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## **NBA ENTERTAINMENT HIRES HORIZON SPORTS & EXPERIENCES FOR METAVERSE, GLOBAL EXPANSION HELP**

This is Horizon Sports & Experiences's first new client since launching in November

By [Brian Bonilla](#). Published on December 13, 2022



NBA Entertainment, the marketing and production arm of the National Basketball Association, has hired Horizon Sports & Experiences (HS&E) on a one-year basis to offer consulting services on growing the sport's fan base and global footprint.

This is the first new client for HS&E since launching in November. HS&E is co-led by former Turner Broadcasting president David Levy and former Momentum Worldwide Chairman-CEO Chris Weil.

The company's relationship with NBA Entertainment will be broad and include the metaverse, according to Levy. He has worked with the NBA for 35 years during his time in the media industry, especially as the president of Turner Broadcasting (TNT broadcasts NBA games).

“We’re going to explore how we add more value to their partners and their sponsorships, their league sponsors,” Levy said. HS&E and the NBA will explore opportunities in the metaverse and how they could get fans “closer to the game,” he said.

The NBA experimented with the metaverse in May when it partnered with Meta to provide game experiences through Meta's Horizon Worlds for a month.

“During his many years as an NBA partner, David has demonstrated his creative and innovative approach to branding and growing businesses,” Gregg Winik, NBA president, content and executive producer, said in a statement. “Adding his expertise to HS&E’s strong data and analytics capabilities will help us better understand the needs of our fans and how to reach them.”

HS&E will work on building fan experiences at prominent NBA events, such as the NBA All-Star Game and opening day games, as well as globally.

“There’s no better global brand in the sports business than the NBA,” Levy said. “They were in the forefront in digital and pushing out digital on a global basis before really any of the other leagues. They travel overseas and play a lot of their games in Europe, in Asia, they launched NBA in China.”

One marketing challenge for the NBA is reaching and understanding its audience, which interacts with the league differently than it did prior to the streaming revolution and the rise of NBA highlight companies such as House of Highlights. (House of Highlights was acquired by Turner’s Bleacher Report in 2015.)

### **Levy's history with the NBA and Horizon's resources**

“Everybody’s viewing NBA content differently,” Levy said, noting House of Highlights, ESPN.com and ESPN+ as examples. “Ultimately those kinds of data points are going to be interesting for the NBA to look at, to find out who are their fans, how much are their fans consuming online, how much are their fans consuming locally [and] how many fans are consuming on cable?”

Levy also said that he would be willing to assist the NBA with its upcoming media rights negotiations, though he said that was not part of the deal.

Levy helped broker the NBA's most recent media rights deal with Turner Sports in 2014. The NBA also has a media rights deal with ESPN, and both deals, which total \$24 billion, are set to expire after the 2024-25 season. The league could be looking for \$75 million in its next deal, according to CNBC.

“We’ve been working together for years and they know I know a little bit about the business and if they ask me to lean in, I’m certainly going to be available to help,” Levy said.

Although HS&E operates separately from Horizon Media, Levy said the company will utilize Horizon’s data, analytics, and media resources to help inform details about the NBA’s audience. Other HS&E clients include boxing promotional company Top Rank and college sports marketing company Learfield.

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