

Kevin Dodelande: "How data is revolutionizing the transfer market"

The world of football has successfully undergone a technological transformation that has radically affected the way players are recruited.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Gone are the days when a player caught the eye of a sporting director with a pretty touch of the ball or a dazzling dribble. Like other business sectors, football is living in the age of new technologies. Data processing has revolutionized the way we work in football, particularly in the recruitment department. The trend is to streamline the decision-making process in order to build a team that is competitive in both sporting and economic terms.



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Transfermarkt, the data pioneer

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It all began in May 2000 with Transfermarkt, a German website created by Matthias Seidel, a Borussia Dortmund fan. This 100% participative football portal displays information on matches, results and players. Today, it is the world reference for transfer prices, both for the media and for club directors. While Transfermarkt focuses exclusively on economic data, other sites, such as the American ai.io, specialize in the specific processing of player characteristics using artificial intelligence. AI can help identify and track talented players from around the world by analyzing astronomical quantities of video

footage, player statistics and social media activity. Better still, the AI uses computer vision to track players' movements and actions on the pitch. Valuable information for creating detailed

reports on players' strengths and weaknesses.

A global phenomenon

In the United States, MLS (Major League Soccer) club recruiters rely almost exclusively on the ai.io tool to build their teams. The phenomenon has crossed the Atlantic. In the Premier League, Manchester City uses AI to analyze player data and predict their performance. The club's AI system, called Match Insights, uses data from matches, training sessions and GPS tracking. This data is then used by the club's coaches and scouts to make decisions on which players to recruit and how to develop them.

Spanish club Barcelona uses AI for its training center. The system, called La Masia 4.0, uses data from matches, training sessions and academic assessments to track the development of young players. This information is then used by the club's coaches to define individualized training plans for each player. Premier League club Brentford, as well as French club Toulouse FC, make their transfers based on the analysis of player statistics.

[Kevin Dodelande](#): "Data reassures club owners"

These precise, rational pieces of information are also likely to reassure club owners who are less inclined to spend crazy sums. This happened in the not-too-distant past when the purchase of a player was essentially based on the impressions or simple intuition of a sporting director. The use of new technologies is not exclusive to the big teams. AI can help reduce recruitment costs by automating numerous tasks such as scouting, data analysis and reporting.

Kevin Dodelande: „Economies of scale thanks to AI“

Data saves clubs time and money. Do you need a striker who can go deep, or a defender who is both technical and powerful? Does the player have an impeccable lifestyle? Is he a team player? Social network analysis and technological tools can now answer all these questions. A club is looking for a million-euro striker. There are over 1,000 available on the European market. If the club has to send out its scouts, they won't be able to supervise all 1,000. So you might as well pre-select the five or ten most suited to your style of play.

Kevin Dodelande: "There are even participative Apps"

The Aiscout app allows anyone in the world to film themselves performing trials and training exercises and measure their performance using video recognition technology. Professional recruiters then obtain information on the player's technical, athletic, cognitive and psychometric capabilities.

It's also a way of tightening the net and avoiding missing out on a nugget, as in the case of Ben Greenwood, who was never spotted by a club and now plays for Bournemouth in the Premier League thanks to the Aiscout platform.

Towards the end of scouts?

Will the age of data sound the death knell for club scouts? Even if data has become increasingly influential in soccer, it isn't magic either. Of course, data cannot stand alone. The various data collected and analyzed won't be able to unearth and target THE perfect player. But it is an invaluable decision-making aid, helping scouts and agents to do their job more effectively. Clubs are increasingly convinced that, in order to make a decision, they need something that will complement their field expertise. This will either reassure them or challenge them. Completely robotized football is not yet for tomorrow. And this is just fine.

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