SETON HALL | LAW

Sports Law Symposium: Money in Sports: The Year of Investment in Sports November 8, 2023



Christopher Russo

CEO Fifth Generation Sports crusso@fifthgenerationsports.com

I specialize in M&A for sports and media, leveraging deep industry expertise and relationships on behalf of my clients. I also bring a unique perspective to each engagement, given my experience as a senior league executive, a start-up entrepreneur, and an investment banker. For nearly five years, I led Houlihan Lokey's sports M&A practice and completed high profile transactions such as the sale of Sports Illustrated to Authentic Brands Group and the sale of SI Play to Comcast-NBCUniversal.

Most recently, I launched Fifth Generation Sports, a boutique advisory firm, focused on the intersection of sports, technology, and digital media. The firm has special expertise in emerging growth areas such as sports betting and sports collectibles. Recent transactions include the sale of Brand Brigade to Bruin Sports Capital/TGI, FanHub Media to Genius Sports and Meredith's FanSided blog network to Minute Media.

Prior to my tenure in investment banking, I served as Senior VP and general manager of the NFL's new media division and completed groundbreaking online, mobile, and satellite radio arrangements. I also served as Founder, Chairman and CEO of Big Lead Sports (aka Fantasy Sports Ventures) where I created the largest independent digital sports property in the U.S. with 20 million+ unique users; I ultimately sold the company to USA TODAY. Early in my career, I gained extensive television experience via senior executive positions at NBC and New Line Cinema.

In addition to my current work in sports M&A, I serve as a faculty member at Northwestern University. I developed the curriculum for the "Digital Media in Sports" course for the Northwestern School of Professional Studies. I teach the course annually which focuses on the latest trends in digital sports rights, sports betting, eSports, social media, streaming technology, entrepreneurship, and sports media deal-making.