

# The Panthers Won the 2016 Season with this Campaign

**CASE STUDY** | Carolina Panthers



wyng

# Key Stats from Carolina Panthers Photo Lab



**Photo Lab**

TEMPLATE



**2+ Months**

LENGTH OF CAMPAIGN



**10K+**

# OF CAMPAIGN VISITS



**1,300+**

# OF SUBMISSIONS



**88% mobile views**

DEVICE BREAKDOWN



**11 stickers, 6 frames**

# OF STICKERS AND FRAMES

Following an exciting 2015 season that culminated in a trip to the Super Bowl in 2016, the Panthers faced a more challenging year on the field. However, it'd be difficult to know from fan engagement on social media alone. Thanks to the ingenuity of Dan LaTorraca, the team's Manager of Digital Content and Strategy, and Amie Kiehn, its Social Media Content Coordinator, the Panther fanbase was able to stay energized through a challenging season. For their latest Photo Lab campaign, the duo allowed thousands of fans to

upload their own selfies, customize them with Panther-specific stickers and frames, post them in a special gallery, and share them across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The Panthers call the campaign one of the team's most successful of the 2016 season, and we've identified five techniques that any pro sports team could benefit from: identifying team loyalists before launching, pre-populating the Photo Lab gallery, soliciting fan feedback, approving content as quickly as possible, and increasing revenue by adding sponsors.



## 1. Find Loyalists

Professional sports teams have an advantage that few other brands enjoy: regardless of performance, a group of fans is always engaged. From running the team's social media channels, the Panthers already had a good idea who those influencers were. They were active, especially on Twitter and Facebook. To diversify their talent pool, the Panthers also hopped on Twitter and direct messaged other fans who were similarly engaged. Before the official launch, these influencers were invited to try out the campaign, which created a foundation of excitement among the demographic most likely to spread the word.



### TAKEAWAY:

Before launching a campaign, identify brand loyalists and give them advanced access.



## 2. Pre-Populate the Content Gallery

Besides creating buzz, opening the campaign to super fans also allowed the Panthers to pre-populate the site with quality photos. “No one wants to see an empty gallery,” Dan says. “They want to feel like part of a community, like their friends are on board.” During the week between the soft and hard launch, the gallery collected dozens of high-resolution, well-framed, fun photos. Not only did this content encourage participation from less enthusiastic fans, but it also gave them examples to aspire to. Ironically, the Panthers have found that fans respond best when they see photos from their peers, not just from players, so it was imperative that the pictures be organic.

### TAKEAWAY:

Pre-populate the Content Gallery with exemplary photos collected from brand loyalists.

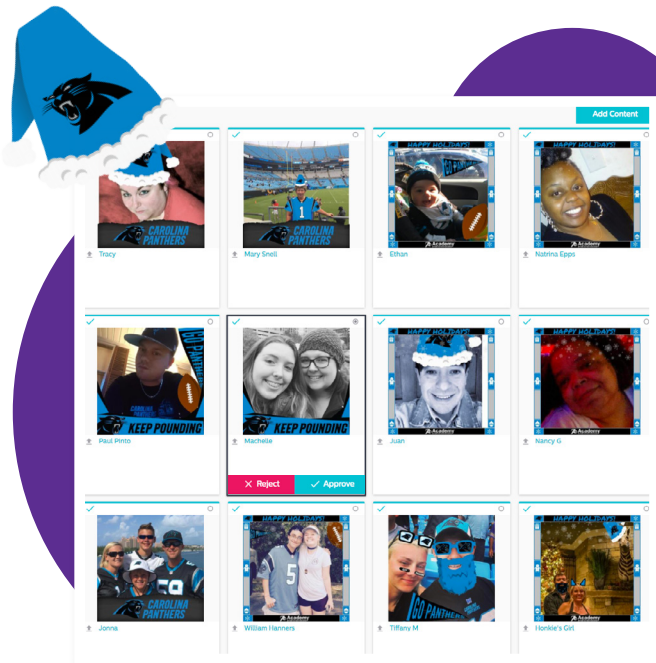
### 3. Give Fans What They Want

Throughout the campaign, the Panthers stayed in dialogue with those same superfans. After one suggested that cat ears be added to the collection, an in-house graphic designer made the sticker, which became one of the most popular. The Panthers also watched the Photo Lab gallery itself. They noticed that most fans used the sunglasses and eye black, so they made them available in different colors. The football wasn't used as often, so they moved it to the second row of options. By giving fans more of what they already liked, the Panthers encouraged them to upload and share more content.



#### TAKEAWAY:

As the campaign runs, identify what's working and make it more widely available.



#### TAKEAWAY:

Incorporate content-validation into your daily routine so consumers see results quickly.

### 4. Approve Consumer Content ASAP

As Amie so aptly put it, “Fans want to see their photos as soon as possible.” To make that happen, the social media team approved content throughout the day. That way, a fan could upload her photo and see it in the Photo Lab gallery almost instantaneously, encouraging her to share it while her excitement was highest. Of course, this campaign was just one among many that the two were responsible for during the season, but the Panthers felt the Wyng platform made the content approval process very simple and efficient.

## 5. Leverage Existing Sponsorships

The Panthers had partnered with Academy Sports + Outdoors before, so the Panthers asked the retailer if they were interested in joining the social campaign. Academy was, and the parties discussed their best options. In less than a week, and in the heat of the season, they were able to agree on customized frames, design them in-house, beta test them (they wanted the sizing to be just right), upload them to the Wyng Platform, and go live. With minimal work, the Panthers increased their revenue and partnered with a sponsor who was eager to capitalize on the social media buzz.



### TAKEAWAY:

Consider involving sponsors in the campaign to increase revenue.

Though every sports team has a unique identity and fan base, they all have two goals in common: to win the championship and to keep fans happy. While Wyng can only help with the latter, our platform accommodates any brand guidelines, from black and white cat ears to green and orange dolphins. Harnessing consumer influence, especially when the team isn't performing at its best, is critical to keeping fans energized and engaged.

**Contact us to learn how you can create a successful campaign strategy with Wyng.**

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Wyng is a marketing platform for brands and agencies to build and run campaigns that drive participation and elevate consumer influence. We powered the first Super Bowl hashtag commercial in 2011. Since then, we've continued to evolve our platform to align with shifts in consumer behavior through a robust library of campaign templates. We help brands create communities, what we call tribes, bound by affinity and connection. Wyng is headquartered in New York City.

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