

# What is the media's role in the future success of Pro Cycling?

Building a positive relationship and feedback loop between the teams, race organizers, and the wider public

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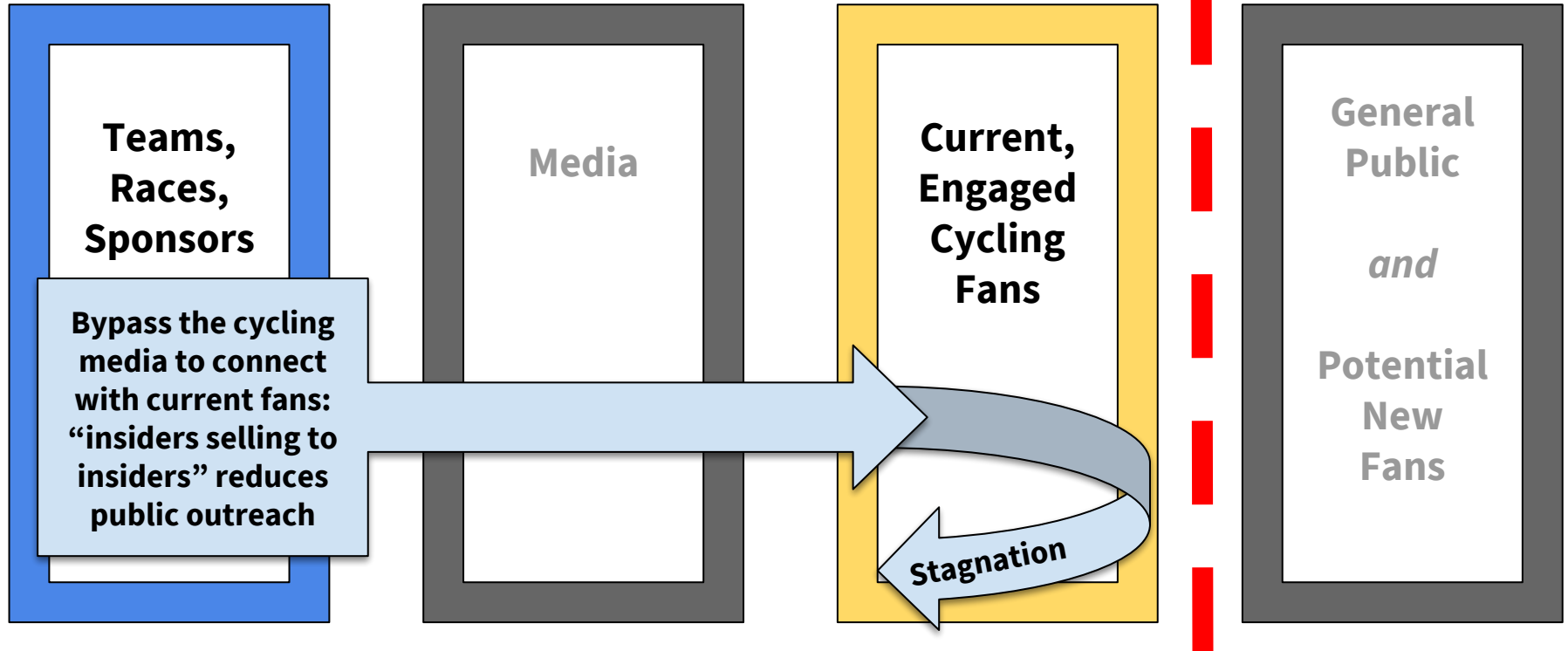
# The Challenge to Media:

- Television, press and newsprint has been under constant pressure since the rise of digital news media
- Media has been shifting from print and magazines to just a few newspapers and specialist print magazines, and *dozens* of websites and blogs
- Years of doping scandals have created distrust between the media and teams/rider
- Development of social media has further eroded the value of the cycling media. Social media viral posts erode the accuracy of serious reporting
- Fewer exclusive stories and a diluted audience across a more digital media have reduced the impact of trusted news sources, damaging their advertising income.

# Pro Cycling Bypasses the Media

- Teams and race organizers have developed their own digital marketing/media structures, pushing propaganda to fans to bypass the media
  - Teams are now restricting media access to riders to try to control the narrative. Rider quotes are often the same: “Thanks to my team...” but this hurts everyone involved
- Teams, races and their sponsors use self-branded websites, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube channels and PR professionals to put a positive spin on everything they do and to neutralise any scandals
- The end result: **This reduces the narrative of the sport “insiders selling to insiders”** - teams and race organizers are telling, and selling cycling’s story and sponsors to existing fans without the outreach to “hook” new fans and expand the base of interest.

# Today: Negative Feedback on Cycling



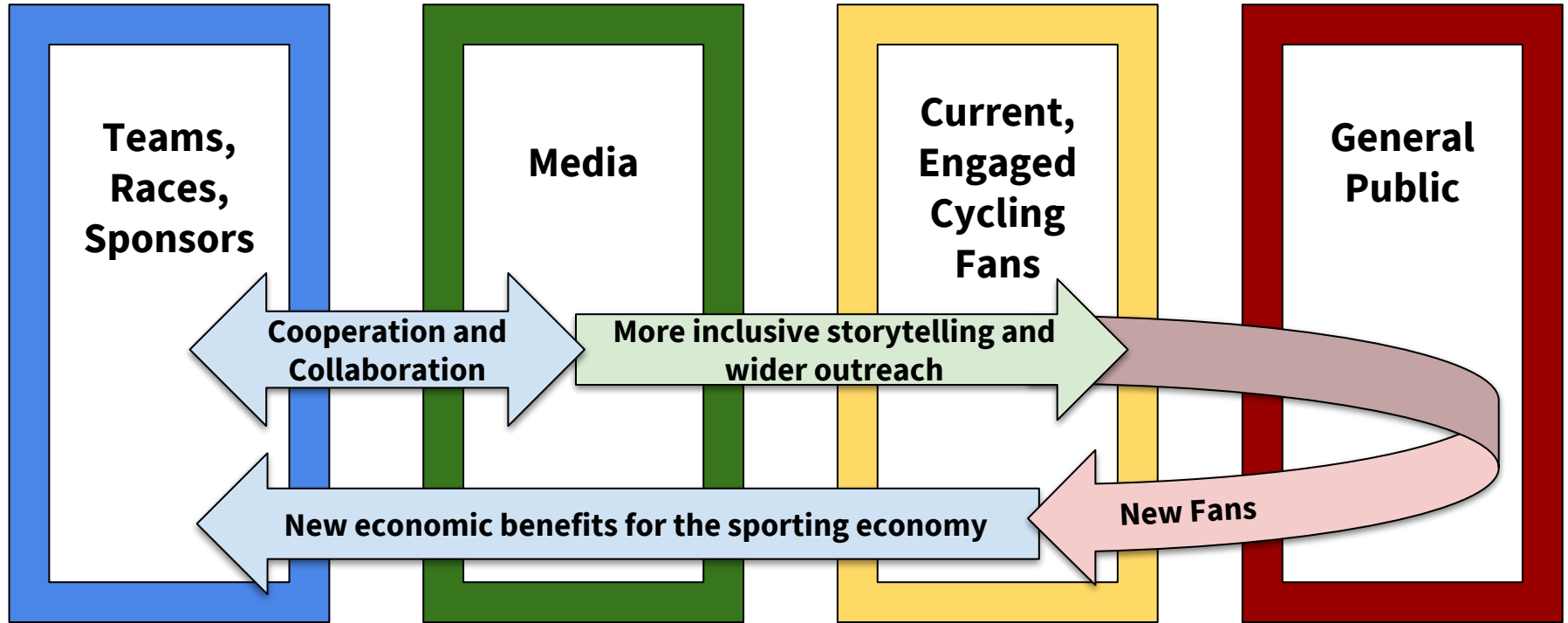
# The impact on Pro cycling's economy

- **Narrower media access and fewer channels are reducing the sport's outreach to the wider, more diverse public audience**
- Pay-to-view TV exclusive broadcast deals limit the outreach to connect to new fans and diminish the overall fan footprint
  - Eurosport paid race organiser RCS Sport more for exclusive Giro d'Italia rights in several European countries including the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark. It increased its cycling subscribers under the new deal but overall viewership of the race was actually down by 25% due to fewer free-to-air channels showing the Giro d'Italia in Europe
- Team sponsors are choosing alternative digital marketing strategies. The sport is no longer connecting accurately to its target audience
  - Vacansoleil, a former WorldTour team sponsor, now invests the same marketing \$\$\$ in online search, obtaining greater ROI over sports sponsorship. This indicates that cycling has not innovated in ways to expand its fan base and create sponsor activation opportunities

# The future: The media helps draw in new fans

- Good journalism is not dead, recent global events have proved that. The media has to adapt to the changes in digital technology and consumer trends
- The media has to create its own sustainable business model that does not depend on simple digital advertising and social media links, perhaps via subscribers model and with other income sources
- The media can create a **positive feedback loop** with quality journalism to build stronger relationships with current fans, and share the sport with a wider global audience to attract new fans
  - This is valuable to the sponsors, teams, race organizers and the future of the sport

# Future: Positive Feedback Loop



# Proposal: Create a media hub for pro cycling

- Today, each stakeholder on its own is only partially effective at promoting its interests. We propose the creation of a dedicated media hub or working group to help promote and report pro cycling for the benefit of all the stakeholders
- UCI, race organizers, Broadcasters, media representatives, and the teams and riders each have a share in this media hub and working group
- **The hub, with help from the stakeholders, would work to reach a wider public. This reinforces connections with current fans, expand cycling's audience and so in turn build the sport's profile and income**



# Media hub connects cycling's stakeholders

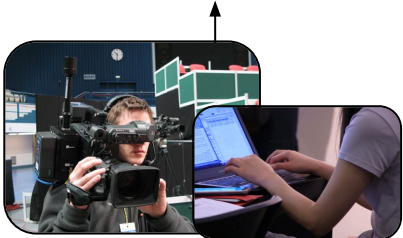


**TV & Digital  
Broadcast**



**Teams  
& Riders**

**Global cooperation  
builds the sport**



**Media**



**Race  
Organizers**

**100 years ago the media created the Tour de France to sell more newspapers.**

**And now the sport needs to understand how the media can help improve the economics and future success of pro cycling.**