

## 2013 Final Four Online Review

With the Final 4 now set with Louisville, Wichita State, Syracuse, and Michigan – we took a look at each of their digital strategies.

The methodology was to check each of the main athletic department sites to see what information and links they provided to other channels. If the AD section didn't lead us anywhere, we searched on Google for the program & coach in an effort to find official sites and social media channel accounts.

Our group started working in the college athletics online category in 2007, and we've monitored it closely ever since, so the findings were really not that surprising. Below are a few of the highlights, and on the following pages we've reviewed each of the individual programs in detail.

### Top-level Findings:

- No program had a dedicated website.
- Michigan was the only program to have an official Twitter account.
- Michigan's John Beilein was the only Head Coach to have an official Twitter account.
- Michigan was the only school to promote a facility on Foursquare.
- Wichita State was the only school to actively promote associated Hashtags.
- Rick Pitino & Jim Boeheim had personal websites, but they were more brand sites instead of focusing on their given programs.
- Syracuse was the only program to not have a social media presence of any kind.
- The four programs have a very limited social media channel exposure:

	Twitter	Facebook	Instagram	Pinterest	YouTube	Tumblr	Foursquare
Louisville	NA	50,508	NA	NA	454	NA	NA
Wichita State	NA	15,139	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Syracuse	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Michigan	54,983	148,185	NA	NA	NA	NA	5,236
*YouTube Subscribers							
**Foursquare Check-ins							
All #'s via 10:30AM CST 04.02.13							

### Future Considerations:

- *AD Sections:* If programs continue to rely solely on these sections within the AD sites to market themselves then they're going to have to make up for it on social media, because there is zero differentiation when it comes to AD section templates. Put yourself in the shoes of a potential recruit and see if you get pumped about any aspect of the program based on what you see on the AD Site. Whether it's a true dedicated program website, or a social media focused site, programs that look beyond the AD Site section template will stand out more and more.
- *Social Media:* The winning marketing formula going forward, despite what the programs have done here, is going to be active program accounts on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram at a minimum. It's a strategy that not only enhances your relationship with recruits, but also fans and program partners.

## Louisville Cardinals

### Profile

#### Athletic Dept Site:

<http://www.gocards.com/sports/m-baskbl/lou-m-baskbl-body.html>

#### Program Site:

None

#### Coach Site:

[www.RickPitino.com](http://www.RickPitino.com)

#### Social Media Channels:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UofLBasketball>

### Review

#### AD Site:

- Developed by CBSsports.com College Network.
- When you hit the main page you get the following Splash page, which is impactful, except there is no social media integration:



- The main page within the basketball section includes a Social Media tab which includes an activity feed from the program's Facebook account, but the general sports Twitter account provides mostly out of place content:



The screenshot shows the Louisville Cardinals website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for SPORTS, SCHEDULES, TICKETS, MERCHANDISE, FACILITIES, ATHLETICS, MULTIMEDIA, DONATE, and TRADITIONS. Below this is a sub-navigation bar with links for FAN CENTER, STUDENT-ATHLETES, RECRUITS, SPONSORSHIP, UNIVERSITY, and SITE INDEX. The main content area is titled "MEN'S BASKETBALL" and features a "SOCIAL MEDIA" tab. This tab displays two social media feeds: "FOLLOW ON TWITTER..." and "FOLLOW ON FACEBOOK...". The Twitter feed shows several tweets, including one about Ty Young being selected as BIG EAST Baseball Player of the Week. The Facebook feed shows a post from Louisville Cardinals about Kevin Ware's surgery. To the right of the social media feeds is a "QUICK LINKS" section with various links for the 2012-13 and 2011-12 seasons, including NCAA Tournament Central, Roster, Schedule, Game Notes, Statistics, and Men's Basketball Guide. Below the quick links is a "LIVE BASEBALL ON CARDS TV" advertisement for the "ALL SEASON" subscription, which includes a "CLICK TO SUBSCRIBE" button. At the bottom right, there is a "SHOP NOW" section for "CARDINAL AUTHENTIC" merchandise, specifically a "College Basketball #10 Practice Jersey - Black" priced at \$31.99.

#### RickPitino.com:

- Under Quick Links in the AD Site they include a link for [RickPitino.com](http://RickPitino.com).
- Back in June 2010 we did a [review on Coach Pitino's site](#), and unfortunately not much has changed.
- Includes a 2009 Copyright notice, which right away gives a bad impression.
- The Schedule hadn't been updated since the 1.12.13 game as of today when it was finally changed (have snap from yesterday with old information).
- Coaches Favs list shows it being from 12.01.09.
- Team – showed a 2011-2012 roster that was updated on 10.24.11 until today when it was finally changed (have snap from yesterday with old information).
- Players in the NBA content is outdated.
- No social media integration.
- Bottom-line a coaching brand like Rick Pitino deserves a better online presence.

**Social Media:**

- The only verified official channel that the program has is a Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/UofLBasketball>:



- They do a reasonable job with updates and incorporating images in posts, but one thing we noticed was on some of the images was a callout for [CardinalAthleticFund.com/Social](http://CardinalAthleticFund.com/Social)



- So we typed in the link and found a page noting: “Welcome to the Post Season Social Media Hub”



The screenshot shows the Louisville Basketball website's "Post Season Social Media Hub". At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: "FAQ'S", "ABOUT CAF", "WAYS TO GIVE", "ANNUAL FUND", "PREMIUM SEATING", "TICKETS & PARKING", and "ULFlyingCard". On the right, there are social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, along with a "LOUISVILLE FIRST CARDS FOREVER" logo. Below the navigation bar, there is a "MY CARDINAL ACCOUNT | GIVE NOW" button. The main content area features four basketball players in white and red uniforms. In the center, there is a Louisville Basketball logo and the text "Louisville Basketball". Below this, it says "Welcome to the Post Season Social Media Hub". At the bottom, there are four social media tiles: 
 

- Top-left: @ULFlyingCard with a paratrooper image.
- Top-right: FANS with a crowd image.
- Bottom-left: Men's Basketball with a game action image.
- Bottom-right: @UofLWBB with a team photo image.

 At the very bottom, there is a "Social Media" bar with icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.

- Within the basketball section on the AD Site, there is no mention of the Cardinal Athletic Fund. You have to look under the Athletics tab.
- When you click the Men’s Basketball graphic it displays video links and a Facebook activity feed. Overall just a very confusing approach and not one we’d recommend at all.
- Getting back to program accounts, it is interesting that Twitter’s own [March Madness discovery](#) page lists this account for the team: <https://twitter.com/villebasketball>. The description says it is the official program account, but it hasn’t been updated since March 12, 2011. The account also linked to a YouTube page <http://www.youtube.com/thevillebasketball>, but it hasn’t been updated since 5 months ago.
- One other note, we saw the Athletic Dept has a Pinterest page and a “Cardinal Basketball” board, but the last update was 4 weeks ago, and it does not solely cover the Men’s team <http://pinterest.com/uoflsports/cardinal-basketball/>

## Wichita State Shockers

### Profile

#### Athletic Dept Site:

[http://www.goshockers.com/SportSelect.dbml?&DB\\_OEM\\_ID=7500&SPID=2851&SPSID=61179](http://www.goshockers.com/SportSelect.dbml?&DB_OEM_ID=7500&SPID=2851&SPSID=61179)

#### Program Site:

None

#### Coach Site:

None

### Social Media Channels:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/coachchrisjans>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Wichita-State-Mens-Basketball/90483612103?fref=ts>

### Review

#### AD Site:

- Developed by Neulion.
- When you hit the main page you get a well done splash page (best of the 4 schools by far) that includes an impactful image of Coach Marshall. The page includes two hashtags – game specific #BEATLOUISVILLE, and department-wide #WATCHUS, and it includes icons for general AD social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram).



A promotional banner for the NCAA Tournament game between Wichita State and Louisville. The banner features a central image of Coach Marshall with his hand raised in a 'V' sign. The text 'FINAL #BEATLOUISVILLE' is at the top. Below that, 'NCAA TOURNAMENT' is written. The main title 'WICHITA STATE VS LOUISVILLE' is in large, bold letters. At the bottom, it says 'SATURDAY, APRIL 6 | 5:09PM CT | CBS'. There are also links for 'BUY TICKETS', 'TRAVEL INFO', 'WHERE TO WATCH', and 'NCAA BRACKET'. Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, and Instagram are at the bottom right, along with the hashtag #WATCHUS. The Wichita State Shockers logo is on the left and the Louisville Cardinals logo is on the right. Navigation links for 'ROSTER', 'NEWS', 'SCHEDULE', and 'STATS' are also present on both sides.

- The universal header includes the #WATCHUS hashtag, and the main basketball section page includes the splash page image:



The screenshot shows the Wichita State Shockers website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) and a search bar. Below this is a banner for "WICHITA STATE SHOCKERS" with the team mascot and the hashtag "#WATCHUS". The main content area is titled "TOURNAMENT CENTRAL" for the game "WICHITA STATE VS LOUISVILLE" on "SATURDAY, APRIL 6 | 5:09 PM CT | CBS". The page features a "Men's Basketball" section with links to "News", "Schedule/Results", "Stats", "MVC Standings", "Roster", "Coaches and Staff", "Camps", "Charles Koch Arena", "Fact Book", and "More". A "TOP NEWS" section displays a large image of Coach Chris Jans with the text "FINAL #BEATLOUISVILLE" and "NCAA TOURNAMENT WICHITA STATE VS LOUISVILLE". A "SHOCKER VISION VIDEO" section shows a video player with the Shockers logo and a list of video clips including "MBB: Shockers on ESPN2 and CBS", "MBB: Ohio State Postgame", "MBB: La Salle Postgame", "Tim Tebow speaks to the MBB Team", and "MBB: S. Active After O-Ren". At the bottom, there is a "GAME STARTS IN" section showing a baseball game "Baseball: vs Indiana State ...".

- The section does not include any promotion of their official Facebook account or Coach Jans' Twitter account. When you visit the Social Media directory located under the Fan Central tab, they do list both accounts.
- Under the "Future Shockers" tab when you try to click Men's Basketball it takes you to the Baseball Program's page. From there under Sports you're able to access the [Men's BBall page](#). Page consists of links to 7 video clips.

#### Social Media:

- The Shockers have an official Facebook account, but they need to solidify a better username: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Wichita-State-Mens-Basketball/90483612103?ref=ts>, and they also have an Associate HC (Chris Jans) with a Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/coachchrisjans>



- They chose not to carry through the splash page image from the AD Site, and the current cover image makes no mention of the Final Four.
- What's interesting about their FB strategy is they post a lot of content (mostly game updates), but you have to go all the way back to March 20<sup>th</sup> to find a post with a photo.

## Syracuse Orange

### Profile

#### Athletic Dept Site:

<http://www.suathletics.com/index.aspx?path=mbasket>

#### Program Site:

None

#### Coach Site:

[www.JimBoeheim.com](http://www.JimBoeheim.com)

#### Social Media Channels:

None

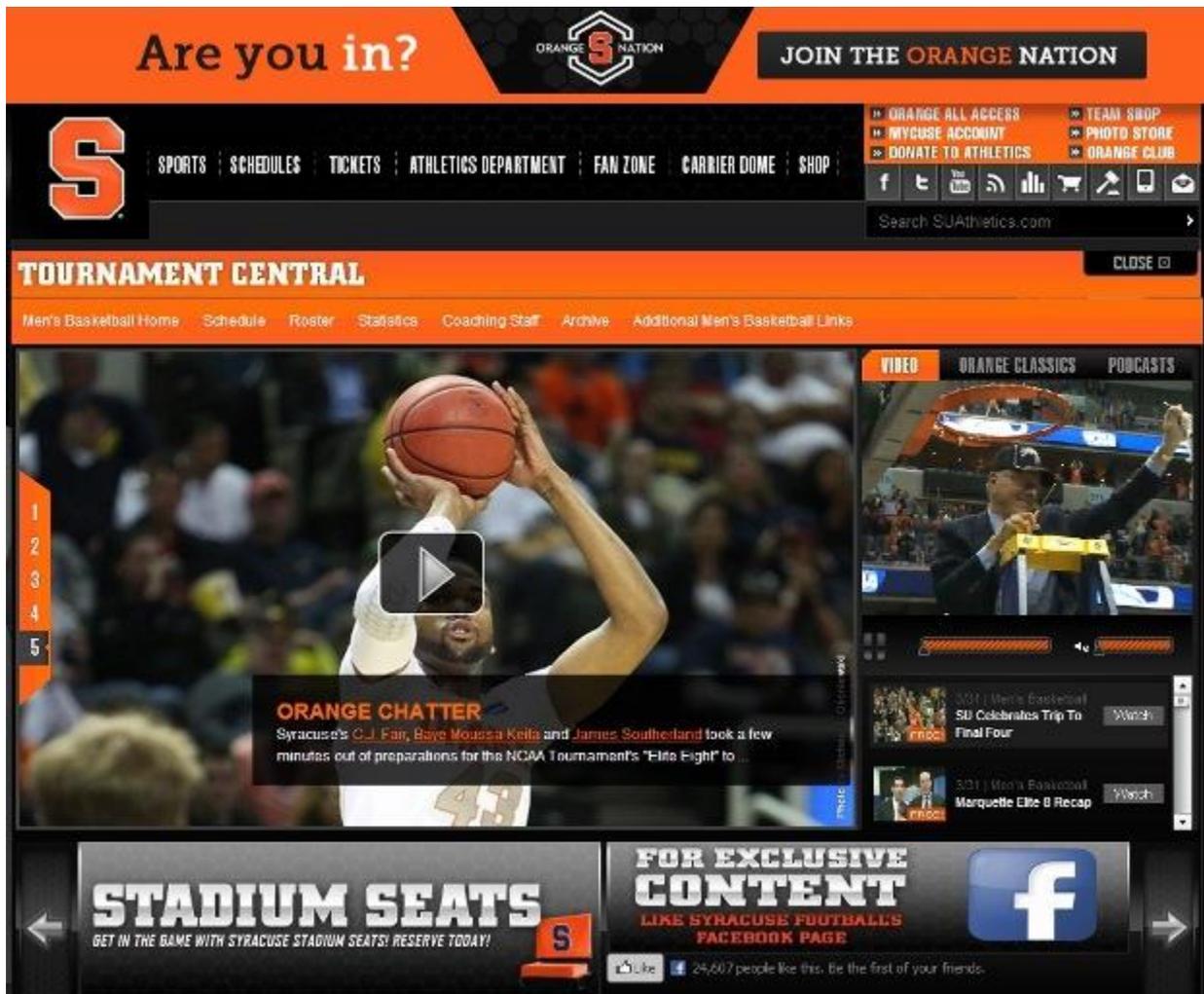
### Review

#### AD Site:

- Developed by Sidearm Sports.
- When you hit the main page you get the following Splash page, which is well done, except there is no social media integration (granted hard to do when you don't have any official program accounts, but the overall athletic department could have promoted a hashtag):



- The main basketball section provides similar content that you would find on any AD Dept basketball program section, but curiously does promote the Football Program's Facebook account in the rotational ads:



The screenshot shows the Syracuse University Athletics website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with "Are you in?" and "JOIN THE ORANGE NATION". Below that is a menu with "SPORTS", "SCHEDULES", "TICKETS", "ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT", "FAN ZONE", "CARRIER DOME", and "SHOP". A search bar is also present. The main content area features a "TOURNAMENT CENTRAL" section with a video player showing a basketball player. Below the video is a section titled "ORANGE CHATTER" with a short article snippet. To the right, there are video thumbnails for "3/31 Men's Basketball SU Celebrates Trip To Final Four" and "3/31 Men's Basketball Marquette Elite 8 Recap". At the bottom, there are two promotional banners: "STADIUM SEATS" and "FOR EXCLUSIVE CONTENT LIKE SYRACUSE FOOTBALL'S FACEBOOK PAGE".

#### JimBoeheim.com:

- Under Additional Links on the Ad Site they link to [JimBoeheim.com](http://JimBoeheim.com)
- First thing you realize is this is more of a personal brand website, and not focused on promoting the Syracuse Program.
- No images from Final Four
- Orange Headlines – links to AD Site (2 articles).

#### Social Media:

- Not much to mention here, because the program does not have any official social media accounts.
- Twitter's [March Madness discovery](https://twitter.com/PSBasketball) page lists this account for the team, but it's not an official one: <https://twitter.com/PSBasketball>
- Similar to Louisville, the athletic department has a [Pinterest account](#), but there's no specific Men's Basketball board, and even the "Tickets and Promotions" board doesn't include FF ticket info.

## Michigan Wolverines

### Profile

#### Athletic Dept Site:

<http://www.mgoblue.com/sports/m-baskbl/mich-m-baskbl-body.html>

#### Program Site:

None

#### Coach Site:

None

### Social Media Channels:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UMichBball>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/JohnBeilein>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MichiganBasketball>

Foursquare: <https://foursquare.com/v/crisler-center/4b154fedf964a52082af23e3>

### Review

#### AD Site:

- Developed by CBSsports.com College Network.
- When you hit the main page you get the following splash which like Syracuse is well done, but does not include any social media integration:



- On the main basketball section page, they include a Twitter Follow button, and a Facebook Like button for specific program accounts which is well done. They also include a callout tab for Social Media similar to Louisville (ie same developer template), which includes Twitter and Facebook program feeds. They also include a John Beilein tab which includes a feed from his Twitter account. They also include a “Connect” sub-nav tab which includes links to the program’s Twitter and Facebook account (but not Coach Beilein’s).



- The Connect sub-link also includes a link for “[The voice of @umichbball](#)” which promotes a pretty cool contest to be the voice of the official program Twitter account. No winner is listed for the current 2012-13 season.
- The “Follow the Wolverines” SM graphic does not link to official program accounts, but instead a department-wide directory. (Coach Beilein’s Twitter account is not listed on the dept-wide directory)

**Social Media:**

- The program has official accounts on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MichiganBasketball> and Twitter <https://twitter.com/umichbball>, and Head Coach John Beilein also has an official Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/JohnBeilein>
- They do a good job with their Facebook account keeping it updated and integrating photos in posts. Also the cover image is current to the Final Four, and it includes their Twitter handle. The Instagram tab features a feed from the Athletics Dept (/UMichAthletics), but 99% of the photos are of the basketball team so not sure why they don't just have their own account – and why the Athletics account doesn't cover any other sports going back to December 5<sup>th</sup>.



- Much was made about the program's partnership with [SportStream](#), but there is no mention of it in the basketball section or the overall SM directory. You only find it via the Game Day sub-link – then click Game Central – then it's listed as a text link on the page.