



In collaboration with:



# Weekly #SportPositive Twitter Chat

## Tuesday, March 31st

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**Topic: How to reach & engage sports fans on sustainability and climate change in a credible and meaningful way**

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*\*\*Please note we have just taken salient points that were added in the discussion, and have not given attribution. This document is to give a flavour of the Twitter Chat, it is not a transcription. If you wish to see who wrote points that resonate with you, to pick up a discussion, search #SportPositive on Twitter and you will be able to see the original tweets.\*\**

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**Q1 - The Basics: What are the building blocks of strong fan engagement?**

1. Back of house legitimacy
2. Forward facing initiatives
3. Walk the walk before talking the talk
4. Dedicate proper resources & energy to understand fan expectations
5. Design proper campaigns to engage fan segments
6. Track behavioural changes & KPIs

Meet fans where they are! Literally and figuratively. What medium are they using or wanting to be engaged by? AND where are they at with what you're trying to ask -- do they have the information or tools/means necessary?

Crafting stories and creating excitement for fans to participate as part of their brand experience.

If organizations find that making long-term commitments is intimidating, especially early in their journey, they can test out strategies during one-day events! This is a good way to test the engagement without committing a huge amount of up-front investment

Many event sustainability initiatives look solely at classic thematic issues like carbon, waste, water. What's often missing is connecting sustainability to the event experience - not just for fans, but all participants (athletes, workforce, media, sponsors etc. Need to look at how to convey sustainability messaging through key touch points people experience - travel to/from venue, F&B, waste recycling set up, how the venue looks and feels sustainable... Not just talking about it

- 1) Chart your course strategy.
- 2) Give your fans a voice.
- 3) Give fans skin in the game.
- 4) Provide player access.
- 5) Create great content (and lots of video).

Have a good relationship with your fans to begin with. Understand how to properly leverage your communications channels. Have clear, engaging messaging and content

We can see what is important to the organization vs fans. We can design campaigns to educate and inform fans if it's important to org and not fans.



(visual from @mcculloghbrian)

Likewise, from this select dataset from one organization - the org may want to prioritize initiatives that are important to fans but not truly for the org at this point (revisit your org priorities). Plus some of these tie together and can be used to engage sponsors.

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**Q2: Being Credible: How can you engage fans on sustainability/climate change credibly? Especially perhaps when your organisation isn't as far along in your sustainability journey as you would want.**

Transparency & honesty. "We are working towards goal X because we value Y." Track your progress & communicate it on a regular (annual) basis. Engage skeptics & alleviate concerns through authentic action

Understanding the capacity of your local community to handle certain initiatives is important (what can be recycled, do you have composting, is public transit available & accessible). Understanding the internal constraints for fans is critical.

Share facts and demonstrate statistics as well as show examples and concrete realities that directly affect their daily lives

Transparency is essential and people appreciate it when organisers acknowledge challenges and talk about lessons learned, not just bigging up achievements

You're always on a journey - no one can achieve a zero impact. Always improving and innovating. That's the human experience and what businesses do in other facets of their organizational life.

We think a good rule of thumb is to not ask for more than what you're willing to do, generally speaking. We are role models so we need to lead so others follow. That's true regardless where you are in your journey.

- 1) Assess the baseline capacity of your organization i.e., making sure your organization is demonstrating the behaviour it is trying to instil in others.
- 2) Understand barriers and benefits.
- 3) Build a behaviour change campaign....

Really difficult if you're not fully invested. Anything short of 100% will be seen as green washing. Response: True. But feel better than doing nothing fearing of that, especially for the early-stage markets like Japan. Most importantly we need to step forward together with our fans, & need to continue until the market properly understands sustainability

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### **Q3 - Clarity on What You Are Trying to Achieve: What should we actually be asking fans to do when we engage them on sustainability and climate change?**

An 'ask' can be as simple as to educate and draw awareness to overcome internal and external constraints for specific behaviors.

An explicit ask would be to leverage a sports organization's strategy to communicate a specific 'call to action' for fans to get involved - incentives related to the organizations (discounted tickets, F&B specials, cool sustainable merch) are great incentives!

There should absolutely, positively ALWAYS be a direct ask. That is verifiable (in execution) , measurable and reported. We are well beyond awareness.

The ask is to do your part. We try to give specific directions about what we're asking, whether its to place materials in the proper bin, or how to use the local transit system to attend events

Invite fans into the house, to be part of the team. Important to say 'we're on the journey. We're not perfect but we are starting...come start with us/join us'. An invitation to 'join the team' is a symphony to fans' ears

Changing behavior in an event is much 'easier' than outside. look to waste recovery rates in a facility vs tailgating areas. Changing outside behaviors takes time & messaging. Can't expect fans to take public transit in their everyday lives or compost if it isn't an option.

It may not be the explicit ask, but the end goal must be to engage with fans in a way that shows them how to replicate positive change in all facets of their lives, not just when they engage with sport. Sport is the powerful mechanism to drive this movement!

Take actions in their daily lives even for small steps that can collectively impact, and influence their friends so we can take actions as a team!

- 1) Follow the science reports on climate change.
- 2) Join the climate movement.
- 3) Create more awareness in their communities.
- 4) Take actions by reporting Individuals, companies or organizations that pollutes the environment and climate.

Leave only footprints. Take only memories. Don't harm the planet for your sport

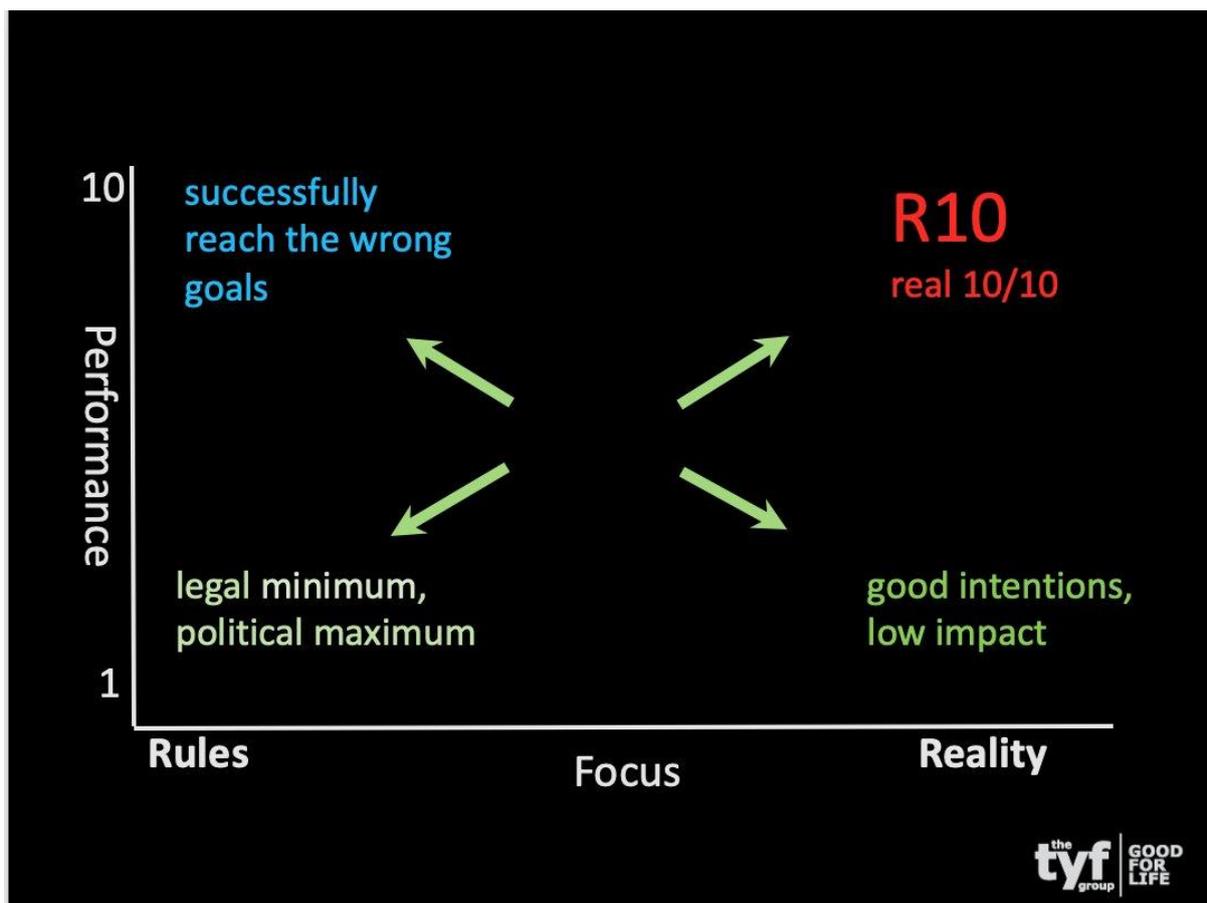
In action terms think about how you travel, enjoy and engage with sport. Challenge your sports venues and teams to do more to reduce their impact whilst delivering great quality sport

There needs to be a model of what the most 'sustainable fan' is and then messaging should be geared towards encouraging a shift towards that 'person'.

A big part of the problem and solution is purely connecting the dots between ourselves and our environment. So the ask is broad, can you see how we all rely on the environment, and knowing this will you join us as a custodian?

Materiality assessment can be a strong foundation for developing a forward-facing sustainability strategic plan.

Make your start point the goal that you'd set out to achieve if you knew you couldn't fail. Work back from there - and scrap 'feel good' incremental steps that can't deliver zero carbon / plastic-free / circular economy viz.



**Q4 - Engagement in the Time of Coronavirus: What methods and tools can we use to engage fans on sustainability/climate during coronavirus when live games aren't being played?**

Tread lightly. Aspects that play into hygiene, safety, & enviro sustainability are key. "We are spring cleaning" is a message that may resonate. But priorities to engage fans may be more focused on getting butts in seats than focused on enviro issues. I would also say this is a 'good' time to evaluate and prioritize initiatives to launch as we get back up to speed post-COVID

Key to plan for unity/community themed campaigns (stronger together, all for one, etc) that speak to the positive themes emerging from the situation rather than the fear/sadness. Sports lifts us up, need to stay with that trajectory in messaging.

These days it's social media, web, tv, etc. Pretty much the same tools as usual. But the question is whether you try to engage more, less, or about the same during this period.

We have social groups on Facebook and telegram where all our fans join to share their contributions and ideas. We encourage them to give us incredible insight to serve them better.

Campaigns that emphasize SDG3 theme Health & Wellbeing will be well received. I would start there in the immediate aftermath before moving to climate for the mainstream fan. Campaign on 'greenspace care' for human health (vs carbon sequestration) is the better spin in 2020.

Practitioners don't do enough to link between environmental issues and human health issues. They're the same issues. We're not saving the planet; we're saving ourselves.

Many leagues are having some fun with online games, taking a big leaf from the eSports playbook. Lots of opportunities to engage, to arguably, a more engaged audience - as attention is fully on one screen.

- 1) Social platforms
- 2) Cable Networks
- 3) Blog articles

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**Q5 - You Can't Manage What You Don't Measure: Do you think it's possible to really measure fan behaviour change? What ways are you/would you look to do it?**

Absolutely, yes. We again have items & a process to design, evaluate, & adapt fan engagement campaigns. This has already been successfully applied to sport events & significantly increased sustainable behaviors. But organizations need to commit & invest.

Yes it is possible. You can measure how much bin contamination you have. You can measure how many reusable cups you sell. You can measure how many veggie/vegan meals you're selling. Outside the venue it's tougher but our industry polls fans all the time

There should ALWAYS be metrics, must be designed in at start of campaign. Putting a specific call to action to fans is the best way to have tangible metrics. Digital contests, promo codes, tagged concession items all way capture not only participation but IMPACT.

Big data can tell you what people are doing but can't get at the why people are doing it - such data is missing from the equation and maybe why the sector, as a whole, is slow to integrate. Yes, KPIs (e.g., purchasing habits, transportation metrics, others) are very important.

It's difficult to attribute behaviour change to one source; fans will be influenced across a range of experiences. Obviously important to seek to spread good practice but this needs continuous effort across multiple fronts. Not easily measured.

Identifying org. KPIs & using data readily available can help. Surveying fans on a semiannual basis can also track the positive impact and influence of such efforts. Doing so will again provide useful data for current and prospective sponsors too.

Yes, it is possible to measure fan behavior change, which can be done by engaging your fans via questionnaires, feedbacks, reports etc.

During the old T-shirt drive early this season, [#chibajets](#) conducted a simple research on the level of awareness of circular economy, and some answered they did not know it before. Likewise we can measure the change in their behavior.

Impacts within the venue can be monitored - Just needs sufficiently systems in place to capture at useful granularity. Although this info is only useful if it's analysed and acted upon. Automated recording useful, but even manual testing annually or monthly will demo trends.

Measuring behaviours can also be done remotely with trackers, or apps (e.g. travel to venues or movement within parks) or incentivised surveys acting as another educational and engagement touch-point in addition to providing feedback.

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## Thank You!

If you contributed to the #SportPositive Twitter Chat on March 31<sup>st</sup>, thank you for being a part of it! If you didn't, I hope you find this document useful, and mark your diaries now to join us next week, **Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 4-5pm UTC.**

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