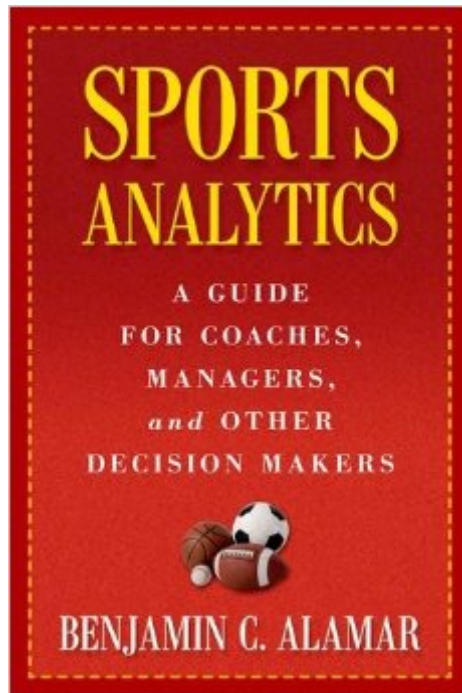


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Sports Analytics: A Guide For Coaches, Managers, And Other Decision Makers



Synopsis

Benjamin C. Alamar founded the first journal dedicated to sports statistics, the Journal of Quantitative Analysis in Sports. He developed and teaches a class on sports analytics for managers at the University of San Francisco and has published numerous cutting-edge studies on strategy and player evaluation. Today, he cochairs the sports statistics section of the International Statistics Institute and consults with several professional teams and businesses in sports analytics. There isn't a better representative of this emerging field to show diverse organizations how to implement analytics into their decision-making strategies, especially as analytic tools grow increasingly complex. Alamar provides a clear, easily digestible survey of the practice and a detailed understanding of analytics' vast possibilities. He explains how to evaluate different programs and put them to use. Using concrete examples from professional sports teams and case studies demonstrating the use and value of analytics in the field, Alamar designs a roadmap for managers, general managers, and other professionals as they build their own programs and teach their approach to others.

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Customer Reviews

I expected something else from this book. I was looking for discussions about specific cases of sports analytics impacting decision making and making a difference in the output of a sports agent (be it an athlete, a team, a scout, a sports investment fund). I was looking for discussions about specific KPIs, how they are captured, the reasoning underlying their conception and why they add

(or fail to add) value. Instead, I found the book to be quite generic and basic, containing very little that someone who has any experience as an analyst in any industry would not know. Also, I felt that the book reads more like a manual, with a very bland narrative and no story telling.

The concept of analytics in sports and the prospect of its ultimate utility resulting in competitive advantage has progressively gained traction at the organizational level in professional sports. However, despite its growing legitimacy, many executives and decision makers have struggled to employ a comprehensive strategy to realize the full potential of an analytics initiative. Many times these efforts are impeded due to the daunting challenge of forming and integrating a complete analytics program that can compliment and support the goals of the organization, which without help can be a massive undertaking that can be discouraging, easily procrastinated, or only partially executed. Mr. Alamar has done a masterful job in providing those decision makers and fans alike a comprehensive blueprint from which they can gain a contextual understanding of the distinct components that need to be configured to ensure success. I found this book to be extremely thorough in explaining both the advantage an analytics program can have in an uber competitive setting, but also the role of quality personnel and processes as the prime ingredients of a successful analytic plan. Whether it is the NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, or the Champions League, success is always at a premium and sustained winning is usually found in the margins. This book offers a unique resource that competently describes the interaction among leadership, data management, information systems, and predictive analysis required to produce new data in a timely manner for more efficient decision making that ultimately promotes more successful outcomes.

Professor Alamar sets forth a comprehensive, yet easily readable in depth introduction to sports analytics. The book is a perfect mixture of concepts, explanations and stories, which makes the book very enjoyable and addictive (I read it in two days). This is a sport neutral book (only anecdotes and examples are sport specific), which makes the content applicable to all sports. It is a must read for anyone interested in sports, from a decision maker at a team, all the way to the most casual of fans as it is an understandable introduction to a very complex and increasingly influential facet of sports.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. Alamar writes a very informative and entertaining book detailing the importance of data analytics in sports. This is a fascinating read for any saber-minded sports fan, and an absolute must read for serious fans of the NBA. In "The Blind Side," Michael Lewis

compares Alamar to Bill James and like James, Alamar is able to break down serious data metrics in a clear, insightful, and lively manner. Getting an inside peek into the front offices of major sports franchises is fascinating. I highly recommend this book.

Easily read for the lay person or old school coach who is not used to the changing world of sports data. Also good for the fan who may wish to have a peek behind the scenes of the changing world of how his favorite team is put together. I'm a sports fan but also a sports fiction writer. I picked this book up to get a better grasp of what a character I crafted might think like. It's been good for deepening my understanding of his addictive mindset.

I was hoping for a little more detail from the book. It had some great insider information, but I felt that it was lacking in certain areas. I also found that there were several places in which he repeated himself. Unfortunately, there are not many books on this topic. With that in mind I do recommend this book to anyone interested in this field.

Decision-makers at all levels throughout elite sports organizations should strongly consider investing their time in understanding the material presented in this book. My advice is to repeat the following cycle until it is no longer adding value to the decision-making process(es): 1) review the material; 2) apply one or more concepts; 3) repeat. Following this approach will undoubtedly result in several value-adding cycles and improve upon the analytics competencies of both the individual and organization. My advice and my confidence in the result are based the experience I have working with elite sports organizations on the development and execution of their analytics programs. Generally speaking, those organizations that have mastered the concepts covered in this book are well-poised to maintain the competitive advantages that they've gained through their analytics programs.

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