

# 5 Ways to Enhance Arena and Stadium Fan Experiences

By Damian Olsen

Live sporting events are more about the fans than about the game itself. Why? Because without the revenue generated from the sales of tickets, merchandise, concessions, and food and beverage, venues and sporting clubs would cease to operate.

Given that the industry is so reliant on fans, the role of the host venue is not only to deliver an engaging and enjoyable stadium fan experiences on the day but, more importantly, to encourage fan loyalty and prompt them to return to the venue to support their favorite teams again and again.

**Below we have compiled the top five ways venues can enhance stadium fan experiences on match or game days to increase the average spend per person and encourage repeat visits.**



## 1. Minimize Queues

Getting stuck in a queue for an extended period can have a negative impact on an arena or stadium fan's experience at an event. Furthermore, after years of social distancing measures, fans are even less tolerant of queues than ever before.

From parking to accessing and entering the venue, purchasing food, beverages, and merchandise, using amenities, and departing the venue, there are so many places where queuing can become an issue. Here are some steps venues can take to prevent lengthy queues for fans:

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**Wayfinding:** Give fans the information they need to access the venue and find their way around once inside to ensure a consistent and smooth flow of people and reduce the risk of queuing.

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**Timed Entry:** Stagger arrivals with timed entry tickets to avoid overcrowding and ensure a steady flow of fans entering your venue.

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**Digital Tickets:** Digital tickets reduce printing and postage costs, eliminate the risks of ticket fraud, lost or stolen tickets. Most importantly, it makes it quicker for fans to enter the venue if used with self-serve ticket scanning terminals.

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**Virtual Queuing:** By allowing fans to pre-purchase food, beverages, merchandise, and other activities on the day, you can avoid unnecessary queuing and maximize potential revenue.



## 2. Create an Enjoyable Atmosphere and Safe Environment

Nothing can beat the live roar of the crowd. Still, when it comes to encouraging people out of their homes and into live event settings, it is essential to minimize risk and provide a safe, clean and comfortable environment with a good view of the action to match. Here are some prime examples of ways that sporting venues can provide the best possible atmosphere and environment to ensure memorable arena and stadium fan experiences:

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**Accessible Information:** You must ensure fans can access real-time event details and information about the venue, such as safety policies and security measures before, during and after the event. A mobile app is a great place to store this information in a user-friendly, accessible format.

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**Let Supporters Sit Together:** Allow fans to book seats with fellow supporters to avoid unnecessary friction and ensure they can celebrate or commiserate together.

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**Visible Security Presence:** Your fans must know where to turn for help when they need it. From getting directions to reporting an incident, a visible security presence makes fans feel safer and encourages them to notify staff when they see anything out of the ordinary.

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**Real-Time Digital Signage and In-App Notifications:** In the event of an incident or emergency, your digital signage and mobile app should display relevant details to inform your fans about what is happening, what steps are being taken and what they need to do (i.e. If they need to evacuate, the signage should show the nearest emergency escape route).



### 3. Provide Exclusive Fan Experiences on Game or Matchdays

Aside from watching the game itself, it is essential to think of other ways to entertain fans inside the venue, with exclusive activities and experiences that cannot be replicated at home. Here are some prime examples of live and interactive arena and stadium fan experiences:

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**Premium Hospitality and VIP Suites:** Corporate boxes and VIP suites allow fans an opportunity to enjoy an elevated matchday experience.

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**Digital Installations and Interactive Experiences:** From interactive signage to virtual reality and holographic entertainment, utilize technology to enhance the live experience before and after the game and during breaks.

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**Onsite Sporting History Museums and Other Entertainment Hubs:** Successful arenas and stadiums utilize the spaces around and outside the venue to provide additional ticketed activities and experiences for fans, such as mini museums that focus on the club's history as well as themed bars and more.

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**Tours:** Ticketed tours allow fans to see their favorite sporting clubs behind the scenes while simultaneously increasing revenue for the arena or stadium on and off matchday – win, win.

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**Live Performances:** Pre-game and half-time entertainment is another way to differentiate the live in-person experience from watching the game at home.



## 4. Stay Connected Before, During and After the Game

The arena and stadium fan experience should not be limited to game day. It is essential to consider how you are engaging fans before, during and after live sporting events, and social media is a great way to interact with fans consistently.

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**Fan Engagement App:** Encourage fans to interact via a mobile app by sharing pictures and participating in online trivia and other games during the live event.

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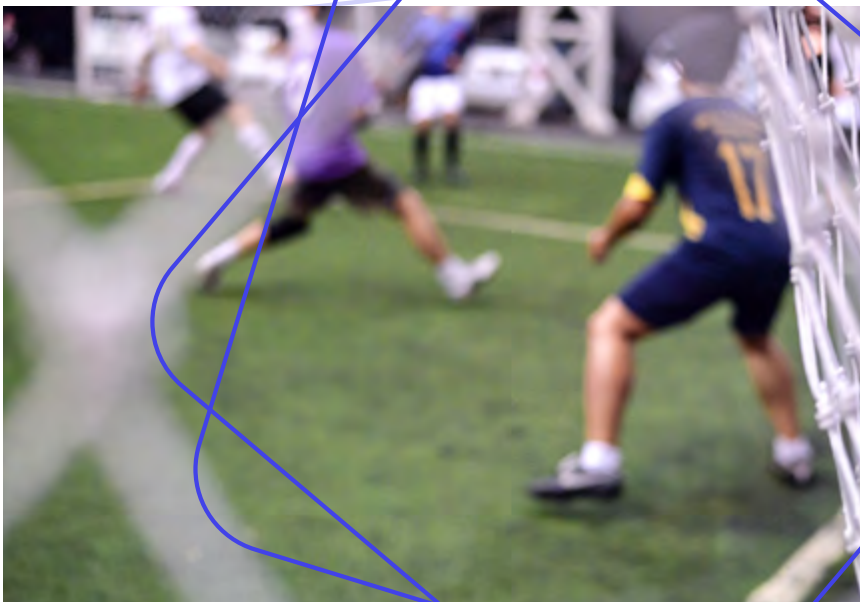
**Feedback:** Increase fan engagement by allowing fans to provide feedback about their experiences at live events and, where relevant, use this to inform changes to improve the venue. Mobile apps, emails and online surveys are great ways of promoting and capturing post-event feedback.

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**Encourage Interaction on Social Channels:** Incentivize fans who interact online by liking, sharing and saving content with giveaways, special offers and other promotions.

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**Create Online Fan Clubs:** Allow fans to stay connected to each other by facilitating online fan club events and forums where like-minded fans can share their excitement for upcoming games and events.



## 5. Reward Loyalty With Perks for Season Ticket Holders, Members and Return Visitors

It is essential to reward loyalty from season ticket holders and return visitors by offering them exclusive perks to improve their overall arena and stadium fan experience. Here are some great ways to reward loyalty:

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**Free Parking:** Offer free parking for season ticket holders to make it easier to access the venue.

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**Loyalty Points:** Reward fans based on the number of times they visit the venue or the amount of money they spend within the venue by giving them loyalty points or credit that they can use for purchases within the venue at future events.

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**VIP Areas:** Allow season ticket holders to access VIP areas and activities restricted to other guests.

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**Exclusive Merchandise, Incentives and Discounts:** Reward season ticket holders with exclusive merchandise, promotions and discounts only available at the stores within the venue on the day of the event.

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**Membership Programs:** These programs allow venues to capture information about members including their personal contact details which can be used to gain better insights into the demographics of your fan base and for ongoing marketing purposes. Encourage fans to become members and reward them with exclusive offers like priority bookings, guaranteed premium seats, exclusive food and beverage packages and more.

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**Free WIFI:** Give season ticket holders and return visitors a bonus, with free WIFI to use for the duration of the event so that they can connect and utilize your online services.

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## Ready to Optimize Your Arena or Stadium Operations?

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