

## CASE STUDY

# DETROIT LIONS GET CREATIVE DURING COVID, INCREASE PARTNER VALUE ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA



### OVERVIEW

The Detroit Lions fan base consists of more than 5 million fans, primarily based in Michigan and the Midwest. Across all social media platforms, the team has more than 4.5 million followers, with a year-over-year growth rate of 2%. In 2019, the Detroit Lions partnered with Blinkfire Analytics to measure real-time sponsorship performance and actively manage their social content strategy.

### CHALLENGE

With no fans in the stadium for the 2020 NFL season due to COVID-19, the Detroit Lions needed to create new and engaging ways to bring their fans from the couch onto the virtual gridiron, while also driving value for both marquee partners and in-stadium partners, including Rocket Mortgage, Kroger, and Toray Industries.

The pre-and-postgame live shows allowed our team to engage with Detroit Lions fans through longer form live programming, despite not having fans in our building for the 2020 season. Additionally, the show has been a valuable channel to provide additional marketing opportunities to our corporate partners, while keeping fan interest high.

**Alex Ballew**  
Business Insights Manager, Detroit Lions



### SOLUTION

The sports team as a media company - that was the vision and approach the Lions took when creating and executing their content and programming for the 2020 season. Leveraging the expertise of the Blinkfire Analytics Customer Success Team and the Lions' 2018 and 2019 season data in the platform, the team's analytics and marketing departments added new partners to unsponsored social assets and created a pregame and postgame video series.

The Lions developed hour-long pre-and-postgame shows for Facebook and YouTube to

include presenting partners, sponsor ad roll, and highlight reels. The pre- and-postgame shows aired for both home and away games, creating an opportunity for in-stadium sponsors to receive valuable exposure while also controlling and creating the content fans watched.

Additionally, the Lions used the Blinkfire Analytics Scene Value Report to add a sponsor to their score graphics. After each quarter, score graphics were posted to Twitter and Instagram Stories, and final score graphics posted to Facebook, Instagram, Instagram Stories, and Twitter.

### RESULTS

During the 2020 NFL season from September 10, 2020 - January 3, 2021, the Detroit Lions showed innovation and creativity with their pre-and-postgame shows, using the opportunity to provide valuable and engaging social media exposure for sponsors.

### PRE & POST GAME SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

**3.2K** ENGAGEMENTS PER SHOW

**1.3M** TOTAL VIEWS  
(across Facebook and YouTube)



### ROCKET Mortgage

**520%** YoY increase in engagements

(across the Detroit Lions Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube channels)

#### Notable sponsorship exposure:

- Rocket Mortgage's Facebook and YouTube engagement exposure **increased 575% and 1350% YoY**
- Step & repeat sponsor Rocket Mortgage's press conference engagement exposure **increased 186% YoY**



As a presenting partner for the pre-and-postgame shows, **Kroger's earned media value increased more than 180%** compared to the 2019 NFL Season.



### 'TORAY'

Japan-based textile company Toray Industries (Toray) only appeared on in-stadium signage during the 2019 season, earning minimal social media exposure. The Lions' social media team added Toray as the score graphic sponsor for the 2020 season -- an asset that was unsponsored but earned **5.9K engagements per post** in 2019. **Toray received more than 7.1 million impressions and 215K engagements on score graphics for the 2020 season.** Engagement for score graphics posted on the Lions' Instagram timeline increased by 10% compared to 2019.

Blinkfire Analytics is the leading business intelligence & marketing analytics platform to evaluate sports, media, and entertainment sponsorships across social media, digital, and Advanced TV. Using artificial intelligence, machine learning, and proprietary computer vision technology, Blinkfire Analytics measures media value and impact – allowing rights holders, players, influencers, agents, and brands to better engage their fans and sponsors across multiple platforms. Many of the world's top teams and leagues rely on Blinkfire Analytics' real-time, always-on platform for sports and entertainment sponsorship evaluation to quantify engagement and sponsorship dollars.



To learn more about Blinkfire Analytics, email at [bizdev@blinkfire.com](mailto:bizdev@blinkfire.com) or visit [www.blinkfire.com](http://www.blinkfire.com).

