



THE BIG TEN CONFERENCE EXPANSION

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EXPANSION 101

In 2024, the Big10 is set to welcome four new teams from the West coast: UCLA, University of Oregon, University of Southern California, and University of Washington. This expansion marks a significant geographical shift for the conference, bringing in a new era of cross-country rivalries in hopes to enhance the Big10's competition.

“It will give the league a better chance to compete for and win national championships in all of its sports, and expansion will give the Big Ten a “really strong footprint.””

Tony Petitti – Commissioner of Big10



FINANCE AT A GLANCE

Financial Problem #1

The cost of travel will increase due to the expansion to the west coast

MORE TRAVEL = HIGHER TRAVEL COST

This will lead to:

- More flights for staff and equipment
- Longer flights
- Time zone changes
 - Longer hotel stays
 - Scheduling complexities



FINANCE AT A GLANCE

Proposed Solution



Scheduling Changes

- One west coast trip every 2-3 years per sport
- 7-10 day trip where games are played against multiple teams in the area
- On a consistent rotation between schools

Reasoning:

- west coast travel cost once every few years
- Eliminate the need for multiple trips
- Allows for advanced planning

FINANCE PROBLEM

Exploring the Challenge:

- Average Big Ten University airfare spending in 2017: \$7.25 million (Popke, 2019).
- Total conference expenditure on travel: Over \$100 million annually.
- Anticipated increase due to conference expansion.
- Urgency for adopting strategic measures to optimize travel costs.
- Goal: Ensure long-term financial sustainability for member universities.



FINANCE SOLUTION

The Answer:

- Big10 to consider acquiring or forming a partnership with an airline.
- Big10 exploring the option of purchasing airplanes for its travel needs.
- Example: New England Patriots invested \$10 million to purchase two planes for team travel.
- Initial investment might exceed \$7.25 million, but long-term benefits and cost savings anticipated.
- Potential advantages in terms of streamlined travel logistics and reduced expenses over time.

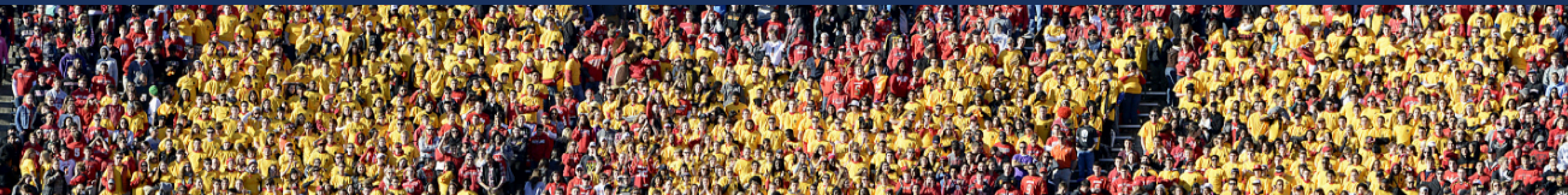


THE PROBLEM: MARKETING NEW RIVALRIES

- Getting fans excited about new matchups between teams who usually don't meet in the regular season amid losing historic rivalries and nostalgic matchups due to the new media deal and conference realignment



- Getting fans to stay engaged with social media and games being played in three different time zones in this new Big Ten Conference



THE SOLUTION: MARKETING NEW RIVALRIES

- Targeting teams in large media markets in further expansion
- Airing classic games with new programs on the Big Ten Network
- Embracing new innovative engagement technology like augmented reality and AI
- Investing in market research and data analytics
- Considering partnerships with technology companies and local businesses



ISSUES WITH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

1

THE PROBLEM

Lack of a clear line of communication between TV partners, the conference, and the member schools



The Big Ten's credibility is being torn apart from the inside out, and it only has itself to blame

From a leader on the brink to schools that can't get on the same page, the Big Ten has some coalescing to do

By [Dennis Dodd](#) Aug 30, 2020 at 11:27 am ET • 6 min read

SOLVING ISSUES IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION



2

THE SOLUTION

A brand new, clear strategic communication plan announced to the public that integrates transparency and involves the data analytics, ADs, the COP/C, new in-house executives in a specified department, as well as outsourced firms



EXPANSION ETHICS: STUDENT-ATHLETES OR ATHLETE-STUDENTS?

PROBLEM #1: INCREASED CLASS TIME MISSED

- negative effects on the student-athlete's ability to learn and understand course material
- athletes are forced to "teach themselves"
- professors unwilling to accommodate missed class time
- feeling "behind" in course work contributes to stress and anxiety
- sends message to student-athletes that athletics are more important than academics

EXPANSION ETHICS: STUDENT-ATHLETES OR ATHLETE-STUDENTS?

SOLUTION:

- Since athletes will be missing more time, **written agreement between the athletics department and academics** to ensure athletes get the materials they need. For example:
 - **recorded classes**
 - **lecture slides**
 - **filled out class notes**

ETHICAL DILEMMAS CONT. THE MENTAL TOLL

PROBLEM #2: NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON MENTAL HEALTH

- Rates of burnout and depression are trending upward amongst the student athlete population.
- Decisions like the expansion of the Big Ten fail to consider the athletes and their mental health.
- Having to adjust to different time zones multiple times a year will enhance these feelings of burnout

THE NUMBERS

- ★ mental exhaustion, anxiety, and depression remain **1.5 times higher** than pre-pandemic rates
- ★ 30% of female and 25% male student athletes having anxiety
- ★ only 10% of student athletes with known mental health conditions seek help
- ★ 25% of elite athletes experience disordered eating, anxiety, depression or anxiety

ETHICAL DILEMMAS CONT. THE MENTAL TOLL

SOLUTION:

- **rotating schedule** allowing teams to only travel to **one East/West Coast team per season**
 - individual to each sport
 - reduces the strain on the athletes from traveling to different time zones frequently
- **schedule** longer road trips **around** holiday's/ **days off from school**
- **take one longer trip** out West/ East and compete against **multiple teams** before traveling home

MEET THE TEAM

Let's meet our team members!



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QUESTIONS