The Future of Second Screening
A new technology, in everyone's pocket, could transform the way we watch sports forever.
You watch the game as much for the action in the group chat as the action on the field.

Sport is the last bastion of live television; an appointment to view that fans and advertisers can’t miss. In a world of On Demand and DVRs, social media has made live broadcasts important again, with the second screen fueling the first screen.

Dull broadcasts helmed by former stars take on a whole new life when supplemented by data-driven analysis and memes on Twitter.
Accenture (2015) estimate that 87% of global consumers use a second device whilst watching TV. It is also nothing new, as a 2013 article in Wired titled “The Evolution of the Second Screen” can attest to.

However, the promise of evolution in that article has never happened, and second screening has become tired, an expectation rather than an innovation. The real revolution is coming from social media networks, who are snapping up rights in an effort to consolidate consumers first and second screens.

Second screening is not unique to sport, it is an ingrained part of modern life.
So how can sports leagues and teams continue to forge innovative relationships with fans?
The new iOS update could hold the answer. Augmented reality is now baked into every iPhone, making it the most accessible immersive technology yet. And one that could revolutionise second screening.

For us, AR has the potential to solve two of the sports industry’s biggest challenges. Firstly, how to provide a better experience for diehard fans whose attendance and enjoyment is often taken for granted. And secondly, how to reach out to a younger audience who have endless entertainment options in an increasingly diverse media landscape.
Diehard sports fans often see an entirely different game playing out, with statistics, heritage and rivalry weaved in.

Augmented reality presents the opportunity to bring these previously unseen aspects to life, giving an unprecedented experience either in stadium or at home.

Major League Baseball are leading the way with At Bat, a premium app for fans that is now enhancing the in stadium experience.

Whilst at the game, you can hold your phone up to see extra information overlaid in real time. This delightful innovation is perfect for a fan group obsessed with data.
For younger fans, augmented reality is already a part of their daily lives through Snapchat and Pokemon Go.

Second screen AR experiences would speak to them on their terms, in a language they understand.

It will also allow more emotional stories to augment the action, giving new fans a better understanding of the nuances of the game.
A great example of this is FC Bayern’s app that places augmented reality versions of players into your world. For their emerging global fan base, that might never get to see the likes of Neuer and Robben in person, AR can make dreams a reality, while also providing great social content for the team.
We can imagine an AR app that demystifies the jargon around sport and allows new fans to try them out in the comfort of their own homes.

Or a Ghosts of Past app that overlays great performances or world records into real life stadium action, giving instant context and intrigue.
Augmented reality, with its ability to appeal to both diehard and non fans, can serve as the ultimate marketing tool.

It also provides a new revenue model for sports leagues and teams as they look to create more of their own content rather than leaving it to brands and broadcasters.

Sources:

Google (2017)
Three-quarters of British population use a second screen while watching TV, study finds

Accenture (2015)
Accenture Report: 87% of Consumers Use Second Screen Device While Watching TV

Wired (2013)
The Evolution of the Second Screen

MLB ARKit
How Major League Baseball is using Apple’s ARKit to increase fan engagement

FC Bayern
FC Bayern launches first Augmented Reality Fan Experience
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