



CASE STUDY

Sacramento Kings Use Airship to Help Power World's Most Innovative Arena Experience

SACRAMENTO KINGS OBJECTIVES

- Make the mobile app the ultimate source for team and venue updates
- Create a next-level in-arena experience via personalized messaging and location-aware technology
- Differentiate the app experience — for games and events — via targeted and segmented push notifications

AIRSHIP SOLUTIONS

- Airship Mobile App Engagement + Location
- Airship Connect
- Airship Insight

THE VISION:

Golden 1 Center, home of the Sacramento Kings, is the most technologically-advanced arena in the world. Completed in September 2016, it created a next-level experience for Kings fans and event guests (concerts, etc.).

“From a strategy perspective, it’s been mobile-first. Our goals when building Golden 1 Center were to make the experience intuitive, frictionless and seamless,” said Kyle Eichman, senior director, technology solutions for Sacramento Kings and Golden 1 Center.

Promoted as a user’s “remote control” to the arena, the Kings + Golden 1 Center App allows attendees to host their digital tickets, order food to their seat, view videos and advanced stats, and purchase tickets to events and games.



DESCRIPTION

With the most technologically advanced arena in the world, the Sacramento Kings are delivering an app that serves as a remote control to the stadium for fans who go to games — and as a way to keep fans anywhere and everywhere connected to the team year-round.

SOLUTION

Use segmentation so that the user can choose between two different modes, Kings and Golden 1 Center, in one app experience. Use push notifications with beacons throughout the game to deliver personalized, location-driven notifications.

RESULTS

The Kings have seen an average of 25% higher influenced app open rates compared to sports & recreation benchmarks.

RESULTS

41%

The Kings personalized welcome message has seen up to a 41% indirect open rate.

28.5%

Higher influenced open rate on iOS compared to sports/recreation industry benchmarks.

20%

Nearly 20% of arena audience uses the app while at a Sacramento Kings game.

Mobile messaging is critical to this mobile-first fan experience, both on and off the court. To make it all happen in real time and at scale, the Kings use Airship to power its mobile messaging, including segmented and location-targeted, personalized push notifications.

MAKING THE VISION COME TO LIFE

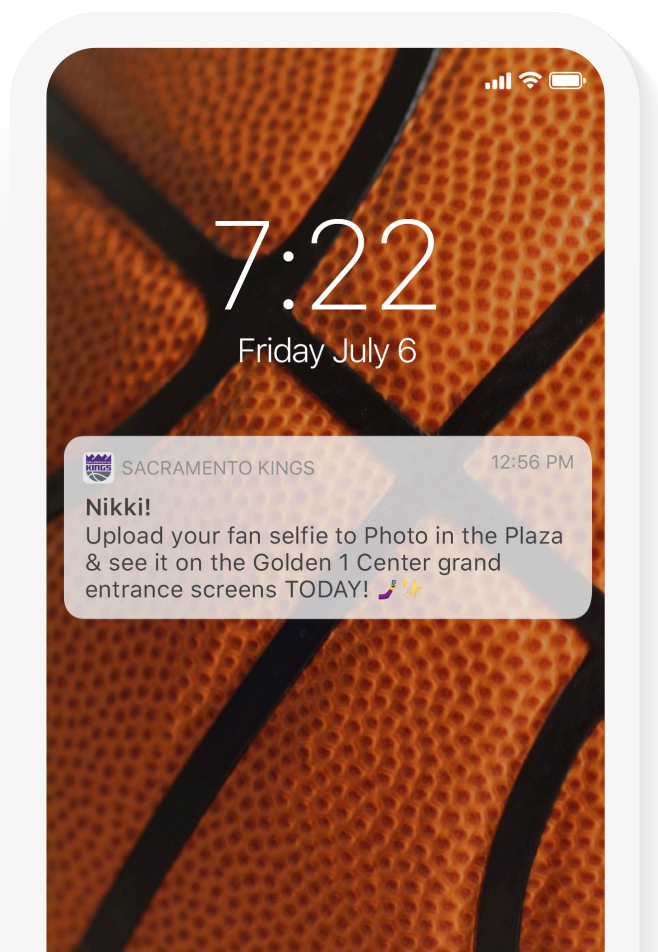
Using Segmentation to Differentiate the Dual App Experience

To create a more relevant experience based on user use case, the Kings + Golden 1 Center App supports two different modes: Kings and Golden 1 Center. This is unique because other sports/event apps require users to have two separate apps — one for the sports team and another for the arena — creating a fragmented user experience. Featuring both within a single app allows users to toggle between the two seamlessly — leading to both a better app and arena experience.

Users may customize the app based on their preferences. If fans love the Kings, they can get breaking team news and updates. If guests love entertainment, they can get the latest on shows, events and concerts. If they love both, users may seamlessly manage their preferences via “Settings & Preferences” to get it all. Notification options include Kings News, Kings Offers & Promos, Game Updates and Final Scores, as well as Golden 1 Center News and Golden 1 Center Offers & Promos. Based on a user’s preferences, the team is able to tag and send segmented push notifications via Airship Mobile App Engagement.

For example, if a user has chosen interest in Golden 1 Center News, they can get a notification about a new concert or show coming to the arena.

“Everyone is really good about segmenting and personalizing email, but in today’s landscape, brands need to go beyond that,” said Eichman. “For us, the goal has always been to take similar functionality, and take it to the next level via mobile messaging and push notifications.”



With Airship Performance Analytics, the Kings can see a heatmap of where their users are located. (Red is the highest concentration). The team can also hover over each section to see exact numbers and use this information to send micro-targeted campaigns based on location.



The Kings effort has paid off — over the past year, the team’s push notifications have seen a 28.5% higher influenced open rate on iOS devices and 25.3% higher rate on Android compared to the average sports/recreation benchmarks.

Personalized Push Notifications Drive Engagement

The Kings also use Mobile App Engagement to deliver an extra special on-site gameday experience for attendees via personalized notifications paired with location awareness.

When a user approaches Golden 1 Center (moving within range of a specific beacon), the team is able to send a push notification, including welcome and personalized greetings. To accomplish this, the Kings

use Airship Mobile App Engagement personalization templates in tandem with Airship Real-Time Data Streaming, which “listens” for any devices that come into proximity of a beacon in or around the arena.

The combined solutions are able to pull information about that specific user (from the team’s third-party data vendor) and automatically create a personalized message nearly instantaneously. The Kings can also configure the template to include other personalized information such as favorite player, ticket holder status and more.

Unique and engaging notifications drive fans to use the app in the arena to guide their experience and see up to a 41.1% indirect open rate. What’s most popular amongst fans? Eichman said, “All of our push notifications resonate with our users, but our most popular notifications are breaking news and player updates — fans love to be the first to learn about their favorite team and players.”

The Kings also follow mobile messaging best practices, including using emojis in their push notifications, to further user engagement. “If we wanted to reach a bunch of people, the easy answer would be to send notifications to everybody,” said Eichman. “For us, it’s not about how many people you touch, that’s not the most important KPI brands should be focused on. We believe in sending to a smaller group of users who find the information most relevant. When you’re more relevant with your content, your KPIs will often be much higher.”

“We want the building to be smart enough to check into you. With Airship’s solution, we can combine personalization, beaconing technology and timeliness — no one else has the capabilities to do so.”

KYLE EICHMAN
SENIOR DIRECTOR, TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

GATHERING MOBILE DATA FOR FUTURE CAMPAIGNS

Data continues to be important in shaping the Kings mobile messaging. The organization uses Airship's analytics tool, Performance Analytics, to look at the success of its different messages and analysis. "Insight allows us to look at the data and optimize our strategy to ensure we're reaching the right audience at the right time," Eichman said.

Data also plays a key role in their innovation. "We definitely take a test and learn mentality. It doesn't hurt to do a test — a lot of organizations back way off or want to only do full-scale rollouts, but we feel it's in everyone's best interest to test and learn everywhere we can."

THE VALUE OF AIRSHIP

"We want the building to be smart enough to check into you. With Airship's solution, we can combine personalization, beaconing technology and timeliness — no one else has the capabilities to do so."

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