



Wade Smith's professional background spans corporate strategy and marketing roles, management consulting and non-profit sports administration. Currently, Wade is the Chief Operating Officer of National Collegiate Rugby serving 620 clubs and 17,000 athletes and driving the growth of college rugby nationally. Through his business *Go Play! Consulting*, Wade also advises national governing bodies, sports associations and grassroots organizations to help them expand their programs, improve operational efficiency, and enhance their member experience.

Wade has a strong understanding of the amateur soccer landscape from his client work with large soccer clubs and associations, and volunteer board roles with the Downtown Los Angeles Soccer Club and previously with the largest grassroots soccer club in Australia. Wade's two daughters have played competitive club soccer in the Coast Soccer League for six years.

Prior to working in sports, Wade spent 20 years in global executive roles and has deep experience in strategy development, marketing, and general management. Wade held senior marketing and strategy roles with some of the world's largest financial services companies, including Citibank, MetLife, and IFM Investors. As a management consultant at Ernst & Young, Wade advised global financial services organizations in the areas of market entry, strategic planning, and operating model design.

Current Roles

Chief Operating Officer, National Collegiate Rugby, 2021-current, Los Angeles, CA

- Oversee operations, marketing and strategy for college rugby's national association that serves 17,000 athletes across 620 men's and women's clubs. Manage eight paid staff and dozens of volunteers to deliver national championship pathways, provide member services and grow the sport of rugby.
- Responsible for five national championship events annually, including the National 7s Championship—the largest collegiate 7s tournament in the world with 130 schools and 2,000 athletes.
- Produce content for 1 million social media followers, engage with 15 million accounts annually, generate 10 million views on streaming platforms and partner with national sponsors.
- Oversee membership services and technology platforms that enable registration, member payments, eligibility tracking, and competition management.
- Manage the Profit and Loss position and provide regular financial and operational updates to the Board.

Founder, Go Play! Consulting, 2015 - current, Sydney, Australia and Los Angeles, CA

- Founded a consulting business that assists sport organizations to operationalize their strategies, enhance member engagement, and improve their operations.
- Managed several projects for the US Youth Volleyball League including upgrade requirements for registration platform, player recruiting marketing strategy and staff performance planning.
- Developed strategic plan and organizational scorecard for Atlanta Youth Rugby, an organization delivering community programs to 3,000 kids and a competitive program for 400 players.

- Negotiated three-year, \$240,000 sponsorship agreement for Nike to provide player kits to 2,700-player football club, which was one of the largest ever community football deals for Nike Australia.
- Facilitated board-level strategic planning for multiple organizations including the largest soccer club in Australia and an Australian soccer association with 23 member clubs (17,000 players).

Previous Roles

- Executive Director of Marketing & Product Strategy, IFM Investors, 2012-14, Sydney, Australia
- Executive Director, Ernst & Young Business Advisory Services, 2008-12, Sydney, Australia
- Head of Marketing and Strategy, MetLife Australia, 2005-08, Sydney, Australia
- Marketing Director, MetLife, Inc. International Division, 2002-05, New York, NY

Education

- Master of Business Administration, Finance and Marketing, New York University, New York, NY
- Master of Science, Instructional Systems, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
- Bachelor of Science, Corporate Communications, Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY

Related Experience

- Board Member, Downtown Los Angeles Soccer Club, 2020-23
- Board Member, Balmain Football Club, 2014-17, Sydney, Australia