

## NBCSports.com relaunching as traffic grows

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NBC Sports is using the success of ProFootballTalk.com as a template for its fast-growing digital business, with a redesign for NBCSports.com set to launch around Labor Day and PFT editor Mike Florio expanding his profile in other NBC ventures.

The redesign will expand on already active plans for the NBC site in which the PFT model — featuring a blog-based effort as an entry point for the site's coverage of a league — has been replicated for other major sports, with HardballTalk.com, ProBasketballTalk.com and ProHockeyTalk.com all showing strong growth of their own.

NBCSports.com generated 7.845 million unique visitors in July, according to comScore, ranking the site No. 10 among U.S. sports destinations and more than twice the 3.783 million visitors seen in the same month last year. June's count (9.343 million) was similarly strong for NBCSports.com, up more than fourfold compared with June 2009, fueled by the FIFA World Cup and a partnership for the site with Goal.com.

Meanwhile, the expanded presence for Florio calls for him to have regular on-air TV role this fall during the network's coverage of Notre Dame football. A first-ever PFT NFL season preview print magazine was recently published, and Florio has performed several guest-hosting stints on Dan Patrick's syndicated radio show. Patrick is a co-host of NBC's "Football Night in America."

"Our online brand hasn't really caught up to our traffic yet," said Rick Cordella, NBC Sports Digital general manager. "But we're trying to get a structure together that really communicates that we are different, absolutely different, than our competition, and what's occurred with PFT is certainly a very big part of that."

NBC struck a deal with Florio 14 months ago to host, sell and promote PFT, and PFT represents the largest individual chunk of the monthly online traffic for NBCSports.com. PFT-branded video content is available through the NBC site, as well.



The site will use its feature blogs as entry points to league coverage.

"NBC has done everything they've promised to do. They've aggressively marketed the site, and traffic has gone up," Florio said. "A lot of people still don't know about PFT yet, though, so we've got further goals we're trying to reach, and we've done some things to try and expand the brand."

NBC is also actively working with digital video outfit NeuLion to develop an iPad companion to the network's TV and online coverage of "Sunday Night Football." The free app will provide stats, highlights, drive charts, social-media integration and other interactive features. The offering is expected to be available in time for NBC's broadcast of the Sept. 9 NFL regular-season opener.