

## How a brand built around lacrosse launched an athlete entrepreneur

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Professional athletes are budding entrepreneurs, investors, and business operators. However, today's athletes aren't working solely with financial capital to accomplish this. Athletes use valuable assets like social capital, marketability and direct connection with fans to facilitate new opportunities. Athletes also utilize these assets to create relationships with brands and develop backgrounds that are useful for secondary career planning or personal brand building.

Many athletes do this well. Paul Rabil, for example, built his personal brand around lacrosse and used it to launch an extremely successful business career away from the sport. Rabil is one of the greatest professional lacrosse players of all time. He's also a highly successful athlete influencer, media operator, investor, and entrepreneur, most recently as a founder of the Premier Lacrosse League, launched in 2018. Rabil began his professional lacrosse career while working full-time, which is common. He eventually quit that job and started a clinic business to support his lacrosse wages. The trajectory of Rabil's career changed by becoming an early user of social media to connect with lacrosse fans. "For me [social media] was the only way to connect with a lacrosse fan because we weren't getting coverage on linear media," says Rabil. "I committed to being an early adopter and learning about the platforms, understanding trends, understanding consumer habits and building out creative and thoughtful content."

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