

Interview With Yu (Lucy) Huang, Coordinator, Data Strategy & Fan Loyalty, National Basketball Association China

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After pursuing an international education, Yu Huang, a native of China, returned to her homeland to commence her career in the sport industry. Huang, who is the coordinator of Data Strategy & Fan loyalty with the National Basketball Association China (NBA China), is based in Shanghai, China. Before she joined NBA China, Huang was a specialist in sport-event management at YooZoo Sports, a company that uses internet space operation (ISO) to develop high-tech infrastructure in stadiums. In addition to YooZoo Sports, the YooZoo Group has several other subsidiaries (e.g., YooZoo Games, YooZoo Picture). Currently, YooZoo Sports has three large multipurpose sport parks that concentrate on soccer practices and games but also provide use for other sports (e.g., Shanghai YXSpace). Revenue is also generated by renting the facilities to private companies in Shanghai. Huang's role with YooZoo Sports involved developing marketing and partnership opportunities with corporations and leagues around the world. Some examples of these partners include Fan Zhiyi, a former professional soccer player who played for the Chinese national team and professional teams (e.g., Shanghai Greenland Shenhua Football Club) and the Great Stone Gridiron Corporation (GSG). GSG is a company based in China that aims to introduce American football to China and develop interest in the sport through hosting youth camps and initiatives, partnering with elementary schools and building training facilities in Beijing and Shanghai. After her time with YooZoo Sports, Huang joined NBA China and assumed her current coordinator role, working with the data-strategy and fan-loyalty program NBA Qiu Mi Quan (QMQ), the first NBA fan-loyalty program. Her primary responsibilities are maintaining QMQ platforms, launching regular online campaigns, and organizing fan events.

Li: As a coordinator of the data-strategy and fan-loyalty program with NBA China, what is the most interesting and challenging parts of this position?

Huang: The new program itself. My colleagues and I here at NBA China can try different campaigns to interact with fans. Trying various approaches makes my

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position and work here interesting. Some examples of our campaigns include making dumplings with Jeremy Lin and fans' playoff bracket predictions, which provide an opportunity for Chinese participants to win a playoff ticket. The interesting part of these campaigns is a dream come true for Chinese NBA fans and myself because we get the opportunity to interact with NBA players in person. However, my work as a coordinator can sometimes be challenging because my colleagues and I at times encounter numerous obstacles and failures before we finally discover how the program works. For example, we found that during some of our campaigns we have had a difficult time increasing fan participation rates to levels that we had expected in light of the NBA's high brand awareness in China.

Li: What is NBA Qiu Mi Quan (QMQ)? How does this program build fan loyalty, and can you provide an example or two of how the program works?

Huang: NBA QMQ is the first NBA fan-loyalty program and is specifically focused on the Chinese market. In addition, the NBA introduced the program in China as a method for market testing. If the program achieves huge success in China, the NBA will implement the program in other countries. As for how the program works, NBA QMQ has a rewards system that encourages fans to watch,