

Points of view & Insights

Customer experience : Connected stadium

Make your audience vibrate !

A great club, a good slogan and a mythical atmosphere? This historic trio is clearly no longer enough to attract crowds into the stadiums. With the declining attendance at stadiums in France (-6.5% for the 2015-16 season), clubs will have to redouble their ingenuity and offer ever more innovative services to their fans.

Because the alternatives are numerous: free channels dedicated to the complete sports bouquets proposed by all the operators, the spectator has multiple choices to follow the matches on screens always bigger. The emergence of virtual reality that will offer new experiences. We have also to consider added inconvenience as an aging stage, access difficulties, waiting hours at the entrance and exit of the stadium, or security issues, fans can quickly choose to live the experience at home.

1. Re-delight the relationship with fans

To attract their spectators again, clubs must first and foremost recreate a strong emotional link. Fluidity, ease and customization are the key words of tomorrow's experience. And this is the challenge: to make a match a strong and unbreakable moment, to rebuild the sacred link between a supporter and his stadium, a link that must not be broken by many pain points, that could be yet prevented.

The spectator has always been at the heart of stadium life. However, understanding his expectations but also his frustrations to redesign a successful experience is quite new. And this experience needs to be expanded to cover his entire journey, including before and after the match. The whole relationship needs to be redesigned: celebrating subscriptions, offering more activities during the game and with key moments, and going back home with a souvenir photo are all effective ways to improve the physical experience. These elements allow the supporter to feel a full member of the community.

2. Digital technology for more comfort and interactivity

Digital technology is important today and revolutionizes pre- and post-match life: online ticket booking, additional content and replays, targeted and adapted CRM campaigns. Digital technology, however, is not only a means of prolonging the duration of contact, it will also make it possible to transcend the physical experience itself, thanks to modern and adapted infrastructures.

Some stadiums have already bet on digitalization of the physical experience and propose new offers. These stadiums 2.0 are resolutely turned towards their supporters.

The Allianz Arena makes every effort to decrease the wait, the main pain point of the customer experience, and to facilitate access to the stadium. The real-time data makes it possible to follow the flow of arrivals, to identify possible traffic jams and thus to propose a personalized itinerary while optimizing the filling of the car parks. The application directs the spectators to the different doors and the staff is assigned according to the hot spots, optimizing the flows and decreasing the wait at the entrance.

To enhance the experience during the game, Levi's Stadium offers an ultra-powerful wifi allowing 60 000 simultaneous connections, as well as an application allowing an online order of catering delivered directly to his place. Fans avoid the wait in the crowd and enjoy every moment of the game. Accompanying the fan in his experience through an app was also the choice of another large stadium, the Barclays Center. The app is a true playmate: interactions on social networks, statistics, replays, team composition, organization of the coming and catering offer. These are two perfect examples of accompanying the physical experience through mobile apps.

The wait during idle games is also completely redesigned: highlights, statistics, live voting and many others ... These functions make it possible not to miss anything of the match and offer the possibility of interacting with the other spectators. To go even further in the show, 3D mapping allows to project 3D visual animations during the presentation of players or shows during half-time and offers an exclusive show. Another innovation is the Staples Center (Los Angeles) which has equipped with high-speed cameras that immortalize the reaction of fans at key moments of the meeting. The viewer then has access to his own album of spontaneous photos via the FanPics application.

All these new technologies inside the stadiums and the digitization of the customer experience serve a single purpose: creating a strong emotional bond with the fans before, during and after the match. While some pioneers have opened the doors of connected stadiums, there is still a lot of work to be done in the direction of the ideal spectator experience, to provide a new experience for fans and to recreate the link that unites a club with its fans.

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