LGBT ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

EMBRACE THE FUTURE OF THE GAME
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WE BELIEVE IN AN OPEN GAME

At the USTA, we celebrate the open format — the idea that anyone from anywhere should be able to play and compete. That’s the principle behind our signature tournament, the US Open. It’s also the driving force behind our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, designed to grow and promote our sport to the next generation of fans, players and volunteers. To do that, we are removing barriers and creating opportunities wherever we can so that tennis becomes a true reflection of all of America.

Our mission is to position the USTA and the game of tennis as the global model for diversity and inclusion in sports. And the first step in that mission starts right here with you.

This guide is designed to help you connect with a key segment vital to the growth of tennis — the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. You’ll learn about LGBT demographics, history with the game, steps for engagement and success stories from others. With your help, we can make sure the game of tennis remains relevant, beloved and, most importantly, open to generations of players to come. This is only the beginning, a way to get the conversation started. Our hope is that with this information and insight in hand, you’ll be able to begin to engage with this community in a meaningful and productive way.
THE OPPORTUNITY

THE PLAYERS: LGBT

The LGBT community — those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender — are a vibrant, diverse and influential segment of the American population. Approximately 3–6 percent of Americans openly identify themselves as LGBT. While precise population numbers are difficult to identify, what is becoming clear is that the LGBT community across the country reflect a breadth of races, ethnicities, and ages, as well as income and education levels. It also includes an important and often overlooked part of the community, the LGBT family. The number of LGBT parents has been growing steadily over the past decade and is expected to increase significantly in the coming generation.

While the community yields a significant buying power, estimated at nearly $790 billion, their effect on our culture and politics may be even more powerful. With advancements on high-profile equality issues like “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” and same-sex marriage, and an ever-increasing presence in television, advertising and media, the LGBT community is gaining momentum and making strides toward greater equality.

MAKING POINTS: WHY LGBT?

Similarly, the conversation around LGBT participation in sports is evolving and becoming more honest and open. Many recreational sports have local LGBT organizations and tournaments. Every four years, the Gay Games attract more than 10,000 athletes competing in team and individual sports, including tennis. The next event, in 2014, will be in Cleveland, Ohio. The LGBT community is continuing to break ground and gain momentum with major LGBT sports organizations too. Leading sports brands like Nike, as well as professional sports teams like the San Francisco 49ers, are also coming together to fight bullying and discrimination in sports overall. Some professional sports teams have LGBT fan-appreciation nights.

While the future of the LGBT community in tennis is undefined, the contributions already made by LGBT players, such as Renée Richards, Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova, have been profound and lay a strong foundation for continued progress.

BARRIERS TO LGBT

- Still haven’t achieved widespread acceptance in sports — making many less comfortable with participating
- Particularly concerned about finding safe, inviting and welcoming places to play
- LGBT families — a largely unaddressed opportunity in terms of providing a welcoming place to play for the entire family

SOURCES

2011 GfK MRI Doublebase
U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2011, 1 year
The LGBT Financial Experience: 2012–2013 Prudential Research Study
THE LGBT COMMUNITY IS A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE U.S. POPULATION

The following information shows current demographics for LGBTs, including population trends, geographic locations and important observations.

While the LGBT community forms a significant part of the U.S. population, it’s important to understand the different cultural influences in your community.

BETWEEN 3-6% OF THE U.S. POPULATION

$790 BILLION BUYING POWER

Younger Americans, ages 18–29, are much more likely to be open about their sexuality and are three times more likely than those ages 65 and older to openly identify as LGBT.

6.4% AGES 18-29 VS 1.9% AGES 65+

A Community Marketing Inc. study for Prudential found that 23 percent of lesbians and 7 percent of gay men are financially responsible for a child under age 18.

11% HAVE CHILDREN

49% PLAN ON HAVING CHILDREN

Research has found that LGBTs make up a similar percentage of the population of all ethnic groups.

The same Prudential survey found that 11 percent of Gen-Y participants already have children and an additional 49 percent plan to have children in the future.


While we highlight the top 15 markets, it’s important for you to know your market. There may be a significant LGBT community in your area.

LGBT Same-sex Couples
Large Population Cities
(population above 250K)

1. San Francisco, CA — 3.03%
2. Seattle, WA — 2.31%
3. Oakland, CA — 2.16%
4. Minneapolis, MN — 2.17%
5. Atlanta, GA — 1.98%
6. Portland, OR — 1.92%
7. Long Beach, CA — 1.91%
8. Washington, D.C. — 1.81%
9. Denver, CO — 1.57%
10. Boston, MA — 1.47%
11. St. Louis, MO — 1.41%
12. Sacramento, CA — 1.30%
13. Dallas, TX — 1.23%
14. San Diego, CA — 1.22%
15. Austin, TX — 1.18%

LGBT Same-sex Couples
Mid-Sized Population Cities
(population between 100K and 250K)

1. Fort Lauderdale, FL — 3.11%
2. Berkeley, CA — 2.06%
3. Salt Lake City, UT — 1.54%
4. Cambridge, MA — 1.44%
5. Orlando, FL — 1.38%
6. St. Petersburg, FL — 1.38%
7. Madison, WI — 1.32%
8. Alexandria, VA — 1.14%
9. Pasadena, CA — 1.14%
10. Jersey City, NJ — 1.12%
11. Arlington, VA — 1.11%
12. Providence, RI — 1.11%
13. Richmond, VA — 1.04%
14. Vallejo, CA — 1.03%
15. Lansing, MI — 1.03%

LGBT Same-sex Couples
Small Population Cities
(population below 100K)

1. Provincetown, MA — 14.81%
2. Wilton Manors, FL — 12.53%
3. Palm Springs, CA — 10.73%
4. Rehoboth Beach, DE — 9.97%
5. Guerneville, CA — 8.04%
6. West Hollywood, CA — 6.21%
7. Pleasant Ridge, MO — 5.48%
8. Rancho Mirage, CA — 5.23%
9. New Hope, MN — 5.20%
10. Oakland Park, FL — 4.84%
11. Cathedral City, CA — 4.63%
12. Miami Shores, FL — 4.29%
13. Avondale Estates, GA — 4.28%
14. Northwest Harbor, NY — 4.27%
15. Northampton, MA — 4.03%

You can learn a lot from watching what others have done. The following stories highlight some of the great work being done by other local community tennis associations to get you excited about the power you have to help others find themselves in the game.
DEVELOPING PLAYERS BY DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP

WHO:
Philadelphia Liberty Tennis Association  
Philadelphia, Penn.  
philadelphialibertytennis.com

CHALLENGE:
Find a way to build trust with LGBT community and to create a welcoming environment for them to play tennis.

APPROACH:
PLTA started first by building an authentic, consistent and close relationship with the LGBT community. Tennis was simply a by-product of that relationship. To get to know the LGBT community, PLTA created a presence through multiple LGBT touch points within the community — from LGBT-specific events to bars to media outlets.

RESULTS:
The tennis club now features an active and robust LGBT membership of approximately 80–90 members.

“A good way to promote LGBT is through your section coordinator.”  
— David Killian, Philadelphia Liberty Tennis Association

KEY LESSONS:
• Connect at the grassroots level to generate word of mouth within LGBT community  
• Have an active presence at LGBT festivals/events  
• Communicate affiliation with GLTA (Gay and Lesbian Tennis Alliance)  
• Be active with organizations that support LGBT sports  
• Place banners in local bars to raise awareness  
• Get featured in a local LGBT newspaper  
• Work closely with section diversity leader  
• Donate to local LGBT charities
A SOCIAL SERVE

WHO:
IndyTennis
Indianapolis, Ind.
facebook.com/IndyTennisGLTA

CHALLENGE:
To create an authentic and organic way to invite the LGBT community to participate in their Start/Restart tennis class for new and returning players.

APPROACH:
IndyTennis utilized some traditional media, but really leveraged social media to promote the class.

RESULTS:
IndyTennis’ Start/Restart class was the largest in the USTA Midwest section, with 16 participants. Participants wanted to continue even after the class was completed and more have expressed interest in more classes in the future.

KEY LESSONS:
• Leverage Facebook and Twitter to get people excited and engaged
• Share photos and communications that reflect a fun and inviting atmosphere
• The important response to this Start/Restart class shows the potential within the LGBT community

“People don’t want to feel like a goal or a number.”
— Jonathan Scott, IndyTennis
Creating a bridge into the LGBT community might not happen overnight. But if you stick with it, success can and will happen. Here are a few points to keep in mind as you put your plans into place.

**Tennis is your “passport” into any new community**
While it is always important to know as much as you can about the LGBT community, you don’t need to be an expert on LGBT culture. You are already an expert in tennis — and that should be your entry point into any new community.

**You already know enough to get started**
The materials and the stories shared here are enough to help you make your first call or set up your first meeting.

**One call will snowball**
The very first call or visit with any organization may be your biggest hurdle. After that, your contacts and opportunities will snowball. Friends will tell friends. Colleagues will tell colleagues, and before you know it, you will have made a huge impact in a new community!
PUTTING YOUR PLAN IN PLACE

Here are five simple steps to follow as you kick off your plan.

**Step 1: Find an idea you are passionate about**

Now that you are inspired and motivated to reach the LGBT community, find an idea that you and your CTA can get excited about and commit to.

For example, you may want to offer a Start/Restart class like IndyTennis did. The success that IndyTennis had with their class shows great potential for tennis in the LGBT community. They may just be looking for a warm invitation.

**Step 2: Find a local partner**

If you are not familiar enough with the LGBT community, team up with a partner or cultural guide to reach out to this community.

- Start by talking to your USTA contacts. Tell them your plan. Have them connect you to other USTA people or resources
- Next, reach out to existing, LGBT-focused CTAs — find out what programs worked and what solutions they found to any barriers
- Finally, partner up with an organization within the community where you want to work

The “Partner Up” diagram on the next page walks you through this process and gives you ideas for helping to identify partners in your community.

For example, you may want to reach out to an LGBT-focused nonprofit in your area. Tell them your plans. Brainstorm ideas for how to get the word out. They may direct you to key LGBT newspapers or LGBT online bulletin boards you can use to post your invitation.

**Step 3: Formalize your plan and develop activation elements for your launch**

Now that you have your plan and your partner, it’s time to formalize everything.

- Create a budget
- Define your milestones
- Determine ways to track your success
- Design and distribute your activation elements

For example, you may run a notice in a local LGBT newspaper and drive all responses to your website. You may want to have participants register online ask to add them to your email list for future classes and develop a social-media following in the LGBT community.

**Step 4: Execute and have fun!**

The main goal is to make it happen. Remember that there is trial and error. As long as you are playing tennis and having fun, that’s all that matters.

**Step 5: Track, monitor, course correct and share**

As you build your program, keep track of your successes and your learnings. Sharing your learnings with other CTAs is important. The more we all learn about what works, the better we can all become at spreading the love of tennis.
PARTNER UP

Having a partner in the community in order to get started is an important first step. Start internally and work your way out and you’ll be well on your way to becoming an important part of the community yourself.

LGBT parents are often overlooked. Make sure you welcome this important and growing community.

Reaching out in the LGBT community to fitness enthusiasts is a great start.

Most universities, colleges and many high schools have LGBT organizations or Gay Straight Alliance groups. This might be a good place to find young, active people.

Contact other LGBT-oriented nonprofits in your area. Chances are they reach a diverse cross section.

Explore advertising, calendar postings, and free public-relations opportunities in local LGBT papers and on websites.

Reach out in the LGBT community to other sports organizations. Whether tennis or not — support each other.

Have a presence in the community by partnering up with local LGBT-festival or -fair organizers to have a booth or access point.

Many cities have neighborhoods popular within the LGBT community. Post information at cafés, restaurants and bulletin boards in these neighborhoods.
“Open” doesn’t necessarily mean “inviting”
Make your invitation known. It’s important to offer the LGBT community a direct, warm invitation to play. Just being open to them joining your program if they find you on their own may not be enough.

Meet the community where they are
Inviting people to your courts is one approach, but going into their community is another great way to get people involved. It’s a welcoming way to bring them into your tennis community.

Reflect the community
Having a diverse volunteer staff is always a powerful way to make diverse audiences feel welcome and a part of your organization. The more you get the community involved, the more you can reflect diversity.

Don’t forget social media
Having a digital presence can be another great way for the LGBT community to learn more about your organization and what you are trying to do. Also, having a meaningful social-communications strategy can be an easy way to stay connected.

Don’t forget about LGBT families
Many in the LGBT community have children and are looking for welcoming environments for the whole family to play together. They are often overlooked.

Inspiration from the stars
Being inspired by someone you can relate to is another powerful way to get motivated. Making sure they know about current and up-and-coming LGBT stars is important.

It’s OK to say “I don’t know”
Authenticity is key to any true connection. If you ever feel unsure about something, just say you don’t know.

Remember there will be trial and error
This is all about having fun and spreading the love of tennis. Don’t be afraid to swing and miss. Just keep sharing your love of the sport and, before you know it, you will have touched many lives.
The future of tennis is in your hands.

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- LGBT Media
- LGBT Sports Organizations
- Local LGBT Festivals and Fairs
- LGBT Neighborhoods
- Nonprofits
- Education Centers
- Fitness Centers in LGBT Neighborhoods
- LGBT Parent Groups and Organizations

USTA CONTACTS

- Section Executive Directors
- District Executive Directors
- Section Diversity and Inclusion Representative
- Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittees
- CTA Donors
- CTA Staff and Volunteers

OTHER CONTACTS

(CTAs that are members of USTA and GLTA*)

- Gay and Lesbian Tennis Federation of San Francisco (GLTF)
- Los Angeles Tennis Association (LATA)
- Oak Lawn Tennis Association — Dallas
- Seattle Tennis Alliance (STA)
- Denver Area Tennis Enthusiasts (DATE)
- Center Court Tennis Association of Kansas City (CHES Inc.)
- Gay Lesbian Amateur Sport Society (MN Rallies)
- Atlanta Team Tennis Association (ATTA)
- Philadelphia Liberty Tennis Association (PLTA)
- Metropolitan Tennis Group — NYC (MTG)
- IndyTennis (Indianapolis)
- Topspin Foundation (CNKY)
- Capital Tennis Association — D.C. (CTA)

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS — These can be good resources to find local chapters serving your area.

- Family Equality Council
- Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)
- Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA)
- GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation)
- Gay & Lesbian Association of Retiring Persons (GLARP)
- Gay, Lesbian & Straight Educators Network (GLSEN)
- The GLBT National Help Center
- Human Rights Campaign (HRC)
- Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund
- The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center
- National Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Centers (NALGBTCC)
- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Foundation
- National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)
- National Gay Pilots Association (NGPA)
- National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA)
- National Lesbian and Gay Law Association (NLGLA)
- National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals Inc. (NOGLSTP)
- Out and Equal Workplace Advocates
- Pride & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)
- Pride at Work

*Gay and Lesbian Tennis Alliance

Looking for more ways to connect with the LGBT segment? There are probably many organizations and groups you can reach out to right in your own community. The following are just a few worth considering.