

## Red Sox Make Carl Crawford 10th Most Lucrative MLB Deal Ever

Written by Maury Brown  
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When the New England Sports Ventures, the owners of the Boston Red Sox, went out and purchased Liverpool FC of the English Premier League, there were concerns by part of the fan base that it might distract from spending on free agents this off-season.

How wrong that was.

The Red Sox have signed former Rays outfielder [Carl Crawford](#) to a [7-year, \\$142 million deal](#) that now ranks him in the top 10 in highest paid players in the league. When coupled with the Adrian Gonzales trade, which will be fully finalized with an extension after Opening Day for [Luxury Tax dodge purposes](#), the Red Sox have garnered two key pieces of player talent.

On Crawford's contract, his \$142 million in total contract dollars will rank him #10 in all-time highest paid players behind [Miguel Cabrera](#)'s 8-year, \$152.3 million deal with the Tigers reached in 2008. In terms of annual average value (AAV), he also ranks 10 at \$20,285,714.30 jumping him ahead of [Manny Ramirez](#) (\$20 million for his 2001-08 contract) and just below [Roger Clemens](#)' prorated deal in 2006 that landed him \$22,000,022 for that season (for those wondering, the \$22 dollars attached at the end of the deal was tied to his uniform number).

Here is how Crawford stacks up in AAV to other 2010 off-season signings:

- [Carl Crawford](#) - \$20,285,714.30

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- [Jayson Werth](#) - \$18,000,000
- [Derek Jeter](#) - \$17,000,000
- [Troy Tulowitzki](#) - \$15.775 million

As a point of commentary, MLB is seeing some of – if not the most – competitive balance in its history. But, there is still an incredibly large chasm between being competitive in one or two years and being able to retain key player talent that a club has developed when they hit free agency. The Rays never stood a chance in retaining Crawford given the incredible sum he landed with the Red Sox.

The best any low revenue making club can hope for is taking on risk and signing talent early on to MLB contracts of the multi-year variety into one or more years of their free agency eligibility. Small revenue making clubs trying to go toe-to-toe with the likes of the Yankees, Red Sox, Angels, Cubs, etc. will be nearly impossible given the revenues that they have to work from. The Rays of the baseball world certainly have shown that if you draft well and develop talent, you have a shot at the brass ring. But that ring becomes harder and harder to grasp the further you're key talent moves along in major league service time.



**Maury Brown** is the Founder and President of the [Business of Sports Network](#), which includes The Biz of Baseball, The Biz of Football, The Biz of Basketball and The Biz of Hockey, as well as a [contributor](#)

[to FanGraphs](#)

and

[Forbes SportsMoney](#)

He is available for hire or freelance

[Brown's full bio is here.](#)

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