accuracy or consistency.

Building on this success, the league has expanded its use of Claravine to unlock even greater efficiencies and insights across broader campaigns. Custom templates are now in place to track initiatives by affiliates and partners. By leveraging integrations like Adobe Analytics, Kochava, and S3 to connect tools with the league’s data warehouse ultimately automating workflows and streamlining reporting. The streamlined campaign tracking process has been extended to other critical initiatives, including season ticket promotions, fan interest forms, and retail campaigns—enabling the league to optimize marketing strategies and empower teams to make data-driven decisions across all facets of the organization.

The benefits go beyond insights— with over **50% of the league using Claravine**, this adoption translates into smarter decisions, more efficient workflows, and ultimately, increased revenue.

Key Results:

+33% YoY
in campaign-attributed visits

50% +
adoption of data standards across teams and partners

Hours to minutes:
Schedule release prep time reduced from days to hours

Dramatic improvement in data quality and marketing attribution

“ Utilizing detailed metadata around the channel, creative, audience, and campaign along with behavioral data has allowed for deeper insights to optimize campaigns and to help us integrate with additional technologies to fully understand where to allocate spend and resources efficiently.

- Sr. Manager Media Strategy & Insights

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