

Exclusive Survey Names Peyton Manning Most Marketable NFLer

By [Jon Show](#), Senior Staff Writer



Some of the most marketable players in NFL history have lined up at quarterback, and among current rosters, Colts QB Peyton Manning and Patriots QB Tom Brady stand apart, according to a survey of 56 sports marketing and media execs conducted by THE DAILY. Manning was voted the most marketable player in the NFL with nearly 52% of first-place votes, followed by Brady's 34%. Overall, six of the top ten players named are quarterbacks, a trend that is closely mirrored in our last survey in '02.

"Marketers are looking for personalities that can help re-enforce their brand equities and break through to reach consumers," said IMG Consulting Senior VP David Abrutyn. "And more often than not, the quarterback position delivers these personalities."

Peyton Manning Named Most Marketable NFL Player

METHOD TO THE MADNESS: All respondents were asked to list, in order, who they think are the three most marketable players (rookie or veteran) in the NFL. Points were awarded on a

three-point scale, with three points for a first-place vote, two points for second place and one point for third.

1)	Peyton Manning	29	7	13	114	33.9%	51.8%
2)	Tom Brady	19	19	5	100	29.8%	33.9%
3)	Reggie Bush	2	6	10	28	8.3%	3.6%
4)	Ben Roethlisberger	1	4	3	14	4.2%	1.8%
5)	Brett Favre	0	5	3	13	3.9%	0.0%
6)	Donovan McNabb	2	1	4	12	3.6%	3.6%
7)	Tiki Barber	1	2	3	10	3.0%	1.8%
8)	Terrell Owens	1	3	0	9	2.7%	1.8%
9)	Michael Vick	0	2	3	7	2.1%	0.0%
10)	LaDainian Tomlinson	0	1	4	6	1.8%	0.0%
t11)	Shaun Alexander	0	2	1	5	1.5%	0.0%
t11)	Chad Johnson	1	0	2	5	1.5%	1.8%
t11)	Eli Manning	0	2	1	5	1.5%	0.0%

t11)	Brian Urlacher	0	1	3	5	1.5%	0.0%
15)	Tony Gonzalez	0	1	1	3	0.9%	0.0%

MANNING THE HELM: Fresh off signing a new deal with DirecTV that includes brother Eli and father Archie, Manning also has contracts with Sprint, MasterCard, Reebok, and Gatorade, among others. The Manning family's NFL lineage and charitable contributions in the Gulf Coast were cited by more than one respondent. "His reputation is impeccable, and the work he and his family did after the nightmare of Katrina further solidifies the greatness of his character and work ethic," said CSMG Int'l Exec VP/Player Marketing Nova Lanktree. "The NFL family connection is also very appealing to Corporate America and he brings a brother and a great father to the marketplace table." Most respondents heaped praise on Manning, but others pointed out his lack of a Super Bowl title. One ESPN programming exec said, "He needs to win a Super Bowl to bring his marketability to an even higher level." And while some of his newer TV spots — Sprint in particular — display Manning's sense of humor, some suggested more of a focus in that area. "Manning has the bloodlines, the mainstream appeal and impressive numbers marketers like to associate with," said The Bonham Group Chair & CEO Dean Bonham. "Although he needs to display more personality."

GROWING UP BRADY: Nearly every respondent who voted for Brady cited one of three things: looks, crossover appeal and Super Bowl rings. Brady's current endorsement deals include Nike, Movado and Sirius. SportsCorp President Marc Ganis said, "Brady is the biggest star on the most glamorous and successful team of the decade; movie star looks with a movie star girlfriend. Articulate. Doesn't let all the attention go to his head." Visa Senior VP/Event & Sponsorship Marketing Michael Lynch, whose company featured Brady in ads last season, added, "It's pretty hard to beat Tom Brady for marketability. He's that perfect combination of attitude and crossover appeal, combined with results on the field that all define him as a winner." Strategic President Peter Stern: "He has the perfect marketing recipe, a sixth-round underdog with good looks who continually performs on the biggest stage. Tom is a solid selection for Madison Avenue."



Brady's All-American Look Cited By Many Voters

BURNING BUSH: Saints RB Reggie Bush has exploded onto the scene in his rookie NFL season, inking high-profile deals with Subway, PepsiCo, Hummer, adidas and EA Sports. His focus on redirecting some endorsement dollars for Hurricane Katrina relief has also helped expand his exposure. An overwhelming number of voters (83%) also named Bush the most marketable rookie. "His 'did you see that' quality can only facilitate, and accelerate, his ability to enjoy significant and immediate marketing success," said OnSport Senior VP Malcolm Turner. Visa's Lynch added, "You have to feel like his creativity and poise will translate well at the next level. He's the kind of player that makes you stay up late for the highlight show." But Insight Sports Networks Senior Dir of Programming & Production Corey Russell cautioned, "Companies are jumping too early on the Reggie Bush marketing bandwagon. Give him a year to establish a presence."

FOURTH & FIVE: Super Bowl champion Ben Roethlisberger placed fourth in the survey. He has deals with Nike, Campbell's and ProTrade, among others, and counts his own line of beef jerky and BBQ sauce through PLB Sports. "Big Ben has rugged blue collar appeal that could sell anything from trucks to home improvement products to fast food burgers," said Pickett Advertising Exec Creative Dir Bob Dorfman. "His focus so far has been mainly on regional deals, but his future on the national stage looks very bright." Future Pro Football HOFer Brett Favre placed fifth. Favre's endorsement portfolio includes Snapper, Prilosec, Sensodyne and Starter/Nike. He also recently signed a two-year deal with Rayovac despite speculation that this will be his final

season. Leverage Sports Agency VP Randy Walker: "I think when his playing career is over, he can slide into a class of John Elway, Dan Marino, Joe Montana: star NFL quarterbacks who continually stay in the public eye via corporate relationships." Inside Out Sports & Entertainment Founding Partner Jon Venison: "I believe Brett Favre to have the most crossover appeal of any NFL quarterback since Joe Montana and Joe Namath. He is an MVP quarterback with a Hollywood smile and boy-next-door charm. Quite simply, Brett has something for everyone."



**Some Consider Terrell Owens'
Bad Boy Image A Plus**

GET A T.O.? After being dumped by the Eagles last season and finding a new home in Dallas, Terrell Owens was voted the eighth most marketable player. While he has once again been the focus of controversy, some believe that Owens has a strong marketing future. "I know this sounds crazy," said HBO Sports President Ross Greenburg, "but if he can get a personality transplant, and become a positive mental and physical force on Bill Parcells' Cowboys, he can pull off a George Foreman and reinvent himself as a marketable athlete." Masterfoods USA Dir of Sponsorships & Sports Marketing William Clements Jr. added, "They all hate him, but they all talk about him. He is the bad boy of the NFL, and once he gets healthy and starts playing he's going to light things up. ... I'd probably rank him No. 1 if it wasn't for his injury and the stuff going on right now." Lundy Marketing Group President Larry Lundy: "It's only a matter of time before a company takes a chance on the most talked about player in the NFL."

RETIREEES: Retired players were not eligible in our survey, but a few respondents cited the growing marketability of some retirees that have stayed in the spotlight through endorsements and/or media jobs. 16W Marketing Senior Dir of Talent Marketing Bob Philp: "There is a growing number of retired guys that also have an appeal as endorsers, especially when it comes to targeting a more mature demographic. Guys like Howie Long, Dan Marino, Boomer Esiason, Phil Simms, Joe Theismann and Terry Bradshaw have done well in the corporate world because of their past achievements on the field as well as their success as broadcasters and in the business world."