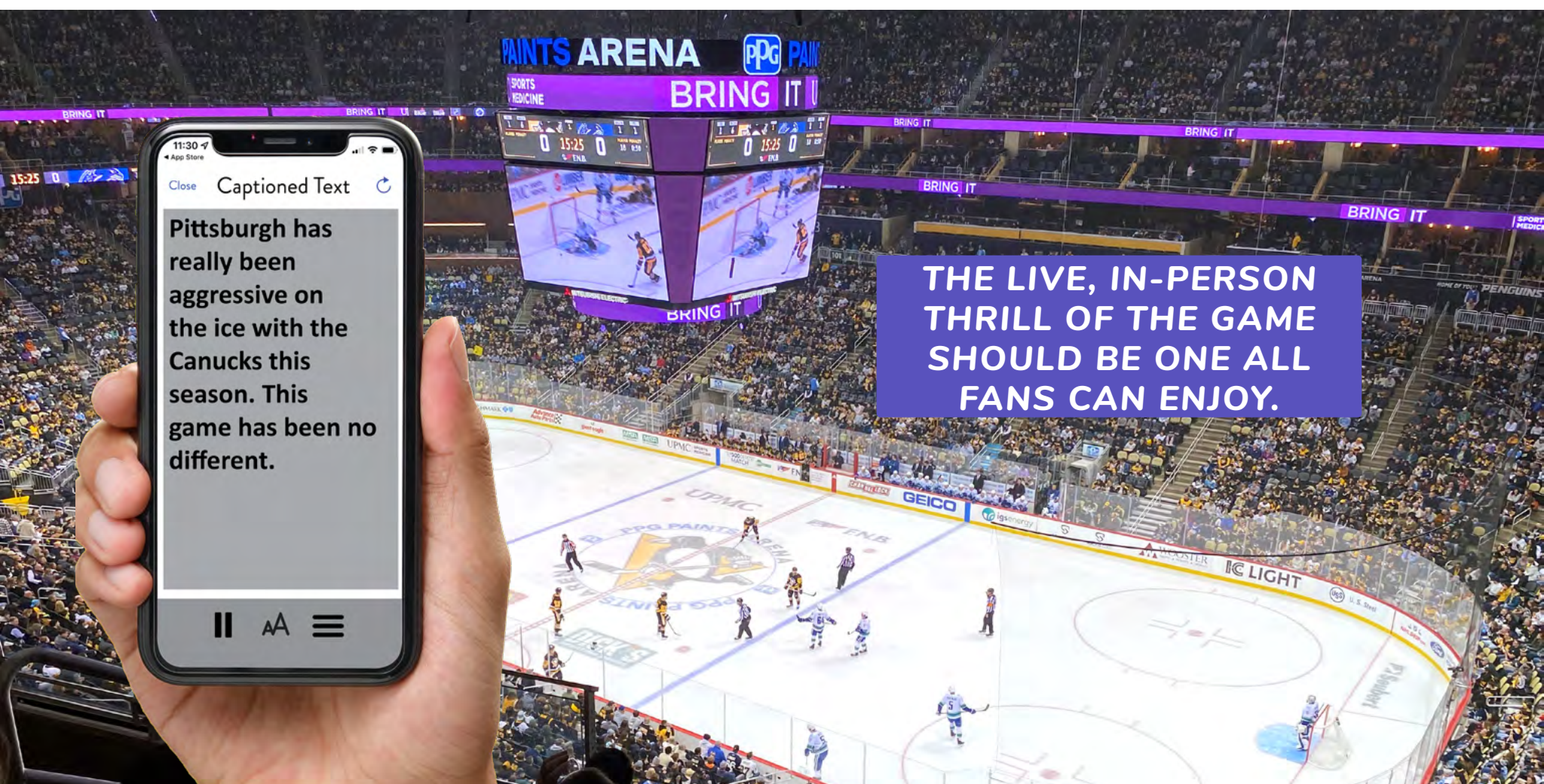


GETTING IN THE GAME:

Captions for Live Sports
and Events

WE'RE FANS OF CAPTIONS!

We get it. It's great to curl up on the couch and watch your favorite team from the comfort of your living room (the refreshments are a lot less expensive, that's for sure!). Still, there's just something about the experience of making it to the stadium in person and cheering with other fans that can't be beat.



Captions make sporting events, concerts, conferences, and theater performances accessible for everyone, especially the 1 in 5 Americans who are deaf or hard of hearing. By captioning song lyrics, stadium announcements, dialogue, or player and scoring information, fans never have to miss a second of action.

Increasingly fans of all kinds, not just sports fans, have shown a preference for venues that prioritize accessibility. Recent research has shown that

people are 31% more likely to attend a live event if they know it will have captions. And as venues are returning to hosting capacity crowds, that's a tactical advantage no good team would let go to waste.

But what's the best way to offer captions in your venue? While making your event accessible isn't difficult, knowing what options will work for your specific stadium, arena, or event center means knowing what goes into providing accessibility for all.



WHY CAPTION?

Adding captions – a textual representation of audio content – makes that content more accessible to the more than 48 million Americans who are deaf or hard-of-hearing (DHOH). Captions provide those in the DHOH community equal access to your live event, allowing everyone to better follow the on-field action or on-stage performance and help make games, events, and concerts inclusive to all while meeting accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

DID YOU KNOW?

VITAC captions more than 50 regional sports networks, in addition to MLB, NHL, NBA, NFL, and universities around the nation. We work with manufacturers and software companies across the country that handle in-venue video graphics, and are uniquely able to stream to more than one interface, whether it be a mobile device or ribbon board.

WHAT IS CAPTIONED AT EVENTS?

The U.S. Department of Justice has indicated in past lawsuits that captioned material includes what is announced over the public address system, including:



All play descriptions,
scoring, and player
information



Referee and penalty
announcements



In-game promotions,
contests, and
entertainment action



Advertising,
commercials, and
song lyrics



Emergency messaging



End-of-game
announcements and
next-event information

HOW DOES STADIUM CAPTIONING WORK?

Whether displayed on a venue's scoreboard or streamed directly to a mobile device, captions create a more inclusive atmosphere that enables all fans to get in the game. It's a relatively simple process, and one that a professional captioning provider can walk you through.

Pre-Event

The first step, not surprisingly, is getting in touch with a captioning provider to discuss your needs, expectations, and options for providing in-venue captions for your events. The provider will review with you, among other things, ordering and scheduling instructions, the types of captions available, and the ways to display those captions.

In advance of each event, the venue should plan to supply the caption provider with a general description of the event to help assure the highest quality captions. For sporting events, this could include the names of the teams playing as well as any songs that may be sung or played during the course of the game. (It's helpful for venues to share team player names and coach rosters, names of team and/or facility owners, and other important people associated with the teams, though these also are items that captioning professionals should be able to secure as part of their own research prior to the event.) For other events, prep materials could include such things as theater playbills, the names of performers, songs expected to be performed, agendas or event schedules, names of presenters, topics up for discussion, or scripts for prepared speeches or presentations.



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HOW DOES STADIUM CAPTIONING WORK? -CONTINUED

During the Event

Skilled captioners listen to live audio feeds from the arena, stadium, or event center, and translate that audio into real time text that can be displayed on the venue's scoreboard and ribbon boards, in-stadium closed-circuit television systems, or streamed to a dedicated URL that can be viewed on smartphones, tablets, and mobile devices.

A secure and reliable connection is needed to transmit the program audio to the captioner and then transmit the caption data back to the caption encoder. Captioners can be located on-site at the venue or remotely (many live sports events are captioned remotely, with the captioner requiring only a feed of the venue's public address audio.)



Captions also can be streamed over the internet to hand-held mobile devices, smartphones, and iPads so that fans, no matter where they are in the venue during the event – snack bar, concourse, gift shop – can view captions. Streaming captions to a mobile device also means that venues can save room on the scoreboards for other announcements and revenue-generating advertisements.

It is recommended that all events be scheduled to start when patrons are expected to begin arriving, and when the PA system begins making announcements. (This could be up to an hour before the actual event is to start.)

DID YOU KNOW?

Many sports teams and venues stream captions directly into their mobile apps. It's a simple way for a team or venue to promote their accessibility and a convenient way for fans to find captions since many already are using the app for other information regarding the team and game.

Post-Event

Captions should be scheduled for as long as fans typically stay in the venue, which may mean captioning for 30-45 minutes after the typical conclusion of the event. This coverage is important to assure accessibility to DHOH individuals regarding important announcements about use of the facility, emergency conditions, and/or safety instructions whenever they might be needed.

WORK WITH A CAPTIONING PRO!



When it comes to providing in-venue captions, working with an experienced, professional captioning provider can make all the difference – and eliminate a lot of stress. Professional captioning providers will:

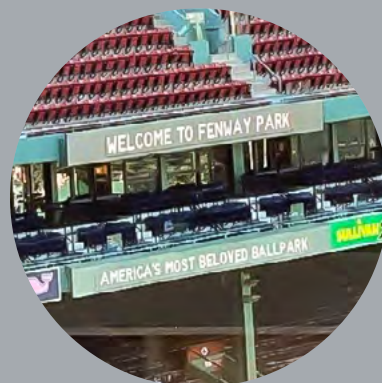
- Collaborate with you to test your equipment and troubleshoot
- On-board you and your venue/staff to ensure seamless delivery
- Establish and test multiple IP and encoder connections, and monitor start and finish times for all games to make sure every part of the event is captioned
- Research rosters, coaching staffs, mascots, and announcers and load them into customized dictionaries to use for the games
- Be available to offer customer support and assistance should any issues arise

PROVIDING INCLUSIVE FAN EXPERIENCES

A number of sports teams, leagues, and stadiums and arenas rely on VITAC to bring the action to their fans, showcase their commitment to accessibility, and improve the overall fan experience.



Professional and college teams and sports venues use our event center solutions to display live captions during games. For example, we teamed up with Major League Soccer's New York Red Bulls to bring inclusive, accessible soccer action to all fans. The captions displayed all the public address announcements, such as player, scoring, and penalty information, in-stadium promotions, and advertising.



We provide captions for a Major League Baseball (MLB) mobile app designed to create a more inclusive experience for fans following their favorite teams. MLB's "Ballpark" app incorporates VITAC captions – available at the touch of a button – directly into team applications, meaning that fans who wish to read captions on their phones no longer need to visit the stadium's guest services or ask for any accommodations.



Colleges and universities, from nationally recognized institutions to local junior colleges, display our captions during commencement ceremonies to ensure accessibility for all participants and attendees.



ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL!

Whether it's providing access for your fans who are deaf or hard of hearing, patrons who know English as a second language, or people who simply missed what was announced on the public address, captions have a wide range of benefits for all in attendance.

VITAC has been providing captions and accessibility solutions for more than 35 years, and we'll work with you every step of the way to ensure you receive only the best quality captions. So, whether your event goes to double overtime or three encores, we've got you covered.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can be sure you will receive the highest quality product with unmatched customer service, as well as our marketing toolkit complete with QR code to help your fans easily find game-day captions!

When you choose VITAC's services, you can be sure that you will receive the highest quality product with unmatched customer service. Let us show you why we're the "no worries" captioning company.

[Click here to contact us today >>](#)