



THE COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYBOOK

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document presents a strategic framework through which FOX Sports, FS1 and BTN can organize a coordinated college football offense

As a strategic framework, it is intended to be directional rather than executional – designed to guide and inspire the team moving forward



SETTING THE CONTEXT: A LOOK AT THE CHALLENGE

As the dominant college football leader, ESPN is a perceptual black hole

When asked where they will find the best CFB games on Saturday, ESPN is mentioned first by 30% of fans – versus Fox Sports at 6% and FS1 at 2%

When asked to identify which networks carry which conferences, ESPN is the leader in four of the power five, with the SEC on CBS the only exception

To win, we have to forcefully pull away from ESPN's gravitational pull

Because ESPN is assumed to have the best of CFB, any game presentation or marketing communication that isn't disruptive is assumed to be from ESPN

We should assume that anything we communicate – if at all generic to CFB – will not escape their gravitational pull



SETTING THE CONTEXT: A LOOK AT OUR ASSETS

With the addition of the BIG10, we're now in a place to challenge ESPN's perceptual dominance



- xx games
- draft priority
- xx on FBC
- xx on FS1
- xx on BTN
- RSNs in key markets



BIG 12 CONFERENCE

- xx games
- draft priority
- xx on FBC
- xx on FS1
- RSNs in key markets



- xx games
- draft priority
- xx on FBC
- xx on FS1
- RSNs in key markets



How can we most effectively leverage these assets in concert to disrupt perceptions and create change?

FOUR QUESTIONS TO GUIDE US: TWO ON POSITIONING

POSITIONING

The idea that infuses our college football coverage with as much differentiated advantage as possible

Q1: HOW CAN WE MOST EFFECTIVELY POSITION FOX SPORTS IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL?

Ideally, in a way that de-positions ESPN

Q2: WITHIN THIS POSITIONING FRAMEWORK, HOW CAN WE LEVERAGE THE BIG10 AND BTN?

A “catalytic product” brings the overall brand position to life – can BIG10 + BTN be the catalytic product that tangibly brings our overall CFB position to life?

FOUR QUESTIONS TO GUIDE US: TWO ON TACTICS

TACTICS

Specific production and marketing executions that bring our CFB strategy to life for the audience

Q3: WORKING WEEK-TO-WEEK, WHAT SPECIFIC TACTICS CAN WE USE TO PROMOTE OUR GAMES?

Versus ESPN's games specifically and informed by our overall strategy

Q4: HOW CAN WE STEAL ATTENTION FROM ESPN AS FANS PLAN THEIR SATURDAY VIEWING?

College Gameday is a successful “gateway” – given this advantage, how can we innovate to shine a light on the FOX, FS1 and BTN lineup week-to-week?

THE POSITIONING OPPORTUNITY

POSITIONING A CHALLENGER BRAND

We must challenge the status quo

We must overcome the power of marketplace inertia

We must escape the gravitational pull of the dominant competitor

We must be different, we must act different

We must challenge brands by challenging perceptions

We must disrupt current attitudes and behavior

We must create change, among people
who generally don't want to



WE NEED A POV THAT CREATES CHOICE

Ideally, our position would be built around tangible product differences

We don't have a differentiated CFB product, so we have to develop a differentiated POV

In other words, we need to create a POV that will separate us from ESPN

The contrast needs to feel true to our organization, our partners and our audience

If we can communicate a disruptive POV consistently over time we will come to “own” it

Dove is a great example of a POV-based positioning strategy

Dove was an undifferentiated brand of soap

But Dove became the brand that believed in “real beauty”

And in doing so, developed a differentiated, category-disruptive POV

The Dove logo is displayed in a large, elegant, dark blue script font. It features a registered trademark symbol (®) at the end of the word. The logo is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the slide, partially overlapping the background image of the women.

WE'RE NOT DEFINING OUR POV IN A VACUUM

We know that ESPN is seen as too corporate

More like the agent in the suites who is in it for the money

And less like the fan in the cheap seats who is in it for the love

AS THE CHALLENGER...

Can we leverage ESPN's dominance against them?

Can we position ourselves in a way that de-positions them?

Can we define our CFB POV in opposition to their perceived CFB POV?



A USEFUL ANALOG — POSITIONING AS CHOICE

Some of the best positioning strategies are simply the successful communication of a clear choice to the audience

A choice that once understood by the marketplace works to the advantage of the brand

Apple is a great example of positioning as choice

And the choice Apple presented to the audience was all about self-identity

Were we corporate drones who toed the company line and followed the crowd?

Or were we independent creatives who thought for themselves and stood out from the crowd?

The choice was clear, and it was up to us to show who we were through our choice in devices

This strategy effectively leveraged our aspirational self-identity to Apple's advantage



Can we create a clear sense of choice in CFB – between our POV and that of ESPN?

MATCHUPS ALWAYS MATTER

Fans are always going to find their team and their game

When it comes to **driving interest in a given game**, the two teams playing will always trump rival broadcasters' respective brand POVs and marketing efforts

But given our place at the bottom of the CFB consideration set we can benefit from a disruptive declaration of intent that **establishes our voice in the category**

In the short term, our goal is to **move up the consideration list** – for fans to weigh our games against those on other networks, rather than defaulting to ESPN

Over time, **we can “own” this POV** so that it can help tilt the balance in our favor



LET'S CREATE A CLEAR CONTRAST

WHO WE ARE

WHO THEY ARE

The gritty lineman	↔	The flashy wide receiver
Blood, sweat, tears	↔	Gold chains, girls, glory
In the weight room	↔	In the press room
Team-first	↔	Me-first
Humble and relatable	↔	Arrogant and boastful
Committed to my program	↔	One and done
For the love of the game	↔	In it for the money



Coincidentally, the values we're aligning ourselves with also align closely to the values of the BIG10

A NARRATIVE

One step out of high school.
A completely different world.
Bright lights. Huge stadiums.
Big time schools. Big time players. Big time stakes.
School spirit. School honor.
Maybe the best four years of your life.
Every day. Every practice. Every game.
Every single play.
Working together. Working to win. Working.
Teammates for life.
Enjoy every minute of it. Make every single minute count.
Embrace the intensity.
There is nothing like College Football.
Absolutely nothing.
Fox College Football. For the love of the game.



FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER:

This POV, inspired by core values, is the response we want to achieve from viewers, and it should inspire all of the stimulus we put into the marketplace

Although we'd never describe them in terms of geography, our POV is **informed by classic "Midwestern" values** that our audience aspires to

This not only **aligns with our BIG10 offering**, but also benefits from the particularly strong position of FOX Sports in the Midwest (via RSNs and NFC markets)

It's critical that we are not wistful in communicating our POV: we must be contemporary and forward-looking, inspired by tradition, not beholden to it

WHAT ABOUT THE BIG10/BTN?

In many ways, the **values** inherent to our POV **are also BIG10 values**

Blue-collar, black-and-blue, in-the-trenches

A strong commitment to the amateur work-ethic

Gritty, determined, stout

Team first, school second

Reserved, humble, tough

As such, the BIG10/BTN can be our “catalytic product” **bringing our POV to life** in a tangible, believable way

THIS ALIGNMENT CREATES AN OPPORTUNITY

As much as FOX can use ESPN as a foil, BIG10 perceptions contrast with SEC perceptions to our advantage



VS



VS



THE TACTICAL OPPORTUNITY

LET'S THINK LIKE A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN



HOW CAN WE
“WAR GAME”

EACH WEEK
TO DEVELOP A

SATURDAY-SPECIFIC
ATTACK?

Although the schedule is fluid, we'll have a sense for our games vs. theirs – **let's anticipate how they will communicate and build our plan accordingly**

Always in a way that is informed by our overall positioning strategy – how can we **most effectively frame our games** within the context of our CFB POV?

LET'S GET REGIONAL

Our RSN (and NFL) reach is a competitive advantage: How can we use it to ensure maximum impact?



LET'S INNOVATE TO DISRUPT THE SATURDAY ROUTINE

We have to tip our hat: College Gameday is a great show

The program works hard to instill ESPN's CFB credentials

And it's tactically a great “gateway” lead-in for Saturday viewing

We've been there, and done that

Let's assume that we can't win through imitation, and that fans will watch Gameday no matter what we do

How can innovation help us grab mindshare?

What's the killer app (or suite of apps) that we can use to ambush fans each and every Saturday morning as they plan their viewing





THANK YOU

Fox Sports Strategy & Consumer Insights

