

## Sports Geek Nation AMA with Jason Davis

Jason Davis was a former Sports Geek podcast guest in episode 151 back when he was with the Queensland Rugby League and one of our most active users in the Slack community. He founded TheSiren.com.au and Siren Media in 2017 a digital content agency catering to sports and business sectors. Jason's years of experience in working with digital, media, sports events marketing and reactive content will surely give you more insights.

Connect with Jason Davis on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), Twitter [@jase\\_davis](#) and Slack [@jase](#)  
Find out more about The Siren at <https://thesiren.com.au/>

Here's the full transcript:

Links to names will link you into Slack community, if you are not a member [please sign up here](#).

**Q. [Sean Callanan](#):** I'll open proceedings @jase tell us more about the origin story for The Siren, where did the idea come from and how did you get started?

**A. [Jason Davis](#):** Thanks Sean - well, as you mentioned, I was Head of Digital at the Queensland Rugby League for a couple of years and before that worked with the Seven Network on the Australian Open tennis OTT streaming product, which went on to form the backbone of the Rio Olympics streaming service. In all those jobs I would be running content and tech teams behind the scenes underneath stadia and see all this great content of player preparations and team warm ups and half-time sprays by coaches (!) and the game aftermath etc and I'd always be thinking to myself how lucky I was to see that - the fans didn't. But then in the locker room of the 2016 State of Origin Game II, when the song was being sung and shenanigans were being had, I started thinking about the 55k fans in the stadium (Suncorp) would give their eye teeth to see what I was seeing. In some respects, they were getting a worse experience than those watching on TV, who at least got a little bit of this content through the broadcast - along with interviews, analysis etc. You get very little of that at the game. Also, even at that level of sport, sponsorship and commercial departments are always looking for more inventory to sell, and fans are always looking to get closer to their team - especially the most engaged ones who've paid money to be there. I thought if I could create a content platform to let teams share a bit of this with fans, but only the ones at the stadium (to get more bums on seats), the live sport experience would better compete with the broadcast experience, and it would create digital engagement that sponsors would love to get a piece of. I built it and called it The Siren ([thesiren.com.au](https://thesiren.com.au))

**Q. [Andrew Walton](#):** Hello @jase have you found any technical limitations in delivering the platform so far and how did you work around them please?

**A. [Jason Davis](#):** Thanks @andrewwaltonx - Not too many really tough technical challenges. Mobile coverage is the main issue in some large venues, but that's mostly been mitigated by WiFi and 4G upgrades around the big stadia and country in general. I think if I'd released the

product two years ago it would have been a very different story! Another interesting quirk to that story in stadia is the introduction of a lot of stadium WiFi services, but I don't think they've been very successful in general because fans know that if they sign in to the stadium wifi they're going to get bombarded with marketing. 4G coverage is usually pretty good and data is cheap now - when was the last time you signed into stadium WiFi? I never do. Ironically, putting exclusive content gathered by The Siren behind the wifi sign-in as an incentive is a service we are looking into. Stadia need fans to use the WiFi to pay for the infrastructure (as mediocre as it sometimes is).

**Andrew Walton:** Thanks @jase recent WiFi experiences here personally have been mixed so far. MCG generally good, Etihad average, MECC reasonable as examples. @mrblairhughes would have as good a view as anybody given the volume of events and locations he covers.

**Jason Davis:** I never log in unless I have to - I get similar feedback from my "civilian" friends, but there would be a percentage who do

**Q. Sophie Moore:** Hi @jase I was wondering if there is an interest or intent to engage those that are interested in all things 'sport' or 'code' but aren't 'fans' of one particular team or franchise? Generating more engagement and reach?

**A. Jason Davis:** Hi Sophie - We want to concentrate on engaging whoever is at an event - there's a lot of upside for event-holders in converting first-timers into semi-regulars. We're talking to non-sport operators like music festival operators and even retirement village operators but we're staying inside the geofence for now - although we allow sharing "outbound" to social as a reach play.

**Q. Kieron Turner:** Hi @jase - How have you found the transition from employee to entrepreneur and what's been the biggest challenge with The Siren? Has it been generating interest, educating decision makers, overcoming rights holder restrictions or something else completely?

**A. Jason Davis:** Hi Kieron - Q1: I'm loving the autonomy and speed that you can move in business - compared to being in a corporate structure. And anyone who's worked in sport knows it's often very old school. I just couldn't sit in any more meetings that I knew were pointless and wouldn't achieve anything.

Q2: You've hit the top-three challenges on the head, @kieronturner - with educating decision-makers the toughest. Educating sport execs (often former players) about a completely new type of location-based sponsor inventory via a platform that isn't like anything else out there is a challenge.

We also found that even with new sponsor money on the table, clubs still didn't have a spare game day resource to run The Siren, so we changed our offering slightly to supply that

resource for them, as well as digital ad sales if needed. The rights issue is also a tough one - mainly because there are a lot of old-school rights deals still in place, before location-based digital marketing was a real thing. So execs look at a deal that says "<sponsor> owns the rights to digital content for broadcast" and they don't want to test where that starts and ends. Many times, the actual deal states that the rights-holder gets first rights to game day content from the league/competition for broadcast purposes but that doesn't mean you can't expand the content that is captured and offer them first right of refusal.

## What is Sports Geek Nation?

Been forwarded this from a colleague? That's great we love seeing our members get credit for sharing their knowledge. Sports Geek Nation is a curated sports business community in Slack and Facebook which will help you learn from the very best in the world. Sports Geek Nation was founded by Sean Callanan in 2015 (as #SportsBiz Slack), it connects sports executives who work in digital, data and technology.

Sports Geek Nation has members from (in alphabetical order) Australia, Canada, Denmark, India, Lithuania, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States working in sports such as basketball, football, ice hockey, baseball, AFL, horse racing, golf, rugby league, netball and more.

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