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Cleveland Cavaliers Challenge

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Cleveland Cavaliers

The Challenge: *The Cleveland Cavaliers are challenged with staying engaged with their members (season ticket holders). Please provide ideas as to how they can stay relevant to members during the pandemic.*

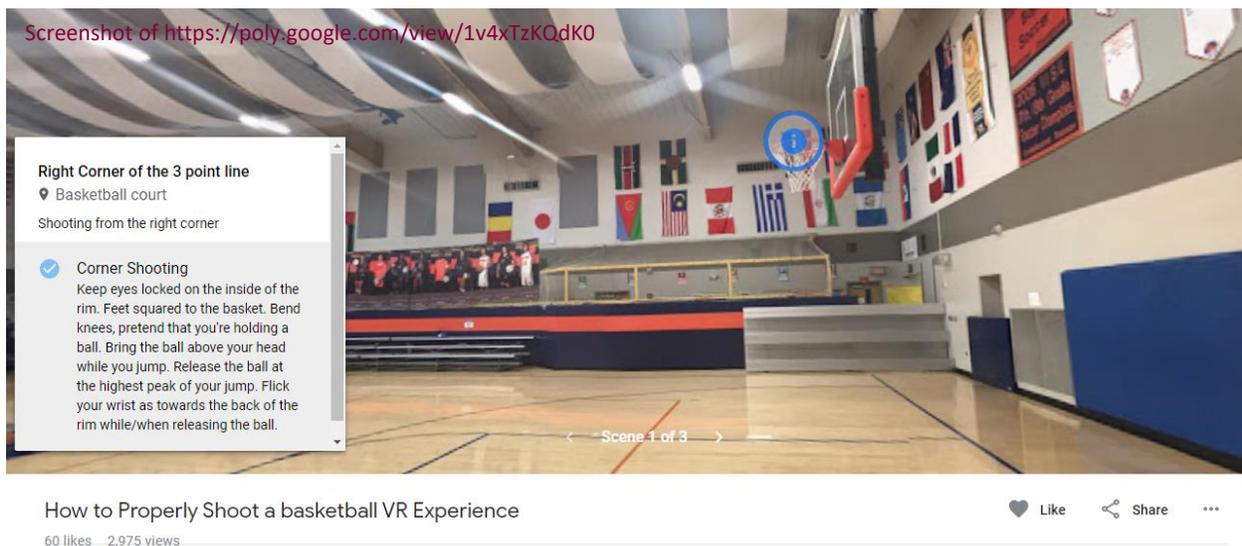
A Member Oriented Virtual Reality Experience

BY SARAH KNIGHT

Staying connected, informed and excited about a team is a major challenge with the Covid-19 pandemic. As Cavs fans around the country dream of a day when they can return to their favorite seats in their favorite section to watch their favorite team, the Wine and Gold family is focused on meeting their members where they need us – safe at home. Let’s keep the family safe with technology that will make bringing the Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse into their living rooms a snap.

Being a part of a family means getting to see all the behind-the-scenes prep that makes your family events work. Imagine showing up to Thanksgiving Dinner at your extended family’s house – you immediately get put to work rearranging chairs or basting a turkey. When you are with family you are a part of the chaos - whether in the kitchen timing all the dishes coming out at once, or after dinner when you help clean up the hundreds of dishes that just keep getting dropped off. You don’t really feel like family until you know what happens when every dish in the house needs to be cleaned. As the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute showed when they sold tickets to a future Fenway Park game, what really grabbed interest was a behind-the-scenes-tour that let fans see the “dirty dishes” of Fenway Park (Hessekiel Para. 14). This virtual tour was only provided to those who purchased tickets as a part of the fundraising campaign – and resulted in a sold-out future game. Simply the perk of getting to virtually tour areas of the stadium normally reserved for the highest of VIPs was enough to amplify engagement with the campaign. By being included in the efforts behind the scenes to make a baseball game exciting, fans became “fams”.

Creating an immersive tour experience can be as simple as using a 360° camera and the Google Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (ARVR) Tour Creator to quickly snap a photo of every stop on the tour and make a “street view” style walkthrough of the areas we want fans to experience. A Virtual Reality tour through the Google ARVR can also include notes and details that might normally be missed. These 360 photos can also be used to help fans take part in the on-court coaching experience, as shown in the example below.



The higher-tech option would include enlisting a company like Inside Maps. By having an experienced staff with more detailed cameras and technology, Inside Maps creates immersive, 3D maps and walkthroughs of buildings, allowing fans become a part of the action – from the measurements of the lockers in the locker rooms to how many steps they would need to cross the offices when running an important memo from one department to another. Unlike producing the snapshots in-house, the independent company would produce the tour with input from staff for which areas they would like scanned in detail. Whether an in-house creation or a contracted high-tech powerhouse virtual world, the goal is to let the Wine and Gold Family experience the world of the Cavs from an angle they can't

see courtside. From the details of the locker-rooms, to how players get around in halls the fans never see – a tour lets every member of the family become a part of the team.

Different areas of the virtual tour experience can be created and unlocked for different levels of membership, or slowly released to keep fans engaged over several months. Embeddable video interviews can be linked within the tours to allow fans to meet members of the Cavaliers staff – “take your family to work day” can be every day with quick 5 minute interviews that let the family become a part of the action behind the scenes. Gameday photos that have already been shared can be added as pop-ups to give context to experiences the fan has already excitedly absorbed. Previously produced segments can be added as stops on the tour for fans who may have missed them. In a world where reality can have hidden dangers to fans and their loved ones, a virtual reality lets them still love their favorite team while also staying safe.

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