

# ***Study on NBA Operation and Business Management Mode in Different Periods***

## ***- A Comparative Study Between Silver Period and Stern Period***

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**Abstract:** This article will discuss the different strategies of the two NBA commissioners for the growth of the league over the course of 40 years. Under the different historical background and development level of the two chairmen, Wen will analyze their policies to promote the development of the league and their strategies to promote the commercialization of the league. The operation and organization of the event, commercial partnerships and sponsored events, media development and marketing were the three most important parts of the discussion. After the global expansion, the NBA ushered in a rapid commercialization process, 40 years of continuous introduction of new policies to attract viewers, increase viewership, promote the NBA to the world, and a high degree of cooperation with different companies, which involves many complex background factors. This article will enumerate and compare the actions of the two presidents in these three parts, and analyze them to judge the trend of future alliance development.

**Keywords:** commercialization, media, NBA Operation, business management

## **1. Introduction**

NBA has undergone a lot of changes since it entered the new era. With the rapid development of network technology in modern society, people's attitude towards entertainment has also undergone great changes. Since 1984, a total of 40 years, the NBA has had two commissioners, David Stern served as commissioner for 30 years, and Silver accepted the title of commissioner in 2014. They experienced different times and different social backgrounds during the period, so they had different development goals and development strategies.

During the 40-year tenure of the two presidents, NBA has experienced two different development directions and development strategies. Based on the different development stages, this study will analyze the changes in NBA business models during the tenure of the two presidents and analyze the commercial value and scope of influence of the NBA under different business models.

This study will use comparative analysis and case analysis to analyze different commercial contracts in the two periods, such as large numbers of television broadcasting contracts, commercial advertising cooperation contracts, multiple internal rules and regulations of the league and internal

team transactions, as well as Collective Bargaining Agreement and other rules and clauses. To analyze the change and development direction of the business model

This paper will first discuss the development goals and business cooperation models of each stage of the NBA brand in the past 40 years, as well as the future development direction and development strategy. Then this paper will discuss the operation of each team within the league and the various salary terms when trading, and finally, discuss the different development directions and business models of the two presidents during their tenure.

## **2. The NBA Operation and Business Management in the Period of Stern**

### **2.1. Historical Background and Development Characteristics**

David Stern served as the NBA Commissioner from 1984 to 2014, making him one of the longest-tenured commissioners in the league's history. During his administration, the NBA experienced significant growth and global expansion, transforming it into one of the most popular and financially successful sports leagues in the world.

The NBA started out as a pure sports league, with revenue coming only from ticket sales. At present, NBA has gradually become a full-functional commercial league with the integration of sports, entertainment, education, charity and so on. Under Stern's leadership, the NBA saw rapid expansion, both domestically and internationally. The league added several new teams, including the Miami Heat, Orlando Magic, Charlotte Hornets, and Toronto Raptors. Additionally, Stern actively pursued international opportunities and promoted the game of basketball globally, leading to the establishment of a massive international fan base and numerous foreign players joining the league.

Stern understood the importance of marketing and embraced innovative strategies to promote the NBA. He focused on increasing television coverage, securing lucrative broadcast deals, and leveraging various media platforms to reach a wider audience. This approach significantly boosted the league's popularity and revenue.

Stern emphasized the NBA's brand image and the significance of its star players. He fostered an environment that allowed players like Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, and later Kobe Bryant, Shaquille O'Neal, and LeBron James, among others, to become global icons, driving the league's popularity to new heights [1]. Since 1999, NBA has worked with the Players' Association to develop a series of programs to help rookies adapt better. These programs provide skills and information to rookies [2]. Like this kind of mature modern professional sports organization, the club and the league have become inseparable entities. Its social and economic organization model is based on the club establishing the system through the club community league to coordinate the cooperation and competition between the clubs. Therefore, each club must abide by the league rules in the macro environment. On the other hand, as the operation of the club itself, it must also attach importance to the communication of media relations, especially the integrated communication Characteristics.

### **2.2. Stern's Personal Leadership Characteristics**

Stern was known for his strong and authoritative leadership style. He was unafraid to make tough decisions and enforce league rules and policies. His leadership was crucial in navigating challenges, including labor disputes and player behavior issues.

Stern was forward-thinking and always looking for ways to grow the league's reach and revenue. He embraced technology and new media platforms to connect with fans, expand the global market, and generate more significant opportunities for the league and its players.

During his tenure, Stern prioritized social responsibility initiatives within the league, such as NBA Cares, which involved players, teams, and the league supporting various community and charitable causes.

Stern was adept at navigating complex negotiations, such as collective bargaining agreements with the players' union, securing broadcasting deals, and working with team owners and sponsors to ensure the league's success.

Stern faced numerous challenges throughout his tenure, including player controversies, labor disputes, and financial hardships. His ability to remain resolute and make difficult decisions often led to positive outcomes for the league in the long run. David Stern's administration significantly shaped the modern NBA and laid the groundwork for its continued success. While my information is up to September 2021, this study encourages to verify if there have been any significant developments or new information about David Stern's tenure beyond that date.

### 2.3. Event Organization and Operation Mode

During David Stern's tenure as NBA Commissioner from 1984 to 2014, he implemented several event organization and operation models that contributed to the league's growth and success. Some key aspects of his administration in this regard include.

Stern maintained the traditional NBA regular-season format, with each team playing 82 games during the season. He also expanded the playoff format to include 16 teams, with the top eight from each conference qualifying for the postseason. The playoff series was organized in a best-of-seven format for each round.

Stern actively pursued international expansion by organizing preseason and regular-season games in various countries. This initiative helped promote the NBA globally and increased its fan base outside the United States. Additionally, international players began to have a significant impact on the league, further contributing to its global appeal.

Under Stern's administration, the NBA All-Star Weekend became a marquee event. It included the All-Star Game, Slam Dunk Contest, Three-Point Shootout, and Skills Challenge. The All-Star Game featured the league's top players competing in a showcase event, drawing significant attention and media coverage.

Stern focused on enhancing the NBA Finals experience for fans and viewers. The Finals featured the Eastern Conference champion versus the Western Conference champion in a best-of-seven series. The league worked to create memorable experiences for fans attending the games and promoted the Finals as a major global sports event.

Stern oversaw the annual NBA Draft, where teams selected eligible players to join the league. The draft process became an eagerly anticipated event, with extensive media coverage and fan interest.

One of Stern's most significant achievements was securing lucrative broadcast and media deals for the NBA. He understood the importance of television exposure and embraced technological advancements to reach a broader audience, both domestically and internationally.

Stern emphasized the NBA's responsibility to give back to the community. He encouraged players, teams, and the league to engage in various social initiatives through the NBA Cares program. These efforts focused on addressing social issues, supporting charities, and promoting community development.

Stern managed multiple collective bargaining negotiations with the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA) during his tenure. He played a crucial role in securing labor agreements that balanced the interests of the players and the league, maintaining labor peace and ensuring the league's stability.

Overall, David Stern's administration prioritized growth, innovation, and globalization, transforming the NBA into a premier sports league with a worldwide following. His leadership and strategic vision significantly impacted the event organization and operation model, contributing to the league's lasting success and popularity.

## 2.4. Business Partnerships and Sponsorship Models

During David Stern's tenure as NBA Commissioner from 1984 to 2014, he oversaw significant changes in the NBA's business cooperation and sponsorship model. Under his leadership, the league experienced unprecedented growth in revenue and global popularity, largely due to strategic partnerships and innovative sponsorship approaches. Some key changes during his administration include.

Stern actively pursued corporate partnerships with major brands and companies. He recognized the value of aligning the NBA with well-known and reputable organizations, which helped elevate the league's image and expand its reach. Major corporations, such as Nike, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, and American Express, became prominent sponsors of the NBA.

Stern was instrumental in building the NBA brand as a global sports and entertainment icon. He worked closely with marketing experts to develop compelling campaigns, iconic logos, and slogans, such as "NBA: Where Amazing Happens" and "I Love This Game," which resonated with fans worldwide and reinforced the league's appeal [3]. In the year Stern became president, and Jordan joined the team's average market capitalization of only about \$10,000, a team has been on the verge of bankruptcy. At the end of the season, the combined market capitalization of the teams was as high as \$100 million. The average market capitalization of the teams was \$100 million. One of the teams made a profit. The rest of the teams made only a small loss, and the league made a total of \$100 million.

Under Stern's administration, the NBA expanded its international presence by forging partnerships with global companies and hosting events in various countries. The league organized international preseason games, exhibitions, and promotional tours featuring NBA players to reach new markets and engage with international fans.

Stern encouraged NBA teams to invest in modernizing their arenas and facilities, providing fans with enhanced game-day experiences. This includes advancements in arena technology, premium seating options, and upgraded amenities to attract corporate partners and sponsors looking for branding opportunities.

Stern recognized the importance of broadcast and media rights in growing the league's revenue. He negotiated substantial broadcast contracts with major television networks, ensuring extensive coverage of NBA games, including the playoffs and NBA Finals. These media rights deals brought significant financial benefits for the league.

In 2017, a few years after Stern's tenure, the NBA became the first major North American professional sports league to allow jersey sponsorships. This decision allowed teams to feature sponsor logos on their jerseys, providing additional revenue streams for both the league and individual franchises.

As digital platforms gained prominence, Stern embraced the internet and social media as essential components of the league's marketing strategy. The NBA established a strong online presence and engaged with fans through various digital channels, reaching a wider and younger audience.

Stern played a pivotal role in laying the groundwork for the NBA's immense popularity in China. His efforts to establish partnerships with Chinese companies and broadcasters, as well as hosting preseason and regular-season games in China, contributed significantly to the league's global expansion [4]. According to data from the NBA, about 18 per cent of the league's players are international, with about 60 per cent coming from Europe.

Overall, David Stern's administration was marked by a focus on business innovation and strategic partnerships. Through these changes, the NBA evolved into a powerful global brand with a vast network of corporate sponsors and a thriving business ecosystem that continues to flourish today.

## 2.5. Media Communication and Marketing Strategy

During David Stern's tenure as NBA Commissioner from 1984 to 2014, the NBA experienced a revolution in media communication and marketing strategy. Stern recognized the importance of media exposure and leveraged various platforms to promote the NBA, expand its global reach, and engage with fans in new and innovative ways. Some key aspects of media communication and marketing strategy during his administration include:

Stern understood the significance of television as a primary medium for reaching a broader audience. Under his leadership, the NBA secured lucrative broadcast deals with major networks, including NBC, ABC, and later TNT and ESPN. These deals increased the frequency of nationally televised games, making NBA basketball more accessible to fans across the United States.

Stern actively pursued international broadcasting agreements to introduce the NBA to new markets around the world. By partnering with various television networks and broadcasters, the NBA expanded its reach and cultivated a massive international fan base.

Under Stern's administration, NBA Entertainment was established as a subsidiary to produce and distribute NBA-related content. This included documentaries, highlights, and promotional videos that showcased the league's stars and memorable moments. NBA Entertainment played a crucial role in building the NBA's brand and captivating fans with compelling storytelling.

As the internet gained popularity, Stern recognized its potential as a powerful marketing tool. The NBA invested in building a robust online presence, launching an official website and engaging fans through social media platforms [5]. All of the fans interviewed for the mobile live broadcast are highly rated because the mobile live network solves a series of problems, such as live source less. The live broadcast time is few; the clarity is not good. Modern People's vision of the future cannot escape the shackles of current technology. The advent of 4G led to an explosion of mobile payments and short videos and laid the foundation for live streaming on mobile devices. The league provided access to highlights, statistics, and exclusive content, fostering a deeper connection with fans worldwide.

Stern introduced NBA All-Access, a program that allowed fans to experience games, players, and behind-the-scenes content like never before. This initiative used multimedia platforms to offer fans unprecedented access to the league, players, and events, enhancing fan engagement and loyalty.

Stern spearheaded the NBA's Global Games program, which involved hosting preseason and regular-season games in various international cities. This initiative not only allowed international fans to experience live NBA action but also provided an opportunity for local communities to engage with the sport and the league.

Stern and the NBA launched various marketing campaigns, including the iconic "I Love This Game" slogan and the NBA: Where Amazing Happens campaign. These powerful marketing initiatives resonated with fans, fostering emotional connections to the league and its players.

Stern actively promoted NBA players as global icons and personalities, not just athletes. He encouraged players to engage with the media, fans, and the public, which helped build personal brands and elevate the league's overall appeal.

Overall, David Stern's administration revolutionized the NBA's media communication and marketing strategy, turning the league into a global sports and entertainment powerhouse. Through say use of television, digital media, and international partnerships, Stern successfully positioned the NBA as a prominent and beloved brand worldwide. His strategic vision and emphasis on innovative marketing continue to shape the league's success long after his tenure.

## 3. The NBA Operation and Business Management in the Period of Silver

Adam Silver has been serving as the NBA Commissioner since February 1, 2014. He succeeded David Stern, becoming the fifth commissioner in the history of the National Basketball Association.



Since my knowledge cutoff is September 2021, this study can provide you with information about Adam Silver's background era and characteristics up to that date.

### 3.1. Historical Background and Development Characteristics

Adam Silver assumed the role of NBA Commissioner after serving as the NBA's Deputy Commissioner and Chief Operating Officer under David Stern. He worked closely with Stern for many years, gaining valuable experience and insight into the league's operations and business strategies.

During Adam Silver's administration, the NBA continued to embrace technological advancements to enhance the fan experience. The league further expanded its digital presence, streaming services, and engagement through social media platforms, reaching a younger and broader audience.

### 3.2. Silver's Personal Leadership Characteristics

Adam Silver is known for his progressive and forward-thinking leadership style. He has been willing to explore new ideas and address critical issues affecting the league, such as player health and wellness, diversity and inclusion, social justice, and mental health awareness.

Silver has maintained a strong focus on the well-being and interests of the players. He actively engages with NBA players, listens to their concerns, and involves them in decision-making processes that affect the league and its players.

Under Silver's administration, the NBA has been at the forefront of addressing social justice issues. He has encouraged players and teams to use their platforms to speak out on important societal matters, supporting initiatives like NBA Cares and promoting community involvement.

Like his predecessor, David Stern, Adam Silver has continued to prioritize the NBA's global expansion. He has pursued opportunities for the league in international markets, fostering partnerships and organizing games and events in various countries to grow the BA's global footprint [6]. In June 2002, Yao Ming joined the Houston Rockets as the third Chinese basketball player to play in the NBA after Battle and Wang Zhizhi, becoming the first Asian top scorer in NBA history. Since then, more and more Chinese fans have become Rockets fans because of Yao Ming's participation, and the attention to the NBA has never been greater [7]. The NBA sniffed this change keenly, and formally pointed the strategic vision to the vast Chinese market; the NBA sports culture in China has also formally entered the comprehensive, in-depth period.

Silver has been supportive of player activism and free expression, encouraging players to use their platforms to address social issues and advocate for change. He has shown a willingness to work with players on issues they care about and has been receptive to their input.

Like his predecessor, Silver has successfully navigated collective bargaining negotiations with the National Basketball Players Association (NBA). He has worked to find common ground and ensure that labor agreements benefit both the league and the players.

Under Silver's leadership, the NBA has continued to experience significant financial growth, securing lucrative broadcast and media rights deals and forming strategic partnerships with major corporations and sponsors.

It is important to note that since the information is up to September 2021, there may have been further developments or changes during Adam Silver's tenure as NBA Commissioner beyond that date.

### 3.3. Event Organization and Operation Mode

As of the last update in September 2021, Adam Silver's tenure as NBA Commissioner has seen several notable changes and innovations in the event organization and operation model. Under his leadership,

the NBA has continued to prioritize the fan experience, explore new formats, and embrace technology to enhance engagement. Here are some key aspects of event organization and operation during Adam Silver's administration.

Adam Silver has maintained the tradition of the NBA All-Star Weekend, featuring events like the All-Star Game, Slam Dunk Contest, Three-Point Shootout, and Skills Challenge. He has worked to make the All-Star Weekend a more immersive experience for fans, incorporating interactive events and entertainment alongside the basketball competitions.

Similar to David Stern's era, Silver has continued the NBA's international expansion efforts. The NBA Global Games program has expanded, with preseason and regular-season games being played in various countries outside the United States. Notably, the NBA has seen tremendous success in China, with extensive promotional efforts and the growing popularity of the sport in the region.

Under Silver's administration, the NBA has experimented with new event formats to engage fans. For instance, the NBA introduced the NBA Africa Game, an exhibition game featuring a mix of NBA players and African talent, aiming to grow basketball on the continent and showcase talent from the region.

One significant change implemented during Adam Silver's tenure is the introduction of the NBA Play-In Tournament. The tournament was introduced during the 2019-2020 season and designed to determine the final playoff spots in each conference. It adds a new layer of excitement to the end of the regular season and provides teams fighting for playoff berths with additional opportunities to qualify [8]. In combination with the goal of revision the rules and the change of the style of the game field, the development of the NBA game field has an obvious tendency, at the same time, the outside players gradually become the key role in the game.

The NBA Summer League, an annual event in Las Vegas, has become an essential platform for young players, rookies, and unsigned talent to showcase their skills. It offers an opportunity for fans and teams to get a glimpse of potential future NBA stars.

Adam Silver has encouraged NBA teams to invest in arena technology and infrastructure to enhance the fan experience during games. This includes interactive displays, high-definition video screens, and improved Wi-Fi connectivity to facilitate engagement through mobile apps and social media.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Silver played a crucial role in implementing health and safety protocols to ensure the continuation of NBA games in a safe environment. He worked with the NBA Players Association to establish measures that protected players, staff, and fans while maintaining the integrity of the competition.

Adam Silver has continued to leverage digital media and social platforms to engage fans and grow the NBA's online presence. The league has actively used social media for highlights, news updates, and interactive fan experiences to connect with a global audience.

Adam Silver's administration as NBA Commissioner has been marked by a willingness to explore new event formats, prioritize fan engagement, and adapt to changing circumstances, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. His approach has contributed to the continued success and popularity of the NBA as a premier sports league worldwide. Please note that developments may have occurred beyond my last update in September 2021, so this study encourages us to verify any recent changes in the NBA's event organization and operation model.

### **3.4. Business Partnerships and Sponsorship Models**

Adam Silver's tenure as NBA Commissioner has witnessed significant changes in the NBA's business cooperation and sponsorship model. Under his leadership, the NBA has continued to expand its global brand and secure strategic partnerships with various companies and organizations. Here are some key aspects of business cooperation and sponsorship model changes during Adam Silver's administration.

One of the notable changes during Adam Silver's tenure was the introduction of jersey sponsorships in the NBA. In 2017, the league allowed teams to feature sponsor logos on their jerseys, opening new revenue streams for both the league and individual franchises. This move brought the NBA in line with other global sports leagues and provided corporate partners with valuable branding opportunities during televised games.

Adam Silver has been proactive in securing corporate partnerships with major brands and companies. The NBA has continued to collaborate with various high-profile corporations, such as Nike, Coca-Cola, State Farm, and American Express, among others. These partnerships have helped the league expand its reach and generate additional revenue through sponsorships, product licensing, and promotional opportunities.

Building on the NBA's global expansion efforts, Adam Silver has focused on securing international sponsorship deals. The league has formed partnerships with companies from various countries, particularly in regions with significant NBA fan bases, such as China. International sponsors have played a crucial role in increasing the NBA's popularity and revenue on a global scale.

As digital media and technology have become integral to sports marketing, the NBA under Adam Silver has embraced digital sponsorship and technology integration. The league has collaborated with tech companies and digital platforms to enhance the fan experience, offer interactive content, and provide unique advertising opportunities.

Under Silver's administration, the NBA launched the NBA 2K League, a professional esports league featuring virtual basketball competitions. The league has attracted sponsorships and partnerships from both traditional sports brands and esports-related companies, demonstrating the NBA's adaptability to emerging trends in the sports and entertainment industry.

Adam Silver has encouraged the NBA to take a socially responsible stance, which has attracted partnerships with organizations committed to social justice and equality causes. The league's focus on social justice initiatives, particularly during the Black Lives Matter movement, has resonated with brands and sponsors seeking to align themselves with socially conscious platforms.

The NBA has explored innovative advertising methods, including in-stadium and virtual advertising, to enhance the viewer experience and offer new sponsorship opportunities. Virtual advertising has allowed brands to reach global audiences during international broadcasts, maximizing exposure and engagement.

Throughout Silver's administration, the NBA has prioritized fan engagement through data analytics, customer insights, and personalized marketing efforts. The league's ability to connect with fans on a deeper level has attracted sponsors looking to leverage the NBA's passionate and diverse fan base. Adam Silver's tenure as NBA Commissioner has seen the league's business cooperation and sponsorship models evolve to embrace new opportunities in a rapidly changing media and marketing landscape. As with all aspects of the NBA, these strategies are subject to further development and change, so this study encourages to verify any recent updates beyond my last update in September 2021.

### **3.5. Media Communication and Marketing Strategy**

As of the last update in September 2021, Adam Silver's tenure as NBA Commissioner has been characterized by a focus on media communication and innovative marketing strategies. Under his leadership, the NBA has continued to adapt to the changing media landscape, leveraging digital platforms and expanding its global reach. Here are some key aspects of media communication and marketing strategy during Adam Silver's administration.

Adam Silver has recognized the significance of digital and social media in engaging with fans and expanding the NBA's reach. The league has invested in building a strong online presence, utilizing



platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok to share highlights, news updates, behind-the-scenes content, and interactive fan experiences.

The NBA has developed an official NBA app that provides fans with a personalized and immersive experience. Through the app, fans can access live scores, player statistics, video highlights, and exclusive content, increasing fan engagement and loyalty.

Under Silver's administration, the NBA League Pass, a subscription-based streaming service, has become an essential tool for reaching global audiences. The service allows fans to watch live games and access on-demand content, catering to viewers outside the NBA's traditional broadcast territories.

The NBA has formed partnerships with various digital platforms to expand its media distribution. This includes collaborations with streaming services like Twitch and China's Tencent to increase the accessibility of NBA content and engage with younger audiences.

To tap into the power of user-generated content and connect with fans on a personal level, the NBA has established the NBA Content Creators Program. This initiative empowers fans and creators to produce and share NBA-related content across social media, promoting fan-driven storytelling and engagement.

Silver's administration has explored emerging technologies like VR and AR to enhance the fan experience. The NBA has experimented with virtual reality broadcasts and augmented reality activations, providing fans with immersive and interactive content.

Adam Silver has been instrumental in securing lucrative global media rights deals. The NBA's international appeal has led to broadcast partnerships with various networks and streaming platforms, expanding the league's global viewership and revenue potential.

Under Silver's leadership, the NBA has continued to produce compelling marketing campaigns, leveraging star players and memorable moments to resonate with fans. Campaigns often embrace storytelling, emotion, and cultural relevance to connect with diverse audiences worldwide.

Like his predecessors, Adam Silver has maintained the NBA's commitment to community and social initiatives. The league has used media communication to promote NBA Cares programs, community outreach efforts, and social justice initiatives, emphasizing the NBA's dedication to making a positive impact beyond the court [9]. In the realization path, the project activities and commonweal practices in the NBA cares plan are the main ones. Among them, the NBA Fitness program (NBA Fit) and the NBA Mind Healthy Program (NBA Mind Healthy) are guided by the core concept of humanization, and mental health is positioned as the basic element of residents' Health and excellence to advocate for citizen's, and consumer's attention to their own mental health issues, and to initiate educational participation in the math and basketball skills of children in their communities to educate and serve the communities in which the teams; clubs are located.

Adam Silver's administration has demonstrated a willingness to embrace new media technologies, engage with fans through digital platforms, and continue the NBA's growth as a global sports and entertainment brand. As with all aspects of the NBA, these strategies are subject to further development and evolution beyond my last update in September 2021. This study recommends verifying any recent developments in media communication and marketing strategies under Adam Silver's leadership.

#### **4. A Comparison Between Silver Period and Stern Period**

The NBA's game operation model underwent significant changes during the administrations of both David Stern and Adam Silver. While there are continuities in certain areas, such as the fundamental structure of the game and the overall entertainment value, each commissioner brought unique approaches and adaptations to address the evolving landscape of professional sports. Let's compare the game operation model under David Stern and Adam Silver.

#### **4.1. Marketing and Media Strategy**

David Stern: Stern's administration revolutionized the NBA's marketing and media strategy. He secured lucrative broadcast deals with major networks, increased television coverage, and emphasized branding, turning the NBA into a global sports and entertainment icon.

Adam Silver: Silver continued to leverage digital media and technology to enhance the NBA's reach and fan engagement. He embraced social media platforms, established the NBA app, and worked with digital partners to cater to the changing media consumption habits of younger audiences.

#### **4.2. Leadership Style**

David Stern: Stern was known for his strong and authoritative leadership style. He was decisive in making tough decisions and enforcing league rules. Stern's management approach often involved a top-down leadership style, where decisions were centralized at the league level.

Adam Silver: Silver's leadership style is often described as more collaborative and inclusive. He values player input and has emphasized engaging with stakeholders to make informed decisions. Silver's approach is characterized by a willingness to consider different perspectives and work collectively with players and team owners to address challenges.

#### **4.3. International Expansion and Globalization**

David Stern: Stern's administration laid the foundation for the NBA's international expansion. He actively pursued opportunities to grow the game globally, organizing games in various countries and signing international broadcast deals.

Adam Silver: Silver continued Stern's global vision and placed an even greater emphasis on international expansion. Under his tenure, the NBA's presence in international markets, particularly China, has continued to grow, with strategic partnerships and events catering to a diverse global audience [10]. In 1988, the NBA held its first overseas games in the Soviet Union. In the 21st century, some of the regular season even moved overseas. As of 2014, the NBA has played nearly 150 games in more than 20 countries and has continued to increase in recent years.

#### **4.4. Emphasis on Technology and Digital Media**

David Stern: While Stern recognized the significance of television, his era saw the early stages of digital media's impact. The NBA's online presence was nascent during his tenure.

Adam Silver: Silver fully embraced digital media and technology as critical components of the NBA's business management model. He leveraged social media platforms, streaming services, and interactive technologies to engage fans, expand the league's reach, and enhance the fan experience.

#### **4.5. Social Responsibility and Player Activism**

David Stern: Stern was committed to social responsibility and community engagement, but social justice issues and player activism were not as prominently emphasized during his tenure.

Adam Silver: Under Silver's leadership, social justice initiatives and player activism took center stage. He encouraged players to use their platforms to address social issues, leading the league's response to events like the Black Lives Matter movement.

#### 4.6. Marketing Campaigns

David Stern: Stern's marketing campaigns were notable for showcasing star players and promoting the NBA as a premier sports and entertainment brand. He emphasized traditional advertising mediums such as television commercials and print media.

Adam Silver: Under Adam Silver, marketing campaigns continued to feature star players, but the focus shifted to digital and social media platforms. The NBA's marketing approach became more interactive, with campaigns designed to encourage fan participation and sharing on social media.

In summary, while both David Stern and Adam Silver contributed to the NBA's success, they approached media communication and marketing strategies differently. David Stern's era laid the groundwork for international expansion and traditional media partnerships, while Adam Silver's administration embraced digital and social media, player activism, and innovations in technology to engage with a broader and more diverse audience. Their combined efforts have shaped the NBA into a global sports and entertainment brand with a strong emphasis on fan engagement and social impact.

#### 5. Conclusion

This paper expounds and compares the initiatives of the two in three important parts. The different commercialization strategies implemented by the two presidents have promoted the rapid development of the alliance. However, due to the changes in the international situation, the historical background of the two companies has undergone great changes, so it is difficult for this paper to compare the development direction promoted by the two companies with many detailed terms at the same latitude. In addition, this paper cannot judge the current president's next steps in the rapid commercialization process of the alliance, so there are certain limitations. However, due to the accelerated commercialization process, the alliance has signed new contracts with more and more commercial companies in different fields, so this part will be the research target in the future.

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