

Win AD Case Study: Apparel – Colorado State University



Colorado State University Athletics relies on *Win AD* for salary benchmarking, budget planning, communicating with campus leadership and most recently, to negotiate a high-stakes apparel agreement with Under Armour. In this case study, Deputy Athletics Director **Steve Cottingham** shares how *Win AD* helped CSU negotiate the best possible apparel agreement and weighs in on why *Win AD* is worth the investment.

Winthrop Intelligence would like to thank
Steve Cottingham at Colorado State University



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How did *Win AD* impact your recent apparel negotiation?

"*Win AD* was extremely useful as we switched vendors from Russell to Under Armour. It's particularly helpful when you're going into a new relationship with a new vendor because you don't know their standard contract template. You can review exactly how past contracts were done to identify what really is standard language, which can help you save time and be more efficient getting the deal you've set out to get."

"We used *Win AD* to really drill down in a very systematic way of looking at what Under Armour was doing elsewhere along with what other apparel vendors were doing with peer & aspirational programs. We identified schools that are similar from an athletic and academic standpoint and put *Win AD*'s information into a spreadsheet. It allowed us to compare deals in a very condensed and efficient way and helped us create a range of realistic expectations. "

Why does reliable information streamline negotiations?

"The data helps you properly frame the deal from the beginning. It allows us to fast-forward the conversation. People get fearful wondering if they're asking for the right things. When both parties are knowledgeable, you can let go of anxiety and get to a deal that's favorable for both parties."

"I am a big believer in data-driven conversations. It's always better to go into a conversation with a partner and say: 'Here are the numbers, here's what you've done elsewhere, here's what your competitors have done elsewhere.' *Win AD* is great as far as pulling all the relevant information together in one place. "

"Having reliable data allows for a better conversation between partners. It allows what's really happening in the market to drive your conversation rather than making it about feelings and pride. It helps depersonalize the conversation and reduce the potential tension that can happen in those types of negotiations. *Win AD* allows you to go forward in a more productive way. "

" You should absolutely invest in *Win AD*. It's the best money you'll spend all year. It's an easy return on investment. "

- Steve Cottingham

How does *Win AD* help across campus?

"*Win AD* is helpful internally in terms of planning, negotiations and talking to other campus stakeholders about what they can expect. *Win AD* helped us distill the right information for a presentation to our campus leaders. They want to be sure that the institution is being treated appropriately and have a comfort level we're getting a great deal. "

"For university legal counsels, it's an extremely valuable tool because they're not living in this athletics world every day. It can be daunting for them and it's helpful to see specific examples of language provisions and see what other people have done. "

Can you talk about return on investment with *Win AD*?

"When you're negotiating a deal worth millions of dollars, the fee is so minimal in relation to the value received as far as saving time and creating efficiency & confidence. I honestly don't even bother to think about the ROI on *Win AD* because I know we're getting more than we pay for. It doesn't take a lot to understand you're going to make back your subscription fee over the course of the year. There's a direct ROI but it also just gives you peace of mind. "

"I found it very helpful in a specific project where we garnered support for a university investment of 163,000 into 8 different Olympic sports. We used *Win AD* to build a comparison model showing what the means and medians were for our conference competitors. Seventy-five percent of the student athletes affected were female, so we were able to show that the investment was appropriate and would bring us up to the mean. The data supported our position and helped us make an effective argument to get the funding we needed. *Win AD* absolutely makes selling your ideas and vision easier across campus when you can really show what you need and why. "

How does *Win AD* save you time?

"You're simply so much more efficient with *Win AD*. *Win AD* has done all the work in assembling the data. You can quickly go into the database and pull it all together. It's so much more efficient than trying to compile information by hand. "

Where else are you benefitting from *Win AD*?

"As far as negotiations with coaches, it's been helpful in being objective about appropriate salary levels and quickly getting a sense of where the market stands. Before *Win AD*, you would call around and try to get some benchmarks. It was guesswork or anecdotal information, which was difficult."

"We've also used it extensively for studying salary structures. What are the ranges of salaries, what certain assistant positions are being paid in the sports we offer within our conference and region."

"Big picture, I use *Win AD* throughout the year. I spend a lot of time in the Coaches database during hiring season. We use it for benchmarking, financial projections and budgeting. It's very helpful for central campus administration to give them peer data about what other programs are doing. "

"*Win AD* helps you find the specific information you need for competitive analysis. For example, I learned by studying *Win AD* data that our student aid is significantly higher than many of our peers. When you back out that expense and look specifically at sport operating costs, it became clear we need to invest more in our sports. It helps you make informed decisions. "

What would you tell peers who are considering subscribing?

"You should absolutely invest in *Win AD*. It's the best money you'll spend all year. I use it every day. It's an easy return on investment. One coach salary negotiation per year and it will pay for itself. And it's gotten progressively more valuable over the years. All the additional resources that have been added are extremely valuable. "

