



How Sprout Social helps the Chicago Bulls take its social media game to the next level



The [Chicago Bulls](#) don't just belong to Chicago.

The NBA franchise is an international brand with tens of millions of fans around the world.

Of course, being one of the most popular sports teams in history comes with its own difficulties.

How do you maintain an inclusive connection with fans so far outside the Windy City?

If you're the Bulls, you use social media to take the Second City experience worldwide.

From Santiago to Shanghai, Sprout Social's publishing, analytics and listening tools enable the Bulls to create connection with fans across the globe.



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Luka Dukich

Senior Digital Content Manager, Chicago Bulls

Crafting high-scoring content

Sprout is used primarily by the Bulls’ content team, led by Senior Digital Content Manager Luka Dukich.

“We feel like we have an obligation to give people only the highest-quality content,” Dukich said. “If you follow the team on social media, you should feel like you’re getting things you can’t get anywhere else.”

Using Sprout’s **publishing tools**, the Bulls are able to quickly schedule content, ensure it’s published at the optimal times to generate engagement, and apply custom tags to aid in performance analysis.

“Having a platform to schedule all our posts gives me extra time to go even further with our content and create those human connections with our fans,” said Social Media Coordinator Samantha Brown. “With Sprout, I can immediately see what fans are really engaging with and make sure we’re producing more of that.”

Just as important is how **Sprout’s analytics** empower the Bulls to better understand what content resonates most with its global audience.

“We signed up for Sprout to help us with social publishing and planning, but the analytics tools have really blown us away,” Dukich said. “It’s saved us a lot of time and a lot of energy in terms of getting accurate data quickly.”

Using Sprout, the team can track Facebook Page impressions, Twitter hashtag trends, Instagram follower growth and much more all from a single location. And with the click of a button, it can then turn this data into custom, presentation-ready reports.

“The way that digital and social marketing works is you always have to be aware of what’s happening, what the trends are, what people are responding to,” Dukich said. “Sprout gives us the ability to see what types of campaigns are working in real time, as well as the ability to adjust appropriately. I don’t think we’ve ever had a tool that’s been able to so quickly provide us with feedback.”

The time saved by using Sprout is especially helpful when it comes to working with sponsors.

“We have more than 50 brands that are sponsoring Bulls content with us, so we have 50-plus partners that are producing content on our social channels,” Dukich said. “We’ve never had a tool before where we could actually, in real time, give them updates on how things are working without it being a crazy time suck for our team. It would take someone dropping everything else and then going in manually and pulling numbers, checking to make sure the numbers were correct, and then reporting them back to the client—it just wasn’t possible before Sprout.”



“ For me, the best part of Sprout is time saved. Time is everything for my job, and to have that extra time is so precious because it really allows me to create those one-on-one connections with our fans. ”



Samantha Brown

Social Media Coordinator, Chicago Bulls

Ensuring effective offense

Sprout’s powerful analytics tools help the Bulls understand what’s happening on social, but they don’t necessarily explain why.

That’s where [Advanced Listening](#) comes in.

“Sports is about emotional connection,” Brown said. “When you think about your favorite sports team, you may feel happy or upset, you may want to do a little dance or cry. That connection is the driving force behind our fans. It’s not about throwing content at them and expecting them to engage with it the way you want them to. It’s about finding their wants and needs.”

Sprout’s listening tools help the Bulls understand audience sentiment around specific topics, as well as uncover emerging trends among fans. By accessing publicly available social conversations using social listening, the team can quickly dive into audience attitudes and opinions regarding different subjects, then drill down even deeper based on audience demographics and geographic location.

Social listening also provides opportunities for authentic engagement that might otherwise go unnoticed.

“It’s finding those conversations that might not be directed to us but are about us, and then I can go in and just kind of inject myself and say, ‘Here are the Chicago Bulls,’” Brown said. “It allows us to find ways to join those conversations in a natural way, not just push ourselves into something we’re not supposed to be a part of.”



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Dan Moriarty

Digital Director, Chicago Bulls

Enjoying the assist

When it comes to measuring the value of Sprout, the Chicago Bulls do so in terms of time saved and insights gained.

After all, when your brand is recognized worldwide, the challenge isn't growing your audience, it's keeping up with it.

“For me, the best part of Sprout is time saved,” Brown said. “Time is everything for my job, and to have that extra time is so precious because it really allows me to create those one-on-one connections with our fans.”

For Digital Director Dan Moriarty, it's the chance to truly connect with Bulls fans around the globe.

“We really want to create that lifelong connection,” Moriarty said. “Social is our biggest platform for communicating with fans, and we get data back on every single post. So whether it's a Facebook video or an Instagram Story, we're able to use Sprout to understand how people are engaging with that content and inform our strategy.”



Of course, the efficiencies created by Sprout represent their own form of ROI as well.

“That’s where partnering with technologies like Sprout can really help,” Moriarty said. “It becomes this backbone that enables efficiency across the team, whether you’re in the office, on the road or working from home. It gives you one central location that you can log in to and make sure we’re proactively planning for what we’re doing ahead but also retroactively looking at what’s happened historically, and how do we improve as a result of that. Sprout and the social data we get from it has really taken us to the next level.”

Ultimately, Sprout’s greatest value to the Bulls may be how it simplifies the often-complicated world of social media.

“The social platforms give you data, but there’s so much to wade through and so much work that goes into sitting there and culling through everything to distill it down,” Dukich said. “We needed to find a tool that could help us take that data, put it in perspective for us, but also make sure that data is accurate. That wasn’t the case with other tools we’ve used in the past and that’s something that we really struggled to find.”

With the help of Sprout Social, the Chicago Bulls were able to stop struggling and start connecting, from Illinois to Australia and all points in between.