

World-Class Sports and Entertainment

An Interview with Brett Yormark,
Chief Executive Officer, Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment

EDITORS' NOTE Brett Yormark oversees the business enterprise that manages and controls the Brooklyn Nets; Barclays Center; the New York Islanders business operations; NYCB LIVE, home of the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum; and the Nets' G League affiliate, the Long Island Nets. Since its grand opening in September 2012, Yormark has overseen all facets of Barclays Center and co-founded BSE's Advisory Board, a group of 40 leading industry executives who contribute to the programming and strategy direction for both venues. Yormark joined the Nets after a successful six-year period with NASCAR. As vice president of corporate marketing, he oversaw a \$750 million deal with Nextel Communications which, at the time, was the largest sponsorship agreement in the history of American sports.



Brett Yormark

COMPANY BRIEF Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment (brooklynse.com; BSE) develops and operates state-of-the-art venues and manages premier sports franchises, delivering dynamic content and experiences for audiences. BSE oversees programming, marketing, sales, and operations for Barclays Center and Long Island's NYCB LIVE, home of the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, and manages and controls the NBA's Brooklyn Nets, its G League team, the Long Island Nets, as well as the business operations of the NHL's New York Islanders.

Will you discuss the impact that Barclays Center has had on the redevelopment and growth of Brooklyn?

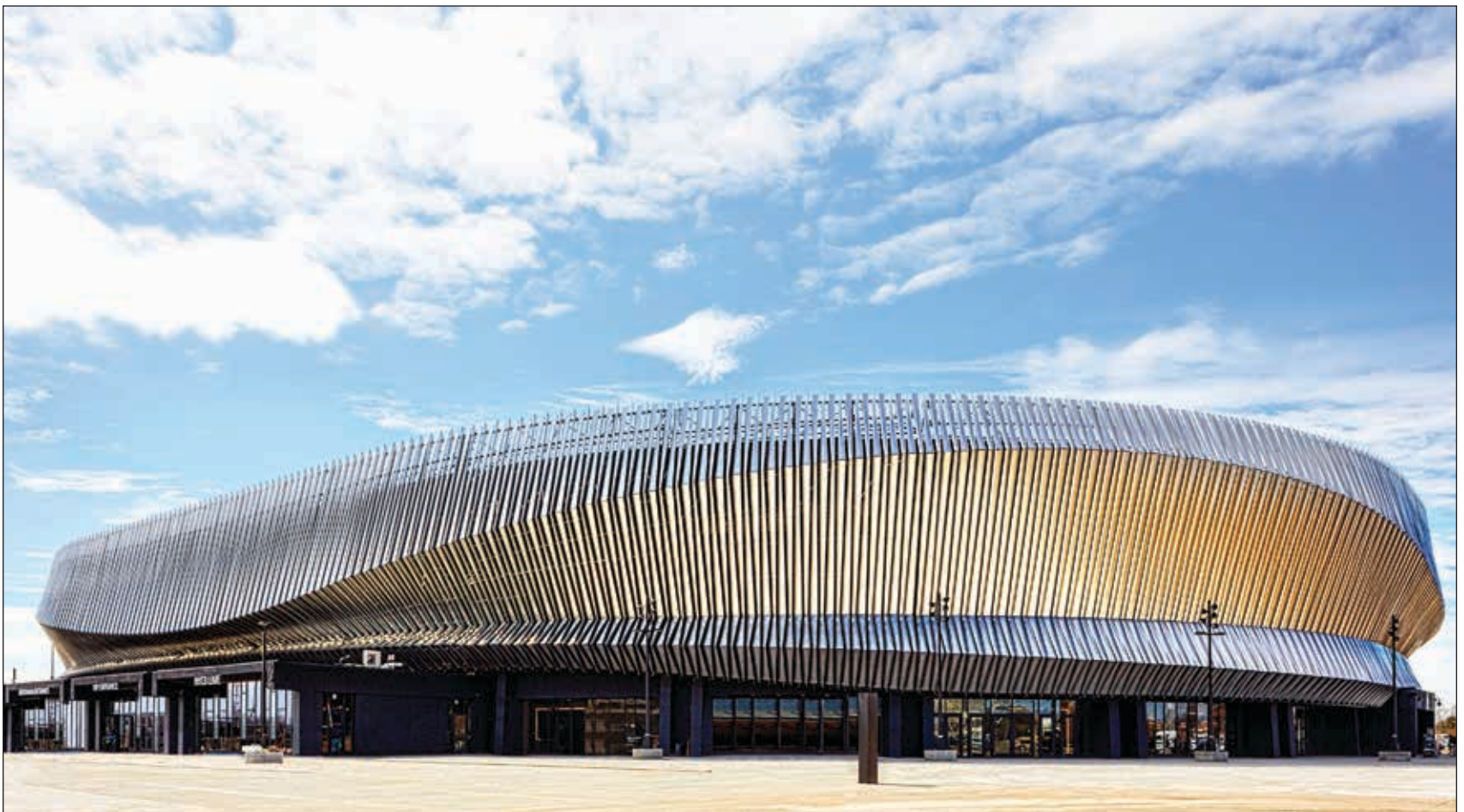
In many respects, Barclays Center has become not only the epicenter of the borough but, in many ways, its heartbeat.

Brooklyn was going through a bit of a renaissance before we broke ground, but since then we have earned our role in the borough and have contributed in so many different ways, both culturally and from a job creation point of view.

The building has become aspirational for anyone in the borough to want to box in our ring, play basketball on our court, or to one day perform on our stage – it serves so many different purposes.

I often say I'm happy but never satisfied. We've done a lot in the borough. We mean so much to so many, but there is much more to accomplish, and that is our goal.

Looking back on the first five years, our goals were to be a good neighbor and to contribute economically, socially, and culturally to the borough. In many respects, we also hoped to bring the big event business back to a market that had been underserved in sports for so many years.





Barclays Center interior and exterior (this page) and NYCB LIVE, home of the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum (opposite page)

Everyone has been to the borough now, from JAY-Z to Barbra Streisand to The Rolling Stones to Paul McCartney to major college basketball and boxing events to great family show programming. We also brought the New York Islanders into the borough. Much has gone on that exceeded our expectations, but we're just getting started, which is also really exciting.

We have learned a lot and look forward to the next five years.

You put a major emphasis on the operations of the facility. How important has it been to create a service culture?

From day one, we believed the content would get people to Barclays Center, and the newness and appeal would get people in the door the first time, but we had to give them a reason to keep coming back. The main reason we can give people is to make them feel like they're all being treated like celebrities.

We went out and partnered with Disney, and they have done a terrific job with all of our onboarding and training. We work with Levy, who helps us manage our food and beverage program – we introduced Brooklyn Taste, which is 57 food vendors and restaurateurs from Brooklyn that create this platform so that anyone who comes to Barclays can feel the culinary flavor of Brooklyn.

The food and customer experiences truly differentiate us in the marketplace and give people a reason to keep coming back. We will constantly look to recreate and refine those two areas of our business. This fall, we will introduce some new culinary highlights to the offering that will give people a reason to want to come back.

At the end of the day, customer service is paramount.

What prompted your recent partnership with Infor and what made you feel it was important for the Nets?

This was a game-changer for us. The sports and entertainment business is reliant, more so now than ever, on data and analytics. Most businesses are going in that direction, and ours is no different.

We had a very small relationship with Infor, one that we nurtured to where it is today. They're helping basketball contemporize how they do things, and we are applying this to our business as well.

They're the largest tech company headquartered in New York, but a lot of people don't know who they are. They work with many Fortune 500 companies, helping them to grow and to be smarter about their business, and they're doing the same for us.



We're excited with respect to the partnership, not only on what it's going to deliver on the basketball side, but also on the business side.

In basketball, we need the data and analytics to drive decision-making today, and same on the business side. All of our decisions are data-based now.

What can guests expect with the reopening of Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum?

It opened April 5th with Billy Joel and has been totally recreated and reimagined. We put \$165 million into it, so when people go there for the first time, they're seeing a total overhaul from the outside to the inside. In many ways, it reflects the premium nature of Barclays Center. Our employees there have also been Disney trained, so there is the same customer service element. In addition, the architecture wows when it comes to the façade and, when one walks into the concourses, there is also high design.

There are about 30 vendor favorites throughout Long Island that have been brought into the building to create a great culinary experience and offering.

It's a great market when it comes to Nassau and Suffolk counties and the density of those markets, and it's a market that is distinctly different from Brooklyn. Fans there have been waiting for years for world-class entertainment to return.

In the three years before it closed, very few concerts went to Long Island. We almost look at it as a startup, and we're treating it as such with all of the right marketing and messaging. We're confident the biggest and best artists will return and some will appear for the first time on Long Island. It has become a destination. ●