

Researcher studies how professional sports fans use mobile phones

November 28 2017



Credit: University of Texas at San Antonio

Seok Kang, an associate professor in the Department of Communication at The University of Texas at San Antonio, is researching how professional sports teams build loyalty by engaging their fans through their mobile devices.

Kang published "Mobile communication and pro sports: motivation and fan [loyalty](#)," a study in the *International Journal of Mobile Communications* that describes the findings of a national panel survey of

405 respondents.

Kang's survey asked fans about their mobile phone habits and their reasons for using the technology for pro sports. The motives fans provided in the survey were classified into either instrumental or ritualistic use. Instrumental use is goal-directed use, where individuals use media to gather information, learn new things or just be social. Ritualistic use is a fan's habitual use of media for relaxation or time consumption.

Findings from Kang's research suggest that instrumental motives predict behavioral loyalty. These motives were related to actions taken to show support for a team or players such as purchasing tickets to games, attending games, watching games on television or buying products. Meanwhile ritualistic motives were associated with fans' attitudes toward teams or players

"Mobile phone use has transformed the economic landscape of sport media content," said Kang. "Fans who are more engaged online buy more team product merchandise and have a higher fan loyalty for the sports teams or players they are interacting with on social media."

Kang also found that most fans use two or more screens, generally a combination of phones, tablets and televisions, while watching professional sports. Called second screening, doing so allows the fans to simultaneously watch games, post on social [media](#), interact with other fans, watch mobile videos and read sports headlines, thereby enhancing the game experience.

The UTSA researcher says the findings have critical implications for the marketing teams of [professional sports](#) franchises.

"Pro sport organizations must incorporate interactive [mobile](#)

[communication](#) to reach out to current and develop new pro sports fans," said Kang. "Creating that connection in the digital space can lead to increased fan loyalty. Teams' frequent information updates, constant interaction with fans and push notifications on the phone can increase fans' [game](#) attendance and product purchase."

More information: Seok Kang. Mobile communication and pro sports: motivation and fan loyalty, *International Journal of Mobile Communications* (2017). [DOI: 10.1504/IJMC.2017.10005645](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMC.2017.10005645)

Provided by University of Texas at San Antonio

Citation: Researcher studies how professional sports fans use mobile phones (2017, November 28) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-11-professional-sports-fans-mobile.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.