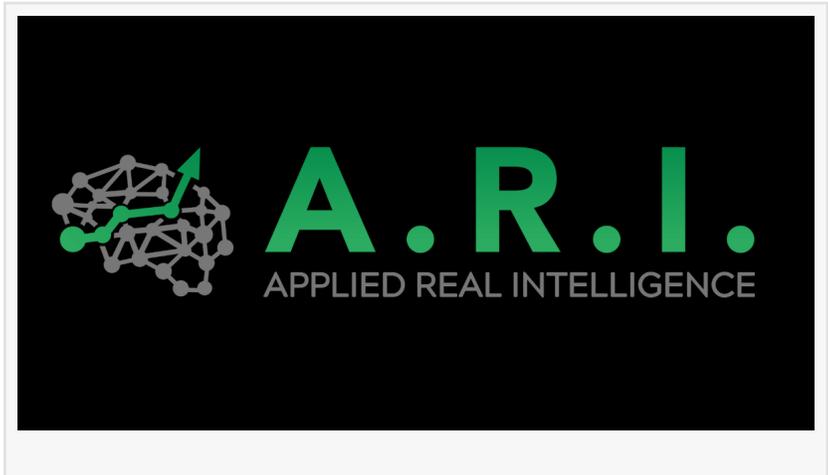


Alternative Investment Firm A.R.I. Acquires Controlling Majority Interest in Lights Out Sports

*Lights Out Appoints Dr. Zack Ellison
Chairman of the Board, President & Chief
Executive Officer to Lead Next Phase of
Platform Growth*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES,
January 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ --
[Applied Real Intelligence \("A.R.I."\)](#), a
leading alternative investment
platform and provider of growth capital
to North American innovators,
announced that it has acquired a



controlling majority interest and expanded its governance role at Lights Out Sports. The investment reflects A.R.I.'s conviction that Lights Out represents a compelling opportunity to build long-term enterprise value through disciplined leadership and scalable growth across combat sports, media, and digital streaming.

“

Assets don't scale themselves. Leadership does. There is a huge opportunity at Lights Out to grow the platform across live events, streaming TV, and partnerships to create durable enterprise value.”

Dr. Zack Ellison

As part of this transaction and expanded commitment, Lights Out Sports has appointed [Dr. Zack Ellison](#) as Chairman of the Board, President, and Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. Dr. Ellison will lead the Company's next phase of growth, with responsibility for strategy, governance, capital allocation, and execution.

Founded by NFL All-Pro Shawne Merriman, Lights Out Sports has developed a recognized brand across combat sports and entertainment. Under A.R.I.'s ownership and

governance, the Company will focus on scaling the platform with institutional discipline and a long-term value orientation.

“Assets don't scale themselves. Leadership does,” said Dr. Zack Ellison. “There is a huge opportunity at Lights Out to grow the platform across live events, streaming TV, and partnerships

to create durable enterprise value.”

Scaling Lights Out Xtreme Fighting with ESPN & Disney+ Distribution

Lights Out Sports continues to scale Lights Out Xtreme Fighting (XF), its live mixed martial arts (MMA) fight promotion, with an expanded event format and growing international audience.



Lights Out XF recently entered into a multi-year media rights agreement with ESPN, significantly expanding its global reach by delivering the full Lights Out XF fight schedule in English, Spanish, and Portuguese throughout South America and the Caribbean via ESPN and Disney+.

The partnership marks an important milestone in Lights Out’s international growth strategy, extending the Company’s reach into some of the world’s most passionate and rapidly growing fight markets. Along with the upcoming Lights Out XF 30 event, these catalysts serve as powerful validation of the brand’s continued expansion across live events, media, and streaming.

A Compelling Opportunity in Sports and Fight Entertainment

Professional sports and fight sports are experiencing sustained global growth, driven by international audiences, digital streaming adoption, and rising demand for premium live content. Across major leagues and combat sports platforms, valuations have increased materially over the past decade, reflecting the scarcity and durability of high-engagement sports properties.

Fight sports, in particular, benefit from:

- A global, always-on audience
- Strong engagement across digital and social platforms
- Broad appeal across demographics and geographies
- Scalable economics across media, sponsorship, and live events

Lights Out Sports is well positioned to capitalize on these trends through a multi-platform approach that integrates live competition, content creation, streaming distribution, and brand partnerships.

Streaming TV & Direct-to-Consumer Distribution

Streaming television is a core component of the Lights Out platform. The Company owns and operates LightsOutSportsTV.com, its live and on-demand streaming sports platform, which combines live sports programming with a growing library of on-demand content to support advertising, sponsorship integration, and direct fan engagement.

As consumer viewing continues to shift toward digital formats, Lights Out sees meaningful opportunity to expand its streaming footprint through original and live programming, strategic content partnerships, and deeper integration with live events and brand partners, complementing third-party distribution and supporting long-term enterprise value creation.

Expanding Across Sports, Entertainment, and Brand Partnerships

Looking ahead, Lights Out Sports plans to expand its presence across:

- Combat sports and live-event promotions
- Digital streaming and media platforms
- Sports and entertainment collaborations
- Sponsorships and partnerships with leading global brands

The Company expects significant growth and evolution of the Lights Out platform as it develops new formats, experiences, and revenue streams across sports and entertainment.

About Dr. Zack Ellison

Dr. Zack Ellison is an investment executive, board leader, and platform operator with more than two decades of experience across sports, media, and alternative investments. Earlier in his career, he served as an underwriter covering the NBA, NFL, and MLB at a global financial institution, where he worked directly with major professional sports leagues on credit, risk, and financing structures.

He is the Founder and Managing General Partner of Applied Real Intelligence (A.R.I.), and the Chairman of the Board, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Lights Out Sports.

About Applied Real Intelligence (A.R.I.)

Applied Real Intelligence (A.R.I.) is a leading alternative investment platform providing growth capital to innovation-driven companies across North America. The firm's proprietary A.R.I. 7S Investment Methodology™ guides its structured and active approach to financing innovation. Learn more at www.arivc.com.

About Lights Out Sports

Lights Out Sports is a sports and entertainment platform focused on combat sports, live events,

streaming media, and strategic brand partnerships. Founded by Shawne Merriman and led by Dr. Zack Ellison, the Company operates Lights Out Xtreme Fighting (LightsOutXF.com) and its owned live and on-demand streaming platform, LightsOutSportsTV.com, delivering premium content and experiences to fans worldwide.

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