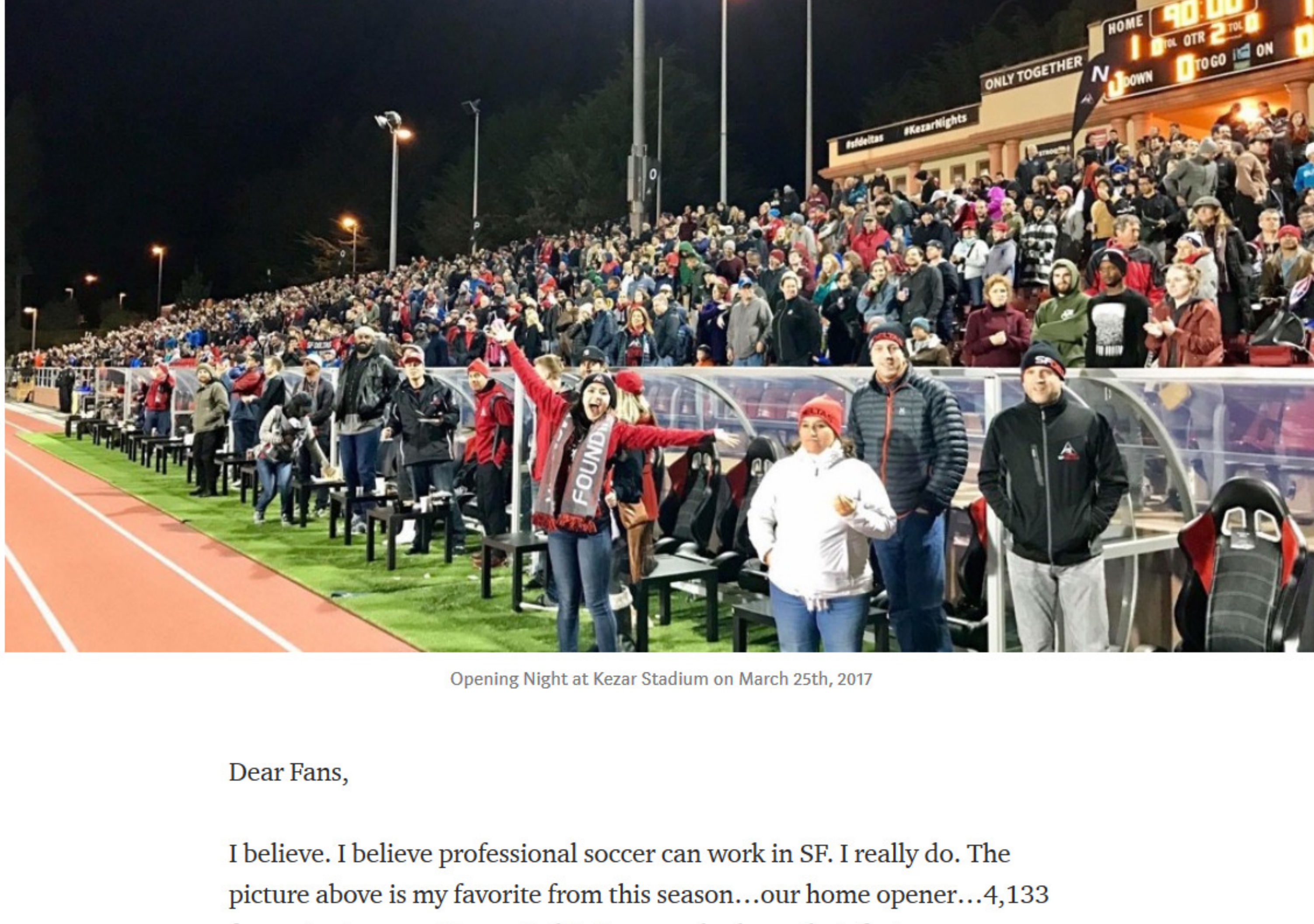


# SF Deltas CEO Challenge to Fans

Only You Can Fix This



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Opening Night at Kezar Stadium on March 25th, 2017

Dear Fans,

I believe. I believe professional soccer can work in SF. I really do. The picture above is my favorite from this season...our home opener...4,133 fans...in stoppage time...tied 1-1...everybody on their feet, as soccer should be watched. However, we have a problem. We have not seen this level of attendance again this season and we need to find a way to fill Kezar Stadium's capacity of 10,000. The San Francisco Deltas (SFD) can't survive if we don't increase attendance. It's scary to write, but Transparency is one of our pillars and it's a reality, not just for us, but for any team. Additional seasons in sports are never certain and we need your help to guarantee future SFD seasons. Stay calm and keep reading. We have 3 solutions.

Before we begin, what head coach Marc Dos Santos and the technical staff have done is nothing short of extraordinary. Marc, Todd Dunivant, Philip Dos Santos, Chris Brown, Kyle Thorne, and Josh Pendleton (and special mention to former assistant coach Andrea Di Pietrantonio) have truly embraced the scrappy startup mentality and have done a ton with a little. They have created a professional environment that has turned a group of players who didn't know each other a few months ago into a thriving team. I have lost count how many times individual SFD players have told me that this is a special group and they've never been in a locker room like this. These guys are more than just gifted athletes; they are a cohesive group of humble, hungry, disciplined winners. Their second place finish in the Spring Season is one example of that. Another example is what they've done to embody our Community pillar such as [helping a boy, victim of a stray bullet](#), and [regularly run training sessions at San Quentin State Prison](#). I'm incredibly proud of all of them.

## SFD Fan Attendance Data

Getting back to attendance, we've been working on this project for over two years. Despite our best efforts and tremendous success on the field, the majority of people living in San Francisco don't know we exist yet. Chalk it up to Donald Trump, an incredibly noisy market, or the competitive entertainment options facing fans on a Saturday night. We think it's likely a combination of all three. There's no question that we are struggling with awareness. However, it wouldn't be nearly as big of a problem if those who did know about us kept coming back and brought their friends with them. It's basic math, right? In the eight regular season games we've hosted to date, we've had approximately 20,000 people in total attendance or an average of about 2,500 people per game.

Date	Opponent	Actual Attendance	Announced Attendance
25-Mar	Indy Eleven	4,133	4,133
8-Apr	North Carolina FC	1,739	1,739
29-Apr	New York Cosmos	3,302	3,302
19-May	Jacksonville Armada	2,201	2,201
3-Jun	Indy Eleven	1,445	1,445
17-Jun	FC Edmonton	1,899	1,899
2-Jul	Puerto Rico FC	1,921	1,921
15-Jul	Miami FC	2,740	2,740
<b>Average</b>		<b>2,423</b>	<b>2,423</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>19,380</b>	<b>19,380</b>

You'll note that our actual attendance (sometimes referred to as turnstile) is equal to our announced attendance. The grand majority of teams across all leagues announce attendance figures that are higher than the actual number of people who attended — sometimes as high as 2-3x. This is a topic for a future post, but for now know that we don't do that. We believe it's important to be transparent with fans about actual attendance since it is a good indicator for the level of interest and engagement in a club, regardless if the attendees paid or didn't pay for their tickets. We also believe that it allows fans to know if they need to play a more active role in increasing attendance, which takes us back to basic math and the way you fans can ensure there is a second SFD season.

If each of our 2,500 fans per game came back the next game and brought JUST ONE friend with them, we would have 5,000 in attendance. If those 5,000 do the same thing for the following game, we would sell out all 10,000 seats at Kezar Stadium. In short, we could sell out in a matter of two games if people just came back with one friend! I mention that because I want to make sure that we acknowledge that this is not impossible. It really can happen. But we need the fans to take a more active role in spreading the word.

Small and scrappy as our team is, we're very data-driven and love to harness the power of our [Eventbrite ticketing platform](#) as well as continuously survey our fans to get feedback. At first glance it may seem that we have roughly 2,500 fans that regularly come to games. In fact, we have more. Many more than we realized.

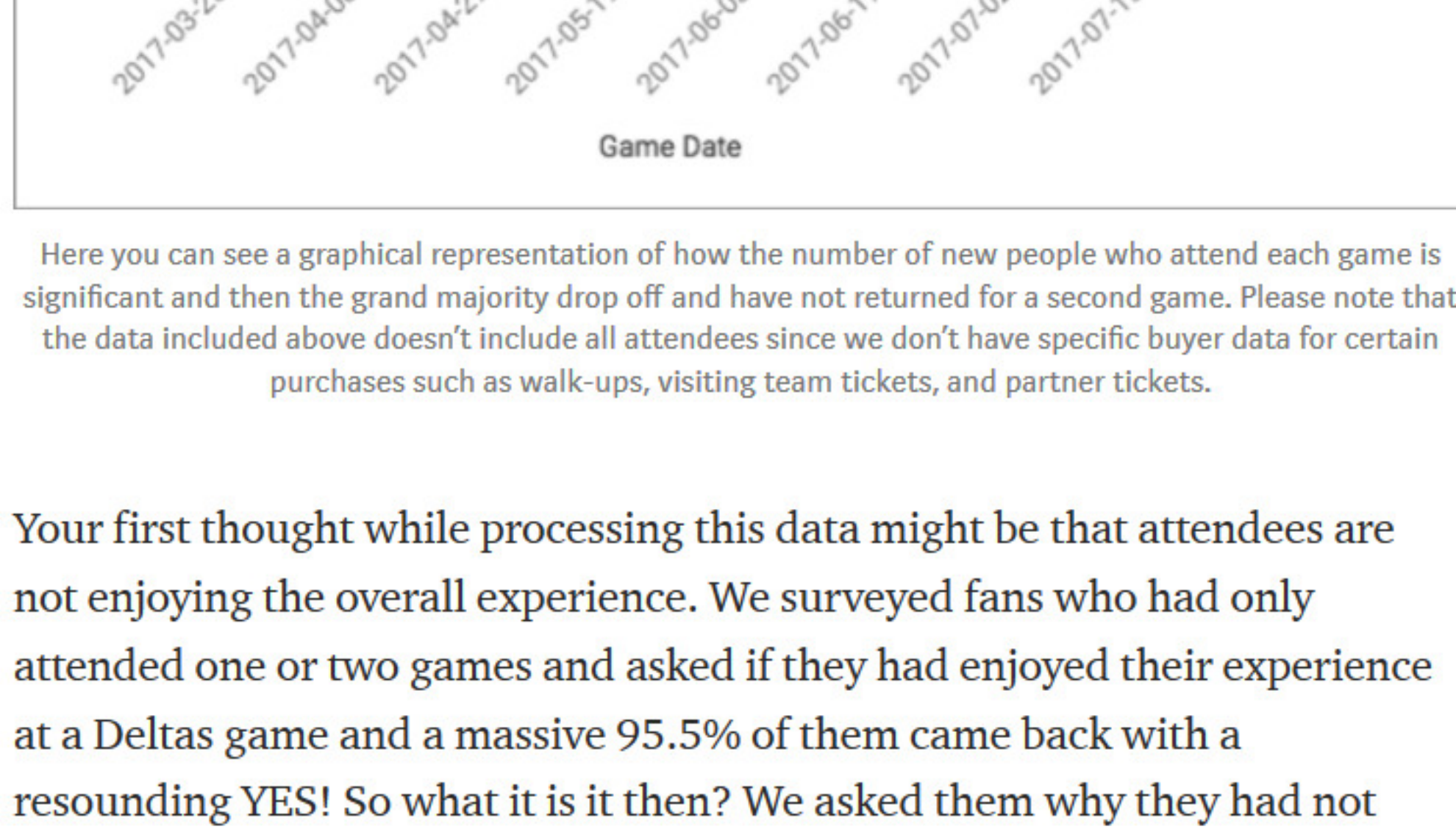
Thanks to Eventbrite, we track ticket purchases by unique individual to see how many games people attend. Of the 20,000 people who have come to a game, below is a table with the distribution by the number of games they have attended. A surprisingly high 88.1% of fans have only attended one game and not returned. From a retention perspective, that's bad. The flipside is we've had a lot of unique people go to games since 88.1% of people are new. It's great that we've gotten so many people to games! These figures imply that we've had approximately 15,000 unique people attend one of our games. We've had enough unique people to fill the stadium one and a half times over. This is a huge testament to our 13-person operations team (what other teams call front office), which is the smallest in the league.

Number of Games Attended	Attendee Breakdown
1	88.1%
2	5.1%
3	1.5%
4	1.2%
5	1.2%
6	1.3%
7	0.9%
8	0.8%
	100%

Now let's look at this data a different way. We segmented fans into cohorts based on the first game they attended. What we saw is a very high churn rate of one-and-done. In other words, fans come to one game and haven't come back. The home opener on 3/25 is naturally skewed because it includes a large percentage of our season ticket holder base and even in that case, 72% of fans have not returned. Did not come back that 92% of fans who came to their first game on May 19th did not come back to a game in the following two months.

Date	Opponent	One-and-Done Churn Rate
25-Mar	Indy Eleven	72%
8-Apr	North Carolina FC	77%
29-Apr	New York Cosmos	89%
19-May	Jacksonville Armada	92%
3-Jun	Indy Eleven	94%
17-Jun	FC Edmonton	94%
2-Jul	Puerto Rico FC	96%
15-Jul	Miami FC	n/a
<b>Average</b>		<b>88%</b>

The chart above gets updated after each game to see how fans in each cohort act and it will be interesting to see where the rates land at the end of the year.



Here you can see a graphical representation of how the number of new people who attend each game is significant and then the grand majority drop off and have not returned for a second game. Please note that the data included above doesn't include all attendees since we don't have specific buyer data for certain purchases such as walk-ups, visiting team tickets, and partner tickets.

Your first thought while processing this data might be that attendees are not enjoying our overall experience. We surveyed fans who had only attended one or two games and asked if they had enjoyed their experience at a Deltas game and a massive 95.5% of them came back with a resounding YES! So what is it is it then? We asked them why they had not returned for more games and 64.8% of people said they simply were too busy with other priorities to make it to more games. *(Footnote below)*

That's a tough problem to fix. San Francisco is an incredible city with an overwhelming number of out-of-home entertainment options. On top of this we've also increasingly come across people who know about SFD and also have not attended a game because they "haven't had time." People in San Francisco work much more than a typical 40-hour work week and live very busy, over-scheduled lives. So, we can either find a way to reduce the number of cool things to do in SF or find ways to make SFD a higher priority for fans, so they return to more games. Since we can't do anything about the former, we definitely have some ideas about the latter below.

## Three Ideas to Increase Attendance

So now we get to the important part, how do we fix this? By "we" I mean you the fans and SFD. In my humble opinion, I see three possible routes.

1. We find a high profile local individual (or small group of individuals) to invest in SFD who would increase the prominence of the team and attract greater media coverage, sponsorship revenue and attendance like Arthur Blank has done with Atlanta United.
2. We forge a relationship (partnership or investment) with a local pro sports team who would increase awareness and also create synergies across shared efforts on sponsorship and ticket sales. Sharing a venue could be possible. The Seattle Sounders and Seattle Seahawks is a good example.
3. The fans come together and fight to capture the hearts and minds of their friends and family and help us spread the word about San Francisco's professional soccer team. It's similar to what fans like [John Green and others did for AFC Wimbledon](#).

Let's look at these three routes in more depth.

## High Profile Local Investor