

## Boston Red Sox Rewards Loyalty Program – Business Impact

**Program overview:** The Boston Red Sox have cultivated fan engagement through a formal loyalty program for several years. An early digital-ticketing pilot in 2013 offered prizes (first-pitch tosses, scoreboard experience) to frequent attendees <sup>1</sup>. In 2016 the team launched **Red Sox Replay**, a secondary ticketing platform that rewarded season-ticket holders (STH) with loyalty points when they sold unused tickets <sup>2</sup>. In 2021 the franchise officially introduced the **Red Sox Rewards** program for all STH, tying everyday fan actions to points (scanning tickets, watching games, answering broadcasts’ “code words,” making in-app purchases, etc.) <sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup>. Points can be redeemed for Red Sox merchandise, rare experiences (autographed jerseys, private dinners with players, batting practice clinics, spring-training trips) and sweepstakes entries <sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup>. Team executives describe the program as a way to “encourage our fans to engage with us” and reward them with “unique prizes and experiences” <sup>7</sup>.

**Season-ticket sales and renewals:** The loyalty program has helped reinforce Boston’s strong season-ticket base (roughly **22,000** full-season equivalents in 2016 <sup>2</sup>) and improve renewal rates. Sam Kennedy, Red Sox President/CEO, reported that “season ticket renewals are up” even while the team cut player payroll – underscoring that revenue gains have been channeled back into the club <sup>8</sup>. (Kennedy emphasized that Boston’s owners treat the business as break-even, reinvesting all ticket and concession revenues into the team <sup>9</sup> <sup>8</sup>.) To promote digital ticketing, the club even offered **triple Red Sox Rewards points** to STH who entered Fenway via mobile tickets <sup>10</sup>. More broadly, Fenway Park remains nearly sold-out: even in 2023 (when the on-field product was mediocre) attendance dipped by only ~52 fans per game compared to 2022 <sup>11</sup>. This high seat-fill (virtually 37,000 capacity at Fenway) reflects sustained fan loyalty.

- **Point:** “Season ticket renewals are up”, noted Kennedy on-air <sup>8</sup>.
- **Point:** Red Sox historically run a league-leading sellout streak; the fanbase is “the most passionate and loyal” in baseball <sup>12</sup>.

**In-stadium and digital revenue:** The loyalty program ties directly to Fenway spending. All STH now receive **tiered concessions discounts (10–20% off)** when they pay with Fenway Pay (the team’s cashless system) linked to their Rewards account <sup>13</sup>. For example, A/B/C/Half-season plans get 20% off all food/beverage via Aramark concessions, and 20-game plans get 15% off <sup>13</sup>. This benefit (in partnership with concessionaire Aramark) incentivizes more in-ballpark spending. Meanwhile, the Ballpark mobile app and rewards portal award extra points for any Fenway concession or team-store purchase paid through Fenway Pay <sup>14</sup> <sup>4</sup>, further driving digital and retail sales. Although the Red Sox (privately held) don’t publish breakdowns, Forbes estimated Boston’s total revenue at **\$513 million (2022)** and **\$574 million (2024)** <sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> – top-four in MLB – a large share of which comes from ticket, concession and merchandise sales to loyal fans.

- **Point:** Exclusive 10–20% concession discounts for STH using the linked credit card <sup>13</sup>.
- **Point:** Fans earn bonus points for in-ballpark purchases (via Fenway Pay) <sup>14</sup> <sup>4</sup>.
- **Point:** Forbes (2025) ranks the Red Sox 4th in MLB with \$574M revenue, \$120M operating income <sup>16</sup>.

**Fan engagement metrics:** Red Sox Rewards has measurably boosted fan activity. In one internal study, **66% of season-ticket holders changed their behavior to earn points** (e.g. attending more games,

scanning codes) <sup>17</sup> . The program's gamification (monthly "Fan of the Month" and season-long "Fan of the Year" leaderboards) encourages consistent participation: for example, STH who scan their tickets five times and make five Fenway Pay purchases in a season earn a 1,000-point bonus ("Fenway Fanatic" challenge) <sup>18</sup> . Fans also routinely answer game-trivia polls or enter NESN/WEEI broadcast code words for points <sup>3</sup> . Points redemption is strong: beyond merchandise, fans bid on high-value auctions (e.g. spring-training trips) and claim experiential prizes like batting-practice clinics <sup>5</sup> . These activities keep Fenway's near-capacity attendance even in weak seasons (attendance fell only ~0.2% in 2023 <sup>11</sup> ).

- **Point:** 66% of STH modified their behavior to earn points, per team research <sup>17</sup> .
- **Point:** Near-constant high attendance – Fenway averaged only 52 fewer fans/game in 2023 vs. 2022 <sup>11</sup> – suggests engaged, loyal supporters.

**Data-driven marketing & retention:** A key benefit of Red Sox Rewards has been the wealth of fan data collected. The club integrated Rewards data into its cloud data warehouse (BigQuery) and a new customer data platform, enabling real-time fan segmentation and targeted campaigns <sup>19</sup> . Marketing Vice President Tim Zue explains they aim to "know as much as we can about fan behavior" to enhance experiences <sup>20</sup> . In practice, Red Sox analysts can now launch personalized email or app-based offers in hours instead of weeks. According to a case study, this data-driven approach yielded "measurable performance improvements, driving revenue and deeper fan loyalty" <sup>19</sup> . Off-field innovations like virtual-reality and augmented-reality ballpark activations <sup>21</sup> and constant mobile content keep the team top-of-mind, further boosting retention.

- **Point:** Integration of loyalty data into a BigQuery/CRM stack sped up campaign execution and analytics <sup>19</sup> .
- **Point:** The team hosts an annual MLB analytics conference – reflecting Red Sox emphasis on data – and uses AR/VR mobile experiences to engage fans <sup>21</sup> <sup>19</sup> .

**Sponsorship integration & value:** Red Sox Rewards creates a new platform for sponsors. For instance, long-time sponsor **Mastercard** is woven into the program: members earn bonus points when they renew season tickets using a Mastercard <sup>22</sup> , and special Priceless experiences (Green Monster tours, batting-practice clinics) are promoted via the Mastercard "Priceless Cities" program. The concessions discount is delivered through Aramark and the Fenway Pay sponsor arrangement <sup>13</sup> . In short, brands get direct access to the most loyal fans: loyalty co-creator LoyaltyRewardCo notes that offering "*money-can't-buy*" experiences (which cost little to the team but thrill fans) provides strong value for sponsors. By aligning sponsor offers (discounts, exclusive events) with the Rewards program, the Red Sox can increase sponsor impressions and fan goodwill.

- **Point:** Red Sox Rewards "provides a new sponsorship platform." E.g. renew with Mastercard, get 1,000 points <sup>22</sup> .
- **Point:** Aramark (concession partner) supports the 10–20% STH discount <sup>13</sup> . Local businesses have also been integrated in the team's minor-league WooSox Rewards (e.g. Canal District shops), illustrating sponsor uptake of loyalty.

**Summary:** The Red Sox Rewards program has reinforced Boston's strong fan base and revenue performance. It drives incremental in-stadium spending (via digital payments and discounts) and keeps attendance high through engagement incentives. Season-ticket renewals have strengthened (as CEO Kennedy noted) even as salary costs rose, and internal analytics confirm the program's effectiveness (66% of STH changed habits for points <sup>17</sup> ). By harvesting rich fan data and partnering with sponsors like Mastercard and Aramark, the club has leveraged loyalty tools to grow revenue and retention. According to one sports-business report, Boston's combination of fan passion and savvy marketing makes it one of MLB's most profitable franchises <sup>16</sup> <sup>8</sup> , and Red Sox Rewards has been a cornerstone of that success.

Category	Impact / Evidence	Source
Season-ticket renewals	Renewals reported <i>up</i> year-over-year (despite cuts in payroll) <sup>8</sup>	Team CEO Sam Kennedy (Audacy)
Attendance	Fenway attendance nearly flat (-52 fans/game in 2023 vs. 2022) <sup>11</sup>	OverTheMonster.com analysis
In-stadium spending	Exclusive 10–20% STH discounts via Fenway Pay <sup>13</sup> ; points for concessions purchases <sup>14</sup> <sup>4</sup>	Red Sox announcements (mlb.com)
Annual revenue	\$513M (2022) rising to \$574M (2024) – MLB Top 4; \$120M operating income (2024) <sup>16</sup>	Forbes valuation (via local media)
Fan engagement	66% of STH <i>changed behavior</i> for points <sup>17</sup> ; persistent fan interest in auctions/prizes <sup>5</sup>	Tappit fan-engagement study
Data-driven marketing	Integrated data (BigQuery+CDP) enabled rapid, targeted campaigns; led to “measurable performance improvements” <sup>19</sup>	GrowthLoop/Red Sox case study
Sponsorship integration	Loyalty platform used by partners: e.g. bonus points on Mastercard renewals <sup>22</sup> , Aramark-powered F&B discounts <sup>13</sup>	Loyalty program analysts

**Sources:** Red Sox and MLB announcements <sup>13</sup> <sup>23</sup> <sup>18</sup> ; interviews with team executives <sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup> ; industry analyses and reports <sup>17</sup> <sup>16</sup> <sup>19</sup> . Each cited number is from the referenced material.

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