

TV And Technology Combine To Meet The Needs Of Sports Fans

(NAPSA)—Using the term “couch potato” to describe sports fans will soon be joining eight-track tapes and typewriters in the history books. Advances in technology—most notably satellite television, the Internet and digital video recorders—are creating a new breed of “virtual home producers” capable of controlling what they watch, when they watch it and the volume of information they receive.

A driving force behind this new breed of sports fan is the growing fantasy sports phenomenon led by fantasy football. With more than 15 million participants, fantasy football fans are utilizing technology to increase the speed and access they have to the players and teams they follow. Each fantasy player “owns” a virtual team made up of individual athletes from different NFL teams. Fantasy fans spend Sunday afternoons monitoring up to 16 players on different teams, in different games, through a combination of advanced technologies, the results of which combine to represent the performance of fantasy virtual teams.

“If you play fantasy football, you simply can’t get too much information or watch too many games,” said Ken Harrison, of Costa Mesa, Calif. “In our league, I am not only tracking how my starting lineup is doing each week, but I am following my reserves’ performances, my opponent’s team and checking out who I might want to trade for.”

NFL stars are even feeling the impact of fantasy football. “I have people coming up to me saying, ‘you killed me last week Peyton,’ even when we won,” said Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning. “A meaningless Hail Mary pass that’s intercepted at the end of

the half might cost someone two points in their fantasy league, but I can’t worry about that, I’m trying to get to the Super Bowl.”

One company that has recognized the voracious appetite of fantasy football players is DIRECTV, the nation’s leading satellite TV provider and exclusive distributor of NFL Sunday Ticket. DIRECTV is introducing a series of new enhancements to the package this season, designed to address individual players’ need to keep track of statistics: GameTracker, Enhanced Games and Highlights-On-Demand.

“The two most popular sources of information for fantasy fans are their televisions—with nearly every game available via NFL Sunday Ticket—and their computer,” said Jayne Hancock, DIRECTV’s vice president of marketing. “We have simply combined the two, providing consumers with a single source to meet all of their needs.”

Enhanced Games provides four additional channels where NFL Sunday Ticket customers can watch one game and see scores and stats from other games—all on one screen in an “L-wrap” format. In addition, viewers will also be alerted when teams playing other games are within 20 yards—known as the “red zone”—of scoring. Top statistical performances will also be provided and updated throughout the day on the bottom portion of the screen.

On Monday mornings, High-

DIRECTV
CH 703
SD KC
7 0
1st 12:54
CH 706
STL NYG
7 0
1st 13:10
CH 707
MIN GB
0 3
1st 12:50
CH 708
ARI DET
0 0
1st 12:55
CH 710
BAL PIT
3 0
1st 13:05

ST. LOUIS RAMS
 PASSING — KURT WARNER 2/4 ATT 25 YDS 1 TD
 RUSHING — MARSHALL FAULK 2 RSH 20 YDS 0 TD

SUNDAY TICKET

With the latest technology, football fans now have greater access to games and stats.

lights on Demand will automatically send and store highlights of NFL Sunday Ticket games to customers equipped with a DIRECTV Digital Video Recorder (DVR) receiver. Highlights on Demand will enable fans to view the highlights at their convenience.

GameTracker, available through directv.com during game time, provides NFL Sunday Ticket customers with alerts when games, other than the one they are watching, heat up so they can tune their television to the right channel and watch the key moments. Customers can also choose to play along with trivia or chat with friends on their computer.

Clearly, advances in technology enable television providers like DIRECTV to transcend traditional television and offer sports fans compelling new features to enhance their viewing experience. For the millions of fantasy fans, NFL Sunday Ticket provides a season’s worth of game action and statistics for about the price of taking a family of four to one game.