

## Case Study: Abilene Christian University Apparel Rights Negotiation



Abilene Christian has utilized *Win AD* in a variety of capacities in recent years – from aiding in the transition to D-I, to negotiating coach and guarantee game contracts, to more recently negotiating a new apparel rights agreement for athletics. **Lee De León**, Athletics Director at ACU shares how *Win AD* impacted their recent apparel rights deal with Nike and why *Win AD* is an asset every AD needs to have.

Winthrop Intelligence would like to thank  
Lee De Leon at Abilene Christian University:



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### What was ACU's goal with apparel rights and how did you prepare?

"Our main goals were maximizing contract length, promotional products and product discount. We put together a spreadsheet by pulling data from *Win AD* that showed us what peers in our conference and regionally were getting to help us assess the lay of the land. We recognized that there we different ways to structure the deal. "

### Why is data important before negotiating a major Vendor deal?

"*Win AD* helped equip me going into the conversations with all 3 major apparel providers. If we didn't have *Win AD*, I would have had to call people to get information. I would have had a hard time getting people on the phone and convincing them to send me their contracts or sharing detailed information."

"The fact that we were able to do it on our own time and at our own pace was extremely helpful. *Win AD* also provides confidentiality, which is critical. You can explore your options and do market research in an efficient and confidential manner."

"As a new AD, it equipped me with the ammunition I need to make tough decisions. Information is power and *Win AD* gave me the information I needed at the right time. I was able to educate myself about what these contracts entailed, what our peers were getting and help me recognize what we should be getting at ACU. It prepared me to know exactly what I was talking about, even though this is my first apparel negotiation."

**" As an Athletic Director,  
you need *Win AD*  
- it's well worth it.  
Otherwise you're  
lacking information  
that you need to make  
decisions at our level."**

- Lee De León

## How does timely information impact contract discussions?

"Early on, I cited some very specific financial information and contract data so the vendors knew I had done my homework. It sent a statement early on and it was very helpful because it gave me instant credibility. It also gave me confidence that I had the knowledge of what other schools were doing and I felt empowered going into the whole negotiation."

"The comparison data gave me numbers to shoot for in our negotiations. I would tell the vendors exactly where we wanted to be because we spent the time in *Win AD* establishing what we should get. It saved the vendors time as well. In the end, I got the apparel deal done in 3 phone calls. Because I knew what Nike schools were getting, we could cut straight to the chase and get the deal we wanted."

"It also saved time because the way the system is setup. It's laid out in a nice, concise format and is very user friendly. You can find peer contracts in a few mouse clicks."

## Can you share how *Win AD* directly impacted your bottom line?

"We increased our amount of promotional product by 6x, we increased our percentage discount and signed a longer contract. We got exactly what we set out to get based on what was important to us. "

"Another valuable benefit is simply assessing which vendors all your peers are using. We used *Win AD* to pull up everyone in our conference and recognized that we could differentiate ourselves from a recruiting standpoint by going with Nike because everyone else in our conference was with Adidas or Under Armour. "

## What other areas is *Win AD* creating measurable impact?

"We use *Win AD*'s financial data to do in-conference comparisons in categories like ticket sales. We recognized that we had room for improvement so I cited *Win AD* data as I communicated to my staff and reinforced our goal of increased ticket sales. The data helped to unify our messaging to work towards our goals."

"It helps us communicate across campus by setting realistic expectations. Our president loves it. He's a numbers guy, he knows what *Win AD* is and understand the importance of hard data. He'll ask, "Do you have data to support your decision?" and I say "Yes, we pulled it from *Win AD*." and he's good with that. It gives me ammunition to make decisions and get things approved."

## What would you tell other ADs about your experience with *Win AD*?

"It's a great investment because you can get as much value out of it as you want. You have so much detailed information at your fingertips. You could use it on a daily basis and it's there when I need it. If I need to make a change or one of my coaches leaves, it allows you to get information fast. It allows you to make timely decisions in an informed manner."

"*Win AD* is worth it. You can lose a lot more than the subscription fee by not having information. You can overpay on various contracts without timely information – it prevents you from making bad decisions and helps you increase revenue."

"There are so many different uses for *Win AD* – it's not just salary info. As an AD, you need *Win AD*. Otherwise you're lacking information that you need to make decisions at our level."



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT *WIN AD*

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