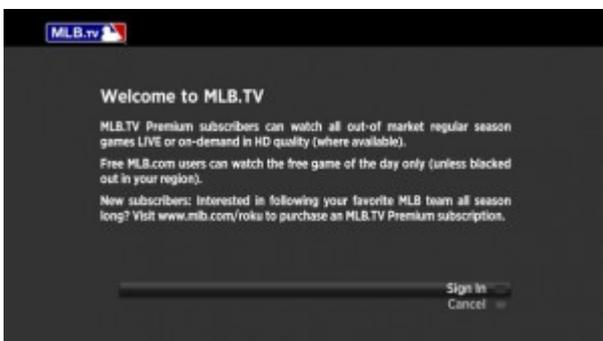




Blackout rules make no sense we live in a global fan economy. A person can live in Texas and pull for Manchester United. I know many loyal Packers fans that live far from Lambeau Field and who are owners. Take me, I pull for the USA in the Olympics but Great Britain and The Netherlands are favorites of mine. When it comes to baseball, I'm a Washington Nationals fan. Fans are no longer defined by geographic proximity to a team and blackout rules do nothing but crush the fan economy. Fans are willing to spend money on fan gear, apparel, travel to games and more. But they have to resort to less than legal means to support their team.



The big issue that, I feel, hold back fans are blackout rules. Blackout rules were designed to get fans to come out to the stadium to watch the games live and give local stations rights to broadcast the games. In other words it is about money. Sure I understand sports are a HUGE business and players & stadiums cost money. (Side note: as someone who works in education I think the spending of players vs education employees are greatly out of whack.) Now the sports organizations have stepped up and are offering game content and more (MLB.TV, Gameday Audio, MLB cable channel, MLB app, etc) to fans who cannot get to the stadium every game day. Cable & satellite companies offer packages for fans. So there

should be no issue with a fan getting to see their favorite team's every game, right? NO!
We still live under the archaic blackout rules. For example just look at the MLB's FAQ on the subject: http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/help/faq_blackout.jsp

Well the issue is a a big one. But if you live far enough away from your team you can take advantage of these services and cheer your team on. But if you live in a blackout area you are at the mercy of your cable or satellite company.



Go Nats!

Let's look at me for example. I live in North Carolina. So the majority of the time my [Nats](#) are blocked on MLB.TV (on my iPad, computer or Apple TV), MLB video, MLB cable channel, ESPN, and cable & satellite's MLB package. Because [MASN](#) network has game day rights to broadcast. Well the issue is I have [Time-Warner Cable](#). MASN & TWC have not wanted to play well with each other, not that TWC plays well with others (NBC Sports Live Extra, Disney, and many other apps blocked out by TWC lack of cooperation). MASN originally wanted their network on the lower tiers so more people could watch. Well how TWC does their tiers have changed. I can get a New York City News channel but I still can't get MASN. I don't know what the current hold up between TWC and MASN is but I'm

guessing money. So even if I paid \$130 for MLB.TV or \$100 for TWC's Season Pass I would still be blocked out. Yes I could go see things in a less than legal way, but that is not me. So I'll pay \$40 to listen to Gameday Audio and use the MLB.com At Bat app.

So I'm calling on fans like me to complain to the leagues. Several articles about a future end to blackout rules have been written (a good one by Maury Brown in [Forbes](#)), Facebook groups [exist](#) and people complain via email. But we need to keep it up, with pressure from the [FCC & Supreme Court](#) it can happen. So keep emailing, tweeting #blackoutruleshurtfans, FB posting, and blogging about it. Fans win when blackout rules are gone and companies see more profit. So let's end this!

I'll say it again, fans are no longer defined by geographic proximity to a team and blackout rules do nothing but crush the fan economy.

UPDATE 2017:

Two years later and not much has changed. MLB has added a follow you team option in MLB TV that runs around \$89 and gives you all of the out of market games, but it still blacks out in market games. So the problem still exists that if you don't have a local provider channel on your tv package you are blocked out. Since Charter/TWC does not have MASN in North Carolina I'm blocked out. Plus even that \$89 is not too reasonable but better. Come on MLB work with your fans!

(Note: All linked articles are property of their authors/publishers. Time-Warner, MASN, MLB, and all teams and copyrights are property of their owners. Copyright & IP laws apply I'm using them out of fair use.)

Share this:

- [Share](#)