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THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Stories of purpose and lasting impact

Taking the 'Red Ball' approach

Helping transform the USTA's membership program in a new era of tennis

ADVANTAGE: USTA

A NEWLY ENGAGED TENNIS COMMUNITY

IN IT FOR THE **FUN OF THE SPORT**

THE SITUATION

When you learn the game of tennis—at any age!—balls come in different colors and sizes based on your level, experience, and age group. One of the best ways to be introduced to the sport is by using the “red ball,” the largest and lightest of the options. It’s easier to hit, allows for focus on skill development, and builds confidence in beginners through early success. But the biggest advantage? For those beginners, it makes the sport more *fun*—a critical element of the game, no matter your level.

To support its bold and audacious goal of 35 million tennis players by 2035, the USTA looked to develop a strategy to transform its current membership offering. Instead of focusing on typical goals of membership programs, such as top-line growth, the plan was to drive the program from a place of love. No pun intended.

Part of the impetus for pursuing this goal was that the USTA’s existing membership value proposition is firmly established in gaining access to the best-in-class USTA-sanctioned leagues and tournaments. And yet, to service the broader ecosystem and accelerate the growth of the game, membership needed reimagining. The USTA saw an opportunity to elevate its value proposition so that it communicated its renewed focus on accessibility and increased engagement. The message needed to come across that the USTA is not only for serious athletes desiring competitive play, but also for players looking to play for fun, for the coaches who are so instrumental to instilling a passion for the sport—for the entire tennis community.

Put simply, how was the USTA going to get more people to play more tennis?



THE SOLVE

Deloitte was able to bring significant experience to the USTA in helping organizations design, build, and transform membership and loyalty programs. Given the nature of the challenge, the Deloitte team rallied around an engagement strategy built on the notion of making tennis more accessible to more players. The USTA team's passion about all aspects of tennis—playing, coaching, and watching—was palpable and served to up the enthusiasm and energy levels as the project got underway.

The Deloitte team explored multiple avenues, both in the tennis world and the larger lifestyle and well-being sector, to create an engaging membership program that offered to be more than just a way to play in sanctioned events.

They also focused on expanding the benefits and reach, including a partnership evaluation framework aimed at building strategic relationships outside of the court and a renewed look at how the USTA could begin to better support tennis coaches across the country. This framework would aim to provide USTA members with extra resources and information, such as easy access to travel and hospitality partners, making it easier for members to get out on the court at the time and place of their choosing.

MATCH POINT: FOSTERING **GROWTH AND ENGAGEMENT** WITHIN THE SPORT

GOING FORWARD

One of the first new programs to emerge from this work has been the creation of [USTA Coaching](#). A new organization designed to empower certified coaches and non-professionals, including parents, community leaders, and volunteers, to receive education, get certified, and begin coaching players. Benefits and features of the new program include access to education for coaches working with players at all levels, special offers, and connection to a national community of tennis coaches. Investing in coaches—those critical advocates and ambassadors who help bring the sport to life for, and teach the sport to, new generations of players is a natural way to bring that mission of opening doors, and courts, to new players across the country.

Because at the core of the work remains a very simple and specific goal: to build a path to more people playing more tennis!



GAME – SET – MATCH
ADVANCING THE GAME ONE MEMBER AT A TIME

LET'S CONNECT.

Do these challenges sound familiar?



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