

### RATINGS ASIDE, COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF SHOWS IMPORTANCE OF ON-SITE, BRAND ACTIVATION



While media is chief around the College Football Playoff (CFP) and NCAA Bowl Season, experiential activation adds an immense amount of value for a brand with consumers on-site.

A record number of 40 bowl games were played in 2015-16. Only one of those games (St. Petersburg Bowl) was left without a title sponsor in 2015, and title deals only saw a slight shift this year. Motel 6 replaced TicketCity in the Cactus Bowl; Camping World traded with Duck Commander in the Independence Bowl; National Funding came in for the Holiday Bowl; and, most notably, BattleFrog sponsored the Fiesta Bowl taking it over from Vizio.

Looking only at the CFP's New Year's Six, there was a 13 percent drop in TV ratings from last year. Outside factors, though, contributed to the drop – and the average margin of victory throughout those games was 24.2 points.

With that said – it's pivotal for brands to engage consumers (the low hanging fruit) at the stadium.

For the first time in history, Miami played host to the 2015 Playoff Semifinal in the Orange Bowl as Clemson squared off against Oklahoma. And, how fortuitous is it that only two summers ago, as the new CFP was announced, Capital One took over the title sponsorship of the Orange Bowl?

With Clemson noted for not being a national draw amongst viewers, the sponsorship experts at rEvolution examined the best on-site activations around Sun Life Stadium in Miami. The following is our findings from the Fan Fest presented by the Capital One Venture Card.

#### Capital One Branded Everything and Even Had Burgers

With the title sponsorship deal of the Orange Bowl and official CFP partner, Capital One's key strategy was branding. The official credit card and banking partner of the CFP seemed to slap its logo everywhere.

From an experiential standpoint at the Fan Fest, the Capital One Cup Athletic Challenge was featured with combine-like tests. Participants received a Cup Challenge QR card from brand ambassadors, scanned their cards at each sport station, and they could then receive a prize (Orange Bowl eye black, a patch or Clemson/Oklahoma branded capes).



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But the Capital One traveling showcase – which was very well traveled (and seen) throughout the years as a NCAA partner – seemed to struggle with consumer fatigue. Lines were sparse even with nearly three hours prior to kickoff.

In addition to appearances by former Clemson player Tajh Boyd, former Sooner Roy Williams and quarterback Doug Flutie, Capital One most notably hosted a Burger Battle that fit perfectly with the tailgate scene and which seemed to be well attended.

The goal was for Capital One to bring the “ultimate game day tailgate culinary competition to Fan Fest,” according to Orange Bowl organizers. The competition featured “a tournament-style format, with top chefs from South Florida facing off, as well as the chefs from Oklahoma and Clemson team markets.”

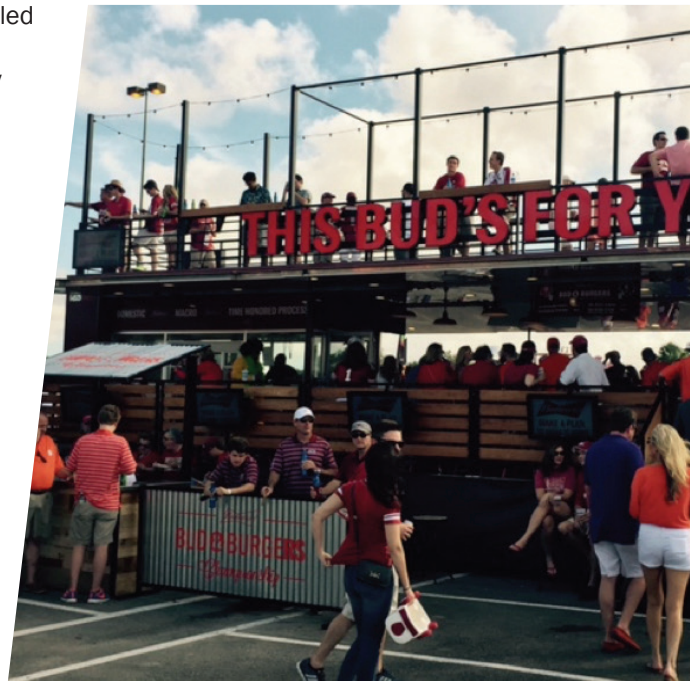
Capital One Venture Card holders received access to a private lounge next to the music stage with Phillip Phillips as the headliner. Both lounge and music stage stayed packed with eager fans.

### **Budweiser Offered the Best Branded Tailgate**

Budweiser leveraged the balmy, December climate of South Florida with a tailgate atmosphere. Working flawlessly with the Capital One Burger Battle, Budweiser used a footprint stemming from its national campaign launched in April 2015, Bud & Burgers Championships (in search of the best burgers in America) and, as they lasted, offered burger samples.

Budweiser offered the most comfortable chill out spot for fans at the tailgate. In addition, Bud Light featured footprints in multiple locations including an “Interactive Endzone.”

Consumers could take photos, in a #UpForWhatever four-wheeler or a massive inflatable chair, which were automatically shared to the Bud Light Interactive End Zone Facebook page and emailed to participants with their choice of a custom Orange Bowl branded background.



### Chick-fil-A Stadium a Must-See

Chick-fil-A had the second largest single footprint and was the most visually appealing for fans. While nearly the same footprint appeared at the College Football Playoff Championship game in 2015, this one was scaled down for the Orange Bowl.

The fast-food joint asked fans to show off their best dance move for a prize and also featured a photo experience on a stadium-like backdrop. Encouraging consumers to “Eat More Chicken” with the mascot making rounds on-site, Chick-fil-A again produced personalized, plush cows with the fan’s name and favorite team color – a big hit.

### Nissan Wins Heisman

Using its historic sponsorship of the Heisman Trophy, Nissan literally dropped a house in the Sun Life Stadium parking lot. The automaker gave fans an opportunity to learn more about Heisman winners, share videos of their best touchdown celebration and take photos with the Heisman Trophy. The Heisman House made 11 stops throughout the year at college football marquee matchups.

Just outside the Heisman House, Nissan hosted a pull-up challenge where participants could win prizes and find a place on the leaderboard.



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