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SEA Change: Sports Excitement Analytics Revolutionizes Watching Sports

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Sports fans and enthusiasts are drawn to professional and college sports for a number of reasons – the tremendous athleticism, the dramatic emotional swings, the depth of loyalty to a team or school, the enjoyment of shared time with friends and family – all of which yield great entertainment value.

But the reality is that not every game rewards the viewer in the end. Spectators knowingly take a risk every time they sit down to watch a game. Will the game live up to its billing? Will it exhibit high energy or low energy? Will it be nip and tuck to the end or a blowout from the beginning?

These uncertainties have always surrounded sports, and spectators have simply accepted these uncertainties as fundamental characteristics of sports. Couple this uncertainty with the fact that nearly every professional and collegiate sporting event is broadcast, streamed, and archived, making the breadth of choice orders of magnitude greater than just a few years ago. Up until recently, individuals have simply stuck with the tradition of watching their favorite and local teams and tuning in to the highlights for everything else. That is, until now.

The advent of Sports Excitement Analytics has ushered in a new era in sports entertainment. Today, sports fans and enthusiasts have a choice as to what to watch and when to start watching. Rather than blindly tuning in to a game, individuals can be alerted to the most exciting games and matches being played at that very moment and jump right into the action, whether that be on their television, mobile phone, or computer. With the widespread availability of DVRs and Internet-based archives, individuals can begin watching these games at their convenience, from the very beginning of the game or at a recommended time in the middle of the action where the excitement level starts to gain momentum.

In order to preserve the suspense of events that fans may not be able to watch live, Sports Excitement Ratings indicate only the excitement level of a match, without revealing the score or other spoilers. Individuals who elect to time shift their viewing will have confidence that the game they're watching is going to be truly exciting without knowing anything else about the game, thus allowing them to experience all the thrill and drama of the game as it

unfolds in front of them.

In short, Sports Excitement Analytics helps direct individuals to the best games and matches being played, guarantees game excitement, and preserves the emotional thrill of watching the drama of the game play out.

There is no doubt that Sports Excitement Analytics is not for everyone or every game. True fans will watch their team through thick and thin, blowout or close game. But every fan is also a sports enthusiast: passionate for the game, tirelessly in search of the great match-ups that thrill throughout and to the very end. Sports Excitement Analytics is for these individuals and these times. When there are hundreds of games in a given week, surfacing the true gems and allowing individuals to experience all the excitement of these great games for themselves adds a new dimension to sports media consumption.

Thuuz LLC (derived from the word "enthusiast") has taken the leadership position in establishing the standard for Sports Excitement Analytics. Thuuz generates Game Excitement Ratings by taking in the play-by-play data for every game in progress and sending this information through a set of proprietary algorithms that quantitatively measure the impact on overall game excitement across three high-level game characteristics: competitiveness, pace, and novelty. Competitiveness measures how close the two teams are matched throughout the game. Pace measures the energy level of the game. Novelty measures the uniqueness of individual events that occur both before and during a game. The sum of these characteristics yields an overall Game Excitement Rating that can be communicated to fans and enthusiasts based on their personal preferences. In addition, a suggested "Watch From" time can be communicated to provide an optimal on-ramp into a game if the individual doesn't have the time to commit to watching the entire event.

Game Excitement Ratings are objective, consistent, reliable, and unbiased. To the *enthusiast*, a blowout is not exciting. Game Excitement Ratings reflect this. However, typical *fans* are thrilled when their team crushes an opponent. Thus, an adjustment needs to be made to accommodate the excitement preferences of every fan. Even for the enthusiast, personal preferences come into play when determining an individual's game excitement profile: To what extent does he or she like a particular sport? Offensive versus defensive play? Individual performance versus coordinated teamwork? These are just some of the preferences that can be used to modify the baseline, objective Game Excitement Ratings to suit an individual's personal tastes.

With the ubiquity of sports content, both live and archived, available on a myriad of screens and devices, Sports Excitement Analytics offers a number of new benefits to enhance Sports Media Entertainment. There is now a call to action pulling individuals into games that they wouldn't have normally sought out on their own. This, in turn, exposes them to teams and athletes that they may not

have had much opportunity to see in the past, thus deepening their knowledge of specific leagues and broadening their exposure across sports.

About the author: Warren Packard is the cofounder and CEO of Thuuz LLC. Prior to cofounding Thuuz, he spent the past 14 years starting technology businesses as a Managing Director of Draper Fisher Jurvetson.