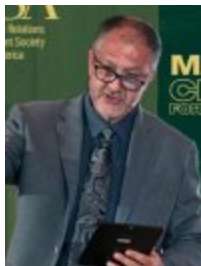



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## Interview « I like that Javier Tebas challenged the sports governance system in Europe » (Marshall Glickman, G2)



Clubs, Reg - Paris - mardi 9 avril 2019 - Entretien n° 143405 - FR 

« The potential LaLiga game in the USA stirred up a huge controversy in Europe. I am sure Javier Tebas expected this reaction. I like that he challenged the system. He made a statement of intent by questioning the status quo of sports governance in Europe. He didn't win the first round, but it's a long-term play that has gotten a lot of people to pay attention to LaLiga outside of Spain. The strategy is working, » stated Marshall Glickman (USA) of the sports consulting agency [G2 Strategic](#), to News Tank Football on 02/04/2019.

Marshall Glickman, formerly the media sales director of the NBA in the 1980s, president of the Portland Trailblazers (NBA), and leader of the group which eventually launched the Portland Timbers (MLS), has been involved with European sports properties since 2002, including associations with EuroLeague Basketball, ATP tennis, the LFP in France, LaLiga and several major clubs (such as PSG, Olympique Lyonnais, Olympique de Marseille, Athletic Club, Valencia CF, Real Betis Balompie).

« In the end the LaLiga game in the USA failed, at least for 2019, because of all these layers of resistance from so-called authorities in Europe that get to decide what you do with your property. Which is really strange to my American eyes. LaLiga is a private league and they want to play a regular season in Miami. What's the big deal? USA Basketball doesn't need to approve anything about the NBA playing games in London, » added the founder and CEO of G2 Strategic.

« LaLiga is definitely doing innovative things, and making themselves unique. I'm very pleased with our partnership. There have been growing pains and difficulties, but that's normal for any league that is going through such a rapid change. But LaLiga has a great leader and a great attitude, and they are embracing technology, » said Marshall Glickman about his work with LaLiga.

Marshall Glickman answered questions from News Tank Football on a wide variety subjects, which will be published in three parts :

- 1 - EuroLeague Basketball and differences in the European and U.S. sports business (published 02/04/2019, see link below)
- 2 - The now three-year partnership between LaLiga and G2 Strategic, and

working with Spanish clubs (published today Tuesday 09/04/2019)

• 3 - G2 Strategic's work in France, from the French Tennis Federation to the LFP, PSG, OL, and the recent takeover of FC Girondins de Bordeaux (to be published on Tuesday 16/04/2019)

Pour plus de confort, [poursuivre la lecture sur le site](#)

**Part One of the discussion with Marshall Glickman : « [Ironically US sports leagues are socialist, while European sports is a wild west](#) » (M. Glickman, G2)**

- **G2 Strategic, your sports consulting company, is now in your third year of collaboration with LaLiga. What has been the scope of this work ?**



G2 Strategic

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*« Increase sales to new customers, to optimize retention, and to generate more revenue per customer in LaLiga »*

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Originally, this project was based specifically on ticketing and seats occupancy. The key objectives are to increase sales to new customers, to optimize retention of current customers, and to generate more revenue per customer. Of course, in Spain, although the goals are simple, the challenges are complicated. For starters, throughout LaLiga, somewhere around 75 % (82 % according to News Tank Football figures) of the tickets are sold as season tickets. In the USA, most sports properties would be jealous of that figure. We like season tickets, because it's money in the bank and the club then doesn't have to struggle to sell tickets one game at a time, which is influenced by so many factors they cannot control (recent sports performance, weather, day-of-the-week, time-of-game, etc.).

This is quite different from France, where the season ticket ratio is around 40 % (43 % according to News Tank Football), which means that every week you have to worry about filling the stadium. This game-by-game reality is a difficult way to run a business.

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*« In my view, the problem is ticket pricing (in causing « no shows ») »*

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So, it's a big plus that LaLiga clubs have a high season ticket ratio similar to clubs in the U.S. But then, how do we explain why there are often several thousand empty seats ? Other than the « big » games, season ticket holders often don't show up, in spite of some clubs now offering new ways to transfer and re-sell tickets. In my view, the problem is pricing ? for various reasons, the discount applied to season tickets makes the cost relatively cheap ? so much so that many fans don't use them for many games.

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*« The ticketing strategy needs to include a range of experiences »*

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Of course, the definition of « cheap » varies from market to market and region to region, but overall, the season tickets are probably too cheap in Spain, especially in the best sectors. I am not at all suggesting that clubs move into a pricing model that makes tickets unaffordable for large segments of the population. However, I am advocating that many clubs need to reevaluate their pricing models ? not something rash like raising the cost of all tickets, but rather better segmentation and adding value. Part of our work for LaLiga is to convince clubs that at the upper end of the spectrum, there's not as much price resistance amongst people who can afford to pay a certain price, but you then must deliver a quality experience that includes a variety of benefits. On the other hand, there are supporters and families that just want to see football, and will be happy to sit on a flat bench in the sun, and that's okay. But

the ticketing strategy needs to include a range of experiences, depending on price level.

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*« The fan experience at games in Europe often is not that great »*

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So, the scope of G2's work with LaLiga has evolved from ticketing to really talking about the fan experience ? how the clubs can create memorable moments. Because, from an American perspective, the fan experience at games in Europe often is not that great : you're sitting in an uncomfortable chair, there's not much choice for food and beverage, fan traffic and security is often congested and crowded. A lot of the stadiums are dirty and not very attractive.



LaLiga

The good news is that LaLiga has asked G2 to challenge these old school norms, and many clubs are receptive and eager to move forward with new strategies and re-invent themselves for the future.

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*« LaLiga formed some working groups to give clubs a forum to address challenges and find solutions »*

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During the first year, G2 developed a comprehensive document that has served as a kind of « bible » for ticket sales. One of our recommendations was for LaLiga to form some working groups designed to give the clubs a bigger voice and a forum to address challenges and find solutions. The league has now formed three groups that G2 is facilitating : Digital Transformation, Regulatory and Quality Standards. We are meeting every two weeks via video conference, and in person when I come to Spain several times each year. We are looking at everything and working collaboratively to develop recommendations. I am finding this to be an invigorating process - many good ideas are emerging.



### **Marshall Glickman**

**Email :** [marshall@g2strategic.net](mailto:marshall@g2strategic.net)

#### **Parcours**

**G2 Strategic**  
Founder and CEO

#### **Depuis**

2004

#### **Jusqu'à**

-

<b>Euroleague Basketball</b> Special advisor to the CEO	2002	2004
<b>Portland Family Entertainment</b> Chairman and CEO	1998	2001
<b>BFI International</b> President	1995	1998
<b>Portland Trailblazers</b> President	1988	1995
<b>National Basketball Association</b> Director of media sales	1986	1988

[Consulter la fiche sur le site](#)

Fiche n° 31087, créée le 05/06/18 à 21:22 - MàJ le 08/04/19 à 23:02

- You also work directly with many Spanish clubs as part of your LaLiga partnership?



Valencia CF

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*« European clubs are often very sensitive to local media and supporters' voices »*

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Yes, in addition to our work with the league, G2 is also working with nine clubs individually ; what we call « demonstration clubs ». We travel to see them a couple times a year, exchange often via Skype, and we talk about different strategies and ideas, review documents and give business opinions. Of course, there's always some resistance to change, and I've learned that European clubs are often very sensitive to local media and supporters' voices, but we are learning how to consider a range of perspectives. We are working with the clubs that want to move forward, so it's a great experience. Embracing change is music to my ears !

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*« Valencia CF is taking aggressive steps to shift their strategy »*

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There are some really forward-thinking clubs. For example, Valencia CF is taking aggressive steps to shift their strategy. Valencia is owned by a Singaporean group (led by Peter Lim) who are bringing a fresh perspective to the business. I met with (club president) Anil Murthy last time I was there, and I think he's terrific and very embracing of new ideas. And he has hired some really excellent business talent to really move the pendulum of what a game event is in Europe. We're working on paperless and cashless in the stadiums, and this is a club who will lead.

## G2 Strategic, LLC

G2 Strategic is a boutique consulting firm providing global sports business solutions to clients in the United States and Europe. The company is based in Portland, Oregon. G2 is an acronym for Glickman Gobel, after its owner and CEO Marshall Glickman, emphasizing the firm's focus on its international client base.

Marshall brings to the table an extensive array of hands-on experience, working with leagues, teams, venue developers, municipalities/governmental entities, law firms and corporations/brands.

There are hundreds of firms offering sports business consulting. G2 Strategic differentiates itself in several ways:

- G2 Strategic's boutique size assures that the client's interests are personally attended to by Marshall and overhead is kept to a minimum level.
- Marshall can evaluate sports business issues through the eyes of clubs, leagues, sponsors, broadcasters, governments and investors, as he has worked closely with all of these key stakeholders, providing strategic advice that considers the interests of all the disparate parties.
- Marshall understands the mentality and structure of sports business on both sides of the Atlantic.

LaLiga's president, Javier Tebas, is doing an amazing job pushing the clubs to be ahead of the curve so they are not always catching up on best practices and rapidly changing consumer behavior trends. G2's job is to work closely with clubs that will provide a positive example for the rest.



Real Betis

© Real Betis Balompíe

Another great example is Real Betis in Sevilla. It wasn't that many years ago that a person could walk into their stadium, sit in a so-called suite, which was just basically a dreary concrete box, bring in their own portable BBQ and food, and cook their meal inside that concrete box ! Today, this club has fully restructured, brought in excellent management, and is embracing the future.

---

*« Real Betis invested in upgrades to the stadium, developed a new price segmentation model and changed the culture completely »*

---

They (Real Betis) have a great business director in Ramon Alarcon. He's had to navigate a lot of resistance from the traditionalists and purists who are around the club, but he has accomplished so much in a short period of time. They have invested in many important upgrades to the stadium, developed a new price segmentation model and changed the culture completely. They have budget limitations, so they have learned how to get things done in an economical way that is very attractive to businesses who want to use the stadium for B2B networking, activation and as a platform to achieve their own business objectives.



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*« RCD Mallorca have implemented some of the most creative fan experience ideas I've seen »*

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Those are just two examples, and there are several others also moving forward. For example, the club in Mallorca, who are now in the second division, but were in the third division last year, have implemented some of the most creative fan experience ideas I've seen. They are organizing fan parties outside the stadium before the games. There is an athletics track surrounding the pitch, which puts the seats far from the action, but now they have learned how to monetize this excess real estate, setting up a new « Corner VIP » club on the track, right next to the pitch. It just takes some creativity, and having shareholders and management who empower their people to think out of the box.

Ultimately, what we're working on, and there's been a lot of leadership support from LaLiga on this, is that all the clubs and LaLiga collectively becomes a more customer-centric experience rather than only a sports or player-centered experience.

- **And you also exchange with Javier Tebas directly as part of this G2 Strategic - LaLiga partnership?**

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*« Javier Tebas is very disruptive and visionary »*

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I very sincerely want to give great credit to Javier Tebas. He's an interesting guy, though I've only met with him a few times. But he's very disruptive and visionary.



J. Tebas, LaLiga

© n/a

For example, the whole affair with the potential LaLiga game in the USA stirred up a huge controversy in Europe. I am sure the president expected this reaction. In the end it failed, at



least for 2019, because of all these layers of resistance from so-called authorities in Europe that get to decide what you do with your property. Which is really strange to my American eyes. LaLiga is a private league and they want to play a regular season in Miami. What's the big deal? USA Basketball doesn't need to approve anything about the NBA playing games in London. But that's the way it is in sports in Europe. There are a lot of authorities.

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*« A lot of people to pay attention to LaLiga outside of Spain »*

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From my perspective, I like that Javier Tebas challenged the system. He made a statement of intent by questioning the status quo of sports governance in Europe. He didn't win the first round, but it's a long-term play that has gotten a lot of people to pay attention to LaLiga outside of Spain. The strategy is working. On my television (in the USA), I can watch games from all five major European football leagues, as well as Mexico and MLS. This was not the case five years ago.



MLS  
© D.R.

People often ask why US fans go to MLS games when they can watch what most consider better soccer on TV with the European leagues. In my view, although the quality of football is improving, people go to MLS games because it's a fantastic gameday experience. So, there is much that we can learn from each other.

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*« LaLiga are building a true media business in the USA »*

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So LaLiga is definitely doing innovative things, and making themselves unique. I'm very pleased with our partnership. There have been growing pains and difficulties, but that's normal for any league that is going through such a rapid change. But LaLiga has a great leader and a great attitude, and they are embracing technology. For example, I love their experimental deal with Facebook in India. Plus, they have the deal with Relevant Sports, which is about more than the idea of a game in the USA ? they are building a true media business in the States. I also note their recent deal with Disney, which is very cool and excellent positioning, especially among younger fans.

***Part Three of this interview with Marshall Glickman of G2 Strategic, about his previous work with the LFP and his other activities in France, will be published next Tuesday 16/04/2019***



**G2 Strategic**

**Adresse du siège**

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97212 Portland - UNITED STATES

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Fiche n° 8431, créée le 25/03/19 à 05:02 - MàJ le 25/03/19 à 17:05

**LaLiga**

**Activité** : Ligue de football professionnel espagnole

**Agence commerciale exclusive** : IMG (depuis 2018-19)

**Sponsor titre :**

• **Banco Santander** (banque) : partenaire titre des 1ère (**LaLiga Santander**) et 2ème (**LaLiga 112I3**) divisions espagnoles pour 2016-2021; dotation annuelle estimée à 20 M€

**Partenaires globaux :**

- **Nike** (équipementier) : ballon officiel, depuis 1996-97, jusqu'en 2018-19, puis **Puma** (équipementier) à partir de 2019-20.
- **Tag Heuer** (horloger) : chronométreur officiel, 2016-2019
- **EA Sports** (éditeur de jeux vidéo)
- **Rexona** (déodorant), **Clear** (cosmétiques), groupe Unilever : 2018-2021, plus de 4 M€ par saison

**Partenaires nationaux :**

- **Samsung** (électronique) : 2015-2021
- **Stihl** (matériel de motoculture) : depuis 2016-17
- **Mahou** (brasseur) : depuis 2006, jusqu'en 2019-20, estimé à 3 M€ par saison
- **Allianz** (assurances) : depuis 2017-18
- **Danone** (alimentaire) : depuis 2015-16
- **Marqués del Atrio** (vin)
- **Solan de Cabras** (eau minérale) : depuis 2016
- **Mail Boxes** (services d'expédition) : depuis 2017-18
- **Vitaldent** (cliniques dentaires) : 2017-2019
- **Panini** (images à collectionner)
- **Mazda** (automobile) : depuis 2015-16, jusqu'en 2019-20
- **El Corte Inglés** (chaîne de grands magasins) : 2017-2021

**Marques associées :**

- **Microsoft** (informatique) : partenaire technologique, depuis le 30/11/2016
- **Walt Disney World** (parc d'attractions, complexe de loisirs) : depuis le 22/04/2017
- **Ballr** (application de fantasy league) : depuis le 22/02/2017, 2017-2020
- **Yutang Sports** (agence de marketing sportif) : partenaire officiel médias sportifs en Chine pour deux ans, depuis le 30/10/2017

**Partenaires régionaux :**

- **Malaysia Truly Asia** (marque de l'office du tourisme de Malaisie) : destination touristique en Asie, depuis mai 2016
- **SportPesa** (paris sportifs) : en Afrique, depuis avril 2017, jusqu'en 2020
- **Kingsley Beverages** (boissons) : en Afrique du Sud, depuis novembre 2016
- **Konka** (distributeur de produits d'électronique et électroménager) : en Chine, 2017-2019
- **MTN Irancell** (télécommunications) : en Iran, depuis décembre 2017



- **MTN Côte d'Ivoire** (télécommunications) : en Côte d'Ivoire, depuis mars 2018
- **Du** (télécommunications) : aux Émirats Arabes Unis, depuis 2015
- **Orange** (télécommunications) : en Égypte, 2016-2018
- **Zain** (télécommunications): au Soudan, 2016-2018
- **Movistar** (télécommunications): au Mexique, depuis 2016-17
- **Big Cola** (soda): au Nigeria, depuis janvier 2018, jusqu'en janvier 2021
- **Vivaro Limited** (paris sportifs et jeux d'argent en ligne) : en Asie, 2017-2020 + une saison en option ; sous la marque **Ope Sports** en 2017-18 et **ManBetX** en 2018-19
- **General Sports Authority of Saudi Arabia** : Arabie Saoudite, depuis janvier 2018, jusqu'en janvier 2021
- **Fonbet** (paris sportifs en ligne) : en Russie, 2018-2021

#### Sponsoring (LaLiga4Sports) :

- **Renault Sport Formula One Team** (écurie de F1) : partenaire officiel en 2018
- **Javier Fernandez** (patinage artistique)
- **Carolina Marin** (badminton)
- Fédérations, compétitions, athlètes espagnols

#### Adresse du siège

Calle Torrelaguna 60  
28027 Madrid - SPAIN

Général	
Création	26/07/1984
Forme juridique	association
Actionnariat	Clubs de 1ère et 2ème divisions espagnoles

Gouvernance	
Président(e)	Javier Tebas Medrano
Directeur général	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Javier Gomez Molina (corporate)</li> <li>• Ignacio Martinez Trujillo (innovation)</li> </ul>
Directeur marketing et communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolfo Bara Negro (marketing et merchandising)</li> <li>• Eva Turégano Garcia (communication)</li> </ul>

Finances	
Chiffre d'affaires	2015-16 : 1,24 Md€
Résultat d'exploitation	2015-16 : 503 019,79 €
Résultat net	2015-16 : 94 303,51 €

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Fiche n° 3742, créée le 11/12/15 à 12:26 - MàJ le 15/04/19 à 18:17

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*En vignette : M. Glickman, G2 Strategic - © D.R.*



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