Sports Fan Loyalty Index Names Football's Patriots

Contributed by Brand Keys
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Before the first kickoff of the 2015 National Football League season Thursday, Brand Keys, the New York-based brand engagement and customer loyalty research consultancy, announced the results of the 23rd annual Brand Keys 2015 Sports Fan Loyalty Index.
â€œConsumers have in their minds an â€˜ideal team," said Robert Passikoff, Brand Keysâ€™ founder and president. â€œTeam able to better meet fans expectations for that Ideal, always win in the brand â€˜Loyalty Bowl.â€™ Thereâ€™s no trophy, but it co with something more important â€“ emotionally engaged fans, increased game viewership, and increased purchases of licensed merchandise.â€•

Here are the 2015-2016 season NFL teams that scored well when it comes to fan loyalty, and those that didnâ€™t. For comparative purposes, the numbers in parenthese give the teamâ€™s rankings for last season:

Top 5

1. New England Patriots (#1)
2. Green Bay Packers (#3)
3. Seattle Seahawks (#6)
4. Denver Broncos (#4)
5. Indianapolis Colts (#5)

Bottom 5

32. Oakland Raiders (#32)
31. Jacksonville Jaguars (#31)
30. Tampa Bay Buccaneers (#29)
29. Washington Redskins (#23)
30. Cleveland Browns (#30)

The Sports Fan Loyalty Index was designed to help professional sports team management identify precise fan loyalty rankings in their home and national markets â€œwith insights that enable the league and team to identify areas â€“ particularly emotional dimensions â€“ that can use some strategic brand reinforcement,â€• said Passikoff. â€œThose insights are always ba upon fansâ€™ â€˜ideal team,â€™ and that means values more than a win-loss ratio.â€• The Sports Fan Loyalty Index provides apples-to-apples comparison of the intensity with which fans within the teamâ€™s home market area support the home team versus corresponding values for fans of other teams or leagues in the same market.

â€œItâ€™s true. Everybody loves a winner, but itâ€™s important to note that win-loss ratios do not entirely govern fan loyalty. N does counting game attendance. When it comes to emotions, and particularly emotional games like the Super Bowl, you could fill that venue 50 times over.â€• observed Passikoff. â€œThere are other powerful and emotionally-based factors that have to be taken into account.â€• The percentages next to each indicate the contribution they currently make to fan loyalty and engagement:

History and Tradition (30%):
Is the game and the team part of fansâ€™ and community rituals, institutions and beliefs?

Fan Bonding (29%):
Are players particularly respected and admired?

Pure Entertainment (21%):
How well a team does, wins, losses sure. But even more importantly than a win-loss ratio, how entertaining is their play? On-the-field aggressive play is an acceptable component of this loyalty driver.

Authenticity (20%):
How well they play as a team. Whatâ€™s the offense and defense like? New managers, as theyâ€™re seen to be responsible fo the genuineness and credibility of the team, can also lift this driver.

â€œAll teams show up intending to win. But the nature of sports fan loyalty is that overall league and team rankings correlate very highly with game viewership and the purchase of licensed merchandise. And, since rankings can be influenced depending upon how loyalty drivers are managed, itâ€™s critical that team marketers manage them strategically to better meet fan expectations,â€• said Passikoff. â€œBut you have to know what the fans expect â€“ beyond a winning season.â€•

The Brand Keys Sports Fan Loyalty Index measures all teams in the four Major Leagues. The National Football League is currently rated #1 â€“ followed by Major League Baseball. The NBA currently ranks third, with the National Hockey League fourth. â€œLoyalty is a leading-indicator of behavior and profitability and should be a key statistic professional sports teams should trackâ€• said Passikoff, as it tells us what fans are going to do.â€•

â€œItâ€™s been said that some people think football is a matter of life and death. Depending on your level of fan loyalty, sometimes it can get much more serious than that,â€• noted Passikoff.