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Development and Implementation of a Sports Broadcast for Columbus State University Basketball (Professional Project Report)

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COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SPORTS BROADCAST FOR COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL

A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT SUBMITTED TO

COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

BY

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DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SPORTS BROADCAST FOR COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL

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Abstract

Sports broadcasting uniquely captivates and unites people in a way no other form of entertainment can. Columbus State University, an NCAA Division II organization, recognized the need to elevate its sports broadcasting capabilities to enhance fan engagement and support for its men's and women's basketball programs. The purpose of this project was to record and report the process in the development and execution of a professional sports broadcast for the 2023-2024 men's and women's basketball season at Columbus State. This project increased visibility for multiple parties while creating future possibilities within the athletic department by introducing new technology and updating the current state of the production software. The collaborative efforts of the broadcast communication team and the staff and stakeholders were instrumental in elevating the programs to new heights of success and recognition on and off the court.

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Technology has become the driving force behind various aspects of our lives, including athletics. It is critical to stay current on technological developments to stay ahead of the competition in sports on and off the field of play, including college and high school sports. However, there is a serious issue with the need for cutting-edge broadcasts, especially at the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) Division II level. Research on sports marketing efforts has mostly been conducted on College Division I intercollegiate athletics, with limited studies examining Division II athletics (Zullo, 2018). For example, an easily accessible figure in sports communications for Division I is that the men's and women's 2024 NCAA Division I championship basketball games drew in 33.7 million viewers (Helsel, 2024). This success in Division I sports broadcasting demonstrates the potential for Division II, but it requires additional resources and guidance. With advances in streaming technology, broadcasts are becoming more immersive and interactive than ever before, benefiting fans and elevating the profile of Division II athletics on a national scale. However, the success of Division II programming in the broadcast industry depends on the professional presentation of college athletics. This report is of such a professional project.

Before the implementation of this project, Columbus State University had what many would consider to be a low-quality broadcast, even for Division II athletics. After discussions with the staff at Columbus State University Athletics, it was clear the institution lacked the knowledge and resources to effectively use the required streaming software and identify the production equipment necessary for a high-quality broadcast. However, introducing this professional project was a game-changer. It assisted the Athletic Department in identifying what was needed to professionalize broadcasting basketball games, allowing the men's and women's basketball teams to excel both on and off the court. The project was conducted over four months, from the start of the men's and women's basketball seasons in November to the end in February, and the results were truly remarkable.

Review of Literature

Introduction

One of the most-watched television programs in U.S. history was the Apollo 11 moon landing in 1969, with an estimated 125 million to 150 million Americans watching (Gibson, 2024). Following this televised, monumental event were multiple highly-watched Super Bowl games. The broadcasts of these Super Bowl games make up almost all of the top 30 mostwatched television events in U.S. history (Gibson, 2024). According to Baker (2023), with five billion viewers worldwide, the FIFA World Cup Qatar in 2022 was the most viewed sporting event. These statistics demonstrate the significance of sports broadcasting in the United States and worldwide.

Throughout history, sports have always been a popular pastime for people all around the world. However, it was only in the development of radio and, eventually, television that sports became a multibillion-dollar industry. The ability to broadcast games and matches to a broader audience allowed for increased viewership and fan engagement. Nowadays, one can watch practically any sporting event on television or via a streaming platform. Sports broadcasting is going through drastic changes with the emergence of new technologies and streaming services that are not just enabling but revolutionizing this type of on-demand viewing (Shrivastav, 2022). These changes and developments are happening worldwide at different levels, including the Division II level of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). With most research

efforts focused on Division I, it is crucial to identify gaps in knowledge at the Division II level, particularly in sports broadcasting, to keep pace with these rapid advancements.

It is critical to comprehend what it takes to develop and produce the best possible broadcast to keep up in the ever-expanding field of sports broadcasting. This review will explore relevant literature that can reform the development and implementation of a sports broadcast for a DII athletic institution and its teams.

Sports Broadcasting in College Athletics

Broadcasting in college athletics has been around for over a century, with college football being on the radio in 1921, then televised in 1939. A few years later, in the 1950s, sports broadcasting was booming, but the NCAA was afraid it would decrease in-person ticket income for the games. While they tried to prohibit televised broadcasts, they agreed to a compromise, and their "Television Plan" was implemented, which allowed teams to broadcast one game a week on Saturdays (Sanderson, 2018, p. 309). This connects to sports broadcasting today, as college football is still mainly played on Saturdays. Though the one-game-a-week rule is not in effect by the NCAA, the success and demand for sports broadcasting grew exponentially each decade past the 1950s, hitting \$60 million (\$188 million today) annually in the 1980s. The NCAA was also trying to monopolize college football rights, but then "the Supreme Court invalidated the NCAA broadcast rights cartel, the number of televised games increased dramatically, and per-game rights fees fell to less than a third of the level that they had been previously" (Sanderson, 2018, p. 310). Fees recovered shortly after as viewers increased and other sports grew in the sports broadcasting light. Many different stations and channels carried different sports. "ESPN first carried early rounds of the NCAA men's basketball tournament in 1980, when the name "March Madness" was coined. After the 1984 Court decision upended the

NCAA's national television contract with ABC, ESPN immediately began to televise some major college football games. ESPN-2 arrived in 1993, with many other ESPNs since" (Sanderson, 2018, pp. 310-311). With various outlets and popularity rising, revenue and engagement were significantly impacted.

Although there are numerous conferences in NCAA sports, the "Power 5" conferences (ACC, Big 12, Pac-12, Big Ten, and SEC) are the DI conferences that bring in the most money. Between football bowl games, the NCAA basketball tournament, and T.V. deals, the Power 5 conferences bring in more than \$250 million annually, plus the rest of the revenue generated from regular season games and more (Sanderson, 2018, p. 311). While these are on the higher end of the spectrum, some smaller DI and DII schools broadcast on streaming services like ESPN+ and FloSports. These are growing recently, where viewers can subscribe and pay a monthly or yearly fee for the platforms. All the different sports are broadcast here, whereas the bigger or more popular games or sports are shown on primetime television. While large DI schools may get to keep the revenue from the broadcasts, smaller institutions may not. The following statement from Cork Gaines with *Business Insider* (2024) shows that not all schools are equal, even in Division I:

Of the 1,062 colleges and universities that field varsity athletic teams under the NCAA banner, only 396—fewer than half—made at least \$10 million off their sports teams in 2022, the most recent year with available data. Only 56—about 5%—of those schools made at least \$100 million.

This revenue is mainly from television contracts, sponsorships, and ticket sales. While ticket sales, alum donations, and licensing fees are all a part of the school's revenue, most of the revenue is generated from T.V. contracts with the conferences. Sometimes, these contracts can

be worth billions of dollars. For example, in the next seven years, all schools in the Big Ten Conference, which is a Power 5 conference, will make \$72 million annually from broadcasting on CBS, FOX, and NBC (Skarecky, 2023). Along with television and streaming services, some games at all division levels are streamed on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitch, or Twitter (Mondello, 2022, p. 63). Now, instead of sitting in front of a television at home, these social media apps are always portable on cell phones and other devices for consumption. This has contributed to the growth in sports broadcasting in recent years.

Like all television productions, to create and produce a successful sports broadcasting program, one must make it inviting and attractive for consumers to return. "Teams, leagues, and broadcasters should develop strategies that engage fans with an understanding they likely are interacting with friends and the broader fan community on a second screen when witnessing sports" (Mondello, 2022, p. 66). This "second screen" is helpful for those fans that cannot be at the events in person.

Athletic Departments

Smaller academic institutions, specifically Division II athletic programs, need help broadcasting their sports content and events to the public. While larger schools' budgets, popularity, and contracts contribute to events being shown on big sports entertainment platforms, smaller schools do not have the same accessibility. Because of this, webcasts have been an affordable option for small universities. Georgia College & State University (GCSU) in Milledgeville, Georgia, made a professional arrangement for a broadcast online with a minor start-up cost of \$30,000 (Carnevale, 2007). GCSU is in the Peach Belt Conference, the same conference that Columbus State finds itself. The two institutions are in the same situation regarding fans accessing the content for all sports. Another challenge these smaller institutions face is finding competent and qualified workers to contribute their time to every event. Luckily, places like GCSU and CSU have student workers who get school credit for their input on the broadcasts or even a small paycheck for participating in live-streaming sports events. Students with various degrees of experience and skills are involved, ranging from undergraduate students in broadcasting and computer science to graduate students in communications and more (Carnevale, 2007). This experience is not only helpful to the DII programs that do not have much money to employ workers for these broadcasts, but it is also helpful to the students as they are getting credit for a class and experience in the field they could potentially work later in life. However, there are always challenges as these institutions may need more human resources or money for reliable equipment as technology continuously advances. As technology advances, athletic program content expectations are also heightened.

Although DII has different demands than DI athletic programs, both kinds of institutions want to keep their fans interested and entertained through interaction online. Division II fans are invested and want to tune in, but the fan base is slightly smaller than the more prominent schools (Carnevale, 2007). As mentioned above, streaming services are starting to show more events throughout all sports and divisions. While large Division I schools have contracts with larger platforms like CBS and FOX, the smaller platforms are starting to do the same with streaming services like FloSports. In 2022, the South Atlantic Conference and FloSports finalized the largest NCAA Division II Media Rights Agreement, in which FloSports would livestream 1,300 or more games each year for a five-year partnership, along with an on-demand portal (FloSports Inc., 2022). In this historic contract, the SAC is strengthening and maximizing the exposure of around 20 different institutions and sports at each school. Not only are the SAC schools being shown on this platform, but fans from opposing teams in other conferences can tune in to watch

on the platform for a subscription fee (FloSports Inc., 2022). Another platform that has recently partnered with Division II institutions is Hudl. Starting in 2023, Hudl has been and will continue to stream more than 200 NCAA Division II championship events and contests over the next year. "Currently, 16 Division II conferences rely on Hudl's advanced live streaming platform to provide fans live and on-demand access to regular-season and conference championship contests, including distribution of broadcasts to conference-branded destinations across web, mobile, and T.V. apps" (Dent, 2023). Columbus State University Athletics is in one of those 16 conferences, as that is the software the Cougars' athletic events are broadcasted. FloSports and Hudl are also in contract with DI conferences and institutions.

Now that DII has been infiltrated with streaming services that are popular and successful at the DI level, more DII conferences and institutions may follow suit. Some conferences, such as the Peach Belt Conference, have a free website and app access to stream the games on the Peach Belt Network platform but sometimes have to include advertisements for costeffectiveness. The Peach Belt Conference pays for its membership institutions to display their programs on the network. If an individual institution wants to use a platform different from the PBC Network, they can, but they have to foot the bill.

Technology and Innovation in Sports Broadcasting

With technology advancing every day, it is imperative that sports broadcasting leverage the new technology surrounding it. Although sports broadcasting has grown exponentially, advances are still being made. Some advances in broadcasting athletics are ultra-high-definition broadcasts, interactive and personalized viewing experiences, multi-camera angles and 360degree views, second-screen experiences, real-time statistics and data visualizations, and more (Ross Video, 2024). UHD makes the contests more visually pleasing and helps fans feel closer to the action, even if they watch it through a screen. Fans and viewers also feel more involved when they get a more personalized viewing experience. This is done by giving them multiple angles, with different cameras and drone shots, interactive angle choices, and second-screen experiences with discussions, additional content, data, and statistics (Ross Video, 2024). These are all starting to be implemented in different levels of NCAA athletics. At Division II Columbus State, some of these advancements are already in effect, as the CSU Basketball broadcasts this season used various cameras and angles of the action. The CSU Baseball team also integrated an interactive viewing experience with multiple different cameras that the viewers can choose from during the game to view the most optimal image for their liking. More sports will likely follow suit, and the DII experience will be as entertaining as DI events on primetime television.

Conclusion

This summary of the developments in college sports broadcasting focuses on the history and advancement of sports broadcasting, successful sports broadcasting procedures, and implementations, comparisons of NCAA Division I and II athletic program viewer demands, different platforms of streaming services, and potential future developments in sports broadcasting. While the content of this review has been studied up to this point, there are numerous gains to be made in the future of athletics. This current project aims to expand the possibilities of sports broadcasting at all levels of athletics, specifically in NCAA Division II.

Project Overview

Creating and implementing a professional sports broadcast for Columbus State University's basketball teams was a challenging yet rewarding project that required careful planning and execution. By developing a broadcast, the broadcast team aimed to provide fans with an immersive and engaging viewing experience while promoting school spirit and enhancing the visibility of the athletes.

Purpose

The Columbus State University athletic department sought a high-quality broadcast that would elevate the basketball programs to new heights of success and recognition, and that is precisely what was done. It was implementing this state-of-the-art broadcast, featuring highdefinition cameras that captured every moment, aimed to connect fans who could not attend games in person to their favorite teams. The viewers witnessed the intensity and skills the talented athletes displayed, enhancing overall fan engagement and highlighting the athletes' talents in high resolution.

A top-notch broadcast provides valuable exposure for the basketball teams at Columbus State and the institution. This exposure can attract talented recruits, improving team performance and success. Pushing the games out onto a streaming site that viewers can reach anywhere allows CSU to compete with more prominent universities and gain recognition on a national level through the live stream. This directly correlates with the institution's sports information department's objective, as stated on *csucougars.com*, promoting CSU Athletics in the community, state, region, and nation.

Process

This complex professional project required careful planning, coordination, and execution. It was essential to follow a detailed process to complete the project successfully. The process description outlines the steps involved in each stage of the project. The description is detailed below.

Equipment Update

The initial stage in creating an exceptional broadcast for Columbus State University involved a comprehensive evaluation of the university's broadcasting capabilities. This entailed an examination of the current equipment, technology, and personnel, as well as pinpointing any areas needing enhancements. The assessment uncovered that the present equipment needed to be updated and that additional personnel would be necessary. Before our involvement, basketball games were limited to a single center camera and a solitary operator in charge of producing the broadcasts in the Production Truck software. Essentially, they had one person doing a job that should have required at least six people to create a top-quality production. Our updated implementation addressed several critical issues identified in the assessment.

To address these shortcomings, we started by replacing the older, low-quality cameras initially used by the athletic department. Before our team took over, the athletic department used one camera for its streams. Columbus State utilized the Canon G70 Vixia HF G70 UHD (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Canon Vixia HF G70 UHD 4K Camcorder



The takeover of this project upgraded the equipment to include four of the Sony PXW-Z90V 4K

HDR XDCAM models (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Sony PXW-Z90V 4K HDR XDCAM Model Camera



These cameras were chosen for their high-density autofocus placement, allowing for exact focusing and tracking during fast-paced events like basketball games. As part of our equipment upgrade, we also added additional tools to enhance the quality of the broadcasts. For example, after Columbus State University requested a wireless floor camera, we accommodated their needs by incorporating a Teradek into our setup. The Teradek (see Figure 3) was selected as a wireless video transmitter that eliminates the need for a long HDMI/SDI video cable (see Figure 4 and Figure 5) to connect the camera to the production control room.

Figure 3

Teradek Bolt 6 LT 750 3G-SDI/HDMI Transmitter/Receiver Kit



Figure 4

High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) Cord



Figure 5

Serial Digital Interface (SDI) Cable, 4K Single-Channel BNC



With the addition of the Teradek, we could send an Audio/Visual (A.V.) signal wirelessly from room to room or the basketball court to the production booth (Maxwell, 2024). With the addition of four cameras came the addition of personnel to continue producing a high-quality broadcast. We recruited student workers from the communication department at Columbus State University to participate in the broadcast production. We filled four camera operator positions: one director, one supervisor, an audio director, and an extra spotter on the floor using our wireless camera.

Camera Angles and Placements

With the addition of four new cameras, we embarked on a collaborative journey to determine the most effective camera angles and positions for these specific cameras. As a team, we started by discussing the best camera angles and potential shots for basketball. My previous experience at Black Hills State University, where I worked on a team of broadcasters during basketball season, has provided me with valuable insights. I learned from the director about the

shots that work best for this sport during my time as a student camera worker. I was also fortunate to take a Sports Broadcasting class, which further enriched my understanding.

Before jumping into positioning for the four new cameras, we needed to remember the 180-degree rule in film. This rule is sacred to the film industry and is predominantly used in live sports streaming. This rule states that all cameras should stay on the same side of an imaginary line connecting two subjects so as not to disorientate the audience's left and right orientation (Aldredge, 2021). In our case, the imaginary line should be drawn from the center court and extend to the end of the arena on both sides (see Figure 6).

Figure 6

Example of our 180-degree Rule Imaginary Line on Columbus State University's Court



Following the 180-degree rule also helps prevent confusion among viewers by maintaining a clear sense of directionality and spatial orientation throughout the broadcast. By adhering to this rule, broadcasters can avoid disorienting viewers and ensure that they can easily track the

movement of players and the ball. This rule is crucial in providing viewers with a seamless viewing experience that allows them to follow the game effortlessly. Once we determined what side of the line we wanted to shoot from, we were able to place our cameras strategically.

As previously stated, the athletic department originally only had one camera for its men's and women's basketball broadcasts. This camera was a center camera directly above the audience (see Figure 7).

Figure 7

Camera Angles Prior to the Implementation of This Professional Project



Note. The red circle indicates a camera, and the number indicates its identification.

My colleagues and I were tasked with determining where the four new cameras we brought in should be placed. After researching the best camera angles for a basketball broadcast and bouncing back to prior knowledge gained as a student broadcast worker with Black Hills State University athletics, we determined multiple vital aspects that we incorporated into our camera layout plan.

One of the most commonly used camera angles in basketball broadcasts is the high-angle shot, which provides viewers with a bird's eye view of the court. This angle lets viewers see the entire playing surface and track player movement effectively. Additionally, close-up shots that focus on individual players or critical moments in the game can add drama and intensity to the broadcast. Camera placement is also important in capturing all aspects of the game. Cameras positioned at mid-court or along the sidelines can provide different perspectives and angles that enhance viewer experience. Our final camera layout included a center camera (camera 2), two sideline cameras (cameras 1 and 3), and a wireless floor camera (camera 4) (see Figure 8).

Figure 8

Camera Angles After the Implementation of This Professional Project



Note. The red circle indicates a camera, and the number indicates its identification.

The following figures display screenshots from each camera angle point of view from four different live broadcasts of this project (see Figures 9-12).

Figure 9



Camera 1, Left Sideline Camera Angle

Figure 10



Camera 2, Center Court Camera Angle

Figure 11

Camera 3, Right Sideline Camera Angle



Figure 12





Once all upgrades had been completed and the improvements were made to enhance broadcasting capabilities at the university, it was time to launch the new and improved broadcast at the first home women's basketball game on November 10, 2023. Once basketball season was in full swing, the project was in full swing. Each game brought changes requiring us to adjust while monitoring our progress. Later, we will discuss some of the team's adjustments when challenges appear.

Developing and implementing a top-rated broadcast for a Division II university was a challenging but rewarding project that required careful planning and execution. By following the steps outlined in this process description -- conducting research, creating a comprehensive project plan and design, implementing changes, monitoring progress, making adjustments, and launching a program -- universities can successfully enhance their broadcasting capabilities and provide fans with an ultimate viewing experience.

Scope

In this section, I will briefly describe the features presented in the overview in more detail. This section will outline the project goals, provide a breakdown of the streaming software utilized, and detail stakeholder involvement in the project.

Project Goals

Several goals and reasons exist for delivering an updated broadcast to Columbus State University's men's and women's basketball teams. First and foremost, our goal was to increase the teams' visibility and exposure, attracting more fans and potential recruits to the university. By creating a high-definition broadcast that is easily accessible to anyone on the World Wide Web, the teams can reach a wider audience beyond just those who attend games in person. Increased visibility can raise awareness of the talent and dedication of student-athletes at Columbus State University, showcasing their skills on a larger platform.

This led to our second goal of the project, which was to provide an opportunity to showcase the talent and hard work of student-athletes, fostering a sense of pride and community within the university. The athletic director and the staff at Columbus State believed that giving back to the athletes who have helped build the framework of their athletic department was the most essential goal to achieve from this process.

The last project goal was to lay the groundwork for generating additional revenue by securing sponsorships to be featured on our broadcasts. We aimed to create a broadcast that would attract a large audience, making it an irresistible opportunity for potential companies to have their brand showcased in a commercial on the livestreams. By partnering with local businesses and corporate sponsors to have their brand mentioned on air during the broadcasts, our teams can generate much-needed funding that can be used for equipment upgrades, travel expenses, or other program needs.be mentioned on the broadcast. We intended to create a broadcast that would draw in many viewers, making it impossible for potential companies to turn down the opportunity to be showcased in a commercial or two on the livestreams. By securing sponsorships from local businesses or corporate partners who want their brand mentioned on air during at no cost to them.

Ultimately, all three goals were successfully met; one can tell this by examining all outlined in this project report. All three goals work together towards one overarching objective: elevating the program to new heights of success and recognition. From increasing visibility and exposure to attracting more fans and recruits, fostering community pride, and the potential of raising revenue through sponsorships – each aspect plays a crucial role in elevating these programs towards new levels of success. By working together towards these objectives, everyone involved in Columbus State University athletics can look forward to a bright future filled with achievement and recognition.

Streaming Software

The type of streaming software plays an essential role in this project. HudITV (see Figure A1) has developed the Production Truck app, which was used to complete this project. Production Truck (see Figure A2) serves as the central hub for all cameras in director mode, scorebugs, instant replays, graphics, commercials, and more. It is the platform that creates and pushes the live stream to BlueFrame (see Figure A3), which is the platform that hosts our end location, the Peach Belt Conference Network (see Figure A4). BlueFrame is the streaming server that delivers the live video to the school's custom network. The way it works is that cameras and audio connect and pull up on Production Truck, and from there, the director chooses the broadcast created for the game and directs and goes live. The live stream is instantly pushed out to BlueFrame, which delivers the output to the PBC Sports Network. This network is a custom network created by Columbus State University's conference and is the central hub for all games at the Peach Belt Conference. The network can be accessed via mobile apps, websites, or platforms like AppleTV, Roku, or FireTV.

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholders are crucial in any organization, as they are vested in its success. They can include employees, customers, investors, and the community. By actively engaging with stakeholders and considering their perspectives, organizations can make more informed decisions that benefit all parties involved. In our situation, our most significant individual stakeholder is the Athletic Director of the athletic department at Columbus State University. The athletic department, led by the A.D., was actively involved in the project, and their interests were to be positively or negatively impacted by the result of project completion (Smith, 2000).

From the start, we collaborated with the stakeholders to plan the project, starting with minor details and fine-tuning the significant ones. It was essential to begin on the right foot with the athletic department to ensure that their investment was utilized effectively. Regular check-ins were held throughout the basketball season to maintain a healthy relationship with our stakeholders.

Performance Analysis

Completing this professional project provided the data required to assess the project's success using objective measurement. From there, it may be established whether the written rationale was adequate. The performance analysis also considers the outcome of the goals and objectives established at the beginning of the project.

Objective Measurement and Written Rationale

This professional project is centered around measurable metrics such as increased viewership and potential sponsorship opportunities. The chance to present the athletes in a brighter light is the driving force behind the broadcast for Columbus State Athletics and its men's and women's basketball teams. We have thoroughly analyzed the specific statistics offered by BlueFrame Technology for each broadcast from the 2023-2024 season and compared those numbers to the 2022-2023 season. This comprehensive approach gives us confidence in determining how productive the broadcast installation was for the department. Specific measurements we examined to judge the project's success include analytics from the BlueFrame Tech administrator analytics feature, which includes data showing the number of total loads, unique loads, total plays, and unique plays. Here are the definitions as stated by *Hudl Support* (2024) for each of these terms to better understand the analytical output of these viewership numbers:

- Total Loads: This is the total number of times the webpage your video is on was loaded. This does not indicate if the viewer clicked on the video, just that they loaded the page.
- Unique Loads: Similar to the "Total Loads," this indicates the unique number of people who loaded the webpage with your video on it. Since this is "unique," if a person navigates to the page multiple times, their visits are only counted once.
- Total Plays: The total number of people who clicked on the broadcast. This does not indicate how long they viewed the broadcast.
- Unique Plays: Similar to "Total Plays," this indicates the unique number of people who played the video. Since this is "unique," if a person views the video multiple times, their views are only counted once. (Agile Sports, 2024)

Please refer to the tables below for specific examples of results from this professional project.

Table 1

Analytical Insights: A Comparison of Total Interactions on separate broadcasts from two Men's Basketball Games (2022 vs. 2024)



Interactions

Table 2

Analytical Insights: A Comparison of Total Interactions on separate broadcasts from two

Women's Basketball Games (2022 vs. 2024)



Upon reviewing and analyzing the data provided by BlueFrame Technology from past to recent broadcasts, it is evident that there was a significant difference in the number of interactions. Although we cannot prove that each of these new interactions came from our implementation of a new state-of-the-art broadcast, we can assume. The primary rationale of the project was to attract more viewers and increase attention towards the university and its athletes. The success of this initiative is evident solely based on the analytics provided by the streaming platform.

Goals and Objective Performance

The success of this project is evident both locally and globally. There are various measures to determine the success of the production's performance. For instance, after

incorporating four additional camera angles, neighboring schools in the conference began adopting the same approach to their broadcasts. At one point, even rival athletic department members would visit us at the production booth before heading out of town to inquire about implementing high-tech broadcasts in their organizations.

Peach Belt Conference Broadcast Comparisons

Our broadcast and the broadcasts of the surrounding conference schools have similarities and differences—for example, that of Georgia Southwestern State University, Columbus State's conference competitor. Georgia Southwestern's basketball broadcasts also featured multiple camera angles. The difference between the two is the use and style of these cameras. Georgia Southwestern primarily used the center camera for most of the game, zooming in and out as needed to follow the action. They will sometimes switch to a side camera with a fixed angle, which remains stationary. While this setup provides a consistent view, it may need a more dynamic feel than our broadcast at Columbus State offers. At Columbus State, we utilized all four of our cameras at every game, allowing us to incorporate features like zoom, pans, and tilts into our shots, enhancing the viewer's experience with more varied and engaging angles.

Other schools in the Peach Belt Conference, such as Clayton State University, only utilize one center camera, much like Columbus State basketball broadcasts, before our professional project implementation. This camera has little to no zoom throughout the game, primarily going from a left to right pan from center court. As mentioned above, Clayton State's Athletic Director attended the games between Columbus State University and Clayton State University in Columbus. At the end of the games, he approached me, the director, at the production booth inquiring about our state-of-the-art broadcast. He mentioned that he would love to implement something like this at his institution and that he applauded our work. This was direct proof that this implementation of this professional project was a success and set Columbus State University apart from its competitors not just on the basketball court but off it as well.

Challenges and Risk Assessment

With any professional project come challenges and risks, and this project was no different. For example, on the basketball court, when teams face the possibility of their best player fouling out, similar risks may occur behind the scenes in the broadcast department that could cause significant problems in production.

One of the primary challenges facing this project is ensuring that all technical aspects of the broadcast are adequately planned and executed. This includes selecting appropriate equipment, setting up broadcasting infrastructure, and training personnel on operating and maintaining equipment. Failure to adequately address these technical aspects could result in poor-quality broadcasts or even complete project failure.

A second challenge we assessed for this project was securing funding for equipment, personnel, and other resources necessary for the broadcast. This required careful budgeting and financial planning to cover all necessary expenses within the available funds.

In addition to these challenges, several risks are associated with developing and implementing a sports broadcast for Columbus State University basketball. One significant risk is the potential for technical difficulties or equipment failures during live broadcasts. These issues could result in interruptions or delays in coverage, damaging the reputation of the university and the broadcasting team. Taking a proactive approach to challenge and risk assessment increased our chances of success while minimizing potential adverse outcomes.

My Role

Undertaking several pivotal roles in executing this professional sports broadcast, I was entrusted with the crucial equipment manager position. This role, a testament to my sense of responsibility, involved the management of valuable gear that powered our entire broadcast. Before each game, I diligently set up the equipment 3-4 hours in advance, and I also led, instructed, and oversaw the operation teardown after each game. I ensured all equipment was safely stored in a secure room after every home women's and men's basketball game.

My most prominent role during this professional project was becoming the producer and director for every broadcast. As a director, I led a team of student workers to produce a successful broadcast for Columbus State's basketball programs in every home game. This role included everything from the studio's environment to camera angles and placement, graphic overlays, commercials, and the show's overall run. My decisions, made before, during, and after our live show, directly contributed to the success of each broadcast.

My final role in this professional project was a bridge between Columbus State University's communication and athletic departments. As the Sports Information/Athletic Communications Graduate Assistant, I established ties with most athletic staff before executing this project. I also have links with the communication department while pursuing my Master's Degree. The communication department played a vital role in this professional project, and they provided all the equipment, as well as the student workers and staff we had on hand during the broadcast of each game. My role as liaison between the two was crucial as I helped bridge any communication gap that there may have been. For example, if the communication staff wondered when the next game was, I had the answer because I worked in athletics. If the athletic department wanted to change the camera angles, I could work directly with them and communicate the changes efficiently to the broadcast crew, highlighting the value of my communication skills.

Conclusion

Implementing a professional sports broadcast for Columbus State University's Athletic Department was a collaborative effort intended to provide fans with an immersive and engaging viewing experience while promoting athlete visibility and school-wide involvement in the basketball teams at the institution. Our team, in partnership with the Athletic Department, revolutionized the viewing experience by completely replacing the equipment initially used by Columbus State University with new state-of-the-art technology. This update shifted the viewers' perspective on the game and established a new standard for sports broadcasting inside the Peach Belt Conference and beyond.

This initiative has been highly successful and has significantly enhanced the overall sports experience for everyone involved, especially our student-athletes. Highlighting their success is the goal of every person who works in administration in an athletic department for a collegiate team. We incorporated specific camera angles, such as hero shots and tight shots, to purposely bring the fans closer to the athletes and provide a more immersive viewing experience that brought fans closer to their favorite teams.

The development and execution of our sports broadcast initiative have already begun to yield positive results, and we foresee its continued benefits for Columbus State University's basketball programs and other sports. However, our project is about more than just the present. It is about showcasing the potential of the updated technology for a wide range of sports and the exciting advancements it could pave the way for in the future. This makes our project a true

game-changer for Columbus State University, with a lasting impact that extends far beyond the lens.

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Appendix A

Streaming Software

Figure A1. Hudl TV Website Homepage, hudl.com





Figure A2. Production Truck Software Broadcaster View

Figure A3. BlueFrame Technology Landing Site





Figure A4. Peach Belt Conference Network Landing Site, pbcsportsnetwork.com

Figure A5. Hudl Cougar Tv Administrator View

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Figure A6. Columbus State University Broadcast Booth/Control Room