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CoSIDA Continuing Education Session: Social Media Promotion & Communication

An interview with:

HEATH NIELSEN, Baylor University Assistant
AD/Communications

BRAD SHEFFIELD, Baylor University Coordinator
of New Media

Moderator: ERIC McDOWELL, Union College
Assistant AD/Sports Information
CoSIDA 3rd Vice President

ERIC McDOWELL: Good afternoon, everyone. We thank you so much for joining us for another one of our presentations today. Hope that you got through your March Madness wherever you are nationwide, Canada, our friends up there as well.

Our topic today, we have two excellent guests from Baylor University that are doing a panel for us, from the University Division Advisory Committee. Heath Nielsen, assistant athletic director for communications, and Brad Sheffield, Baylor coordinator of new media.

This is going to be about new media promotion, a tremendous benefit to all our members and organizations.

Heath and Brad, thank you so much for joining us.

We'll start off with the presentations. There's two parts of this with Heath and Brad. They'll discuss using social media to provide individuals for honors and awards in championship

events, Heisman is a good example of that. Also they'll discuss communicating with the media using social media tools and techniques. After both their presentations we'll be taking your questions.

Heath and Brad, thank you. Look forward to hearing what you have to say.

HEATH NIELSEN: We're basically prepared to speak about what we did during the Heisman campaign for Robert Griffin III and were asked to focus the majority on what we did within social media throughout the season to help publicize Rob.

Our first endeavor, I don't know if this is very social, although we pushed it, is we branded the whole campaign, if you will, with a logo that we had created by a graphic designer. That was really our first step, is we created a logo with his image, with Baylor, the RG3 brand on it, then kind of woven within the logo was a URL for a site at the time hadn't launched but was being created to publicize Robert, which was www.BU-RG3.com. We have no plans to take that down at any time in the future. That was all within the logo.

That was a site that is I guess similar in nature to a lot of what SIDs over the years, recent years, have done to promote candidates for big awards or for All-American status, what we refer to on our staff as a micro site. We also have one for our women's basketball Player of the Year, Brittney Griner. Same basic idea. It's kind of where we could house everything involved with this student-athlete that we were promoting, any kind of highlight videos that we produced, all kinds of links to anything, anytime the media mentioned in a positive way our candidate, anything they did in the community.

In Rob's case we titled that section 'ambassador.' He became the face of not only our football program but athletic department and to a greater degree the school. Academic achievements we could list in there. Obviously all kinds of statistics, records, biographical information. Then we kind of spiced it up with different quotes. We kind of had an intro video.

That was kind of the first step. We actually



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launched this site for Robert the night before our season-opener for the football season. That was kind of the first step to getting his name out there. I guess you could say officially stamping him as a Heisman candidate, although, interestingly enough, on the entire website, we never used the word 'Heisman' which we did later on and we'll cover some later areas.

Initially it was to kind of pump him. We didn't know how well the team would do, how well Rob would do, if he would ever reach the level of a Heisman-type candidate. We played it safe early on. That's kind of how we started things.

BRAD SHEFFIELD: After Robert's first game against TCU, it was on national TV, opening Friday, pretty much the only game on. Robert went off, had a great game, let Baylor down, ended up kicking a winning field goal. The website had already been launched. We knew we kind of wanted to start off with a low-key campaign, and the best way to go about that obviously was social media. It's free. It costs us nothing.

One of the very first things we did is we launched - which is kind of where the 'Heisman' word started to creep into the campaign - we launched the Facebook page. You can still see it. Our plan is to let all this stuff still stay out there for archival purposes that still exists within Facebook.

We basically started that Facebook page a few days after the TCU win. Like many people do with their Facebook pages, we wanted a way to engage fans and seep them informed of what was going on with Robert. It's different because the fans are not the ones voting, but they help with the word-of-mouth, everything like that, keep your candidate's name out there.

We also wanted a place where we could do promotions, winks like on his website, videos, photos, stuff like that. Necessarily we didn't want to bombard the official account with, but we could put it on his Facebook page, throw 10 links up there a day if we felt it fit.

The people that were following had liked that page obviously wanted that information. That was kind of a good way to put stuff on that page that we didn't necessarily feel deserved to go on the official account.

Our numbers started off pretty well when we first launched the page. We'll go through several promos we did trying to kind of engage fans throughout the season. But we noticed that the numbers doubled after probably midway through the year, after a win against Oklahoma.

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Again, we met during the summer and kind of as a staff timed everything out. We had said we wanted to do something weekly. We wanted to have either a promotion via Twitter, Facebook, whatever, something weekly to continue to engage fans and keep Robert's name out there.

One of the things we decided to do that we brainstormed and actually started the week following the TCU game was a segment called 30 with a Thiiird. Obviously we were playing off of Rob Griffin III, a weekly video segment to show his personality off the field. For those of you haven't met him, a good ambassador for Baylor, great kid, very well-spoken.

It kind of started off, it was supposed to be 30 seconds and turned more into three minutes. It was a video segment which we had his teammates ask him quick-hit questions, and Robert would answer those. Again, they had so much fun with it, cutup, we had tons of out-takes, it was a way fans could see his personality. We posted those on his site, the official site, on the Facebook page. We also posted it on our Baylor athletic YouTube page.

Kind of a good story I always tell is we do a weekly press conference every Monday. One of the press conferences is that's where we thought these 30 with a Thiiird videoed segments, would post them later in the week, right before the game. There weren't many media stories out there, so we usually posted them on Thursday because we felt that was kind of a good time to continue giving out information.

On a Monday during Halloween, I think it was Halloween, Robert actually showed up wearing I believe it was a Jason mask. He did most of the video wearing his Jason mask. We post that to YouTube, got thousands of hits. Even when the Heisman presentation rolled around, people were linking that in their blogs.

I go back to showing his personality, something most fans don't get to see.

HEATH NIELSEN: Our next step, this is probably two or three weeks into the season after a couple of early non-conference wins, is we jumped on the Twitter bandwagon when we realized Rob was going to be a pretty serious candidate. I think at the time Russell Wilson and Andrew Luck had a Twitter account.

Our Twitter feed, using the Heisman name, became similar to Facebook. It became a catch-all

where we could forward everything and anything. We could point to links, media stories, any kind of announcements of promos, we could cross-promote with his Facebook with our official website. Just a great way to engage our fans. Not so much maybe the media or the Heisman voters, but a lot of our fans and kind of the troops on the ground excited. We just pushed a lot of information back and forth using the Twitter account.

BRAD SHEFFIELD: One of the things we did, like I said, we started our Facebook page mainly for links and videos, but we knew that we wanted to do some promotions and some contests to kind of give some stuff away to fans on Facebook who were following Robert. We did several promotions throughout the year.

One of the ones we did that was probably I think during the bye week, our second week of the year, we did a contest called Tag to Win. Our original idea or plan was we created a photo of Robert I think from the first week and put some stats at the bottom of the photo and branded it with the logo, his Twitter account. We were using the hash tag RG3. We branded that at the bottom.

The original plan was to post the photo, ask fans to tag themselves in the photo, which would obviously put on their wall, would basically become viral. We were using Facebook as a way to try to get our information out there virally.

We quickly discovered about two minutes after posting the first photo that Facebook has a limit of a hundred tags, that you can pretty much only be tagged a hundred times on a photo. So we quickly had to kind of learn on the fly and change some stuff up.

What we did was every hour for the next four hours we would post a photo. We ended up with five total photos with 500 people over five hours tagging themselves. That was their way to enter into a contest. I believe it was four tickets to the next home game I believe was the prize. But we had 500 people basically trying to share our message on their walls. One of those people, could have been the same people.

Another thing we wanted to do with that contest was we wanted to pick five winners. We didn't just want to say, Okay, these five people have won. We kind of came up with a creative way that we wanted to show our fans on Facebook, This is how we chose the winners.

Pretty much what we did was we printed all 500 names on pieces of paper with the help of



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students and other staff here, then we got two other teammates of Roberts, went in our indoor facility, had them pretty much spread the names in the paper around midfield. It took up most of midfield. Then we had Robert go up our filming platform within the indoor, which was probably 30 feet in the air. We had him from maybe 30 yards away, we gave him five footballs and said, Okay, just throw 'em. We were standing on the ground. He would throw 'em out there. Whatever pieces of paper he would hit, whatever name was on that paper, that was the winner.

So we filmed that. We put a real quick piece together, easy to edit, no editing at all, start, finish, that's how we announced our winners that ended up getting four tickets to the next home game.

A few weeks later, another lull, again we were trying to do stuff weekly, we did a share-to-win Facebook contest where once a day for five days we would post a video or a photo or a link. Again, it was all about cross-promotion. I think there was one time we posted a link back to his Twitter account. On a Thursday, I think we posted a 30 with a Thiiird. That contest asked fans, Share this content on your wall to be entered into a chance to win.

What we did was obviously everybody knows as long as they have their privacy settings set properly, when they share something, we can see something on the back end. We took all those names, put them on little sheets of paper, folded those sheets of paper up, then the next Monday after we posted five different links and items, we had I think close to about a thousand names. We put all the names in a helmet, had Robert come up to our offices, and he picked out five names. Those people won a signed football, limited Heisman trading cards that we were basically sending to media. Our fans started seeing those circulate and wanted those. That was, again, another way to keep fans involved.

Those two promotions were Facebook heavy, so we knew that we wanted to use Twitter in a way to still kind of interact with fans. We all know that Twitter is to inform and Facebook is to engage. We still wanted a way, we knew there was a way to use Twitter to reach out to fans. What we kind of began doing throughout the year just kind of silly, fun stuff on Robert's Twitter account.

There was one day that we basically asked

fans to fill in the blank of a sentence. One of the sentences we used was, Chuck Norris fears Robert Griffin III because, and we asked fans to tweet back at us and we would tweet some of our favorites. One of the ones we got back, Chuck Norris fears Robert Griffin III because RG3 is a runner, not a walker. That was one of the Twitter things we did.

HEATH NIELSEN: There was a period during the middle of the season where we lost three of four games. Most folks know you can't win a Heisman Trophy with three losses. I think we kind of started to get a little bit creative. On the Twitter account, I got a little bit desperate in the middle of the season, started to do a little bit of personal interaction direct with media via Twitter. There were some instances where I began to push for him.

For example, a national media type was listing Heisman leaders, top quarterbacks, they didn't include Robert, we began to be a little bit more assertive, directly tweet at them, Don't forget about this kid down in Waco just because we lost a couple games.

We had a good amount of success where they would joke back with us, include his name, retweet us. It was a way to stay relevant even when some of the great glowing stories maybe dried up during our low spell.

BRAD SHEFFIELD: One of our biggest promotions we kind of saved to hit the grand slam, a home run, at the end of the year, after the Oklahoma game, David, who is on our staff, threw this idea out earlier in the summer. We wanted the right time to unveil it. We did another Facebook contest, we still integrated Twitter and our website, we titled it Join the Third. We were asking fans to add the third to the end of their name on Facebook. I became Brad Sheffield III, Heath became Heath Nielsen III. We also developed the hash tag Join the Third. Somebody is going to ask, Why do you have III on the end of your name? We had several thousand people kind of take part in this. Again, it was a big push not only on Facebook but on Twitter and our official site. That was kind of our big push after the Oklahoma game, was the Join the Third initiative.

HEATH NIELSEN: That was probably the part of our campaign that was my favorite, the most unique, the most memorable. It's a little bit tough when you think of crazy ideas like that, this whole campaign was us sitting around the office saying, What can we come up with, let's be

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creative. Something as simple to ask your fans to add III at the end of their name. It's a little scary because you don't know if it's just your staff and 40 other people who are going to do it and you look silly, or if it catches on, becomes viral, people start to talk about it and wonder what's going on. It caught on and was a big part of getting our fans pumped up the last two, three weeks of the campaign.

Down the homestretch, one of the things we did, the last week of the season, capitalizing on his Heisman moment against Oklahoma, or newfound attention, was we started a video piece that we titled RG3 Moments. We basically took seven or eight different high-point plays throughout his career, most of them during the 2011 season, made little teeny video segments, 15 seconds to a minute. Once each day we would put out an RG3 Moment. Those got picked up by some media types, posted on some Heisman websites, kept his name on voters' minds in that last week leading up to the vote.

BRAD SHEFFIELD: After Robert won the Heisman, we actually did a celebration for him at a basketball game at halftime maybe a week or so later. He was still kind of making the rounds after the Heisman on his way back. We knew we didn't want it to end, stop, Hey, he won the Heisman type thing.

We actually came up with a Heisman Facebook promo and also used Twitter for this also, basically asking fans to send a photo of them doing the Heisman pose. We asked them to use the hash tag RG3 pose. We would retweet some of our favorites, created a gallery on Facebook, and we continued to add photos. We had something that integrates with our video board which allows fans to email us and basically go to a gallery that would later play on our video board during the RG3 ceremony at halftime.

HEATH NIELSEN: Fans got really creative with stuff like that. We had all kinds of costumes, designs. There was a gentleman holding his infant son in his arm striking the pose. There was a guy in his driveway wearing a Scottish kilt striking the pose. It was fun to see. They got to play those on a video board at halftime of a men's basketball game.

Probably last thing we'll mention, trying to capitalize on the fun and the buzz. It was kind of

unique as I needed to get home from the Heisman ceremony in New York after a couple days of the media blitz, I found out kind of last minute I was in charge of bringing the trophy back to Waco commercially on my flight rather than on any kind of private situation or a shipment. We had to get it back the next day for that basketball game.

Once I found out I'd actually be checking in this kind of unique box with me and carrying it on my flight, I grabbed our office flip cam and starting in my hotel room in New York started documenting the travels of this case as we talked to different people in the airport, stamped it, transferred it from plane to plane, kind of just filmed every little step of the way that we could up until we broke it out for Robert at this basketball game and kind of put our video together that ended up on not only all of our sites, our YouTube site, but different media people linked to it, it got a lot of play. A fun little piece about trying to get a Heisman Trophy home.

The piece ended with Robert carrying it over his arms, walking out to the halftime of this basketball game with thousands of fans, which was the first time they saw him back in Waco, cheering on their Heisman hero. That was kind of a neat little piece we were able to capitalize on, as well.

That's our spiel. In a nutshell, that's what we did digitally to try to push or candidate. There were some other pieces that were more traditional mailers.

ERIC McDOWELL: This is outstanding, Brad and Heath. We have 15 minutes to take your questions.

Let's start with this one. Great comments on Twitter contest and personal interaction. Anything that a smaller school like ours can do? All of the RG3 ways are awesome, but anything you can bring from that for a smaller school that we can do with a little smaller fan base? Also somebody sent a question from they call themselves the mid-major, three people on their staff, and they would like some advice in a similar fashion. Thank you.

HEATH NIELSEN: Here is how I would answer that. This is a situation, particularly when you're talking about the social media aspect, there's not a high cost these items. In fact, everything you do on Facebook, everything you do on Twitter, there's not really a cost there.

ERIC McDOWELL: The cost is zero, correct?

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HEATH NIELSEN: Zero. Dive in. Be creative. You don't have to be a large school, you don't have to have a huge name to be creative. Think outside the box, send out tweets, engage your fan base.

When it came to creating a dot-com site, we paid a graphic designer to design the logo, but on the social end of things, even some of our videos, that last video we did with bringing the trophy home, we did that on a flip cam that I shoved in my pocket. It was not an HD expensive camera at all.

You could do it as long as you got the creativity and a little bit of time.

ERIC McDOWELL: To piggyback that, too, a video camera, I'm a head SID here, we also had men's hockey in the Frozen Four. One of the things we've started is a TV show called Nice to Meet You. We basically take a video camera, do 10 minutes close up, pan out. It's a great way to meet the students.

It does not take a lot of people to have to put something together here. We're not talking about a CBS production, are we?

HEATH NIELSEN: No. In fact, in a lot of ways, your clientele, your fan base is more and more used to footage from a camera, maybe a little shake, zoom in and out. I don't think that bothers anybody nowadays.

ERIC McDOWELL: It also brings the social media things to life. Heisman candidate many years ago, I remember we had at a Division II school, our slogan was Popcorn Football. We set out bags of popcorn with the football player's photo on it. People really want to see these kids come to life. I would say alumni, fans, presidents, they really want to see the person come to life instead of action or a head shot.

HEATH NIELSEN: Brad mentioned our video segment, which was mentioned 30 with the Thiiird. That was our little chance for people to see Robert behind the scenes, cutting up with his teammates, laughing, having a good time, see what kind of a guy he is, how well-spoken he is. That was our attempt at that.

ERIC McDOWELL: This brings back a few memories. This would have been asked on

one of these calls about seven years ago about Facebook, four years ago about Twitter. This question came in. Does Baylor or anyone out there use Pinterest? Would you talk about this new application? Are you folks familiar with it and the value it would have for a sports communication office?

BRAD SHEFFIELD: We don't use that here at Baylor. I am familiar with it a little bit. We've looked into it to try to see the different angles, what it provides different than some of the other social media platforms out there.

We do, just have started using Google Plus right before the March Madness, the NCAA tournament. We kind of found that. We have over I think 100,000 people within our circle that follow Baylor athletics on Google Plus.

As many people know, it's Google's social media platform, their Facebook within the Google system.

What we kind of found was cool, got a lot of feedback from, is we did hang-outs. We could do a hang-out with a fan. We did I think three basketball players and a coach throughout our NCAA run on the men's side, in which eight or nine fans could basically have a video Skype, if you will, with this player, ask them anything they wanted. That went on for 20 minutes. Even the fans that weren't on that hang-out, they got to watch it on the Google Plus page stream live, and it was later archived.

We have not jumped yet into Pinterest, but I know that's probably the next big thing out there.

ERIC McDOWELL: Next question comes in from somebody said, they didn't say size of school, but they said, Our program has an outstanding student-athlete who does a ton of work in the community, does a lot of different things, but our team has a dreadful record. He used the word 'dreadful record.' I want to promote the student without harming the other students. This is very interesting.

Take this one, both of you guys. What we're looking at here is it is a program that's not doing exceptionally well, but a young student-athlete that has a 3.8 grade point average, doing hospital work, volunteer work, community work. How would you promote that person and what awards would come to mind? First that comes to me is Academic All-American because of the person with all the outstanding work that they do.

HEATH NIELSEN: I would say the Academic All-American is right in your wheelhouse.

Unfortunately, I guess I'll use that word, I know where this questioner is coming from, having dealt with teams with lousy records, because Baylor football over the last decade or two hasn't been all that strong. So I feel your pain.

Again, video is kind of the direction I'm pushing our guys in. If you can somehow piece together some sort of video, like Eric said, that's the best way to show and put a face on this type of an athlete, that people can remember, people can get behind. I guess you probably need to put a qualifier that your coaching staff needs to be onboard once you start singling out a player above the team.

That was actually one of the early hurdles we had, believe it or not, with Robert Griffin, is to get our coach to single out a single player but a non-senior.

I think with some creativity you can forge ahead and do that.

ERIC McDOWELL: This one from a crusty veteran. She said, I am a crusty veteran and very interested in doing these things, but what do I give up off my plate? That is a great question. I don't think many people in our profession ever think about giving something up. It takes time, it is valuable in this era. In 1980, we wouldn't have been doing this, but other things. So what things would you give up? I'll rework that a little bit and say, What things could be given to either assistants or students that you used to do so you can put time into the new media not serving the student-athlete? What things could you farm off that you would not do that may have to continue to be done, but could be done by either assistants at a larger school or students at another school?

HEATH NIELSEN: You know what, Eric, I'm okay using the word 'give up.' I'm a big proponent, and I tell my staff, We don't have to do things ways we've always done them just because we've always done them that way. If there's something we can leave by the wayside that was really neat in '88 or in '95 or even 2002 that really doesn't benefit us right now, then let's cut it out.

Now if the media or a coach down the road wants to throw a fit, maybe we'll reexamine that decision. But I'd take a look at Baylor. We've cut

way back. We no longer do media guides. We do almanacs for our bigger sports. The number of game notes we produce prior to events, particularly for some of the smaller sports, has gone way down.

I think this is a new age. Don't be scared to put a lot of your eggs in the new technology basket. Ask your media, What do you need from us? What do you really need and what are we providing for you, what do we think we're providing for you, that is really a waste of time and that you're not utilizing? That's my take.

BRAD SHEFFIELD: Kind of like he said, I think it kind of depends on the situation. At Baylor, like he said, we're doing media almanacs, cutting back on pages of game notes, stuff like that.

With Facebook and Twitter, even if as simple as starting off by sending a link to a story. You don't have to do a big promo or anything like that. Copying and pasting takes 10 seconds, another five seconds to switch over to tweet that, or you can post them both at the same time on TweetDeck.

I look at those as kind of billboards basically that these are free, you're putting them up, you're reaching potentially a whole new audience that isn't going to come to your site.

I think gone are the days of 2,000-word recaps. People want to see a 30-second highlight a lot more than they want to read a huge long recap. They want to see stuff, they're visual.

As far as the promo stuff, just get creative. Some of the promos we did, I basically just took the tag to win, just a photo of Robert. We posted it on Facebook. I branded it by throwing in Photo Shop his logo on there, took all of two minutes, loaded it to Facebook. All said and done, I took five minutes to kickstart a promotion that kind of ran itself over the next day.

I think it's just how creative you can get, unique to everybody else's situation.

ERIC McDOWELL: Next one is about blogging. What is your opinion as a blogger? Should it be an SID blogging during an event providing commentary which could be dangerous in an 8-0 loss, for example, or should it be directing them to a member of the media? Fine line obviously.

BRAD SHEFFIELD: We blog basically for football and then basketball games that aren't on TV, then the NCAA basketball tournament, as well



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as we've been doing tennis blogs over the last few years. It's changed over the last three or four years. It's usually myself that handles the blog, then it will transition into someone else helping me out or someone else taking over.

We've actually kind of slowly began to involve our students that would help us out. They would jump on the blog with me to kind of see how things would go. I know some of our students have done tennis, some have done women's basketball blogs.

The NCAA blogs I would kind of handle. I kind of know where you were going with the media. I don't know if I'm off, I don't know if it was Rutgers, someone in the New York area, that had a media member kind of tweet and blog, and he was known for being basketball knowledgeable, so he kind of handled their blog.

With cover it live, it's done internally. We don't do it for every event. We examine whether or not the time going into it is going to be worth it or not.

HEATH NIELSEN: This question is talking about in-game blogs. We have our separate blogs that we can post whenever. We have a former newspaper beat writer that can help us out in that area.

But as far as the in-game blogs, we started out hot and heavy. We've slowed down a little bit. We don't want to waste a lot of manpower on that, especially because you can tweet out a bunch of stuff, and people are watching that as well.

ERIC McDOWELL: How do you deal with negative comments posted on Facebook and Twitter? Social media does allow the fans' voices to be heard but where do you draw the line?

BRAD SHEFFIELD: Million dollar question. I would say early on, we would delete something that was negative. Sometimes we're hesitant about posting the status after a loss. With the bigger sports we'll usually do it and monitor it throughout the night and throughout the next day.

But we have actually found that as long as it's not vulgar, as long as it's not attacking a student-athlete, I myself have become a little bit more open to letting comments and opinions kind of fly on our Facebook page, because I have actually noticed that other fans, I don't even need to get on there and say it, other fans will come in

and take our stance for us, kind of say exactly what I wanted to type, but if we're patient, we have found that fans will come in and kind of simmer the situation down. Two or three days later, it's kind of flown off the page.

ERIC McDOWELL: Last one, NCAA regulations. If you're doing some video or work posting it on your site, what can you and do and not do at an NCAA championship? In other words, what can you film, like the team coming off a bus, coming out of the locker room. Where do things stop with an NCAA event where you can't do any video of your own?

BRAD SHEFFIELD: We actually just experienced this. I traveled with the women during the NCAA tournament. The rules, as we read them, there's broadcasting rights, stuff like that.

As far as what you can do on your own is kind of what we've tried to do with our website regardless, is behind-the-scene stuff, stuff in the locker room, practice stuff, stuff on the bus, on the bus headed over to the game. Anything basically in-game, our videographer was allowed to use end-of-year banquet stuff.

We usually always have highlights in our recap, fans are used to that. We posed that question to the NCAA, the people running the tournament, we need to have highlights, but we would either link to NCAA.com for highlights.

It's behind-the-scenes stuff. Most people watch the game, SportsCenter, go to NCAA.com to see the highlights, the local news taking the feed of those highlights. We always tried to have behind-the-scenes video that fans weren't going to see anywhere else and have that on our site, YouTube and Facebook.

ERIC McDOWELL: Gentlemen, tremendous work. We appreciate both Heath and Brad with their comments.

If you could give me each about a minute of final advice.

BRAD SHEFFIELD: You know, I think kind of summing it up, it all depends on your situation. Our staff here at Baylor, we're fortunate enough to kind of have a bunch of people to do some different things.

But just get creative. Facebook and Twitter, like we mentioned several times, it's free. That's where the fans are. Get creative in ways

you can engage them and kind of keep them informed.

Just think outside the box.

HEATH NIELSEN: At the risk of contradicting some of what we've said throughout this last hour, speaking back on our Heisman campaign for Robert, it was interesting in retrospect, I never would have guessed this early on, that a lot of the social media efforts we made really hit home with our fan base and the general public, but wasn't as effective with the media and the voters.

We had a whole 'nother piece of our campaign we didn't talk about which revolved around a little bit more old-school mailers, football trading cards that we mailed out throughout the year. We had a lot of good compliments from national media and voters, but they focused more on our mailers, what they gave them in their mailbox.

Again, I wouldn't have thought it, but that was much more effective for the media, whereas the things we did socially was much more effective with our fan base.

Just a little FYI, something I would not have known till this last fall.

ERIC McDOWELL: Very good points. Thanks again to Brad and Heath for a very busy time of the year for both of you.

Again, thanks to our sponsors and to you for taking 45 minutes out of your schedule to learn a lot more to help.

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