


[← Back](#)

Lagardère Interested In Looking Into New Sports Blue Says

[Home](#)

+ This Weeks News
+ Marketingsponsorship
- Labor Agents
Lagardère interested in looking into new sports, Blue says >
+ Facilities
+ SBJ In Depth
+ Opinion
+ Coast To Coast
+ Careerspeople
+ What I Like
+ Recent Issues

## Lagardère interested in looking into new sports, Blue says

By Liz Mullen, Staff Writer

Published June 21, 2010

 **Lagardère Unlimited** may be looking to acquire agents representing athletes in sports it isn't active in now — such as baseball, hockey and Olympic sports — but any deals will come only after it fully integrates new acquisition **Blue Entertainment Sports Television**, said **Jonathan Blue**, founder of BEST.

Blue, chairman and managing director of Louisville, Ky.-based **Blue Equity**, is vice chairman of Lagardère Unlimited, the new company that French conglomerate Lagardère formed when it bought BEST. Blue, whose private equity firm has been involved in the roll-up and sale of companies in a number of industries, most notably the Spanish Yellow Pages to billionaire **Carlos Slim** in 2006, will oversee Lagardère's acquisition of sports companies, including sports talent firms.

Lagardère Chairman **Arnaud Lagardère** has said he wants to build a firm to rival the biggest U.S. sports agencies.

Blue said potential acquisition targets include sports consulting companies, marketing companies, and production and event companies, as well as talent representation agencies.

Lagardère, through its acquisition of BEST, has clients in tennis, football, basketball, boxing and broadcasting, but would consider expanding to other sports, including baseball, hockey, soccer, golf and Olympic sports. "We are looking to fill in the gaps," Blue said.

He said he believes the company employs the "pre-eminent team sports agents in the country" in **Joel Segal**, who heads the NFL practice, and **Dan Fegan**, who heads the NBA practice. "I always say that I would let them do my contract," Blue said.

But both Blue and **Kevin O'Connor**, who is Lagardère Unlimited's chief operating officer, said acquisitions would come after the sports assets of BEST and Lagardère are integrated.

Blue built BEST with the help of **Michael Principe**, who was BEST's managing director but has recently left the new company.

"I agreed to stay on with the company for a short period of time to ensure the smooth transition of BEST," Principe said in an e-mail. "That being accomplished, I am now looking forward to taking some time off and reconnecting with my family. It's been a very fulfilling time at BEST as I have not only had the opportunity to work with a collection of highly talented people, [but also] we have proven together that the model, when done correctly, works — and works well."


Principe has been involved in two of the major roll-ups of sports agencies, having also worked with **Robert Sillerman** at the old **SFX Entertainment** before that company and its sports division, SFX Sports, were sold to **Clear Channel Communications**.

Blue said, "I have nothing but high regard for Mike." Fegan said, "In my 20 years in the sports industry, I found Mike Principe to be one of the most, if not the most, capable sports executives I have ever worked with."

 **PETERSON LEAVES HENKEL:** Minnesota Vikings running back **Adrian Peterson** has left marketing agent **Bill Henkel** and told Henkel that he plans to sign with **CAA Sports** for marketing, Henkel said in an e-mail. Henkel and his company, **10 Sports Marketing**, have represented Peterson for marketing since he was drafted No. 7 overall in 2007. CAA Sports' **Ben Dogra** and **Tom Condon** have represented Peterson for on-the-field work since he was drafted.

CAA had no comment.

Henkel wrote, "I have a great deal of respect for Adrian the Athlete and even more admiration for Adrian the Person. I am proud of the work we accomplished together over the past few years, and to me he will always personify a successful yet challenging period of my professional life. Although there are aspects of working with Adrian the Businessman that I will not miss, I will be forever grateful for AD's steadfast trust and faith in me throughout our relationship."

 **CAA SIGNS BROADCASTERS:** CAA Sports has signed nationally syndicated sports talk radio host **Tony Bruno** and ESPN broadcaster **Robert Flores**. Bruno and Flores will be represented by a team led by **Andy Elkin**, **Trace Armstrong** and **Becky Sendrow**.

Liz Mullen can be reached at [lmullen@sportsbusinessjournal.com](mailto:lmullen@sportsbusinessjournal.com). Follow her on Twitter @SBJLizMullen.