



# **BRINGING BACK GAMEDAY**

The FanX™ Playbook for Engaging Fans in Flux



# Table of Contents

- Gameday Planning.....3
- Mobile Ticketing.....4
- Sponsor Activations.....5
- In-Venue Protocols.....6
- Concessions.....7
- Merchandise.....8
- Athlete Marketing & Fan Access...9
- Game Plan Checklist.....10

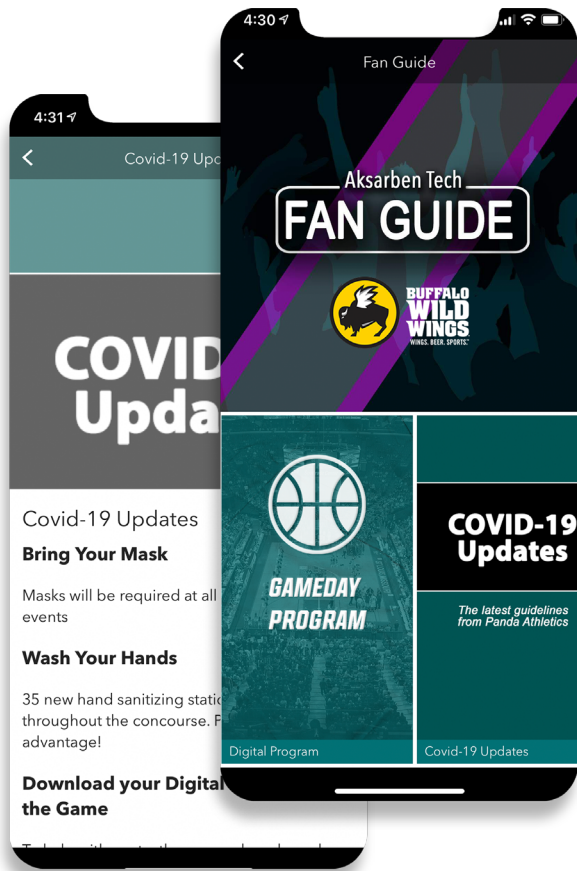
## Welcome!

**We’ve spent the last six months learning from this pandemic, talking to clients, hosting virtual happy hours, and collaborating with partners. This guide is a collection of what we’ve heard and what we learned, and now we are ready to share with you!**

**As a mobile platform provider for sports marketers across the country, we’re looking at this stark reality through a new lens. We know that each and every sports marketer relies on a script to engage their fans on gameday, and in some cases, with no gameday to promote, we’ve got to get creative. As our CEO says, “we’ve got to blow it all up and restructure ourselves.”**

**Use this guide to give your fans the experience they need and want as they await the return of college sports!**

*Thank you to the many clients, partners, and industry pros whose knowledge and expertise helped our team create this guide!*



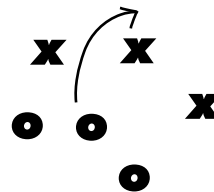
Find more information on ways FanX can help your team switch to [digital programs here!](#)

# GAMEDAY PLANNING

## Prepping the communication channels

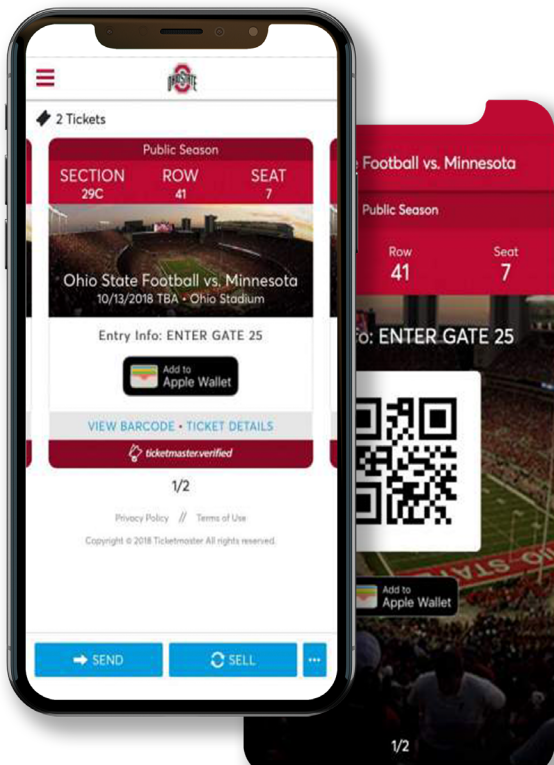
Due to the new rules and regulations around social distancing, athletics departments will have the opportunity to take the proper time to “up their communication game” while waiting for gameday. They’ll work to ensure that their fans are being educated on gameday policies and protocols before they arrive, and by optimizing their mobile communication strategy, they’ll set themselves up for success.

Regardless of when we see college gameday happen, protocols will look different. Fans will need to be made aware of whether masks will be available to them at the game, for example, and messages like this should be shared early and often.



### Quick Tip:

Switching to [digital programs](#) can help reduce contact points on gameday, cut cost to print and distribute materials, and expand the reach of gameday programs outside of the venue.



# MOBILE TICKETING

The time to push digital is now

Now that in-venue competition is not a thing for many colleges and universities across the country, athletics marketers have a rare opportunity to turn their focus to improving their ticketing technology. Many schools have started making the transition to digital already, but now the full-court press is on to get that tech in order, STAT.



**“[We] cut costs by \$30,000 to \$40,000 just from making the switch to digital. It’s a worthy investment that will reap returns in the short and long term.”**



**Brian Morgan**  
**Director of Ticket Sales & Strategy -**  
**Marquette University**

In 2019, Ohio State University added mobile ticketing options to the [Buckeyes gameday app](#). “...in simple math, we increased from 5-7% mobile average for 2018 football to over 40% average for 2019 football,” said Kate Nushart. In the 2020/21 seasons, 100% of tickets will be mobile.

# SPONSOR ACTIVATIONS

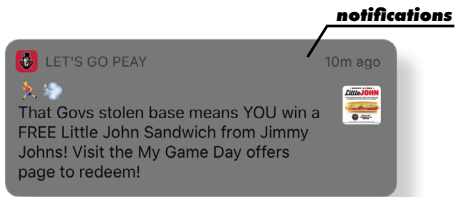
## Creating and tracking engagement

The sponsorship landscape in a contact-free reality is going to be a delicate one. Athletics marketers are going to need to get smart about using digital touchpoints to activate.

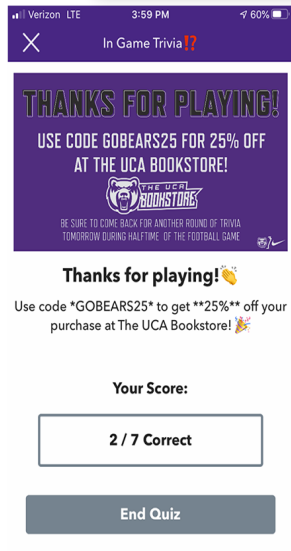
These opportunities should be inserted throughout the gameday script -- not to mention before and after the game. Ideally, sponsors will come to the table with activation ideas, but in reality, this may not be the case and athletics marketers may need to be prepared with a menu of options to offer their sponsors.

**“The trackability piece is key right now. This year, [sponsors] are paying for impressions and not necessarily the number of people in seats. Digital engagement will be a driving force, and creativity is paramount to success.”**

**SQWAD** Nick Lawson,  
CEO of SQWAD



notifications

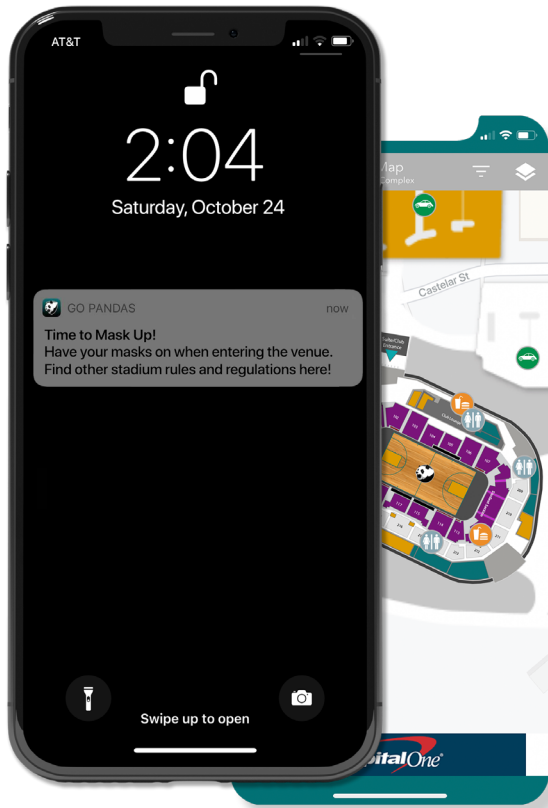


trivia games



promotional cards

When it comes to sponsorship, the opportunities are endless for new inventory! With multiple placement locations options within the app, sponsors are able to track impressions and reach more fans where they are.



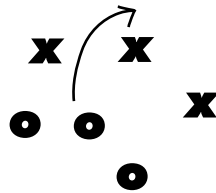
With geo-fenced mapping, fans can easily locate concession stands, restrooms, merchandise stands and more closest to their seat. Use customized push notifications to alert fans in stands of tailored deals to make the experience unique!

# IN-VENUE PROTOCOLS

## Communicating to fans in real time where they are

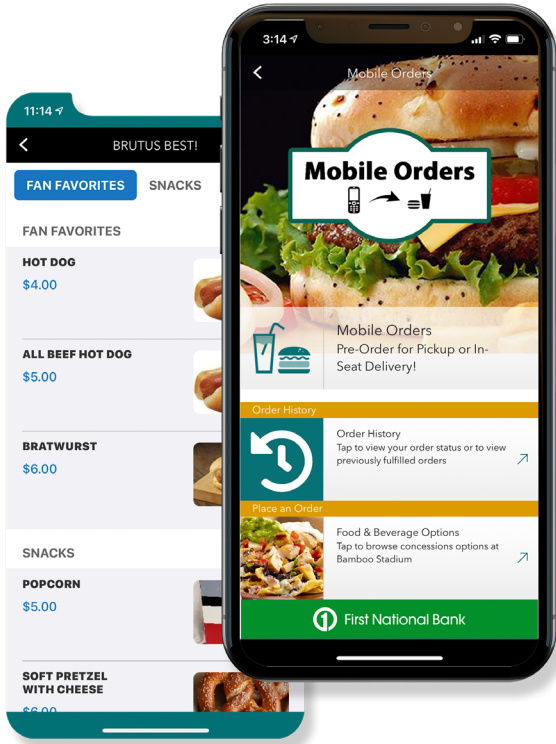
On gameday, it will be essential to continue to remind fans of where they can find what they need inside the venue -- from hand sanitizer to food and beverage pickup to seat and row assignments.

This messaging is going to be mobile-first and venue-second, meaning that all fans should receive gameday communications directly to their phones AND on signs and collateral as they enter and exit the venue.



### Quick Tip:

Our customer success team recommends to leverage mobile push notifications for important touchpoints prior to fans arriving on gameday.



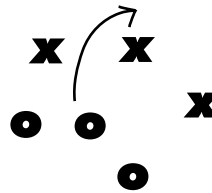
Mobile ordering provides a convenient and safe way for fans to enjoy food and beverages. With designated pick-up locations or in-seat delivery, venues can better manage lines and crowded areas.

# CONCESSIONS

## Enjoying the perks of food delivery

Could this really be the end of the line for in-arena food and beverage queues? [Pun intended.] Now, mobile ordering--which was a hot item before the pandemic--is fast becoming a requirement for many venues across the country.

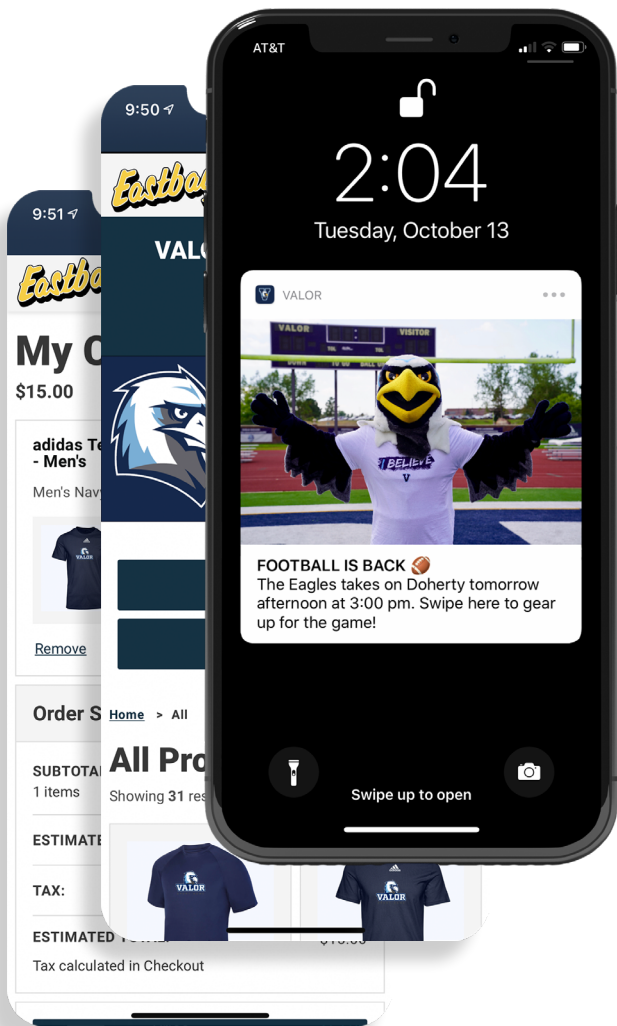
Using mobile applications and touchless kiosk ordering systems, venues can offer their fans peace of mind by giving them all the tools they need to enjoy an in-game snack safely, without moving from their seats. While this won't necessarily replace concessions revenue, it will help move the ball forward for the industry.



### Quick Tip:

Providing safe, convenient mobile ordering can increase the number of orders fans place on gameday! Drive increased cart size by pairing mobile ordering with promotional offers, merchandise inventory and even donation opportunities.



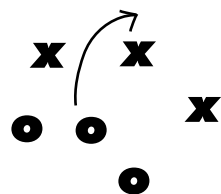


# MERCHANDISE

## Getting into digital gear

The lack of brick and mortar retail this season will open doors for opportunities to maximize digital merchandise revenues through mobile touchpoints. Merchandise sales will follow the same trend as ticketing and sponsorship activation--all signs point to digital.

Throughout the season, athletics marketers can and should push out different promotions to their fans to provide them access to the latest and greatest gear available to support their teams. It's no surprise that creativity will be a key to success, as fans may need to feel more compelled than they normally would to spend their money on gear.



### Quick Tip:

Build excitement & unveil new merchandise to fans through the gameday app. With delivery and pick-up options fans are able to represent their favorite teams with new gear whether they are in the stands or at home!





Marquette athletics led the way in featuring student-athlete's voices in their Ring Out Ahoya podcast seen here in the [Marquette Gameday app](#).

# ATHLETE MARKETING & FAN ACCESS

## Making the experience authentic

The days of autograph signings are far from over, but they are certainly going to look a lot different in our new normal. Fans need to be educated sooner than later on HOW they can access their favorite athletes, digitally and live.

Teams are going to have to uncover new and creative ways to offer fans the opportunity to get to know their players through digital-first programming, and as for autographs and photo-ops, teams will need to get creative with new technologies. Things like augmented reality experiences and live-streamed Q&As are essential to a modern marketing strategy as is bringing athlete's voices to the forefront of the conversation.

**“The NCAA is making a big push to encourage schools to support their student-athletes and their stories by amplifying their voices. Now is the time and place for them to be heard.”**



**Nick Hessler,**  
Former: Digital Strategist & Social Media Community Manager - NCAA  
Current: Digital & Social Media Strategist - Vanderbilt Athletics

# The Game Plan: Your complete checklist to contactless gameday!

## Mobile Ticketing

- Review ticketing procedures. What needs to be changed/updated?
- Allow fans to access & manage their tickets directly using native integration between your ticketing and app providers.
- Schedule notifications to remind fans where to access digital tickets in app.
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Fan Education

- Communicate early and often policy updates and changes so fans know what to expect before arriving on gameday.
- Make your gameday programs digital and viewable in app for easy access to information - anytime, anywhere
- Update in-venue signage and direct to your app for more in-depth information.
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## Real-Time Communication

- Make a gameday notification plan that includes scheduling a pregame notification this weekend letting fans know how they can follow the game (radio, TV, online, etc.)
- Segment your notifications to make sure you hit the right audience.
- Leverage mobile push notifications for important touchpoints prior to fans arriving on gameday.
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## Sponsor Activation

- Involve your sponsors when thinking of potential prizes
- Include a list of partnered restaurants or businesses on the app (either with a promo card or in the fan guide) and reward fans XX points when they submit their receipt
- Create a sponsorship plan that has every opportunity in app for placements covered.
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## Mobile Ordering

### CONCESSIONS

- Set pick-up locations around venue for fans to easily access orders at safe distances.
- Schedule push notifications for fans in-venue to remind fans how concessions are operating.
- Get sponsors involved with push notifications communicating special offers to fans in-venue and at home.
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### MERCHANDISE

- Create a plan to promote merchandise with in app purchasing & in-venue pick-up options
- Allow fans to access team gear digitally to see what's available to help with crowded areas.
- Reward fans XX points for every dollar spent.
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Athlete Marketing & Fan Access

- Poll your student-athletes to find out how they want to engage with fans.
- Utilize social media for personal "get to know you" questions like music playlists, favorite shows, day in the life & more.
- Promote video series, podcast appearances and spotlights with notifications from your app.
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