

College Football Wrapped

How NIL Changed the Game in 2025



The Cost of Winning

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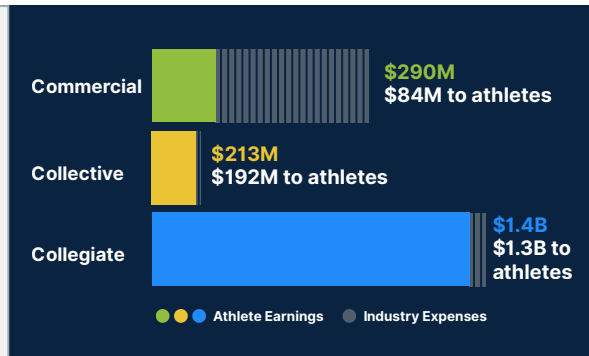
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Review of the 2025 Season

Total NIL Economy

Total spending tied to NIL products and services for college football players is expected to reach \$1.9B this year — nearly \$297M flowing to service providers and other industry expenses like tools and infrastructure, with the remaining \$1.6B going straight to athletes.



Thinking Outside the Cap

Oklahoma isn't treating NIL like a side project, they're building championship infrastructure. With Opendorse, OU is scaling year-round education, brand-building, and measurable outcomes so every Sooner leaves Norman with real marketplace value. That's what winning looks like in this new era.



Looking National

Boise State is turning its 2024 CFP breakthrough into a long-term NIL engine. By deploying a targeted Opendorse Sales & Marketing Plan™, the Broncos are generating real commercial NIL opportunities. This proactive model is critical for programs in the rev-share era.



The Year of the Coaching Change

2025 saw an unprecedented number of changes at the helm for programs both large and small. Coaching changes don't create automatic transfers — they create decision points. The savviest athletes finished the semester, protected eligibility, and maximized film while not overlooking the fine print.

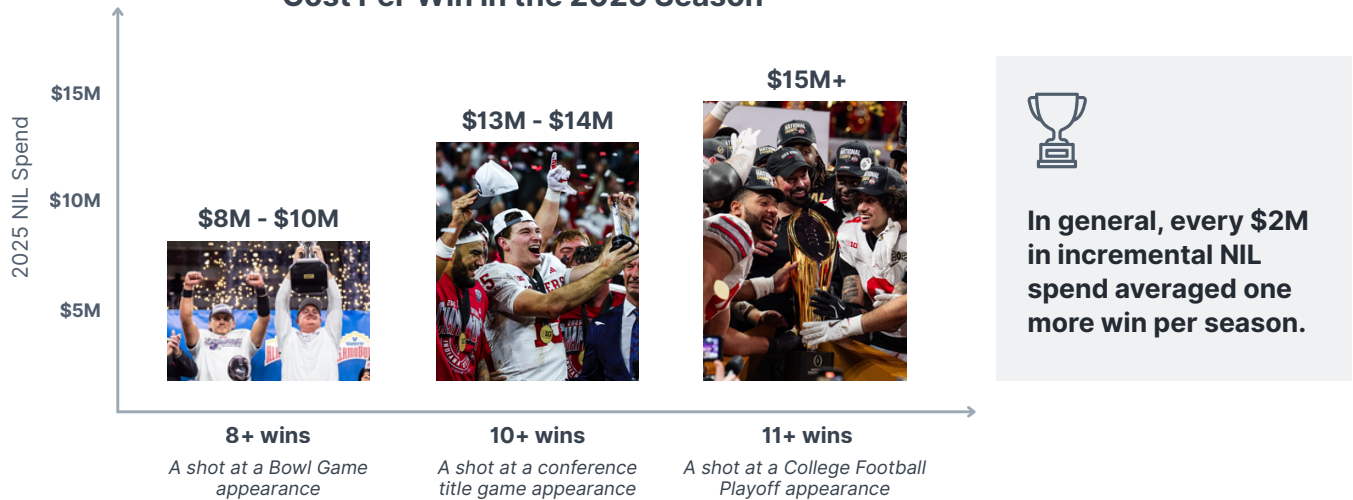


The Cost of Winning

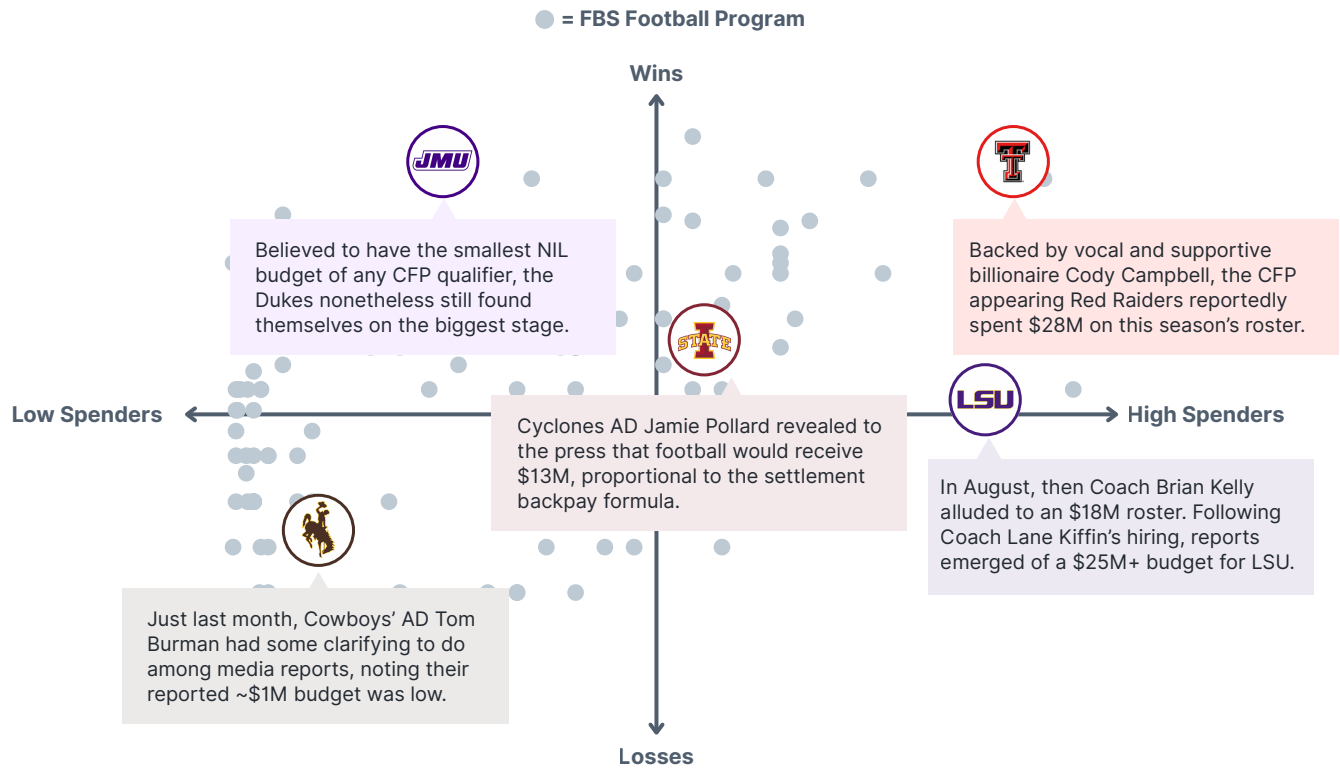
In pro sports, value is measured in dollars and outcomes — Wins Above Replacement (WAR), cost efficiency, and marginal wins. College Football has traditionally relied on potential, recruiting rankings, and postseason results, with little ability to connect spend to performance.

That changed in 2025. For the first time, the data exists to support practical, market-facing metrics. While not a perfect science, they serve as a directional truth teller as the industry evolves.

Cost Per Win in the 2025 Season



FBS Football Budget Spend Compared to 2025 Win-Loss Record



Budget Spend is on a per-team basis, based on a combination of public records request reports, media reports, and known, actual budgets calculated from verified, anonymized NIL payments, disclosures, and budgets from collectives and colleges between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025. Win-Loss Record is the overall record for every NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (NCAA DI FBS) for the 2025-26 season.

Athlete Earnings & Market Movement

The Power of Representation

In 2025, athletes with agents earned

2.1x more

NIL income than unrepresented peers

Income brackets for college football players





































In August, earnings distributions were analyzed among Power 4 football players. After the initial wave of rev-share payments, distributions have adjusted significantly.

More than \$1M	1.5%	+5X from preseason
\$999K to \$500K	4.4%	+7X from preseason
\$499K to \$100K	25.2%	+3X from preseason
\$99K to \$50K	16.9%	+2X from preseason
\$49K to \$10K	30.5%	+2X from preseason
Less than \$10K	21.5%	-3X from preseason

*Rev-share allocation data from [Opendorse Team Builder](#) is based on verified, anonymized NIL payments, disclosures, and budgets from collectives and colleges between July 1, 2021, and November 30, 2025. NIL compensation data is based on anonymized transactions facilitated or disclosed through Opendorse by Power 4 football student-athletes between July 1, 2024, and November 30, 2025. Data is not representative of the latest transfer portal offers and activity.

Top Transfer Portal Options by Position + Percentage of Rev-Share Pool Allocated


Alongside top portal prospects, the average Power 4 program allocates the following percentages to each position group.

QB 16.9%	 Sam Leavitt	 Drew Mestemaker	 Byrum Brown	 Brendan Sorsby
RB 8.9%	 Caleb Hawkins	 Hollywood Smothers	 Raleek Brown	 Tre Wisner
WR 15.4%	 Cam Coleman	 Nick Marsh	 Omarion Miller	 Terrell Anderson
TE 4.5%	 Benjamin Brahmer	 Brody Foley	 Dorian Thomas	 Gabe Burkle
OL 14.2%	 Carius Curne	 Jacarrius Peak	 Wilkin Formby	 Coleton Price
DL 13.7%	 Chaz Coleman	 Mateen Ibirogba	 John Henry Daley	 Wendell Gregory
LB 11.9%	 Robert Woodyard Jr.	 Austin Romaine	 Qua Russaw	 Amare Campbell
DB 13.0%	 Jontez Williams	 Jay Crawford	 Smith Snowden	 Ty Benefield
K/P 1.5%	 Ashton Wolff	 Upton Bellenfant	 Dylan Davidson	 Atticus Bertrams

*Transfer Portal entrants courtesy of On3.

Rev-Share Reality

In June 2025, Opendorse surveyed dozens of leaders across the industry, ranging from ADs and Deputies to GMs and NIL Directors, asking 30+ questions about the outlook of the industry. Six months post-settlement, we revisited five of the most polarizing questions after a season of learning.

	Then	Now
<p>1 What is the status of your institution's primary collective?</p>	<p>28% Agency Model</p> <p>29% Key Payments Only</p> <p>15% Status Quo</p> <p>28% Dissolved</p>	<p>45% Agency Model</p> <p>15% Key Payments Only</p> <p>9% Status Quo</p> <p>31% Dissolved</p>
<p>2 How many athletes rev-share contracts include a guarantee of third-party NIL deals?</p> <p> <i>Of note, in September the College Sports Commission updated rules mandating all promised third-party NIL is cap-countable</i></p>	<p>43% key players had third-party NIL deals explicitly guaranteed in their rev-share contract</p> <p>57% no players have third-party NIL deals explicitly guaranteed in their rev-share contract</p>	<p>28% key players have third-party NIL deals explicitly guaranteed in their rev-share contract</p> <p>72% no players have third-party NIL deals explicitly guaranteed in their rev-share contract</p>
<p>3 If you were to estimate the total amount of department-wide third-party NIL deals secured in year one, where do you anticipate it to fall?</p>	<p>54% \$1M - \$5M</p> <p>28% \$500K - \$1M</p> <p>18% <\$500K</p>	<p>62% \$1M - \$5M</p> <p>27% \$500K - \$1M</p> <p>11% <\$500K</p>
<p>4 On a scale 1-10 (with 10 being very confident), how confident are you in the College Sports Commission's ability to "crack down" on cap circumvention?</p>	<p>7.0 High</p> <p>4.3 Average</p> <p>1.0 Low</p>	<p>6.5 High</p> <p>3.8 Average</p> <p>1.0 Low</p>
<p>5 What is the estimated annual NIL spend for Power 4 football?</p>	<p>\$15M+ Top Tier</p> <p>\$12.5M Middle Tier</p> <p>\$9.5M Bottom Tier</p>	<p>\$18.5M+ Top Tier</p> <p>\$13.2M Middle Tier</p> <p>\$10.9M Bottom Tier</p>

Audience Growth & Influence Leaders

Content comes in all shapes and sizes. In an era where NIL earnings are heavily influenced by social media traction, creativity is rewarded.

Who to Follow

Outstanding storytellers and engaging creators



Kaden Beatty
Washington State Cougars
Fun personal & football mix



Caleb Cook
Georgia Southern Eagles
WWE & cologne reviews



Allen Ortiz
New Mexico State Aggies
Day-in-the-life glimpses



Cash Peterman
UCLA Bruins
Elite all-access storytelling



Mason Rieger
Wisconsin Badgers
Inspirational perspective



Bryce Underwood
Michigan Wolverines
Cross-platform presence

Top Activation Formats

When Commercial brands activate with college athletes, these are the most common mediums



26.9%
Licensing



21.7%
Video



11.6%
Photo



4.9%
In-Person



4.1%
Social Media



2.1%
Audio-Based



40.4%
Other

Top Platforms

Analyzing all social media-based Commercial NIL activities, one platform ranked above the rest



76.1%
Instagram



12.5%
Facebook



10.0%
TikTok



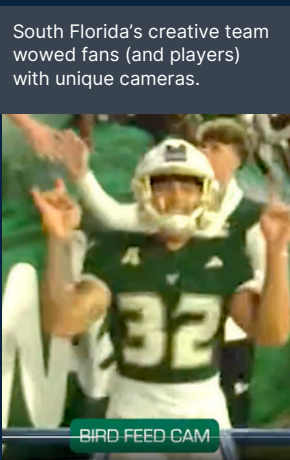
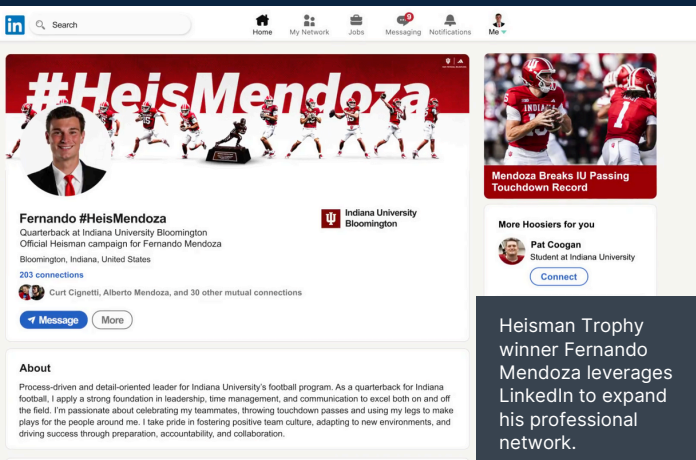
1.2%
Twitter/X



<1%
YouTube



<1%
Snapchat



South Florida's creative team wowed fans (and players) with unique cameras.



Major NIL Partnerships from 2025

The strongest NIL partnerships of 2025 moved beyond one-off sponsorships, evolving into cohesive partnerships driven by consistent storytelling, dependable content cadence, and measurable outcomes.

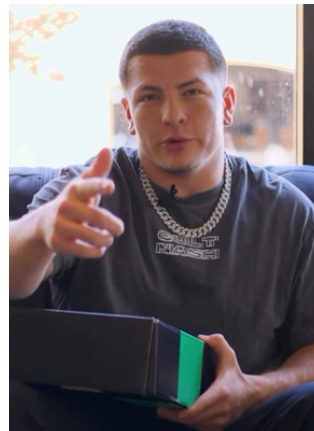


**Regions Bank
x CJ Allen**
Georgia Bulldogs

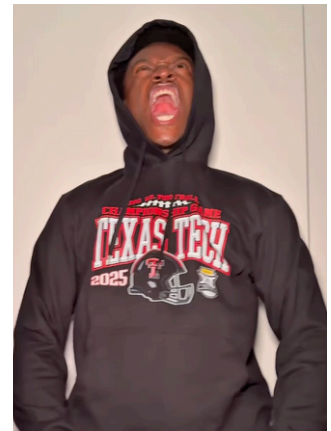


Join the Alabama Fan Group on Facebook
#RollTide
#FacebookGroups

**Meta
x Ty Simpson**
Alabama Crimson Tide

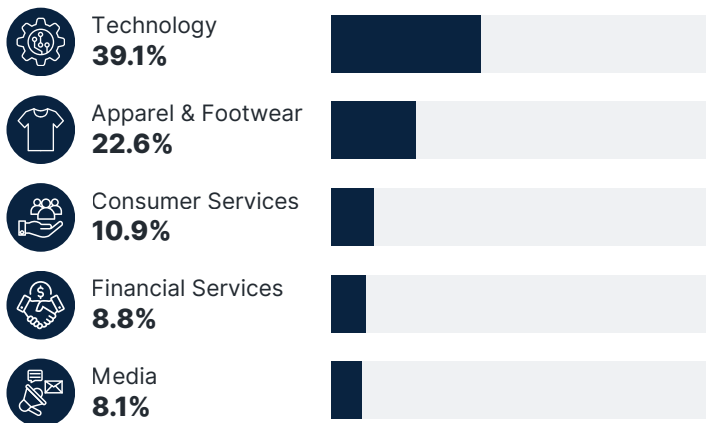


**TruGreen
x Diego Pavia**
Vanderbilt Commodores



**Amazon
x DeVontae Ford**
Texas Tech Red Raiders

Top 5 Activating Industries of 2025



Top Activating Brands of 2025



Case Study: PorkRinds.com

PorkRinds.com set out to combine charitable impact with clutch performances, recognizing “crunch time” performers each week to raise awareness for the Archer Foundation. The campaign is set to conclude with a \$25,000 bonus NIL deal for the weekly recipient with the most shares on his content.

Pictured: Skyler Howard, Texas Tech Red Raiders



Small Ball, Big Movement

The highest level of College Football often takes the limelight, but there is plenty to celebrate across all levels. One consistency among every stage is the importance of establishing a strong foundation of NIL opportunities and education. Here are some schools that championed the changes in 2025.



Yale Bulldogs / NCAA DI FCS
Playoff Second Round Qualifier (9-3)

“ Partnering with Opendorse allows us to provide best-in-class NIL resources that empower our student-athletes to make the most of the opportunities available to them in this evolving landscape.”

– Vicky Chun, Director of Athletics



Ferris State Bulldogs / NCAA DII
2025 National Champions (16-0)

“ For us to continue to enjoy championship success we have achieved, it's critical that we move forward and continue to be a leader in NIL.”

– Steve Brockelbank, Director of Athletics



John Carroll Blue Streaks / NCAA DIII
Playoff Semifinalists (12-1)

“ Our Opendorse partnership allows our student-athletes to participate in NIL in an organized and responsible manner. We believe that this tool makes it easier for local businesses to engage with our athletes resulting in increased opportunities.”

– Brian Polian, Vice President for Athletics and National Engagement



Keiser Seahawks / NAIA
National Championship Runner-Up (12-1)

“ In today's college sports landscape, NIL isn't just a nice-to-have—it's a competitive necessity.”

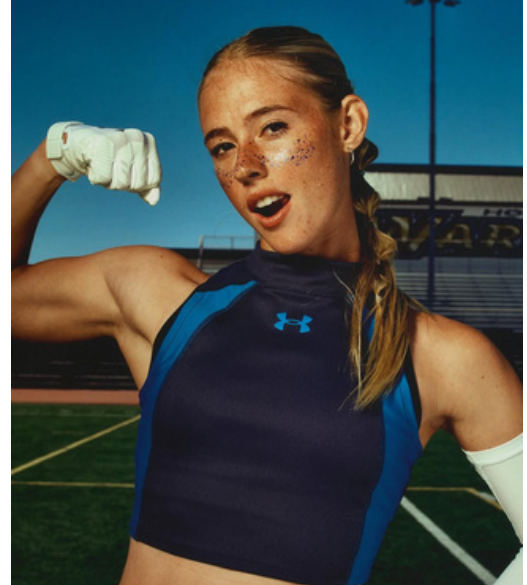
– Keiser Athletics Representative



Hutchinson Blue Dragons / NJCAA
National Championship Runner-Up (11-1)

“ Blue Dragon Athletics' partnership with Opendorse will keep our student-athletes on the cutting edge moving forward in this ever-changing environment.”

– Josh Gooch, Athletics Director



Flag Football Incoming

Ahead of the sport's debut at the 2028 Olympic Games, flag football has garnered significant popularity. In May, Ottawa University claimed its fifth consecutive NAIA national championship with a star-studded roster amassing hundreds of thousands of social media followers – not to mention their graduate assistant coach Alyssa Gillespie who has 1.2M+ followers on TikTok alone. Flag football is on the rise, and many future fans will encounter it through by way of social media engagement.

Ashlea Klam, Team USA and Keiser University flag football player, believes that, “[Through NIL and Opendorse], if younger girls see me in a campaign or commercial, maybe they'll realize this sport is real. They'll see that you can get a college scholarship and make money.”



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