



FOX Sports supports seamless event broadcasts with Smartsheet

Fox Sports broadcasts a range of sports carried by the Fox broadcast network, Fox Sports 1, Fox Sports 2, and the Fox Sports Radio network. The company has ownership and interests in television networks, digital and mobile programming, broadband platforms, websites, joint-venture businesses, and licensing relationships.

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By linking all our projects in a single location with Smartsheet, we can easily monitor the budget and progress health of an unlimited number of projects. Normally, we have 40+ active projects for Pico and Deportes in Los Angeles at any given time. We receive automated alerts on items that are ready to order, when system design proofing is ready for review and approved, when there is an anticipated cost overrun, and when tasks are due. Ninety-nine percent of our project information is entered once and Smartsheet linking does its magic. All the information our project managers need is at their fingertips, accessible whenever we need it.

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Jessica Nguyen, Director of Project Management at FOX Sports



Customer:

FOX Sports

Industry:

Media and Production

Organization Size:

Enterprise (10,000+ employees)

Region:

North America

Website:

foxsports.com

FOX Sports, the sports programming division of the Fox Corporation, broadcasts television, digital, and radio sports content capable of reaching more than 100 million viewers in a single weekend. The company broadcasts sporting events for popular leagues such as the National Football League, Major League Baseball, National Basketball Association, NASCAR, and NCAA football and basketball.

Background

The company's project management team is responsible for helping different FOX Sports divisions design and build broadcast infrastructure, including stages, daily shows, remodel workspaces, edit content bays, highlights, FIFA World Cup, and audio/video control rooms for live event coverage to support digital content storage. *"Whether project teams need a drone/camera to film a game, equipment and systems for media trucks broadcast from behind stadiums, or a live television feed in several stadiums, we help make sure everything is set up properly for the Operations team before each event,"* says Jessica Nguyen, director of project management at FOX Sports. At any given time, project managers track a portfolio of 40+ logistics projects from start to finish using Smartsheet. *"Smartsheet centralizes all our project information, so we can track all key project information seamlessly and deliver projects on time and on budget to ensure everything is ready to go by game time,"* Nguyen says.

FOX Sports initially relied on multiple tools to obtain, track, and present project information. There was no easy way to pull data across different platforms including Microsoft Project, Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft Excel, Atlassian Jira, and Confluence. *"It was so painful and time-consuming, and costs were high on licenses to manage our projects. I had seen similar struggles at my former companies for decades,"* says Nguyen. *"We would typically email all the different teams to get the latest project information, which made it challenging to know the exact project timelines because we were waiting on email responses with the right data. We didn't have a unified way to get an overview of high-level project information including schedules, budgets, status, and open issues and tasks."*

Solution

Nguyen discovered Smartsheet after her new senior vice president of the Systems & Technology team asked her to find an integrated project management solution because he did not like the current solutions being used by other teams at FOX. *"When I saw everything Smartsheet could do, it was an eye-opener,"* she says. Nguyen and her team built templates in Smartsheet Control Center to automate project creation and

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management of data such as scope documents, schedules, budgets, BOM budget, equipment lists, design logs, RAID logs, and document center links. *"It's really easy to copy the templates from one project to the next and fine-tune things as needed," says Nguyen. "Because Smartsheet doesn't require a lot of technical expertise, it was easy for us to get started right away."*

In addition to managing projects from beginning to end, FOX Sports uses Smartsheet for capital planning, an annual process for approving budgets for new projects per fiscal year by Corporate. As part of this process, the organization uses Smartsheet Dynamic View for internal clients to add project requests. *"Smartsheet helps us streamline capital planning, which makes it easier for us to present budget plans to the corporate finance team each year," Nguyen says. FOX Sports also integrated Smartsheet with ServiceNow to track hardware inventory, and Coupa for purchasing goods automation. FOX Sports also tracks service contracts for hardware and software in Smartsheet, and the company uses Smartsheet to manage the hiring process for temporary workers to assist on production projects across the United States from the Assignment Desks team. "We are working on Workday integration as well," Nguyen says. "This would cut down countless hours from our project managers who manually reconcile each invoice between Smartsheet equipment lists and actual payments in corporate financial system to a penny."*

FOX Sports project managers and leadership teams use dashboards to get snapshot views of each project. *"Anyone can access a dashboard in Smartsheet to see every project's current status, with updated information on schedule, budget, and equipment orders," says Nguyen. "Our upper management can see all data and action items for a project in a dashboard, which helps them make more-informed business decisions."*

Portfolio tracking made easy

Today, Fox Sports uses Smartsheet to roll-up portfolio data between Los Angeles and Charlotte, North Carolina projects and drive granular visibility down to the project level by linking data across all the 60+ projects. *"We recently implemented the same solution for the Big Ten Network (BTN) in Chicago, which took only a few weeks. They have 18 projects in the portfolio this fiscal year," says Nguyen. Automated data aggregation and centralized dashboards make it easy*

In a Nutshell:

FOX Sports project managers have eliminated the time-consuming work of corresponding back and forth with internal departments by taking advantage of automated workflows in Smartsheet.

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to monitor portfolio health. *“Having all projects in one solution and having the ability to link them together allows us to publish any dashboards and/or reports by each team’s needs,”* says Nguyen. *“Smartsheet is a very robust tool for our needs. It is simple to learn, easy to use, and can be implemented within weeks.”*

FOX Sports project managers can see summaries of project budgets at all stages of the workflow.

Streamlining budget tracking and saving money

With Smartsheet, FOX Sports has centralized project data. *“Previously, we didn’t have a way to link all our projects together. Now, in Smartsheet we can just click on an icon and see everything related to an individual project or all projects at once,”* says Nguyen. As a result, project managers and upper management can see summaries of project budgets at all stages of the workflow. *“We can easily track every penny we spend in Smartsheet including hardware, software, professional services, cables, labor on systems installation, etc.,”* Nguyen says. *“We can see how much we’ve committed to a project, what we estimated the cost to be, and the actual budget we have left to use. This actually helps us save money in some areas, because we can now track our budgets more accurately.”*

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Saving time by eliminating manual work

FOX Sports project managers have eliminated the time-consuming work of corresponding back and forth with internal departments by taking advantage of automated workflows in Smartsheet. *“We don’t have to email or manually conduct our work now – Smartsheet automates everything and sends out notifications to the right people, so we’re much more efficient and we save a lot of time,”* says Nguyen. *“The ordering process was completely automated recently. This saves so much administrative time for our team.”*

FOX Sports continues to explore the adoption of additional Smartsheet features to increase efficiency. *“I don’t know how we would complete our projects if we didn’t have Smartsheet,”* Nguyen says. *“This tool does so many things, and it simplifies the management of every single project we work on every day.”*