

Headline: Virtual Signage Raised Visibility on TV Sports: TDA's Paul Muller

PHILADELPHIA - The absence of fan attendance at sporting events for most of last year led advertisers, broadcasters and teams to develop other ways to reach fans who were stuck at home. Virtual signage that was only visible to TV viewers became more prominent as marketers shifted some spending away from in-stadium campaigns.

"We've spent a lot of time trying to figure out how to reach these fans via the television or the radio. We've changed a lot of our assets. In stadium, for example, with signage we had," [Paul Muller](#), president of the Tri State Toyota Dealers Association, said in this interview with Beet.TV. The TDA comprises 25 Toyota dealers in Philadelphia and its surrounding areas of southeastern Pennsylvania, northwestern Delaware and southern New Jersey.

Philadelphia is a quintessential sports market, with strong fan support for the Eagles in football, Phillies in baseball, 76ers in basketball and Flyers in hockey. The city has the sixth-biggest population in the United States, making it a top media market for advertisers.

New Avenues for Promotion

Without thousands of fans in the stands seeing Toyota's logos on billboards or visiting its car displays at stadiums, the association turned to virtual signage. That included digital overlays of Toyota's logo on the pitcher's mound and the backstop behind home plate — which typically aren't permissible places for in-stadium signage.

"Those are things we never looked at, or bought before. It gave us another avenue, or expanded avenue, in which to work," Muller said. "The teams and stations have been so much more innovative in coming up with ways for us to get our message across than they had to be before."

He estimated that Toyota's virtual signage on the pitcher's mound was visible to TV audiences approximately 200 times a game, helping to raise awareness for its dealers.

"It's been a tough 'go,' but what we've found is that the enthusiasm for sports in Philadelphia has been tremendous," Muller said. "People were so starved for sports that they were looking for anything sports-related."

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