

Verizon - 180386
Geoff Reiss Podcast - (Transcript Only)
May 11, 2018

>> WELCOME BACK TO UP TO SPEED. A VERIZON PODCAST. FOR TODAY'S EPISODE, JEREMY CAUGHT UP WITH GEOFF REISS, GENERAL MANAGER OF YAHOO SPORTS AS THE OATH OFFICES IN NEW YORK CITY. THEY TALKED ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF THE DIGITAL SPORTS LANDSCAPE AND WHAT LIES AHEAD.

>> WELCOME BACK TO UP TO SPEED, A VERIZON PODCAST. TODAY I'M HERE WITH GEOFF REISS THE GENERAL MANAGER OF GENERAL MANAGER OF YAHOO SPORTS. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SPORTS, MEDIA AND THE DIGITAL WORLD TODAY. GEOFF, THANKS FOR BEING HERE.

>> IT'S GREAT TO BE HERE. I APPRECIATE THE CHANCE TO TALK.

>> RIGHT ON, SO... QUICK WARM-UP THOUGH, BEFORE WE GET STARTED. ONE OF THE THINGS WE LIKE TO DO --

>> WE CAN STRETCH?

>> NO STRETCHING, MAYBE A MIND STRETCH.

>> A MIND STRETCH, OKAY.

>> ONE OF THE THINGS WE LIKE TO DO WITH LEADERS AT VERIZON IS CALLED 60 SECONDS WITH, IT'S A SET OF RANDOM QUESTIONS, YOU GET 60 SECONDS, KIND OF, TOP OF MIND-TYPE THINGS. LET'S START WITH THAT, YOU READY TO GO?

>> SURE.

>> CLOCK IS TICKING. FAVORITE SPORT TO WATCH?

>> BASEBALL.

>> FAVORITE SPORT TO PLAY?

>> PROBABLY TENNIS.

>> FAVORITE PRO TEAM?

>> SADLY, THE METS.

>> OH. WHAT ABOUT COLLEGE?

>> MY SON'S BASEBALL TEAM, OVERLAND.

>> OKAY... WHAT'S THE ALL TIME GREATEST SPORTS RIVALRY?

>> PROBABLY YANKEES/RED SOX.

>> NO DUKE/CAROLINA THROWN IN THERE?

>> NO.

>> OH MAN. WHAT IS THE GREATEST SPORTS COMEBACK OF ALL TIME?

>> PROBABLY THE PATRIOTS A COUPLE YEARS AGO.

>> YEAH... THAT WAS IMPRESSIVE. PEANUTS OR HOTDOGS?

>> HOTDOGS.

>> TAILGATE OR SKY BOX?

>> TAILGATE.

>> BURG OR JOHNSON?

>> MAGIC.

>> FAVORITE SPORTS MOVIE?

>> ACTUALLY, DOC I WORKED ON A COUPLE YEARS AGO, SOMETHING CALLED BLACK MAGIC.

>> OH. I'LL HAVE TO LOOK THAT ONE UP. WHAT'S THE BEST LIVE GAME YOU'VE EVER SEEN IN PERSON?

>> GAME FIVE OF THE 95 DIVISIONAL SERIES BETWEEN THE YANKEES AND MARINERS.

>> OKAY... SPORTS LEGEND? LIVING OR DEAD. WHO DO YOU WANT TO MEET? SPEND SOME TIME WITH?

>> OOH... GOSH. BILL RUSSELL.

>> ALL RIGHT... TIME'S UP. GOOD, THAT'S GOOD STUFF. GOOD FOUNDATION, GEOFF, THANKS FOR THAT. GIVE ME YOUR CURRENT ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD OF SPORTS TODAY? AND HOW IT MEETS WITH TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA AND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS?

>> WONDERFULLY CHAOTIC.

>> MM-HMM.

>> AND BY, THAT I MEAN SIMPLY THAT... I MEAN, THE FUN THING ABOUT BEING IN THE DIGITAL MEDIA SPACE AND HAVING BEEN IN IT FROM KIND OF THE VERY BEGINNING, IS THAT THERE'S A TEMPTATION TO TRY TO, YOU KNOW... PUT YOUR FINGER ON ANY PARTICULAR MOMENT IN TIME AND JUST SAY, OKAY... THE WORLD IS KIND OF ORGANIZED. THIS IS THE WAY IT'S GOING TO WORK GOING FORWARD, THIS IS GOING TO BE THE WAY THAT PEOPLE CONSUME, THESE ARE GOING TO BE THE BUSINESS MODELS, THESE ARE GOING TO BE THE DEVICES AND SURE ENOUGH, EVERY 18 MONTHS, RIGHT? YOU GET SOME DISRUPTIVE NEW FORCE IN PLAY THAT CHANGES THAT THINKING AND WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT NOW. AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES THIS JUST AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF FUN AND AMAZING OPPORTUNITY.

>> HOW DID YOU GET INTO SPORTS? AND... HOW DID YOU GO DOWN THIS LINE INTO SPORTS?

>> UM... I GREW UP WANTING TO BE A SPORTS WRITER AND WAS A SPORTS WRITER THROUGH COLLEGE AND STUFF LIKE THAT, UNTIL I GOT BORED. I GOT INTO SPORTS, WEIRDLY ENOUGH, THROUGH ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF SPY MAGAZINE. WHO HAD GONE OFF TO WORK FOR A PAUL ALLEN-BACKED COMPANY IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST IN 1993 CALLED STAR WAVE AND... THIS GUY, TOM PHILLIPS, WHO IS STILL A FRIEND, WAS VISITING MY APARTMENT IN BROOKLYN, ON HIS WAY TO A BUSINESS TRIP IN CHICAGO TO WEIGH OUT A POSSIBLE INVESTMENT IN A SPORTS DATA COMPANY CALLED STATS INC. I ASKED TOM "WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT STATS INC.?" ARE YOU GOING TO GO SEE THEM TOMORROW? HE SAID "NOT MUCH."

SO, I WALKED HIM OVER TO A BOOKSHELF IN MY APARTMENT, I READ EVERY BOOK THAT STATS INC. HAD PUBLISHED AND THEN, EVERY BOOK THAT THEIR COMPETITOR AT THE TIME, THE ATLANTA SPORTS BUREAU, HAD PUBLISHED AND WE SPENT THE NEXT HOUR TALKING ABOUT BASICALLY WHAT STATS WAS GOOD AT, WHAT THEY WEREN'T GOOD AT AND WE HAD ONE OF THOSE WONDERFUL KIND OF LOOKS ON HIS FACE WHEN YOU BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND ALL THE STUFF YOU DON'T KNOW. AND HE SAID... "CAN YOU COME OUT TO SEATTLE NEXT WEEK? WE NEED A GUY TO RUN SPORTS" AND I HAD A PRETTY GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF UNDERLYING MEDIA BUSINESS MODELS, SO... EVEN THOUGH, IN 1993, YOU KNOW... THERE, THERE, YOU COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE QUALIFIED TO GO WORK IN DIGITAL SPORTS MEDIA, RIGHT? THERE WAS NO SUCH THING. I UNDERSTOOD THE MEDIA COMPONENT AND... YOU KNOW... IT HAS LEAD TO THE SAME PERSPECTIVE I HAVE TODAY, RIGHT? WHICH IS TO BUILD SPORTS PRODUCTS AND SPORTS SERVICES AND UTILITIES FOR FANS FROM A FAN PERSPECTIVE FIRST AND THEN BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE UNDERLYING BUSINESS MODEL IS.

>> SO, WHEN THE MERGER COMPLETED LAST YEAR AND THE MERGER BEING AOL AND YAHOO COMING TOGETHER TO FORM OATH AND BEING PART OF VERIZON, WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DID YOU SEE FOR YAHOO SPORTS?

>> TO ME, IT WAS THIS INCREDIBLY EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE THIS BRAND THAT HAD AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF HISTORICAL SUCCESS AND THE, IN THE SPORTS WORLD AND REALLY KIND OF SUPERCHARGE IT AGAIN. AND... TO DRIVE, DRIVE AN EFFORT TO SEE YAHOO RECLAIM ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE AT THE TOP OF THE CATEGORY.

>> AND THERE WERE A LOT OF DEALS INSIDE OF THAT THAT MADE THAT HAPPEN, RIGHT?

>> WELL... I MEAN, THERE ARE GOING TO BE A LOT OF THINGS, YOU KNOW, FROM DEALS, TO INVESTMENTS, TO, YOU KNOW... JUST OUT-AND-OUT HARD WORK THAT'S GOING TO GO INTO DOING THAT, BUT CERTAINLY THE, THE FIRST BIG DEAL THAT GOT ANNOUNCED WAS OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE THAT WILL ALLOW US TO BRING LOCAL GAMES TO FANS ALL OVERLY THE, ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. STARTING THIS FALL.

>> WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THAT AND WHERE YOU CAN MEET PEOPLE TODAY, WE'VE GOT THE DEAL WITH NFL, THE DEAL WITH NBA, WHAT'S THE ULTIMATE GOAL WITH STREAMING GAMES? IT'S NOT JUST FOR US TO DO IT, THERE'S A REASON BEHIND IT, WHAT IS THAT?

>> STREAMING IS PART OF A LARGER STRATEGY, RIGHT? WE WANT TO FUNDAMENTALLY RESHAPE AND DISRUPT THE RELATIONSHIP THAT PEOPLE HAVE WITH SPORTS. WE THINK THAT MOBILE DEVICES AND TV EVERYWHERE GIVES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO KIND OF RESHAPE THAT LANDSCAPE. SPORTS IS A COMPLICATED CATEGORY, RIGHT? BECAUSE... WE'RE, WE'RE, TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, WORKING WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS OF RIGHTS DEALS, THAT SOME CASES, YOU KNOW, ARE LONG-TERM AND ASYNCHRONOUS. SO... YOU HAVE TO FIND OPPORTUNITY AS YOU GO, BUT THE LONG-TERM PLAY HERE IS TO BE A DISRUPTIVE FORCE IN THE WAY THAT FANDOM WORKS AND WE THINK THERE ARE REALLY COOL WAYS TO DO THAT.

>> WHAT ARE THOSE WAYS?

>> YOU KNOW... WITHOUT, WITHOUT GIVING AWAY TOO MUCH OF, OF WHAT WE'RE THINKING ABOUT, YOU KNOW... WE THINK OF THERE BEING THREE PRIMARY WAYS INTO A FAN'S HEART. RIGHT? IN TERMS OF HOW A FAN WATCHES SPORTS. AND BEING ABLE TO DRIVE NFL GAMES OR NBA, FOR EXAMPLE, TO ALL DEVICES, MOBILE, IN PARTICULAR, IS ONE OF THE WAYS OF DISRUPTING THAT.

YOU KNOW... THE IDEA OF GOING OUT AND EXPERIENCING LIFE IN AN NFL SUNDAY SHOULDN'T BE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CHOICE AND IT ISN'T ANYMORE. YOU KNOW... REGARDLESS OF, OF WHOSE PHONE PLAN YOU'RE ON AND REGARDLESS OF WHERE YOU ARE IN THE U.S., YOU'RE WATCHING FOOTBALL IF YOU HAVE ACCESS TO A MOBILE OR WI-FI SIGNAL, THIS, THIS COMING SEASON.

WE THINK ANOTHER CRITICAL PATH THROUGH A FAN'S HEART IS THE WAY THEY FOLLOW THEIR FAVORITE TEAM. WE HAVE AN AMAZING BUSINESS CALLED RIVALS.COM THAT'S DONE A, JUST A GREAT JOB ON THE COLLEGE SIDE IN TERMS OF BRINGING FANS CLOSER TO THEIR FAVORITE COLLEGE TEAMS AND BUILT REALLY STRONG FAN COMMUNITIES WITH EACH OF THOSE TEAMS AND WE THINK THAT'S A MODEL THAT CAN BE EXPANDED TO, TO THE WAY THAT FANS FOLLOW THEIR FAVORITE PRO

TEAMS AND, AND THE THIRD KIND OF KEY PATH INTO A FAN'S HEART IS GAMING. WE HAVE A TERRIFIC SEASONAL FANTASY BUSINESS THAT DRIVES THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT IN THE INDUSTRY, BUT WE THINK THERE ARE OTHER FORMS OF GAMES THAT CAN BE INTRODUCED AND WE ALSO THINK THERE ARE SOME INTERESTING NEW FAN EXPERIENCES THAT CAN BE CREATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR, WITH OUR LEAD PARTNERS. AND, AND A NEW TIER OF MORE CASUAL GAMES THAT CAN BE INTRODUCED, SO... WE INTEGRATE THAT GAMING EXPERIENCE INTO MORE OF THE CORE, DIGITAL, YOU KNOW... DIGITAL SPORTS EXPERIENCES ACROSS THE BOARD.

>> HMM.

>> SO... WE FEEL LIKE THERE'S SOME DECENT OPENINGS HERE AND... NOW IT'S OUR JOB TO HAVE THE RIGHT IDEAS AND, AND MOST-IMPORTANTLY HAVE THE RIGHT EXECUTION.

>> FROM WHAT YOU'VE SEEN AND BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH OR TESTING, YOU KNOW, AR, VR AND THE NBA AND NBA GAMES OR EVEN THE NFL, WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD HAVE MORE OF A LASTING LEGACY?

>> IT'S A GREAT QUESTION, I THINK IT'S EARLY ON THE VR SIDE TO REALLY PUT YOUR FINGER ON WHAT THAT'S GOING TO BE. YOU KNOW, I THINK, IN A, IN A CRAWL/WALK/RUN WORLD. WE'RE JUST LEARNING TO CALL IN THOSE SPACES, I THINK THE MORE IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITIES ARE GOING TO BE AROUND AR AND BEING ABLE TO AUGMENT FAN EXPERIENCES, WHETHER THEY'RE IN ARENA OR AWAY FROM A TV OR WATCHING TV AND YOU KNOW, WHAT WE'RE INTERESTED IN NOW IS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHICH OF THOSE USE CASES WE SHOULD BE, WE SHOULD BE CONCENTRATING ON. WE HAVE A TERRIFIC SET OF INTERNAL PARTNERS HERE AT RIOT STUDIOS, WHO ARE INDUSTRY LEADERS IN TERMS OF DEVELOPING AR EXPERIENCES AND THAT'S SOMETHING THAT WE'RE LOOKING TO GET GOING IN EARNEST THIS SPRING

>> I KNOW THE DEAL WITH THE NBA BRINGS UP THE INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP.

>> MM-HMM.

>> WE HAVE. WHAT'S THAT AND WHERE WILL THAT TAKE TECHNOLOGY IN SPORTS?

>> A REALLY INTERESTING AND REALLY EXCITING PART OF VERIZON'S OVERALL DEAL WITH THE NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION IS AN INNOVATION FUND. THE INNOVATION FUND REALLY REPRESENTS TWO THINGS. IT'S A COMMITMENT TO CAPITAL, WHICH IS REALLY IMPORTANT, BECAUSE... THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, EXPERIMENTATION AND INVENTION REQUIRES MONEY, BUT... IT ALSO SIGNALS A

WILLINGNESS ON THE NBA WHERE THEY CAN TO COMMIT IP TO THAT. SO... YOU CAN HAVE THE COOLEST AND GREATEST IDEAS IN THE WORLD, RIGHT? BUT IF YOU DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO THE IP TO REALLY DRIVE THEM, THEY DON'T GET OFF THE WHITE BOARD. SO... WHAT THIS REPRESENTS IS FOR US TO WORK WITH YOU KNOW, JUST ONE OF THE, PROBABLY THE MOST TECHNICALLY ADVANCED MAJOR SPORTS ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD. IN TERMS OF CREATING NEXT GENERATION OF FAN EXPERIENCES AND YOU KNOW... WE'RE IN THE MIDST OF, OF YOU KNOW, FINALIZING THE LIST OF THE FIRST WAVE OF PROJECTS WE'RE GOING TO, WE'RE GOING TO EMBARK ON WITH THEM.

>> NICE, AWESOME, FOR THE FAN EXPERIENCE, SPECIFICALLY WITH NBA, WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO HAVE SOMEONE AT A COMPUTER, AT A MOBILE DEVICE OR SOMEONE AT THE GAME?

>> IT'S REALLY INTERESTING, BECAUSE... WHAT'S HAPPENING THERE, MORE THAN ANYTHING, AND IF YOU'VE BEEN TO AN NBA GAME, IN THE LAST COUPLE YEARS, YOU, YOU'VE SEEN THIS LEFT AND RIGHT, IS THAT, IN VENUE, FOLKS ARE WORKING REALLY HARD TO KIND OF REPLICATE SOME OF THE ASPECTS OF WATCHING THE GAME AT HOME, RIGHT? IN TERMS OF THE LEVEL OF SERVICE YOU MIGHT GET FROM FOOD AND BEVERAGE PERSPECTIVE OR THE SIZE OF THE VIDEO REPLAY BOARDS... OR THE LEVEL OF CONNECTIVITY THAT YOU CAN NOW HAVE IN CERTAIN BUILDINGS. AND... AT THE SAME TIME, FOLKS WHO ARE PRODUCING TV, ARE INCREASINGLY INTERESTED IN CREATING, YOU KNOW... WHAT WE THINK OF AS AN ARENA EXPERIENCE AT HOME. RIGHT? HOW DO I GET THAT GREAT CAMERA ANGLE? THAT'S WHERE THE PROSPECT OF VR ENTERS. IT'S THIS WEIRD CONVERGENCE, WHERE YOU KNOW, WE'RE USING AR OR VR TO REPLICATE EXPERIENCES, BOTH AT HOME AND IN THE VENUE. SO... THOSE AREN'T MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE OUTCOMES FOR US TO BE WORKING ON.

>> WHAT'S THE IDEAL EXPERIENCE FOR A CUSTOMER? DO YOU ENVISION WHERE, I'M WATCHING A GAME ON MY HANDSET AND I HAVE THE, THE PLAY ACTION IN THIS WINDOW AND I COULD ALMOST TAP SOMETHING HERE TO PULL UP THEIR CAREER STATS?

>> I THINK THERE ARE A COUPLE KIND OF KEY COMPONENTS TO THE SPORTS EXPERIENCE THAT HAVEN'T BEEN INTEGRATED YET AND... THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS THAT'S REALLY EXCITING, RIGHT? FIRST AND FOREMOST, SPORTS ARE ALWAYS GOING TO BE MORE FUN TO WATCH TOGETHER. SO... YOU KNOW, STARTING TO, TO FIND WAYS TO CREATE COLLECTIVE VIEWING EXPERIENCES. RIGHT NOW... YOU KNOW, IF, IF WE'RE NOT PHYSICALLY PRESENT WITH PEOPLE, RIGHT? WE, WE, WE KIND OF DO IT THROUGH SOCIAL, BUT... IT'S, IT'S KIND OF JANKY AND DOESN'T QUITE WORK. I THINK THERE'S GOING TO BE ROOM FOR

SOME REALLY INTERESTING KIND OF SHARED AND SOCIAL VIEWING EXPERIENCES THAT GO FORWARD.

YOU KNOW... MORE THAN ANYTHING, WHAT, WHAT A LOT OF THIS MEANS IS NOT NECESSARILY CREATING NEW DYNAMICS FROM A, FROM A DIGITAL MEDIA PRODUCT PERSPECTIVE, BUT CAPTURING DECADES-LONG DYNAMICS AND INCORPORATING THEM INTO THAT EXPERIENCE. SO... THAT'S WATCHING TOGETHER, THAT'S BEING ABLE TO PLAY GAMES WITH EACH OTHER WHILE YOU'RE WATCHING. IS HE GOING TO MAKE THIS FREE THROW? IS HE GOING TO GET THE FIRST DOWN? PASS OR RUN, RIGHT? JUST ALL KINDS OF THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN THE STANDS OR IN THE BAR AS FOLKS ARE WATCHING. INTEGRATING THAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE IS, IS ANOTHER WAY THAT, THAT SPORTS-WATCHING WILL EVOLVE.

>> IF YOU MOVE YOUR FOOT, RIGHT FOOT THREE TIMES, IS HE GOING TO MAKE A FREE-THROW TO WIN THE GAME?

>> YEAH, EXACTLY.

>> AND YOU HAVE THAT COMMUNITY ALL TOGETHER. YOU MENTIONED STREAMING RIGHTS, EARLIER AND YOU KNOW, I THINK EVERYTHING NOW IS LIKE, OH, THIS, THIS CONTENT GROUP HAS THIS DEAL THEY LATCHED ONTO. YOU HAVE FOLKS, OBVIOUSLY YAHOO HAS DONE IT, YOU SEE IT, AMAZON, TWITTER, FACEBOOK, THEY'RE ALL DOING DIFFERENT STREAMS AND DIFFERENT THINGS THAT COME ALONG WITH THAT. HOW, HOW MUCH OF A LANDSCAPE IS THAT TO DEAL WITH? WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES THERE FOR US?

>> IT'S ENORMOUSLY CHALLENGING, RIGHT? THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, IT IS A SUPER COMPETITIVE MARKET RIGHT NOW, WHERE YOU HAVE THE TRADITIONAL ENTITIES, THE BROADCAST AND CABLE NETWORKS. YOU HAVE LEAGUE-OWNED AND OPERATED ENTITIES THAT ARE BASICALLY LOOKING TO RESERVE A SUBSET OF THOSE RIGHTS TO BUILD THEIR OWN BRANDS, BOTH FROM A LINEAR NETWORK PERSPECTIVE AND FROM A DIGITAL PERSPECTIVE AND YOU HAVE, THE NEXT GENERATION OF MORE TRADITIONALLY TECH-BASED COMPANIES, OURSELVES, FACEBOOK, GOOGLE, AMAZON, TWITTER ENTERING THE LANDSCAPE. SO... YOU KNOW, ANY TIME YOU'RE, YOU'RE DEALING WITH A MULTI, YOU KNOW... WITH A MULTI-LAYERED COMPETITIVE SET, IT MAKES THE ACQUISITION OF THOSE RIGHTS A LITTLE BIT TRICKIER. AND... IT PUTS MORE BURDEN ON ENTITIES LIKE OURS TO REALLY UNDERSTAND HOW WE'RE GOING TO WORK TO DIFFERENTIATE THOSE USER EXPERIENCES. HOW WE'RE GOING TO BUILD BUSINESS MODELS THAT HELP YOU RATIONALIZE THE UNDERLYING FEE STRUCTURE THAT ARE REQUIRED TO BRING THOSE RIGHTS IN AND HAVE SOME REAL, YOU KNOW... YOU HAVE TO HAVE SOME REAL SENSE OF DIFFERENTIATION AROUND HOW YOU'RE GOING TO APPROACH IT. IT'S

NOT JUST A MATTER OF RENTING THESE THINGS, SLAPPING THEM INTO AN APP AND JUST HOPING FOR THE BEST.

>> WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE NFL DEAL AND BEING ABLE TO STREAM THE LIVE, END MARKET GAMES ON SUNDAYS THIS SEASON, HOW DOES THAT DIFFERENTIATE FOR US?

>> WELL... FIRST OF ALL, THE GAMES GO BEYOND JUST SUNDAYS. WE'LL HAVE A GOOD NUMBER OF THURSDAY GAMES, WE'LL HAVE THE SUNDAY AFTERNOON GAMES, THE SUNDAY PRIME TIME GAMES, THE MONDAY, THE MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL GAME AS WELL. I THINK THERE ARE A COUPLE KIND OF KEY THINGS ABOUT VIDEO THAT GET US PRETTY EXCITED. ONE IS THE IDEA OF, OF BEING ABLE TO OFFER A SINGLE SOURCE SOLUTION FOR FANS TO BE ABLE TO FIND FOOTBALL. AND NOT HAVE TO KIND OF TAKE OUT THEIR OUIJA BOARD AND FIGURE OUT WHAT NETWORK AND WHAT SERVICE ANY INDIVIDUAL GAME MIGHT BE AVAILABLE ON.

THE SECOND IS THE DEGREE OF FRICTION WE REMOVED FOR THE PROCESS, RIGHT? BASICALLY, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT AUTHENTICATION-FREE, FRICTIONLESS FOOTBALL. DOWNLOAD THE APP, YOU KNOW, HIT PLAY AND AWAY WE GO.

>> LET'S SWITCH THE CONVERSATION TO FANTASY SPORTS.

>> SURE.

>> IT'S HUGE, I MEAN, YOU SEE THAT'S ONE OF THE BIGGEST THINGS YOU HAVE, I MEAN, SOMETIMES ON AS MANY AS THREE TO FOUR LEAGUES WHEN THE NFL SEASON ROLLS AROUND. I DON'T KNOW IF I NEED HELP WITH THAT, BUT HOW BIG IS THAT MARKET TODAY? AND WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YAHOO SPORTS THERE?

>> I THINK THE, THE MARKET ISN'T ENORMOUS, PER SE, IN TERMS OF COMPARED TO THE OVERALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WATCH AND ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT FOOTBALL. IT'S PROBABLY THE SEASONAL AND FANTASY FOOTBALL MARKET, PROBABLY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 25 OR SO MILLION FANS, SO IT'S BIG, BUT NOT ENORMOUS. WHAT THOSE FANS REPRESENT THOUGH, IS THE ABSOLUTE CORE OF THE MOST-PASSIONATE GROUP OF FOLKS WHO COME IN AND SUPPORT OUR APPS, SUPPORT OUR DESKTOP SERVICES, OUR MOBILE WEB CONSUMPTION AND... YOU KNOW, THE OPPORTUNITY THERE, CONTINUES TO BE, TO GROW THE, THE CATEGORY THROUGH CREATING MORE ACCESSIBLE GAMES, GAMES THAT ARE A LITTLE LESS FRIGHTENING AND YOU TALK ABOUT BEING IN THREE OR FOUR LEAGUES WHICH I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT NECESSARILY READY TO STEP INTO THE JOB OF BEING AN NFL GM, BUT YOU'RE, IN YOUR HEAD, KEEPING, LITERALLY, 150, 200 GUYS STRAIGHT IN TERMS OF WHO'S HURT, WHO'S LIKELY TO PLAY, WHAT DOES A QUARTERBACK CHANGE IN

CAROLINA MEAN FOR THIS WIDE RECEIVER? AND I THINK THERE'S AN ENTIRE SEGMENT OF GAMES THAT HAVE YET TO REALLY BE DEVELOPED TO SCALE THAT CAN GROW THE MARKET FOR DIFFERENT FORMS OF FANTASY GAMES, SIGNIFICANTLY.

>> AND... SOCIAL MEDIA HAS PLAYED A HUGE ROLE, I THINK, IN CONNECTING PLAYERS AND FANS, OFF THE FIELD. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF THAT AND WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CAUTIONS?

>> THIS IS, TO ME, AS A FAN, RIGHT? NOT AS A DIGITAL MEDIA GUY, RIGHT? BUT AS A FAN, THIS IS THE COOLEST TIME EVER, TO BE A FAN AND WHY IS THAT, RIGHT? IT IS BECAUSE, BASICALLY, THE LEVEL OF ACCESS THAT I HAVE TO BEING ABLE TO WATCH WHATEVER I WANT, WHENEVER I WANT, SOMETIMES EVEN WHEREVER I WANT, IS UNPRECEDENTED. THE QUALITY OF PLAY, THE QUALITY OF ATHLETICS, RIGHT? WHAT THIS GENERATION OF ATHLETES IS CAPABLE OF IS BEING EXPANDED ALL THE TIME.

AND LAST, THE LEVEL OF ACCESS I HAVE TO THESE ATHLETES AS PEOPLE IS UNPRECEDENTED, SO... THE IMPLICATIONS OF THAT ARE, ARE MULTIPLE, RIGHT? FIRST AND FOREMOST, IT MEANS THAT THE, THE, THE INTERMEDIARY LEVEL, LAYER, RIGHT? THAT MEDIA ENTITIES USED TO PLAY BETWEEN FANS AND ATHLETES IS BEING PRESSURED SIGNIFICANTLY. THERE WAS A NICE REGIMENTED ECOSYSTEM THAT WORKED 30 YEARS AGO.

>> YOU HAD TO WAIT FOR THE WEEKLY OR DAILY PRESS CONFERENCE AND THAT'S ALL YOU GOT.

>> YOU NEEDED A SPORTS WRITER TO EXPLAIN THE GUY, GET THE QUOTE AND THE SPORTS WRITER PUT THEIR SPIN ON IT AND BAKE AND REPEAT ON A DAILY BASIS. SO... AS CONTENT CREATORS, RIGHT? GIVEN THAT ATHLETES ARE, ARE INCREASINGLY TAKING MORE AND MORE CHARGE OF THEIR NARRATIVE, RIGHT? IT MEANS THERE'S A REAL BURDEN ON, ON THE MEDIA TO UNDERSTAND WHERE EXACTLY ARE THEY ADDING VALUE? THAT'S PUSH TO CONCENTRATION IN TERMS OF BOTH BEING ABLE TO BREAK AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, ANALYZE WHAT'S GOING ON IN SPORTS. AND, AND WHAT IT'S ALSO MEANT IS THAT THERE'S THIS CRAZY LEVEL OF SUPPLY OF SPORTS NOISE, SPORTS INFORMATION, SPORTS NEWS THAT'S ENTERED INTO THE ECOSYSTEM. WHAT THAT MEANS IS, IS AND THIS IS GOING TO SOUND KIND OF GOOFY FROM SOMEONE THAT RUNS A BIG SPORTS SITE, RIGHT? BUT CREATING ORIGINAL SPORTS CONTENT IS AN ACT OF ARROGANCE AND YOU KNOW... IT'S AN ACT OF ARROGANCE BECAUSE IT PRESUMES THAT YOUR FAN IS IN SOME WAY, FUNDAMENTALLY UNDERSERVED. WHEN THE FAN IS BEING BOMBARDED. IT DOESN'T MEAN YOU DON'T CREATE NEW SPORTS CONTENT, IT MEANS YOU HAVE TO PUT REAL RIGOR BEHIND WHEN YOU DO PRODUCE CONTENT,

AM I TELLING PEOPLE SOMETHING THEY DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE? AM I GIVING THEM A PERSPECTIVE THAT'S BEEN MISSING FROM THIS STORY? OR AM I DOING IT IN A VOICE THAT'S, THAT'S FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT THAN ANYBODY ELSE IS BRINGING TO THE CONVERSATION?

SO... YOU KNOW, FOR A LONG TIME, YOU COULD KIND OF DO, KIND OF A, A NEWSPAPER-LEVEL "HERE'S A RUN DOWN LIST OF THINGS I CAN DO" AND PUTTING THEM OUT THERE. THAT DOESN'T WORK ANYMORE. SO... IT JUST, IT, IT'S A WAY-LONGER ANSWER THAN THE QUESTION MAYBE MERITED, BUT IT'S AN AMAZINGLY FUN TIME TO BE DOING THIS.

>> YEAH... I THINK HAVING THAT ACCESS AND EVEN FROM SOME SPORTS TEAMS AND THINGS THEY DO DURING GAMES OR EVEN, BETWEEN THE GAMES IN THE OFF-SEASON IS, I THINK, WHAT KEEPS ME AROUND AS A FAN.

>> NO QUESTION AND... IT'S INTERESTING BECAUSE... YOU KNOW... TEAMS HAVE A HIGHLY VARIABLE LEVEL OF COMFORT IN TERMS OF KIND OF, OF DEVELOPING THAT TEAM PERSONALITY. SO... YOU KNOW, EARLY ON, AS TEAMS STARTED PUTTING THEIR FIRST FULL-TIME SOCIAL MEDIA STAFFERS AS FOUR OR FIVE YEARS AGO, YOU SAW A, A PRETTY BIG RANGE OF, OF LEVELS OF COMFORT IN THE FRONT OFFICE BETWEEN HOW CHEEKY OR HOW CONSERVATIVE AN INDIVIDUAL TEAM HANDLE WAS GOING TO BE. AND THESE GUYS ARE REALIZING THAT DEVELOPING THAT PERSONALITY IS, IS A PRETTY IMPORTANT PART OF BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FAN.

>> WHEN I THINK OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND SPORTS AND HOW IT CHANGES SOME OF THE DISCUSSION IS FACTORING IN THE NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS, YOU HAD A 16-SEED KNOCK OFF A 1-SEED AND SOCIAL MEDIA WENT CRAZY, RIGHT?

>> THE KICK DOWN INVOLVES MORE, DID AN AMAZING JOB BUILDING THAT HANDLE. WHAT WAS AMAZING, IF YOU LOOKED AT THE TIMELINE THEY WORKED AT, HE WAS THE SAME GUY ALL YEAR LONG, RIGHT? HE WAS A REVEREND, HE WAS CLEVER AND THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, THESE GUYS HAVE THIS CRAZY WIN AND IT'S A, IT'S A NATIONAL PHENOMENON.

>> SOMEONE WHO RAN THE PROFESSIONAL BOWLING ASSOCIATION, DOES IT DO ANYTHING GOOD TO WORK WITH SPORTS LEAGUES LIKE THAT? OR DOES IT MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE TO HAVE MLB, NHL, THE BIG NAMES?

>> I THINK IT CERTAINLY HELPS GIVE ME PERSPECTIVE WHEN WE SIT WITH FOLKS WHO ARE OPERATING SMALLER SPORTS LEAGUES TO, TO UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES THAT THEY'RE, THAT THEY'RE FIGHTING THROUGH. TO HAVE BEEN IN, IN THE SOMEWHAT SIMILAR JOB TO SOME

OF THOSE GUYS. YOU KNOW... THE INTERESTING THING ABOUT THE ECOSYSTEM WE'RE WORKING IN RIGHT NOW... IS THAT, THERE ISN'T AN ENTITY OUT THERE, LARGE OR SMALL THAT ISN'T JUST, JUST FIGHTING LIKE CRAZY FOR LEVELS OF DISTRIBUTION. AND... YOU KNOW... WHETHER YOU'RE, WHETHER YOU'RE A, YOU KNOW... SECOND OR THIRD TIER SPORTS ORGANIZATION OR YOU KNOW... ONE OF THE, ONE OF THE CONVENTIONAL BIG THREE, FOUR, OR FIVE. EVERYBODY'S OUT THERE FIGHTING FOR MORE DISTRIBUTION. UNDERSTANDING WHAT LEAGUES ARE TRYING TO DO, HOW LEAGUES ARE BASICALLY TRYING TO GROW THEIR BUSINESS, HOW THEY SEE DIGITAL AS A PART OF WHAT THEY DO, IT'S SOMETHING THAT HELPS ME DO MY JOB ALL THE TIME.

>> YOU EVEN LOOK AT SOMETHING FARTHER THAN THAT, YOU MENTIONED RIVALS EARLIER AND HOW IT PLAYS AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL. HOW SOON DOES SPORTS AND TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA COME IN? YOU HAVE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUES AND HIGH SCHOOL GAMES THAT I CAN WATCH ON TELEVISION NOW.

>> WELL... YEAH, AND... THAT'S A GREAT QUESTION. ONE OF THE REALLY INTERESTING THINGS THAT'S HAPPENED OVER THE COURSE OF, OF THE LAST FIVE OR SIX YEARS, RIGHT? IS THAT VIDEO CONTENT HAS BEEN DEMOCRATIZED A LITTLE BIT, DEMOCRATIZED BY THREE KIND OF BIG CHANGES. ONE IS, IS THE FACT THAT THE UNDERLYING TECHNOLOGY IS A HECK OF A LOT CHEAPER, IN TERMS OF CREATING A BASIC LEVEL OF KIND OF TELECAST FOR AN EVENT. TWO... IS THAT FANS EXPECTATIONS ON WHAT CONSTITUTES A PASSABLE LEVEL OF VIDEO QUALITY FOR CERTAIN TYPES OF EVENTS HAS SHIFTED A LITTLE BIT AS WELL.

SO... YOU KNOW, YOU'RE SO HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO WATCH THAT, YOU KNOW... THAT D3 COLLEGE GAME OR THAT HIGH SCHOOL GAME OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, THAT YOU'LL ACCEPT SOME FAIRLY SIGNIFICANT ROUGH EDGES AROUND THAT, AROUND THAT PRODUCTION BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT GOING IN THERE WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT THAT'S LOOKING LIKE MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL. AND... THIRD, RIGHT? JUST THE, THE ABILITY TO WATCH THIS ON MULTIPLE DEVICES, AND THE AMOUNT OF BANDWIDTH AVAILABLE AND THE VERSATILITY ON THE BACK END WITH SMART TVS OR WHATEVER ELSE, OR CASTING, BE ABLE TO WATCH THAT FEED ON A 45-INCH TV. IT MEANS THERE IS ROOM FOR EMERGING BUSINESS MODELS IN TERMS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONTENT THAN WE USED TO THINK OF AS BEING THE ONLY GAMES IN TOWN.

>> WHAT'S A PROJECT YOU'RE WORKING ON RIGHT NOW THAT YOU'RE MOST EXCITED ABOUT?

>> OH GOSH, THERE ARE PROBABLY ABOUT SEVEN OF THEM. WE'RE WORKING ON SOME REALLY COOL THINGS RIGHT NOW. YOU KNOW... GETTING READY FOR THE NFL SEASON, PUTTING OUR, OUR NEW NBA DEAL INTO PLAY, WHERE WE'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE A BUNCH OF GAMES FROM NBA LEAGUE PASS AVAILABLE TO OUR FANS. WE'VE GOT TWO NEW ORIGINAL YAHOO VIDEO SPORTS SERIES, DAILY SERIES IN DEVELOPMENT RIGHT NOW THAT WILL BE RELEASED THIS QUARTER. ONE CALLED THE RUSH, ONE CALLED THE SPIN. WE'VE GOT TWO NEW FANTASY GAMES IN DEVELOPMENT THAT'LL BE LAUNCHED THIS QUARTER. ONE AROUND COLLEGE FOOTBALL AND ONE KIND OF A, A CASUAL WEEKLY GAME THAT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO TURN INTO A VERY COOL DAILY GAME. SO... YOU KNOW, WE'VE GOT A LOT IN THE KITCHEN GOING RIGHT NOW.

>> SO... IT LEADS ME TO THE NEXT QUESTION. HOW DO YOU LOOK FOR NEW AREAS? WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA?

>> IT REALLY STARTS WITH, WITH IDENTIFYING PLACES WHERE WE THINK THAT FANS ARE UNDERSERVED AND THAT WE CAN ADD A MEANINGFUL NEW EXPERIENCE FOR THEM. SO... I THINK WE DO A TERRIFIC JOB WITH OUR SEASONAL AND FANTASY PRODUCTS. WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING TO MAKE THOSE PRODUCTS BETTER AND EXPAND THEIR CAPABILITIES, BUT IT ALSO MEANS, OKAY... LET'S BRING SOME NEW EXPERIENCES IN, SOME SHORTER FORM, MORE CASUAL GAMES. IT'S A LITTLE BIT LIKE SAYING "I KNOW YOU GUYS LOVE JEOPARDY AND ALL" RATHER THAN CREATE JEOPARDY 2, LET'S CREATE SOMETHING THAT HAS A DIFFERENT RHYTHM, A DIFFERENT KIND OF USE CASE AND, AND ALLOWS FANS A DIFFERENT KIND OF EXPERIENCE.

>> WHAT WILL THE BIGGEST CHANGE IN THE SPORTS INDUSTRY BE IN THE NEXT TWO, FIVE, TEN YEARS DOWN THE LINE?

>> I THINK THE CONTINUED PRESSURE ON THE TRADITIONAL CABLE BUNDLE WILL HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON SPORTS. THE REALITY IS THAT FOUR THE LAST 25 YEARS, A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO AREN'T NECESSARILY SPORTS FANS HAVE BEEN SUBSIDIZING SPORTS CONSUMPTION FOR THOSE WHO ARE. YOU KNOW... SPORTS NETWORKS HAVE PUT AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF PRESSURE ON THE COST OF THE OVERALL BUNDLE. AND... IN, IN OTHER MARKETS, OUTSIDE THE U.S., THE U.K. IN PARTICULAR, RIGHT? IF YOU ARE A HARDCORE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE FAN LIVING IN LONDON, YOU'RE GOING OUT-OF-POCKET \$60 A MONTH OR SO FOR THE SPORTS TIERS NECESSARY TO WATCH YOU KNOW, TO WATCH ALL THOSE GAMES, WHERE HERE, THAT'S PART OF YOUR BASIC, YOU KNOW... YOUR BASIC PACKAGE THAT YOU'RE GETTING WITH YOUR NBC SPORTS NETWORK.

SO... THE FACT THAT MORE OF THIS COST WILL BE SHIFTED ONTO THE BACK OF THE FAN MEANS THE UNDERLYING BUSINESS MODELS WILL

START TO EVOLVE. I DON'T THINK IT'LL HAPPEN IN ONE WAVE AROUND THE NEXT GENERATION OF MAJOR RIGHTS RENEWALS... BUT... IT WILL CERTAINLY, IT WILL CERTAINLY KIND OF, BEGIN WITH THAT CYCLE AND THAT'S WHAT'S GOING TO FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGE THE BUSINESS IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS.

>> HOW DOES IT FEEL TO LOOK BACK AND SEE WHERE YOU ARE TODAY? AND THE DIFFERENCE THAT IT'S MADE IN THE SPORTS LANDSCAPE?

>> YOU KNOW... I, IT'S HARD -- IT'S, IT'S NOT FOR ME TO TALK ABOUT WHAT DIFFERENCE OR NOT I'VE MADE IN THE SPORTS LANDSCAPE. WHAT I LOOK AT IS, IT'S INTERESTING TO ME, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO HERE AND HOW THAT MIGHT COMPARE AND CONTRAST WITH WHAT I TRIED TO DO IN OTHER PLACES. THE THING I'M PROBABLY -- IF I GET NOSTALGIC ABOUT ANYTHING, IT'S PEOPLE AND JUST THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIPS YOU HAVE WITH PEOPLE OVER TIME AND THOSE DIFFERENT ROLES AND... WITH THOSE DYNAMICS WERE LIKE AND WHAT THOSE PEOPLE ARE DOING NOW, BUT... I'VE BEEN, EXTRAORDINARILY LUCKY IN MY CAREER TO JUST BE IN THE RIGHT AT THE RIGHT TIME TO WORK ON SOME AMAZINGLY INTERESTING CHALLENGES AND... HAVE DONE SOME THINGS THAT, YOU KNOW... I, I CAN'T BELIEVE I COULD BE PART OF.

>> ANY CLOSING THOUGHTS?

>> ANY CLOSING THOUGHTS? UM... PROBABLY THREE, RIGHT? THIS IS AN ENORMOUSLY EXCITING TIME FOR OUR TEAM AND... OUR, AND OUR COMPANY, BECAUSE... BECAUSE THIS IS THIS MOMENT OF JUST UTTER CHAOS IN THE MARKETPLACE AND WITH THAT KIND OF CHAOS COMES REAL OPPORTUNITY. TWO... WE ARE EXTRAORDINARILY LUCKY TO, TO BE KIND OF ALIVE AT THIS TIME AS BUILDERS TO BE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT AND THREE, KEEP YOUR EYES OUT FOR US, WE'VE GOT COOL STUFF COMING.

>> ALL RIGHT... GEOFF REISS, GM OF YAHOO SPORTS, THANKS SO MUCH FOR JOINING US.

>> THANKS FOR HAVING ME.

>> THANKS FOR LISTENING. FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM AND TWITTER AT VZ UP TO SPEED AND STAY TUNED FOR MORE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT TECHNOLOGY, TODAY.