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## FC Barcelona: The Most Passionate Team In The World

RUSSELL SCIBETTI, THE BUSINESS OF SPORTS

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In one of the last sessions from last week's [Global Sports Forum](#), Sandro Rosell, the President of FC Barcelona, talked about what it means for his team to be “*més que un club*” (more than a club).

From the few days I spent in Barcelona, there is no arguing how important Barca is to the local sports culture. Fans live and breathe with the team (it happened to be a pleasant week since they had just defeated Arsenal in a Champions League game earlier in the week).

Here are some of the insights shared by Rosell about the culture and identity of the club:

- Fans that cannot afford to buy tickets find a way to do so. There is an added value to being there live at the games. The fans identify on a personal level with the ups and downs of the team. This symbolizes what it means to be “more than a club.”
- It's not just about winning -- it's how you won. It's part of the culture. What do you show on the pitch.
- People around the globe want to see Barca because of the values of good players and good people. This is a fundamental philosophy across all FC Barcelona clubs, and that comes through on the field. Also, the global expansion of media let's everyone see it. It's very real to the team and the players, not just a show for the cameras.
- FC Barcelona has more than the normal mission for a club -- they want to use the power the club has to create social change. For example, in their UNICEF agreement, their team was actually paying money to UNICEF, not the other way around. (Note: with their new deal with the Qatar Foundations, they will be receiving payment. According to Rosell, the organization needed additional resources to put into the club and this was the best option without losing solidarity on the team's mission)

Rosell also fielded some questions from the audience on other business topics:

- On the stadium name, Camp Nou: We will never take the name from the stadium. We do want to get the best financial return that we can from everything. Ideally, we want to get more from less with our sponsorships. (Note: as one Twitter follower mentioned, similar statements may have previously been



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*made about their jerseys)*

- What is the brand essence: “Feeling. ” I’d like to say, it’s more than what we try to sell, it’s what the customers want to buy.
- My question on their previous interest in a potential MLS investment: That initiative from previous management. We don’t agree with that approach and we definitely will not do that. “There is only one Barca and it’s in Barcelona.”
- On the formation of a Euro-super-league: I don’t like the idea personally. That’s not to say it couldn’t happen in time, but it’s not my preference. The Spanish season is long. We should trim the length of this league and allow more time for the European league.

As someone without much background in European soccer, this session was quite enjoyable, and Rosell is definitely an iconic figure in Spain. Once the session ended, he was available for a 5-10 minute session with the media in attendance, and within seconds he was surrounded by a herd of media holding microphones and recorders as close as possible, so trying to ask additional questions was impossible. I was hoping to ask him what U.S. soccer clubs can learn from the success of FC Barcelona, but that question will have to wait for another day!

On a fun note, if you’ve ever wanted to walk out onto the pitch at Camp Nou, watch this video I was able to take at the Thursday night reception!

Walking onto the pitch at Camp Nou



Read the original article on [The Business of Sports](http://www.businessinsider.com/the-business-and-brand-of-fc-barcelona-2011-3). Copyright 2011.

