

How Inquirer.com's Gameday Central leverages Viafoura Conversations to foster a **4.5X increase in on-site engagement**

THE CLIENT

The Philadelphia Inquirer is a for-profit public benefit corporation owned by a non-profit, The Lenfest Institute. Reaching a monthly audience of over 10 million people, The Inquirer operates across multiple platforms, including newspapers, Inquirer.com, newsletters, live events and more.

The Philadelphia Inquirer



Becky Bowers
VP of Product



Cary Begatole
Product Manager

THE CHALLENGE

For local news sites, it can be tough to compete with national outlets, especially when it comes to sports coverage. Heading into the Philadelphia Eagles' 2021 season, The Inquirer's product team wanted to elevate the digital experience on [Inquirer.com](https://www.inquirer.com) to build fan loyalty and increase key engagement metrics like time on site.

The team was successfully engaging fans before and after Eagles games, but product manager Cary Begatole identified an opportunity to do more during the games to attract and retain fans by creating a second-screen experience. The Inquirer's product team, led by VP of Product Becky Bowers, needed to fill this gap to deliver an end-to-end game day experience that would make inquirer.com the premier web destination for Eagles fans.

THE SOLUTION

As part of The Philadelphia Inquirer's larger strategy around innovation and investment in the Sports Desk, they reimagined Eagles coverage by launching a multi-platform approach called [Gameday Central](#).

Offering live-streaming video with Inquirer reporters, real-time comments, social feeds, and player statistics in a tabbed format, Gameday Central was designed to provide fans with the ultimate interactive second-screen experience on game day.

The commenting tab was powered by Viafoura's Conversations tool, providing fans with a forum to interact with one another and respected journalists during games. Since The Inquirer values open and engaging civil conversations, Viafoura's automated moderation solution was also implemented to flag and remove toxic comments.

Throughout the season, **Becky's team routinely reviewed Viafoura data and internal web analytics to understand user behaviour and improve the experience.** For example, the team suspected that the social feed tab would be the most clicked, but the data showed that fans were spending most of their time in the comments and play-by-play tabs, providing quantitative evidence for how to improve Gameday Central.

This live event solution successfully delivered the ultimate fan experience to Eagles fans all season long, generating increases in engagement, subscriber time on site, and registration growth.

Gameday Central has been a resounding success for Inquirer.com. It received honourable mention in the INMA Global Media Awards category for Best Idea to Encourage Reader Engagement, and was featured in [this Digiday piece](#). It's now a critical part of [Inquirer.com](#)'s coverage of the NFL, NBA, MLB, NCAA, and other major sporting events.

“

Viafoura's Conversations tool is a critical piece of Gameday Central because it allows fans to engage directly in real-time with each other and our reporters, which improves the fan experience and helps us grow our audience.

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— **Becky Bowers**
VP of Product, The Philadelphia Inquirer

RESULTS

4.5x increase in on-site engagement

14% increase in registrations

59% increase in time spent in comments

20% increase in time on the Gameday Central site among subscribers

