

# How name, image, and likeness rights have changed the game for college athletes

Article

**Not exactly amateur hour:** In the year since [NCAA](#) athletes have been able to cash in on their names, images, and likenesses (NIL), celebrity college athletes are just catching up to the

opportunities other celebrities have. Here are some of the partnerships we've seen take off:

- **Opendorse**, which helps athletes manage marketing offers, saw [2,000 athletes](#) use the platform to make deals within the first 10 hours of the updated regulation, according to Bloomberg.
- **Adidas** took a [direct-to-consumer](#) approach by offering direct, paid opportunities for college athletes to promote products on social media.
- **Fanatics** brand **Topps** will be launching college sports collectable [trading cards](#) this fall.
- **Brigham Young University** brokered a [teamwide deal](#) between its football players and Built protein bars. Other schools have since followed suit.

**Changing the game:** College sports generate [over \\$19 billion](#) for NCAA schools each year. But before the rule change, none of those revenues trickled to athletes other than in the form of scholarships. In 2014, University of Connecticut basketball star [Shabazz Napier](#) made headlines saying he and members of the championship-winning team sometimes went to bed hungry. Contrast that with last year, when [University of Alabama coach Nick Saban](#) said, "Our QB has already approached ungodly numbers, and he hasn't even played yet. It's almost seven figures."

### Meet the players:

- **Brands:** They immediately jumped on the opportunity, especially since the NIL niche offers a new way to market to sports fans for a fraction of the cost of TV commercials.
- **Agencies and marketers:** They are looking to connect athletes with brands. That's unless brands get to them first.
- **Athletes:** So far, football players are smelling the roses, while players of less popular sports and Division II and III athletes are left with petals. Female athletes are left, as usual, in a thorny situation of seeing less payment opportunity than male athletes.

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