



# Preoday Q&A with Dan Lipman

Chief Commercial Officer, InCrowd

INCROWD

In this series, [Dan Lipman](#), Chief Commercial Officer, [InCrowd](#), discusses key trends and developments that are driving fan experiences and how digital is changing the sports landscape.

## **Why does the sports industry need to move to a digital-first strategy?**

The battle for fan attention is harder than ever as fans consume content across an ever-increasing number of official and unofficial channels. However, the opportunities this creates ultimately outweigh the challenges. Never before has there been so much opportunity to create engaging and interactive content that is tailored and personalised to each fan; a movement from advertising to engagement. This is incredibly exciting and it's why we are seeing the value of sports organisations increasing significantly; investors in this space are recognising the potential this shift has created.

## **We can't escape the importance of data and personalisation. What role does it play in the fan experience?**

The consumption of content is rising and showing no signs of stopping. The consumption of content is rising and showing no signs of stopping. The volume of content, however, is going up at an even faster rate. You have very little time to grab a fan's attention and deliver your message.

Personalisation is the key to ensure your message cuts through the noise, if you get this wrong, fans will be very quick to move on to something else and winning them back is not an easy feat.

## What are the key digital elements needed for a great fan experience?

Whilst we are a digital-led sports marketing agency, digital needs to complement the real-life experience, not replace it. The best utilisation of digital activity is where the activations improve the core experience of being a fan.

Does it make it easier for them to follow their team, to attend matches, to enjoy their event or match day experience?

Does it give fans their own voice?

Where the answer to these questions is “yes” you can be confident the digital activation is more than just a “nice-to-have” for the fan.

## Who in your mind is winning the fan experience game?

I would say e-sports are really nailing the fan experience. A colleague of mine was recently at a sports match with their child who wouldn't look away from their phone screen and when the parent asked the child why, their answer was, “I don't know what's going on, there's no shoutcaster!” The world of traditional sports can learn a lot from the experiences that e-sports are offering.

From a product perspective, they have tapped into the psychology of fans with a rewards and kudos-based approach, as well as a deep understanding of how small tweaks to the in-game experience can create significant engagement uplifts. A great example of this is how Fortnite looked at predecessor PUBG and made small modifications to the amount of time it took to die within the game and allowed players to respawn with their collected assets intact. The tweaks were based around reducing psychological stress on the player and meaning adoption, retention and session duration significantly increased. This type of psychological approach to product development could be adopted more on traditional sports platforms.

## What are the key digital sports trends to look out for in 2019 and beyond?

There are many things to look out for in 2019, one area that stands out for me is the continued growth of Direct to Consumer OTT strategies.

As many sports rights holders ready themselves to take this step in a more serious way, I think we will see a lot of individuals from the media world start to transition into sports organisations, many in newly created roles such as “Head of Content”. It will be interesting to see how the existing channels start to grow in terms of usage, quality and importantly how they are commercialised.

## What can we expect to see from InCrowd this year?

Our list of app and insights clients is growing at a faster rate than ever before. One area I'm really excited about is our expanding interactive stadium and venue screen software, InCrowd Cast. Cast and its range of engagement plugins give stadium operators the opportunity to create a direct interaction with fans via the perimeter display and big screens. Live voting, social feeds and gamification elements are all available to improve that in-stadia experience.

In addition, clubs, leagues and coordinators can bring live data into their event production such as betting odds, scores from around the league and live game/match stats. It's very exciting because it brings two parts of the InCrowd business together: our leading app development and our groundbreaking display technology.

To get in touch with Dan and the InCrowd team, contact [enquiries@incrowdsports.com](mailto:enquiries@incrowdsports.com) or visit their [website](#).

The logo for InCrowd features the word "INCROWD" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a circular graphic composed of small dots, resembling a crowd or a digital network.