

Sports & Entertainment Beat

Sports & Entertainment Spotlight: Did Peloton Suffer Another PR Mishap after Its Product Placement in SATC?

By Joshua Bloomgarden on 12.16.21 | Posted in Sports & Entertainment Spotlight

Welcome back, thanks for stopping by, and kindly take your shoes off at the front door. We begin this week's installment of the "Spotlight" on a somber note. I would like to extend my deepest condolences to those (like my wife, who greeted me in tears the other night) still reeling from the (SPOILER ALERT) Peloton-induced demise of Mr. Big (played by Christopher Noth) in the "Sex and The City" (SATC) epilogue series, "And Just Like That..." Now, I do not claim to know much about SATC, but I know a thing or two about product placements, branding and marketing. My initial reaction on hearing the news from my wife (actually, my second reaction, after "WHO?!"), was one of surprise: either the production did not clear the usage of Peloton cycling equipment and branding in the show, or that someone at Peloton must have agreed to have the brand featured in the show ignorant to the context in which it might be depicted. Seemingly, no matter how you sliced it, it was another public relations embarrassment for Peloton after a product recall earlier this year and a controversial 2019 holiday advertisement (subsequently lampooned by Ryan Reynolds' Aviator gin brand). Wall Street agreed, as the negative depiction triggered a sell off the very next day. Whether or not Peloton's next move was actually premeditated or (as reported) a face-saving viral moment that came together in a whirlwind, it amounted to some shrewd marketing — this time with Ryan Reynolds and his marketing agency, Maximum Effort coming to the rescue with ad featuring a very much alive Christopher Noth. Will that be enough to sway public perception (and stock prices, which rebounded after the ad was released)? In light of unflattering late breaking news regarding Noth, probably not.

For now, here's a glimpse of some other stories to cycle through in this week's "Spotlight":

- *For some time, the fledgling NIL era in college athletes has been marked by endorsement deals with regional fast-food chains and off-campus businesses. Now, multibillion-dollar brands Bose, Nike and Gatorade are entering the fray, giving me yet another reason I want to go back to college (though I would still need to work on that "athletic" part...).*
- *James Brown's estate sold his song catalogue for a cool \$90 million, undoubtedly making his heirs exclaim, "I Feel Good." Meanwhile, Bruce Springsteen sold his catalogue*

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of songs and recordings for a reported ho-hum of \$500 million. Springsteen could not be reached for comment as he was too busy “Dancing in the Dark.”

- *Nike and Adidas each jumped feet first into the metaverse with the former acquiring an NFT digital shoe company and the latter buying a “plot” in the Sandbox metaverse. Just in time for the holidays for you to stuff in your digital stockings.*

Thanks for stopping by – see you next week!

Endorsement Deals, Sponsorships & Investments

Bose Using NIL Deals to Make Entry in College Sports Sponsorship

December 15, 2021 via Sports Business Journal

Bose is making its foray into college sports sponsorship, signing NIL deals with a mix of current football and basketball players. The most visible of the Bose signees are Michigan DE Aidan Hutchinson (Heisman runner-up) and Ohio State QB CJ Stroud (fourth place in Heisman).

Nike Signs UCLA Soccer Star Reilyn Turner to its First Student-Athlete NIL Deal

December 15, 2021 via Oregon Live - Business News

Nike has made its first name, image and likeness (NIL) deal with a college athlete, selecting UCLA Bruins sophomore soccer star Reilyn Turner. As part of the partnership, Nike said its agreement with college athletes would include an element that connected them back to their local communities.

How Ryan Reynolds and Chris Noth Quickly Pedaled Out That “Whirlwind” Peloton ‘And Just Like That’ Ad

December 13, 2021 via Hollywood Reporter

Over the weekend, as Sex and the City fans were reeling from the shocking death of Mr. Big (Chris Noth) after completing a Peloton ride in HBO Max’s newly launched And Just Like That series, Ryan Reynolds quickly reminded all that everything was going to be OK in hilarious fashion.

Peloton Fires Back at Its Portrayal In ‘Sex And The City’ Reboot With Own Parody Ad: ‘He’s Alive’

December 12, 2021 via CNBC

Peloton wants users to know its at-home fitness equipment can improve one’s physical health — not lead to health complications, which was implied in the reboot of “Sex and the City” on HBO Max.

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Lady Gaga's Champagne, Graham Norton's Gin, Brad Pitt's Wine - We Rate the Top Celebrity Drinks

December 11, 2021 via Irish Examiner

Celebrity endorsement has been around as long as celebrity for the simple reason that it works - it shifts units. One of the earliest was Queen Charlotte endorsing Josiah Wedgewood's 'Queen's Ware' pottery in 1767 - who wouldn't want to drink their tea out of the same cups as the queen?

Royal Conservatory Joins Elton John-Endorsed Exchange Program With London School

December 10, 2021 via CityNews Everywhere (Canada)

The Royal Conservatory of Music's Glenn Gould School is joining a new exchange program endorsed by Elton John at London's Royal Academy of Music. The RCM says the new Sir Elton John Global Exchange Programme begins in September 2022.

Dua Lipa Net Worth 2021: The British Singer's Huge Success That Helped Her Become a Millionaire

December 9, 2021 via Monsters and Critics News

Dua Lipa is one of pop music's biggest stars of today and her rise to the top is due to her consistent hard work. After making her chart debut in 2015, Lipa's career has gone from strength to strength.

The Era of the Celebrity Meal

December 8, 2021 via New York Times - All Sections (subscription may be required)

On a Friday afternoon in the spring of 2020, Hope Bagozzi, the Chief Marketing Officer at the Canadian coffee chain Tim Hortons, was on a Zoom call with representatives for Justin Bieber. The agenda for the meeting? Exploring a possible partnership between the two Canadian greats.

UConn's Paige Bueckers Signs Multi-Year NIL Deal to Represent Gatorade

November 29, 2021 via CBC

UConn sophomore guard Paige Bueckers is the first college athlete to represent Gatorade, announcing Monday a multi-year name, image and likeness deal.

Sports

Key Takeaways From the First Six Months of NIL & 2022 Predictions, According to Peter Schoenthal, NIL Expert and Founder of Athliance

December 15, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

July 1st, 2021, will go down as one of the most important dates in the history of college sports

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as the NCAA finally allowed student-athletes to monetize their names, images, and likeness without compromising their eligibility.

SMU Donors and Businesses Commit to Multi-Million Dollar NIL Program for Football

December 14, 2021 via Business Wire - Communications News

Today, December 14, a group of prominent SMU alumni and businesses from the Dallas area have announced the commitment of over one million dollars annually for an NIL (name, image, and likeness) program tied to SMU football.

NFL Selling Fresh \$275 Million Debt, Rolling Billions More

December 10, 2021 via Sportico - Business (subscription may be required)

The National Football League is selling \$275 million in debt to pay off some existing obligations, provide working capital and fund general corporate purposes. The league is also rolling over two maturing credit facilities into a new, five-year entity holding \$3.178 billion in debt.

The NCAA Sponsorships Company Learfield Has Big Plans for College Athletes (Now That They Can Make Money)

December 10, 2021 via AdExchanger

Jennifer Davis was named CMO of Learfield, a college sports sponsorship and media company, in March of this year. In June, the Supreme Court upended the world of college sports and marketing by handing down a decision that guarantees college athletes the right to accept sponsorship and endorsement deals.

Private Equity Deals Are Coming to the NHL

December 9, 2021 via Sportico - Business (subscription may be required)

The National Hockey League is the latest major sports league to approve private equity ownership in its teams. The league's board of governors on Thursday, December 9, approved a change to its ownership rules to allow for institutional investors, according to someone familiar with the decision.

Film & TV

Messi's PSG in League of its Own for French Soccer TV Cash

December 15, 2021 via Japan Times - Latest News

Paris Saint-Germain would be the biggest winner from any new investment in French soccer's television rights, under plans being drawn up by the sport's top league in the country, according to people familiar with the matter.

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Netflix Signs Development Deal With Kalinda Vazquez; Sets YA Thriller as First Project

December 13, 2021 via Deadline - Hollywood Breaking News

Netflix signed a multi-year overall deal with creator, writer, and producer Kalinda Vazquez (Star Trek: Discovery, Fear The Walking Dead). Under the terms of the deal, she will create, write, and produce new series and other projects at the streamer.

Michigan's Resurgence May Have Big Ten Looking at TV Rights Bidding War

December 9, 2021 via Awful Announcing

For a football series steeped in hype and tradition, this year's Big Ten showdown between the Michigan Wolverines and Ohio State Buckeyes seemed to feel a little different. Maybe, just maybe, this was the year that Jim Harbaugh got the better of the Buckeyes.

Private Equity Funds Ready French Soccer Media Rights Bids – Sources

December 9, 2021 via Reuters - Deals News

Buyout funds including CVC Capital Partners and Bain Capital are lining up preliminary bids for a stake worth some 1.5 billion euros (\$1.7 billion) in the French football league's media rights business, four sources told Reuters.

Music Biz

Pepsi Launches New Music Lab Platform To Create New Opportunities For Emerging Hip-Hop Talent

December 15, 2021 via the Fader

Launched on December 15, the Pepsi Music Lab program - made up of the Pepsi Music Lab Academy and Virtual Summit - aims to give fresh talent the tools and exposure necessary for their careers to take off.

Bruce Springsteen Sells His Masters and Music Publishing to Sony in \$500M Deal

December 15, 2021 via Billboard

Springsteen's catalog includes the 15-times platinum album 'Born In The U.S.A' and five-times platinum 'The River.'

New \$304 Million Bond Backed by Music Rights for The Who, Tim McGraw

December 14, 2021 via Bloomberg - News (subscription may be required)

Bond investors will soon be able to buy a piece of the music catalogs of a wide range of pop, country and classic rock acts including The Who and Tim McGraw.

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HIFI Partners With Music Business Management Firms for Upgraded 'Royalties Dashboard'

December 14, 2021 via All Access

Music industry financial rights organization HIFI has partnered with a dozen of music business management firms to launch an enterprise version of its Royalties Dashboard platform, tracking and aggregating data from labels, distribution services, PROs, music publishers and others.

James Brown Estate Sold for a Reported \$90 Million

December 13, 2021 via Register Citizen

James Brown's estate has sold the late singer's music assets to Primary Wave, the publishing and management company announced on Monday, December 13, marking the latest blockbuster deal in the booming song acquisition market.

Sir Paul McCartney Comes Together With Investors to Back Music Start-Up Audoo

December 13, 2021 via Business Matters Magazine

Sir Paul McCartney is among a group of investors behind a £7.2 million funding round for the music start-up Audoo. The former Beatle joins existing investors Edinv and Tileyard London, alongside Abba's Bjorn Ulvaeus, in financing the company.

Why Spotify's Royalty Fight With Comedians is a 'Double-Edged Sword'

December 11, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

Recently, Spotify removed the recordings of hundreds of comedians — including the works of Jim Gaffigan, John Mulaney and Kevin Hart — in the midst of a dispute over royalties.

Money Man's \$1 Million Bitcoin Advance Just the Beginning of Empire's Blockchain Moves

December 10, 2021 via Forbes - Business (subscription may be required)

First comes a \$1 million advance paid entirely in Bitcoin. Next comes revolutionizing the way the music industry pays, and engages, artists.

Azealia Banks Fires Back at Manager Jeff Kwatinetz's Libel Lawsuit

December 10, 2021 via Greenwich Time

More than a year after she was first sued for stalking and defamation by her ex-manager, Azealia Banks has responded with a cross-complaint accusing the Prospect Park label boss of posing as a "romantic suitor" to "steal" from her.

Sonny Bono's Widow Strikes Back in Cher Copyright Fight

December 9, 2021 via Billboard

Cher's legal battle with Sonny Bono's widow is heating up, with Mary Bono arguing that the legendary singer should not be allowed to claim that her divorce agreement trumps important provisions of federal copyright law.

Britney Spears Free to Sign Her Own Documents After Conservatorship Termination: Report

December 9, 2021 via News International

American pop star Britney Spears can officially sign her documents and control finances.

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Ed Sheeran and Elton John Unite for Their Festive Charity Single 'Merry Christmas'

December 9, 2021 via Recycle Bin of a Middle Child

During the 2021 Christmas period, Ed Sheeran's and Elton John's global record and publishing royalties from the single and profits from sales of the single will be donated equally between the Ed Sheeran Suffolk Music Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation.

Round Hill Music Launches JV With Madonna Producer John "Jellybean" Benitez

December 9, 2021 via Music Week

Round Hill Music has confirmed that its Music Royalty Fund Two vehicle has acquired the music publishing catalogue of producer and songwriter John "Jellybean" Benitez. It includes worldwide hits by Madonna, Whitney Houston, Snap, Will Smith and Nas, among others.

Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)

The NFT Universe Now Has its First Goddess: IRIS

December 15, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

Iris Au, the CEO of Iris World, is launching her newest NFT collection: Goddess Iris, created out of the need to brighten and emancipate the non-fungible token landscape.

Colligo Token & Coinllectibles Introduce Gamified NFT Auctions for Unique Fusion NFTs

December 15, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

Colligo has managed to secure a partnership with Coinllectibles™ – the world's first provider of Fusion NFTs and successfully launched the Colligo Series 1 on the 26th of November, which included an incredible ceramic collectible piece valued between \$38,000 - \$58,000.

Unreleased Whitney Houston Song Demo NFT Sells for Nearly \$1 Million

December 15, 2021 via Yahoo Finance - Top Stories

An unreleased recording of Whitney Houston has sold as a non-fungible token for \$999,999. The NFT was sold through the music-focused marketplace OneOf.

Adidas Originals Launches NFTs and Buys a Plot in The Sandbox Metaverse Image Credit: Adidas

December 15, 2021 via Venturebeat

Adidas Originals will launch its first nonfungible tokens (NFTs) as it dives into Web 3 and the metaverse. Of course, this is going to be a commercial part of the metaverse, where companies use NFTs — which leverages the transparency and security of the digital ledger of blockchain to authenticate unique digital items — to market both digital and physical products.

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Nike Acquires NFT Startup RTFKT Studios to “Deliver Next-Generation Collectibles” – Blockchain Bitcoin News

December 14, 2021 via Justice News Flash

American multinational footwear and sportswear company Nike announced the acquisition of a start-up company called RTFKT Studios, which uses NFT assets, blockchain authentication and augmented reality.

That Viral Harry Styles Cardigan Just Got Auctioned as an NFT

December 14, 2021 via New York Times - All Sections (subscription may be required)

The love affair between fashion and NFTs shows no sign of abating. The latest nonfungible token to get everyone tingling with excitement: a perfect 3-D digital replica of the patchwork JW Anderson cardigan that became a viral hit during the pandemic when Harry Styles wore it.

Katy Perry NFTs Roar Onto Theta Network: Will They Be a Firework or Hot N Cold?

December 14, 2021 via Benzinga

Global superstar Katy Perry is the latest celebrity to launch a line of NFTs. Here's how you can get your hands on a Katy Perry NFT and how they will be different from other celebrity NFTs.

Bored Ape NFT Sells for \$3,000 Instead of \$300,000 After Fat-Finger Error

December 14, 2021 via Bloomberg – News (subscription may be required)

A fat-finger error led an online trader to sell his non-fungible token for one hundredth of its \$300,000 actual price, according to CNET. A trader named Max, with the user name maxnaut, listed his NFT – part of a limited The Bored Ape Yacht Club collection of 10,000 pieces.

Massence Records Goes NFT With Playtreks, the All-In-One App for The Music Industry

December 9, 2021 via MENAFN - Top Stories

Chasing After The Moon Massence Records will distribute music via the PlayTreks app. They also will mint a limited amount of NFTs, available for purchase on PlayTreks' Marketplace.