



# The Sports Strategist: Developing Leaders for a High-Performance Industry

By Irving Rein, Ben Shields, Adam Grossman

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## The Sports Strategist: Developing Leaders for a High-Performance Industry

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In the \$750 billion sports industry, is winning on-the-field the only success driver that matters for a sports business off-the-field? Today, the high-performance sports business is more complex than ever before and is presenting new challenges to the industry at all levels. Sports organizations are fighting hard for the money and engagement of fans, media, sponsors, and employees while facing unprecedented competition both domestically and internationally. The cost of doing business continues to rise, while traditional revenue streams are under increased pressure.

In *The Sports Strategist: Developing Leaders for a High-Performance Industry*, authors Irving Rein, Ben Shields, and Adam Grossman demonstrate that relying too much on winning is a losing long-term strategy for dealing with these challenges. Instead, they argue that sports strategists must focus on building and growing sustainable long-term businesses without depending too much on winning. Their approach centers on identifying and maximizing key factors in sports organizations that, unlike winning, can be controlled and shaped.

Blending extensive industry experience and real-world case studies with their academic expertise, the authors arm readers with the combination of the necessary tools to help them make better strategic decisions. Everyone from industry veterans to aspirational managers will learn how to design identities, reinvigorate venue experiences, manage narratives, and maximize new technology in today's connected world. In addition, readers will explore how to implement business analytics, build public support, and apply ethics in decision-making. These techniques are vital to creating a successful sports organization that is ready to reap the benefits of winning when it does happen, without having to suffer when it does not.

The demand for innovative leaders who can address these issues and make tough decisions on which challenges to prioritize has never been greater. *The Sports Strategist* is an essential resource for anyone looking to thrive in the sports industry.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Whether you are a current or aspiring leader in the sports industry, you will benefit from the innovative concepts in *The Sports Strategist*." --George Bodenheimer, former Executive Chairman and President of ESPN

"This book is a terrific read. It gets to the heart of sports as a business and the challenges of running a franchise to profitability while sustaining fan support." --Rocky Wirtz, Chairman of the Chicago Blackhawks

"*The Sports Strategist* brilliantly articulates how the future of sports, just like entertainment, relies on storytelling, star power, and technology." --Garry Marshall, director of *Pretty Woman* and *Valentine's Day*, actor, producer, and writer

"There are many ways for teams to be financially successful even when they are not winning--and Irving Rein, Ben Shields, and Adam Grossman show the path." --Andrew Zimbalist, Robert A. Woods Professor of Economics, Smith College, sports industry consultant/media commentator

"*The Sports Strategist* uses good case examples and is written by a strong team that understands the importance of taking a strategic view of an industry that, almost by necessity, can be very tactical." --Paul Swangard, Managing Director at Warsaw Sports Marketing

"At Monumental Sports, we are always exploring how new marketing opportunities impact the Washington Capitals, Wizards and Mystics brands and affect our bottom line. *The Sports Strategist* provides readers with the tools to evaluate different choices in a variety of marketing channels and select the best options for their organizations." --Joe Dupriest, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer for Monumental Sports & Entertainment

#### From the Back Cover

*Empty*

#### About the Author

**Irving Rein** is a Professor of Communication Studies at Northwestern University's School of Communication. He has authored many books, including *The Elusive Fan*, *High Visibility and Marketing*

*Places*. He has consulted for Major League Baseball (MLB) the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and numerous corporations and places.

**Ben Shields** is a Lecturer in Managerial Communication at the MIT Sloan School of Management. He served previously as the Director of Social Media and Marketing at ESPN. He is a coauthor of *The Elusive Fan* and has written many articles and book chapters on sports media and marketing.

**Adam Grossman** is the Founder and President of Block Six Analytics (B6A). He has worked with a number of sports organizations, including the Minnesota Timberwolves, Washington Capitals, and SMG @ Solider Field, to enhance their corporate sponsorship and enterprise marketing capabilities.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Omar Yoder:**

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**Walter Blankenship:**

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