Case Study: Using *Win AD* to Accelerate Career Advancement

Turnover of NCAA D-I Athletic Directors is between 5%-10% annually, signaling that in today's hyper-competitive environment—with a finite number of positions available—change is inevitable and competition is constant. Bowling Green State University Director of Athletics Chris Kingston shares how he leveraged *Win AD* to stay abreast of employment opportunities, prepared to succeed during his BGSU interview, and implemented his strategic vision once landing the head athletics job at Bowling Green.

" *It's like going in and already knowing the answers to the test.* "

Chris Kingston
Former Director of Athletics

› Before becoming an AD, did you use *Win AD* to assess future job opportunities?

"As Senior Associate at NC State I used *Win AD* to create a detailed matrix of possible AD job opportunities in the FBS. I analyzed financials, vendor partnerships, coach pay, academic standing and opportunities to grow new revenue. Using the data, I was able to narrow the list down to a couple dozen universities that I would pursue if the opportunity arose."

› When the Bowling Green job opened up, how did you evaluate that position?

"Once the BGSU AD job came open, I really drilled down into the financials and looked at strategic growth opportunities. Because I had access to the contracts, I knew that multimedia rights were locked-in long term, but apparel rights were an area where I could significantly impact revenue growth. I could see what BGSU was getting compared to everyone else in the MAC and peers nationally."

› How did that knowledge impact how you presented yourself to the Bowling Green search committee?

"Honestly, the ability to come in and provide a detailed analysis about multimedia rights, licensing and apparel, may have been different than what they heard from other candidates. I wasn't talking about past deals; I was talking about specific attainable future opportunities with a plan to get there."

"After the interview, I got feedback that my ability to talk about all the revenue streams in great detail and provide specific, legitimate growth opportunities was viewed very favorably."

› **Did you talk specifically about *Win AD* during the interview process?**

"100% I talked about it. I looked at the chair of the search committee and said 'if we don't already have it, it's the first thing I am buying.' I talked about *Win AD* specifically and how I was able to cull the data and develop a plan. I talked about how I used *Win AD* at NC State to maximize our apparel deal. It's like going in and already knowing the answers to the test."

› **How can that data help you grow revenue with vendor partners?**

"*Win AD* creates a different starting point in major negotiations. It's such a position of power. It almost doesn't feel fair."

› **What data and analysis did you present that seemed to leave a lasting impression?**

"I left behind a 1 page chart that laid out where they were, where I knew I could take them and how we were going to get there – all data pulled from *Win AD*. And the best part was, I wasn't asking them for more money to do it. I was able to give the search committee specific examples of where we could save money and drive new revenue because I had copies of their contracts."

› **Did *Win AD* come into play when you were negotiating your salary?**

"Of course. Because of *Win AD* I knew what everyone made. I knew what fair market was. Not only did I know what other ADs were making, I read the contracts. It definitely helped us land in the right spot."

› **Once you were on the job at BGSU, how did you begin implementing your strategic vision?**

"I took my senior staff and setup a budget committee. I thought it was important to get some senior staff members out of their comfort zones. I presented the same *Win AD* financial analysis used for my interview to our senior staff. I made sure that all my senior staff knew our financial situation and vision. It's not just something I did for the interview; it's something we're going to collectively work to realize, so we can do the best job for our student athletes."

"The validity of the data and numbers created buy-in and everyone on my senior staff is now thinking about generating new revenue and realizing savings. Getting everyone in that mindset and using *Win AD's* data has been a great guide for us."

› **Your Associate AD for External, Mary Ellen Gillespie, was recently hired as the AD at UW–Green Bay. Given your experience, what did you share with her about how to succeed when interviewing?**

"I am all about sharing best practices – I want other people to succeed. I talked with her about how I used *Win AD* to facilitate a proactive approach and what steps I took to prepare for own interview. I know Meg used *Win AD* in her own way to prepare for the interview, and she got the job!"