

Sports Geek Nation AMA with Alfonso Medina

Alfonso Medina is the Head of Media Rights at Tennis Australia.

Alfonso's team works with broadcasters and media platforms, sponsors, and publishers around the world, maximising value and reach for properties like the Australian Open, the Laver Cup and many others. Previously at the EFL, Endemol and ESPN among some, he's a big fan of creating and distributing content that talks to a moment in time, a place, an audience or a device. Be it live or delayed, on a big screen, or a phone, a documentary or an ad, for free or premium, sponsored or editorial, he is passionate about the many ways of telling stories.

Connect with Alfonso Medina on [LinkedIn](#) and Slack [@alfonsomra](#)

Find out more about Tennis Australia at tennis.com.au

Here's the full transcript:

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Q. [seancallanan](#): I'll bring the first serve :tennis: For those who are not based in Australia you recently helped negotiate the latest Tennis Australia broadcast deal from Channel 7 to Channel 9. Can you take us behind the scenes of the work involved to pull that deal together and perhaps some of your biggest lessons from the process?

A. [alfonsomra](#): Thanks [@seancallanan](#) for the invite. And the question. I can share some bits.

It was a journey that started probably in 2014 already. We set up an in-house media rights team for the first time, and started to build relationships with all broadcasters in Australia. We did this also around the world, reaching over 100 broadcasters in over 200 countries.

By having this global knowledge and relationships we were able to talk to and listen to Seven, Nine, Ten, ABC, SBS, Fox Sports and many others, and understand and query what they said. We learnt what were their problems and opportunities.

We then presented our own challenges and ideas and conversations evolved in different paths with everyone.

The dialogue with Nine was always very exciting, and we shared so many ideas for innovation, entertainment and engagement.

From there there was a formal process, and we decided to go with Nine, who showed a level of commitment and innovation that was very exciting for the whole organisation.

Many lessons learnt but some that stand out include not assuming that anything is forever, and that building change and adapting for the future doesn't happen overnight.

Q. [Edward Ernst](#): @alfonsomra what are the KPIs you're most often citing when pitching the value of Tennis Australia?

A. [alfonsomra](#): Hi @Edward Ernst, there are a few things that stand out. Like the Australian Open is only one of four Grand Slams, and the only one in the space of eight months, between September and May. It is an event and brand that has been around for over 100 years, and we attract now over 1 million visitors in 2 weeks, that is 30 and 55% more than any other Slam. We also have effectively 100% global share of voice, for 2 full weeks, for a global sport like tennis - no other sport can claim that. Finally, tennis is one of the most inclusive sports. There is equal prize money for women and men at the Grand Slam level, both men and women compete in the same event, at the same time, and in mixed format (in doubles), as well as wheelchair tennis and juniors. Not many sports can actually do that. This translates too in our audience split, very even female/worldwide.

Q. [Rick](#): Hi @alfonsomra firstly congrats on this years Australian Open - was so much more engaging than past versions. Maybe that was the Ch9 influence, but there was a noticeable change in the air.

My question revolves around TV and how important it has become for tennis in general & the Aus Open. How do you leverage this very intense 2 week Aus open period for the rest of the year. Also have you looked at the OTT options for the other tennis properties?

A. [alfonsomra](#): Thanks @Rick for your kind feedback. Nine were terrific in this first year, and we coinvested in a number of innovations that translated into a fresher look in many areas.

We actually talk of the whole month of January with the other tournaments that we run prior to the AO. We host there most of the world's best players, as they prepare for the AO. That starts to build up content, momentum and interest.

Then the AO gives us this global platform that we leverage right across the globe. We had 25 million watching the women's final in Japan alone. We will build on that for next and future years. We had 4 million in China for the women's doubles semi final, which was in prime time their time. That allows us to build content and rapport year round there, as an example. We also produce and distribute content year round, keeping our broadcast and commercial

partners and our fans engaged with the stories in a different level than in January, with a different tone.

OTT we do a lot already, at different levels in different channels and countries. We work closely with our broadcast partners, and the men's and women's tour on digital, cross promoting each other.

OTT more broadly gives us the chance to talk directly to fans, those more avid and those less so, with different programs and formats. From the pure highlights clip to the press conference, to bloopers, or more dramatic films. There isn't a one size fits all, and demand and consumption behaviours change all the time, which keeps us always mindful of being innovative and relevant.

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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