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Brand Keys 2013 Sports Fan Loyalty Index Scores NFL Team Loyalty

**Patriots, Packers and Ravens Lead,
Cardinals, Chiefs, and Browns Trail**

NEW YORK, NY April 29, 2013 – Last week the National Football League Draft held their annual recruitment event where teams get to select eligible college football players for their teams. Each team was assigned a position (in reverse order relative to its previous year’s record) with the draft’s objective to help increase competitive parity. So the last place team gets positioned first, and ideally, are in the position to choose the best player available to reinforce the team.

A similar “ideal” outcome is the foundation upon which the Brand Keys 2013 *Sports Fan Loyalty Index*, the 21st annual fan survey conducted by Brand Keys, Inc. (www.brandkeys.com), the New York-based brand and customer loyalty research consultancy, is based.

The *Sports Fan Loyalty Index* was designed to help professional sports team management identify precise fan loyalty rankings in their home and national markets “with insights that enable league and team management to identify areas – particularly emotional ones – that need strategic brand reinforcement,” said Robert Passikoff, Brand Keys’ founder and president. “Those insights are based upon the fans’ ideal team.” Here’s this year’s NFL teams that scored well when it comes to fan loyalty, and those that didn’t. For comparative purposes, #'s in parentheses give the team’s rankings for last season:

Top-5

1. New England Patriots (#1)
2. Green Bay Packers (#3)
3. Baltimore Ravens (#11)
4. San Francisco 49ers (#13)
5. Indianapolis Colts (#4)

Bottom-5

32. Oakland Raiders (#32)
31. Jacksonville Jaguars (#27)
30. Cleveland Browns (#31)
29. Kansas City Chiefs (#23)
28. Arizona Cardinals (#22)

The Sports Fan Loyalty Index provides an apples-to-apples comparison of the intensity with which fans within the team's DMA support the home team versus corresponding values for the fans of the other teams in the market.

"Everybody loves a winner, but it's important to note that win/loss ratios do not entirely govern fan loyalty. Neither does just counting game attendance. As we've pointed out in the past, when it comes to emotions, and particularly emotional games like the Super Bowl, you could fill the venue twenty or thirty times over." That said, there are three other powerful and emotionally-based factors that must be taken into account." The percentages next to each indicate the contribution they make to fan loyalty and engagement:

History and Tradition (35%): Is the game and the team part of fans' and community rituals, institutions and beliefs?

Fan Bonding (28%): Are players particularly respected and admired?

Pure Entertainment (20%): How well a team does, wins, losses sure. But even more importantly than a win-loss ratio, how or entertaining is their play?

Authenticity (17%): How well they play as a team. What's the offense and defense like? New managers, as they're seen to be responsible for the genuineness and credibility of the team, can also help lift this driver.

This year the First Round draft picks had teams opting for offensive or defensive linemen. A quarterback wasn't chosen until the 16th pick and that was the only quarterback selection of the day. "One wonders if opting first for players that anchor both sides of the line of scrimmage, isn't a sign that teams are concentrating on Authenticity this year," mused Passikoff. "As overall league and team rankings correlate with viewership and merchandise sales, and since rankings can be influenced depending upon how loyalty drivers are managed, it's critical that team marketers do accurate scouting and drafting regarding the strategic play they intend to execute as regards their fans," said Passikoff.

The Brand Keys *Sports Fan Loyalty Index* measures all the teams in the four Major Leagues. The National Football League is currently rated 1st followed by Major League Baseball. The NBA currently ranks 3rd and "perhaps not surprisingly," noted Passikoff, the National Hockey League comes in last.

"It's been said that some people think football is a matter of life and death. Depending on your level of fan loyalty, sometimes it can get much more serious than that," said Passikoff.

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