



CASE CUP COMPETITION

esurance[®]
an **Allstate**[®] company



**2016 NATIONAL SPORTS FORUM
CASE CUP COMPETITION**

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GMR

National Sports Forum – Case Competition

Executive Summary

Esurance is not your father's insurance company. The brand was born online in 1999 with the premise that it could leverage technology to create a simple and efficient insurance product without physical store fronts or sales agents – all designed to save you time and money. Esurance was literally built to save.

In 2011, Allstate Inc. acquired Esurance to serve as its growth engine. Since, Esurance has accelerated its business considerably. The company has expanded its vehicle insurance offering from 30 to 42 states and unveiled its homeowners insurance offering in 23 states. Esurance has significantly increased its marketing budget to generate the awareness and consideration to support its growth goals.

In 2014, Esurance identified sponsorship as a major tool within its marketing mix – something that could provide deeper access to a specific audience and enhance perceptions of the brand. The company hired GMR Marketing to assist in auditing its portfolio, restructuring its investments and developing a sponsorship positioning that the rest of the marketing department and its supporting agencies could rally around.

In 2015, Major League Baseball (MLB) emerged as an opportunity of interest. Esurance found a high degree of target audience and brand alignment with MLB. Importantly, the insurance category was wide open – and had been since State Farm vacated in 2012. After several rounds of negotiation, Esurance and MLB reached a four-year, eight figure sponsorship agreement that included entitlement to the Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot and newly created Esurance MLB Awards.

The 2015 Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot was a swinging success. In the first year of the all-digital ballot, Esurance and MLB attracted 2.5 million unique voters to the platform that collectively cast 50M ballots and 600M votes – smashing previous MLB records for fan participation – while generating 3.2B impressions for the brand inside of three months.

MLB and Esurance are now looking to build upon last year's success of the Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot. MLB will create the overarching marketing campaign and produce the lion's share of promotion. However, Esurance will look to further activate against its entitlement of the ballot to complement the MLB's campaign. Your assignment is to create an integrated activation campaign involving TV, digital, social, PR and live engagement opportunities to generate awareness for the ballot and authentically tie Esurance's brand to baseball and the program.

History of Esurance

As the dot-com boom revolutionized business in the mid-90s, insurers saw the opportunity to improve service by streamlining a complicated process.

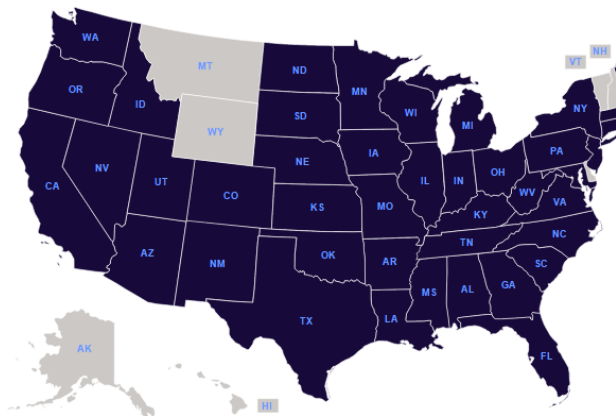
Esurance launched its online car insurance company in 1999 with the goal of making it easy to find the right policy in just a few minutes. By giving consumers the tools to shop and compare online and backing it up with 24/7 customer service, Esurance was helping to write the next chapter in car insurance history.

Traditional insurance companies soon took notice. The hundred year-old model of visiting sales agents inside of brick and mortar locations was rapidly changing. To keep up with the times, all would need to develop online offerings. Allstate Corporation endeavored to go one step further by acquiring Esurance in 2011 with the intent to lend its brand equity and financial resources to the fledgling online insurer in the hopes of boosting the company's already impressive growth.

Esurance, now backed by Allstate, was not content to rest on its laurels. The company sought to help pioneer the industry once again by adding homeowner's insurance to its portfolio in 2013. With only a small fraction of homeowners insurance sold online, this seemed the most logical evolution of Esurance's business within the online frontier.

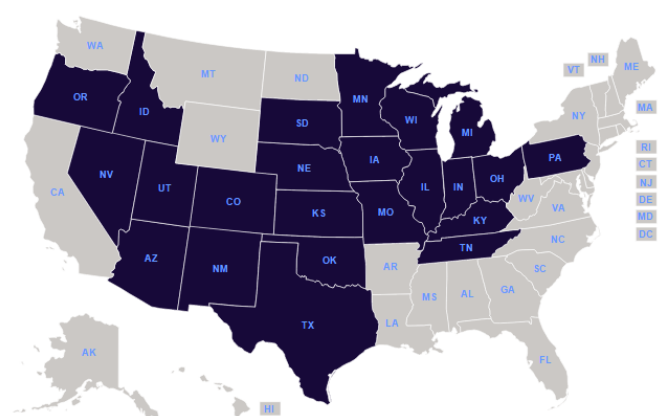
Today, Esurance offers vehicle insurance in 42 states. This includes automobile, RV, motorcycle, scooter, ATV, boat, snowmobile and more. The company also offers homeowners insurance in 23 states.

Auto Insurance State Coverage



● Car insurance available from Esurance
● Car insurance available through our partners

Homeowners Insurance State Coverage



● Homeowners insurance available from Esurance
● Homeowners insurance available through our partners

History of Sponsorship at Esurance

Since 2005, Esurance has been actively involved in the sponsorship space in a wide array of partnerships in sports, entertainment and community relations. Esurance built a heavy presence in the tennis and music space early on which allowed the brand to test the sponsorship waters and build key learnings while at the same time providing visibility on a local and national stage.

Since 2010, the brand has focused on re-evaluating partnership opportunities to create a more focused approach and transition away from what became a scattered and non-consistent portfolio. The goal during this time was to build a clear direction and strategy that aligned the Esurance brand with the right audience, the right platforms and the right asset mix.

The Sponsorship Audit

Esurance engaged GMR to address the fragmented state of its sponsorship portfolio through a strategic audit process. The first step was to identify and build consensus around the objectives of and strategic imperatives for sponsorship at the company. These objectives and imperatives then informed the evaluation of existing and prospective sponsorships that would ultimately lead to a reconfiguration of the portfolio.

The output of the sponsorship audit process can be reviewed below:

Objectives

There is a clear and concise focus on “building relevant awareness and consideration” at scale.

Allstate bought Esurance in 2011 to become its growth engine. Revenue growth requires brand growth. Esurance decision-makers pegged sponsorship as a key ingredient in a handful of new marketing priorities that could drive awareness amongst their target (i.e., “relevant awareness”) at scale but also transfer fan passion to enhance consideration.

Target

The narrowest definition of the Esurance aspirational target audience is A25-49, \$75K-\$250K HHI, married/partnered, homeowner and multi-vehicle owner. However, it’s best to think of this target as the bullseye of a concentric circle. If you strip away multi-vehicle or partnered, the target gets a little bigger.

Esurance is generally looking for young, educated, tech-savvy and self-directed consumers – altogether modern people – that simply don’t have time to endure the traditional insurance process.

The way Esurance views its Self-Directed 30-Somethings is particularly important. These consumers expect a lot from the companies they do business with: fairness, ease-of-use, transparency, and most importantly excellent service. They also expect service to be fast, infallible and continually improving – much like software – but they don’t want the brand to be robotic; they want to know that real humans work there and care.

Brand

Esurance is “Insurance for the Modern World”. The brand prides itself on creating a “smart, easy and tailored to you” customer experience that reflects its pillars of modernity, innovation, efficiency and customer service. This approach doesn’t stop with advertising or product-related experience, but also the way Esurance addresses the fan base of every sponsorship it owns.

Esurance is actively seeking to shift its brand from being seen as an online insurance company, run by computers, offering cheap rates, to being seen as a credible, customer-focused company, enhanced by technology to save you money and take care of you, so people have confidence in buying Esurance.

When people choose to get a quote from Esurance they are motivated to save money, but they don’t expect to receive the same level of customer service that they might get from other insurance companies. They face many uncertainties, seemingly on their own, when it comes time to actually purchasing an Esurance policy:

- Uncertainty about whether or not they’re getting a fair/competitive price.
- Uncertainty about whether or not they’ve made the right coverage decisions.
- Uncertainty about what could happen and will they be protected financially in an accident.
- Uncertainty about whether or not someone will be available to help them when they need it.

Therefore, much of Esurance’s challenge in shifting its brand image will depend upon its ability to build trust and confidence within the consumer.

Portfolio Construct

The objectives, target and brand information were necessary in evaluating the fit of existing and prospective properties, but a framework for guiding and bucketing investments was also required to help reconfigure the fragmented portfolio and maximize existing sponsorship dollars.

Esurance and GMR landed on a three-tier construct for portfolio investment that focused the majority of the company’s efforts on a major tent pole property.

Tier 1 - Big Impact	Tier 2 - Innovative & Regional	Tier 3 - Test & Learn / Associate
Spend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60%-70% of sponsorship budget to be allocated here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15-25% of sponsorship budget to be allocated here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-15% of sponsorship budget allocated here
Definition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 "tent pole" property National in scope, supplemented by local efforts as strategies evolve Must align with Esurance brand and target Affords integration opportunities across all marketing channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 properties Must be strongly aligned with brand pillars of modernity and innovation, while also providing, at minimum, regional reach Track record of success in driving brand objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-4 properties Used to explore properties that could grow into Tier 1 or Tier 2 opportunities May also be used to fund associate-driven initiatives

Audit Findings

Insights taken from the audit process informed a robust evaluation of existing and prospective sports and entertainment properties that revealed a degree of misalignment between Esurance and many of its existing sponsorship agreements (e.g., US Open, Golden State Warriors, South Beach Food and Wine Festival, etc.) while also supporting some existing sponsorship agreements (e.g., SXSW).

Importantly, this provided the justification necessary for divestment of those misaligned assets, which freed up millions of unallocated dollars to reinvest in the existing aligned properties or prospective opportunities that were previously economically infeasible – like Major League Baseball.

Why MLB?

MLB proved to be highly target and brand-aligned with Esurance. Despite an aging fan base, MLB still delivered strongly in the A25-49 category with high average HHI and partnership, homeownership and vehicle ownership rates. Moreover, Esurance was attempting to modernize insurance by leveraging technology to create better customer engagement tools like Photo Claims and Repair View just the same as MLB was attempting to modernize baseball by leveraging technology to create better fan engagement tools like StatCast and PitchFX. Importantly, the category was also open as State Farm had vacated for the NBA in 2012. The only thing left to determine was the platform Esurance and MLB could build together that would help Esurance deliver on its need for increased awareness and consideration.

Official Auto Insurance Partner of Major League Baseball

In April 2015, Esurance signed a four-year, eight figure sponsorship agreement to become the Official Auto Insurance Partner of Major League Baseball. The deal featured standard rights like the use of all MLB logos, trademarks and jewel events (e.g., Opening Day, All-Star Game, World Series) and collective use of team logos. Esurance received these rights exclusively within the category of auto insurance. However, MLB split the larger insurance category by giving The Hartford exclusive rights across homeowners, life and commercial. Importantly, the deal also included two entitlements of league-driven marketing platforms – MLB All-Star Game Ballot and MLB Awards – that would ensure Esurance had the visibility and activation opportunity to achieve the awareness and consideration it desired.

The MLB All-Star Game is the marquee event of the summer sporting calendar. The Mid-Summer Classic represents an unparalleled opportunity across the North American sports landscape to own media headlines in virtually uncontested fashion as the NFL, NBA and NHL are all out-of-season. Therefore, MLB has a vested interest in promoting the MLB All-Star Game and Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot for a host of reasons: enhancing the profile of its players, providing a bigger stage for its sponsors to leverage and creating a content pulse point for its media partners – all three of which are conducive to growth of the game.

Timing played a large role in the asset mix of the Esurance-MLB deal, and Esurance adopted the entitlement of the MLB All-Star Game Ballot at the right time in the game's history as 2015 represented the modernization of the platform and the first time that the ballot would become all-digital. No more paper entries at-stadium. The only way a fan could vote for their favorite All-Star was to head online to MLB.com/Vote through their smart device, computer or at-stadium kiosks.

In addition to all of the other reasons to promote the MLB All-Star Game and Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot, the new and all-digital ballot platform provided yet another incentive for promotion. Esurance partnered with the MLB to design and execute a market campaign that would ensure sufficient promotion of the ballot with the complementary aim of supporting its own awareness and consideration goals.

Below is a glimpse of the calendar of activation Esurance employed to promote the Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot that ran from April 29, 2015 through July 2, 2015.

- To support the ballot launch in May, Esurance and GMR collaborated with MLB to host a one-day stunt at ten MLB stadiums across the league where 10,000+ fans were invited to take a picture with cardboard cutouts of their favorite all-star candidates before some lucky fans were even photo bombed by players. All photo bomb interactions were captured and used to produce TV and digital pre-roll [commercials](#) viewed over 10M+ times.
- To support ballot engagement in June, Esurance and GMR developed a sweepstakes entered by over 400K uniques to send two fans from every team to the All-Star Game in Cincinnati as part of a Fan All-Star Team.
- To extend the ballot conversation in July, Esurance and GMR sought to pivot the focus from players to fans at the All-Star Game. Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot sweepstakes winners attended the All-Star Game, and their experiences were documented in short and medium form video content pieces that told their [fan stories](#) – generating a combined 100M+ impressions through content viewership and earned media. Esurance also capitalized on traffic at the MLB All-Star Fan Fest by creating a [180 degree photo](#) capture allowing 5,000+ fans to showcase and share their All-Star form by saving a home run at the fence generating a further 1M+ impressions.

The result was record-breaking participation in the Esurance MLB All-Star Game Ballot with 2.5M unique voters who cast over 50M ballots and 620M total votes (compared to 1.4M unique voters, 22M ballots and 260M votes in 2014). Impressively, combined MLB and Esurance promotion of the ballot through television, digital, social and other activations generated 3.2B+ impressions for the Esurance brand in three short months.

Assignment

Your assignment is to create an integrated activation campaign involving TV, digital, social, PR and live engagement opportunities to generate awareness for the ballot and authentically tie Esurance's brand to baseball and the program.

Objective

- 500M+ combined impressions through social, public relations and onsite activation

Budget

- \$1,000,000 to produce and/or execute all related activations
- \$250,000 for social media amplification
- The sponsorship agreement comes with sizable television and digital media commitments that ensure Esurance will have the placements to activate your integrated campaign.
- Additionally, MLB is contractually obligated to put its own television and digital media units (e.g., MLB Network and MLB.com assets) behind the promotion of the Esurance MLB All-Star Ballot.