

# Interview with Mr. John Winborn

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**Interviewee:** Mr. John Winborn, CIO of The Dallas Cowboys

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**Summary:**

I had the opportunity to interview Mr. John Winborn, the CIO of the Dallas Cowboys. We discussed his opinion on upcoming technologies their impact on the IT field as well as how they could affect the sports industry from the game itself to the fan experience. This was a great opportunity to get exposure to and a closer look at the intersection of sports and technology.

**Interview:**

We began by discussing Mr. Winborn's background and experience in the sports industry. Mr. Winborn worked at the World Cup, where he worked hiring security for the events for the many games played. He later was a part of the Olympics where he was responsible for more hiring and ensuring that events ran smoothly. He later worked with IBM on their Market Development and Insights where he gained more exposure to technology. He then went on to work in San Francisco where he worked with the Giants and was in charge of their tech systems. Afterwards, he went to the Milwaukee Bears and worked with their tech systems and managed their IT solutions. He then went on to the San Diego Padres and worked with their IT systems. He is now currently on the Cowboys team as their Chief Information Officer and is in charge of various points of technology with enhancing the player, and fan experience. He also often works with the Legends on technical solutions for different situations and scenarios.

As we discussed Mr. Winborn's background he strongly emphasized the importance of finding out what you enjoy and getting experience in it. He talked about how he started by working with security at the major sporting events and then how he was able to use the organizational skills from those experiences and apply it thought out the rest of his career. He encouraged that I go work every job related to the industry and everything that could be learned as what people learn from different parts of the industry can be applied to technology;

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he recalled an employee that used to work in concessions and equipment management but got a job in the IT department as they knew more about the industry and its needs than other applicants who didn't have that background. He also talked about how technology is always changing and that I should be ready to adapt but that I should also look for things that are similar and continue to apply applicable methodologies but adapt to changes.

The next thing we discussed was his opinion on upcoming technologies that could have major impacts on the industry, he mentioned that Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity were big things in the Technology scene; but, Artificial intelligence was going to have more of an impact in the sports technology intersection. He mentioned the benefits of having every play with metrics including temperature, air speed and direction, and time in the game, and many other factors and having all of them analyzed by a computer and how it could help coaches make decisions or modify plays for the better. He also talked about IoT's and RFID's and how they could help the fan experience with tracking and even addressing simple but annoying issues like parking. When talking about these different things Mr. Winborn also put emphasis on how it was important to understand the data and interpret as computers and a lot of people can do the first 80% but only a handful skilled analysts can push the last 20% and reach success. We also talked about the value of AR and VR in the fan experience, but with how players are very particular with their gear and the slightest adjustment can affect their performance AR and VR QB vision will have to wait until the technology is smaller and can't impact player performance. While talking about all these technologies, Mr. Winborn emphasized that the most important key is adoption.

Overall, talking to Mr. Winborn was a great learning opportunity, as I was able to gain exposure to a use of technology that I am not familiar with but spend a lot of time interacting with every Sunday night- sports. I learned about major components in the intersection of tech and sports and got Mr. Winborn insight on where technology could be headed and how it could be used to enhance player, coach, and fan experiences.