

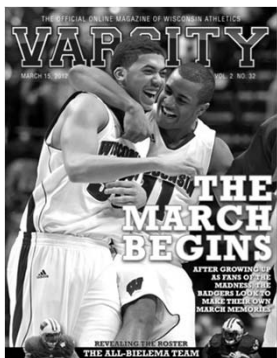
Developing an Athletics Magazine

{ Reaching Goals With Publications

- Brian Mason, University of Wisconsin
- Mike Williams, Illinois State University
- Ben Matchett, University of Calgary

Things to Consider

- Who are you trying to reach, and why?
- How do you plan on reaching them?
- What resources can you commit to the project?



Audience

- **Who are you trying to reach?**

- Fans
- Alumni
- Donors
- Parents

- **Why are you trying to reach them?**

- Information distribution
- Providing an exclusive benefit
- Delivering advertising
- Soliciting gifts

Distribution

- **How will you reach your fans?**

- Mail
- Newsstand
- In venue sales/distribution
- Web site
- Email
- Social media
- Smartphone apps

Production

- **What resources can you commit?**

- Personnel
- Technology
- Production costs
- Distribution costs

- **How will you cover the cost?**

- Advertising sales
- Subscription revenue
- Single-issue sales
- No direct return on investment?

Content

- **Why would I read it?**

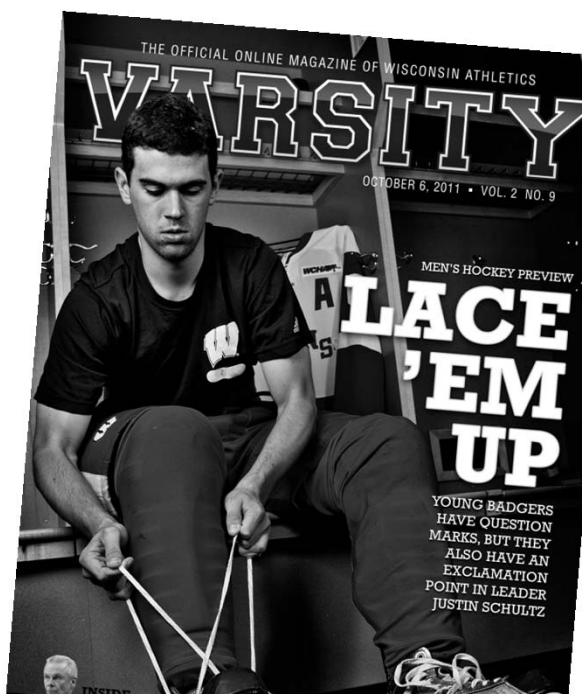
- Timely news
- Features on athletes and teams
- Rosters, schedules, etc.?
- Exclusive content

- **Where will the content come from?**

- Communications staff
- Marketing staff
- Partnership with campus communications
- Students / interns
- Re-purposing existing content

Varsity

“The Official
Online
Magazine
of Wisconsin
Athletics”



What...

- **Weekly, digital-only magazine**
 - Launched in December 2010
 - Weekly during academic year
 - Free
 - Focus on upcoming events and feature stories
 - Averages 50-60 pages per issue
 - Distributed to 140,000 email addresses
 - Available on UWBadgers.com

Why...

- **“Tell our story”**
 - Push content to fans and stakeholders
 - Accessible to all on multiple platforms
 - Utilize existing content that may be overlooked
 - Vehicle for presenting photography
 - Provide coherent package for content
 - Provide additional advertising inventory
 - Offer additional platform for marketing/sales

Who...

- **Collaborative effort**
 - Administration
 - Athletic Communications
 - In-house writer
 - Video services
 - Marketing and Promotions
 - Badger Sports Properties
 - Bucky’s Locker Room (retail store)
 - University Communications
 - Wisconsin Alumni Association
 - National W Club

How...

- **Coordinated effort**

- Athletic Communications
 - Editor – Planning, layout, design
 - Sport Contacts – Recurring elements
- Senior Writer
 - Two feature stories
 - Weekly column
- Marketing and Promotions
 - 2-3 weekly ads
- Badger Sports Properties
 - 12 weekly ads
- Bucky's Locker Room
 - Weekly ad

Results

- **Reaching Fans**

- Average 10,000 views / 200,000 page views
- 18,583 views for Dec. 22, 2011 issue
- 342,872 page views for Feb. 2, 2012 issue
- Average reader spends 14 minutes viewing

- **Providing Revenue**

- Generated approximately \$100,000 in 2011-12

Redbird Magazine

Illinois State
Athletics



What...

- **Monthly printed magazine**
 - Prints monthly, August - May
 - For sale at home events
 - Cost is \$5
 - Distributed free to eligible donors via mail
 - Plans for online subscriptions
 - Focus on sports in season with feature stories
 - Recruiting elements
 - Recurring features throughout the year

Why...

- **Enhance existing efforts**
 - Refresh award-winning game programs
 - Offer full-color publications
 - Increase exposure for Olympic sports
 - Enhance department brand
 - Reach expanded audiences

Who...

- **Collaborative effort**
 - Athletic Communications staff
 - Guest writers
 - Staff photographer
 - Marketing staff
 - Development staff
 - Corporate sales staff

How...

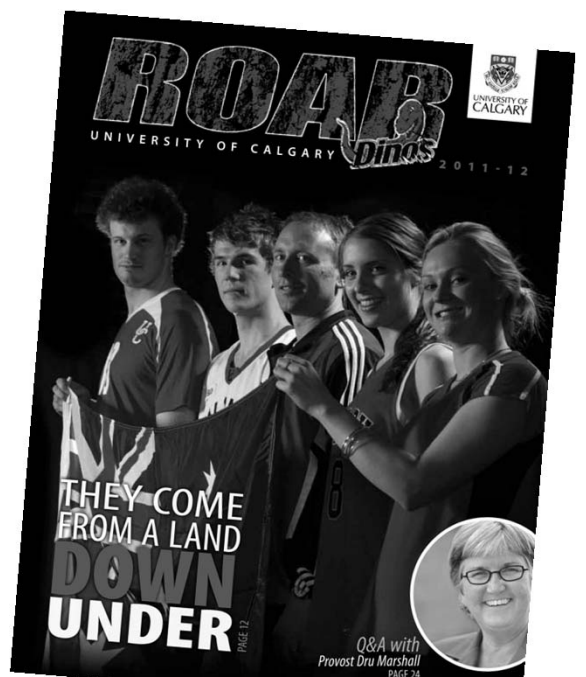
- **Advance planning**
 - Weekly staff meetings to discuss progress
 - Plan issues 2-3 months in advance
 - Adjust specific structure of issues 1 month out
 - 3-week production window
 - Athletic Communications responsible for all writing, editing and design
 - Utilize contacts in School of Art for design help

Results

- **Challenges**
 - Pushback from football, men's basketball fans used to having dedicated programs
- **Successes**
 - Positive response from Olympic sports
 - Sales strong at Olympic sports events
 - Added benefit for donors

ROAR

Calgary
Athletics



What...

- **Annual printed magazine**
 - Department has been producing for 25 years
 - Publishes annually in mid-October
 - Distributed for free on campus and in venue
 - Readership is 7,500 – 10,000
 - Includes information on each team
 - Built around feature content

Why...

- **Reach multiple audiences**
 - Distributes information to fans and stakeholders
 - Serves as annual alumni mailing
 - Given to summer camp participants
 - Replaces sport-specific publications
 - Recruiting piece

Who...

- **Collaborative effort**
 - Athletic Communications staff
 - Marketing staff
 - University communications resources
 - Coaches
 - Third-party designers

How...

- **Advance planning**
 - Communications staff handles content
 - Marketing handles advertising
 - Planning begins in July with editorial meeting
 - Bulk of work done in September
 - Assistance from campus communicators
 - Design is outsourced
 - Annual cost is approximately \$5,000

Results

- **Reaching a wide audience**
 - Provides important fan information
 - Engages alumni directly
 - Offers coaches attractive recruiting piece
 - Historical value
 - Negative feedback when production ceased
- **Revenue neutral**
 - Distributed for free
 - Ad sales help offset annual \$5,000 cost

Contact Information

- **Brian Mason – University of Wisconsin**

bm3@athletics.wisc.edu

(608) 262-2311

@Brian_Mason

- **Mike Williams – Illinois State University**

mcwilli@ilstu.edu

(309) 438-7748

- **Ben Matchett – University of Calgary**

ben.matchett@ucalgary.ca

(403) 220-8143