

Spectator Sports Innovation Flywheel (SSIF)

The Spectator Sports Innovation Flywheel (SSIF), created by Nils Sterenborg and Thomas Lutz, shows how constant innovation fuels lasting success for professional sports clubs and leagues. The model's core drives are growing and satisfying fans, boosting financial stability, and sport success. All 3 embedded in a self-reinforcing cycle.

Innovations that improve the fan experience attract more followers and revenue, which clubs can reinvest in talent and technology. Better results on the pitch then draw even more fans, "spinning the flywheel" faster and accelerating overall growth.

The Flywheel emphasizes steady, step-by-step improvements, like smarter apps, personalized engagement, or smarter sponsor deals—rather than one-off changes. Success depends on teamwork across marketing, tech, and stadium staff, all driven by a culture of continuous experimentation.

Regularly listening to fans and assessing digital capabilities helps clubs invest where it matters most. Innovation in sports is never finished, it's an ongoing process that keeps clubs competitive, relevant, and attractive to fans, sponsors, and talent in a rapidly changing industry

Innovation

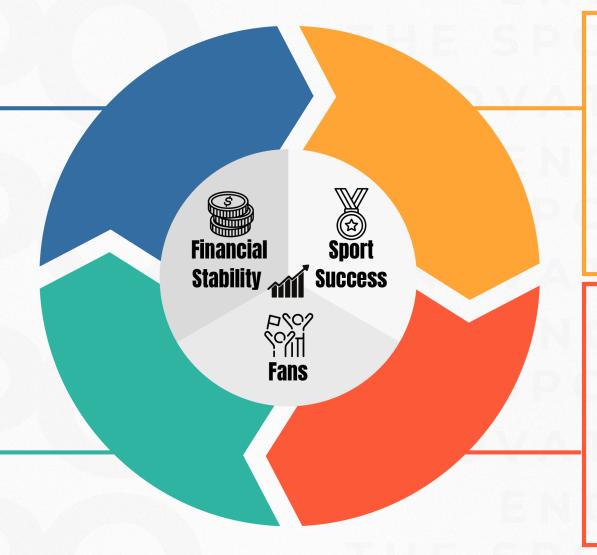
(Step 1) INNOVATE

Implement innovations fast and incremental with a focus on fan experience. New stadium apps, personalized content, optimized sponsor activations but also performance analytics may lead to better fan experience

Revenue

(Step 4 & start over) BOOST REVENUE & REINVEST

Additional revenue grows profits to be reinvested into further innovations and to fuel the financial stability, fan base and the sport success.



Fan Experience

(Step 2) ENHANCE FAN EXPERIENCE

Innovation leads to a better, more engaging experience for fans. This builds loyalty and fan satisfaction. A great experience generates buzz and attracts a larger audience.

Attention

(Step 3) GROW ATTENTION

An improved fan experience leads to more attention. More attention drives e.g ticket sales, merchandise, sponsorships and enables new revenue streams.