Sports . . .
More Than Just The Score

by Jeff McCauley

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4th Edition
**Dedicated to . . .**

Cindy, Emily & Tate  
Faith • Family • Friends

**A Standing Ovation For . . .**

- Mom and Dad . . . while completing this edition, my father passed away. Nonetheless, it will always be Mom and Dad.

- All my students at Bradford High School in Kenosha, Wisconsin for helping me have fun teaching Sportainment for nearly ten years.

- The coaches who “put up with,” and eventually embraced, all the craziness. Especially Oz, for being a sounding board.

- Joe and Scotty. Two administrators with enough courage to allow their teachers to “do their own thing.”

- Jimmy, Kim, Kris, Kristi, Sara, Matt and any other student who has, is, or will take a shot at doing it . . . not just reading about it!

- Doc James, for getting me into the classroom.

- The sports marketing professionals who gave of their time and expertise.

- The Marketing teachers with Fairfax County Public Schools. Thanks for the idea.

- Ron Goch, one of the most selfless people I know, and a true professional.

- Mike Veeck, for both his sense of humor and his passion.

- Steve “Dream” Weaver, who was there when it all began.

- Champ . . . for always having a supportive word.

**About the Author**

Jeff McCauley has taught Marketing for 24 years, and Sports Marketing since 1990. During this time he started Sportainment, the Sports Marketing program at Bradford High School in Kenosha, Wisconsin. The program was featured on ESPN and garnered attention from USA Today, Advertising Age and Fox News among others. Presented with the *Innovation in Marketing Award* from the Marketing Education Association, Sportainment has sent several students into the world of sports. McCauley has taught at both the secondary and post secondary levels and started PrepSportsBiz in 2000 to provide resources to high school Sports Marketing teachers. He is currently a teacher at Davis High School in Utah where he lives with his wife Cindy, their daughter Emily and their son Tate.
Sports . . More Than Just The Score

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That's all the legal sounding stuff. The truth is, the author spent a lot of time putting this book together and would appreciate your honesty.
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Includes samples, discussion questions/activities and quizzes
When Did It All Begin?

You can’t avoid it. Turn on the television and you’re likely to see a sporting event, or an athlete trying to sell you something. Open the newspaper and sports might be on the front page, and if not, it has an entire section. Every town seems to have a radio station dedicated to sports talk. Drive down the road and you’ll see signs on the fences at the Little League Park. That same park might even be named after a local company that contributed money for its construction.

Face it, today; sports marketing is a multibillion-dollar industry. This particular industry has brought together sports and corporate America to create a dynamic partnership. In many cases, the combining of corporate support with sports has proven to be an excellent example of the “win-win” philosophy. What we mean here is that both the companies and sports come out ahead if the partnership is implemented effectively.

The importance of this relationship cannot be overstated. Sports have become a major part of our lives. As a result, sports teams, leagues, conferences, etc. need the revenue that is generated from their partnerships with business. This revenue comes from a variety of sources including sponsorship fees, broadcast rights, licensing, advertising, and promotional opportunities.

Business needs sports as well. In the early years of sports marketing, business used sports primarily as a source of entertainment for clients or employees. There was a time when all a business wanted was a chance to have a professional golfer play a round with its clients or an opportunity to have a few extra tickets to a major sporting event.

Times have changed. Companies realize they need more than just entertainment opportunities from sports ventures. It is difficult for a company to justify spending millions of dollars to simply be associated with teams, leagues or individual athletes. Put simply: companies have realized they need more than entertainment or increased exposure to justify their expenditures. More signs and tickets are simply not enough!
Although a multibillion-dollar industry, sports marketing is a relatively new field. However, there is no definitive answer to “when did sports marketing begin?” Some point to the photos of baseball players inserted in cigarette packs to increase sales or develop brand loyalty. Others point to the late Mark McCormack, founder of the International Management Group (IMG). McCormack is universally credited with developing the practice of using athletes as corporate tools. He developed a friendship and partnership with Arnold Palmer that evolved into one of the most successful agent/athlete arrangements in the history of sports. This was, remember, at a time when all a business was looking for was a professional golfer to spend time with company personnel and top clients. Golf a round, speak at the dinner, take a few pictures and sign a few autographs. At the time, that was sports marketing.

Television and the beginning of its love affair with sports is another event often mentioned as the origin of sports marketing. In the early years of televised sports a simple media buy that allowed a company to reach viewers through advertisements was considered sports marketing. The concept was simple: Buy time during a televised event that had viewers with demographic profiles similar to your target market.

Maybe sports marketing began with the success of Peter Ueberroth in presiding over the commercialization of the 1984 Olympics. The Los Angeles Olympics were the first to be paid for primarily by private industry as well as the first to make a profit.

No history of sports marketing can be considered complete without reference to William “Bill” Veeck. Veeck, known for bringing a midget to the plate in a major league baseball game, had the ability to take the ordinary and turn it into something that would attract both fans and the media. Veeck owned AL teams in Cleveland, St. Louis and Chicago from 1946-80. He introduced ballpark giveaways, exploding scoreboards, player names on jerseys, Wrigley Field’s ivy-covered walls and, of course, the midget Eddie Gaedel. He was a winner on the field as well as his Indians team once won the World Series.

Bill Veeck may have passed away, but his legacy lives on in his son, Mike. Mike has already worked his magic with promotions that have captured the imagination of baseball fans throughout the country.

Most of all, the Veecks, both Bill and Mike, have given us cause to remember that, no matter how much money is involved, sports should be about having fun!

**A Brief Review of Sports Business History**

Following are a few sports business related events of historical significance. While not an exhaustive list, it does allow you to put things in perspective.
1858-First known athletic event that required paid admission from the fans. A baseball game (admission just .50 cents) with attendance records varying from 1,500 to 10,000.

1923-Golfer Gene Sarazen signed an endorsement deal with Wilson Sporting Goods that becomes the longest running endorsement deal in the history of sports. The original deal was for $6,000 per year plus an equal amount for travel expenses. Renewal took place every two years until his death in May 1999.

1925-Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company builds the Pilgrim, the first blimp to fly over athletic events.

1928-Coke partners with the Olympics and remains a sponsor to this day.

August 30, 1939-First televised collegiate football game featuring Fordham against Waynesburg (PA) College.

October 22, 1939-First televised NFL game. Broadcast to 1,000 homes. Eagles vs. Dodgers.

1949-1st major endorsement by a female. Babe Didrikson Zaharias signs with Wilson Sporting Goods for $100,000 a year.

September 27, 1951-The first live, coast-to-coast sporting event was broadcast by NBC. The football game featured Duke taking on the University of Pittsburgh.

August 16, 1954-The first issue of Sports Illustrated is on newsstands.

1964-Blue Ribbon Sports is founded by Phil Knight and in 1972 became Nike.

1966-Ohio University offers the first Sports Management degree program

October 1, 1975-The first pay-per-view athletic event is the “Thrilla in Manilla” with Ali taking on Frazier. It is broadcast to 276 closed circuit locations.

September 7, 1979-ESPN debuts.
1980-The Carrier Dome on the campus of Syracuse University becomes the first college facility with a naming rights deal. The onetime fee is $2.75 million.

1984-The Olympics profits. For the first time the Olympics is privately financed, and shows a profit.

High school sports marketing programs started showing up around 1990, first appearing in the Fairfax County Schools. Since that time, Sports Marketing has become one of the fastest growing marketing-related course offerings in the country. And, while many schools are not able to add an entire course, they are adding a unit within their general marketing classes, Sports marketing is such a new discipline that much of the “history” of sports marketing is still being written. The good news is that you have a chance to help write some of that history.
Sports Marketing Defined

We could spend a great deal of time in a deep philosophical discussion of exactly “what” sports marketing is. However, it seems as though everybody agrees on a definition, they just say it with different words. Look at the following three definitions from some of the most respected authors on the subject:

“Sport marketing consists of all activities designed to meet the needs and wants of sport consumers through exchange processes. Sport marketing has developed two major thrusts: the marketing of sports products and services directly to consumers of sport, and marketing of other consumer and industrial products or services through the use of sport promotions.”

Sport Marketing, Mullen, Hardy and Sutton Co. 1992

“Sports marketing is the specific application of marketing principles and processes to sport products and to the marketing of non-sports products through association with sport.”

Sports Marketing: A Strategic Perspective, Shank, Co. 1999

“Sports marketing is simply any sales or publicity-related activity associated with an organized sporting event (or events), its personalities, or celebrity lifestyle of its participants.”

Sports Marketing: It’s Not Just a Game Anymore, Schaaf, Co. 1995

As you can see, these definitions all say about the same thing, yet do so in ways that can, at times, be a bit confusing. So, for the sake of this book, let’s develop our own definition.
Sports Marketing . . .

is the marketing of sports, and marketing through sports.

For our purposes, we will look at sports marketing from two perspectives: 1) the marketing of sports and 2) using sports to market non-sport products or services.

The marketing of sports is generally looked at as applying marketing principles to a team, sport, venue, athlete, etc. The second perspective, however, is a little different. Here we will spend a great deal of effort learning about sponsorships, or developing corporate partnerships. These partnerships are between the property (the team, sport, conference, venue, etc.) with something to “sell” and the sponsor/partner (company) that feels it can become more successful through a sports-related association.

Based upon these definitions, all of the following are considered sports marketing:

- The purchase of a luxury suite at a sports venue by a corporation with the purpose of both entertaining clients and rewarding/recognizing employees.
- Paying over a million dollars for a commercial during the Super Bowl.
- Cadillac sponsoring the Senior PGA Tour.
- A patron of a service station, after filling their car with gas, purchasing a hat with the logo of their favorite NBA team.
- A baseball fan sending in a proof of purchase seal from a packaged good for two ticket vouchers worth $3.00 off the purchase of tickets.
- A team purchases an insurance policy in order to offer a $10,000 prize for kicking a field goal.
- Every NBA arena selling out when the visiting team was the Chicago Bulls—with Michael Jordan.
- Pepsi or Coca-Cola paying for the pour rights in a sports venue.
- The high school sports marketing class that hires Myron Noodleman to entertain during a basketball game.
- A corporation pays $30,000,000 to have naming rights to the new pro sports stadium.
- The new virtual advertising technology allowing a company to have their logo superimposed onto the playing field during a soccer match. Only television viewers, of course, can see the logo.
A supermarket chain working with the local hockey team to raise money for the Children’s Miracle Network.

Goodyear making sure they are visible at NASCAR races, and hoping they are used by the winning car.

This book will cover both the marketing of business through sports and the marketing of sports. It is intended to help you understand sponsorship, an industry responsible for several billions of dollars of expenditures. You will learn the who, what, when, where and why of sponsorship. You will examine the challenge of pricing sponsorships, and the even greater challenge of determining their effectiveness. You will discuss the appropriateness and success of ambush marketing and learn to develop and sell your own sponsorship proposals for events that occur at your high school.

You will also learn a great deal about marketing a team or an event. In fact, you will learn how to write a marketing plan for a team, and then how to implement it. In addition, you will have a good time while you learn about managing your event and making it fun for the fans. This will require you to find out who Myron Noodleman and the High Impact Squad are. You’ll find out why filling seats is critical to every team, and get a chance to ask research questions to your fans.

The web is growing daily, and although information about the Internet becomes obsolete almost as soon as it is written, you will at least find out about how teams can use the web to their advantage.

Have fun with this book, or at the very least, with the projects and activities you will be doing. You selected this class because you have an interest in sports and business. If you don’t enjoy learning about the business and marketing side of sports... check for a pulse!

The St. Paul Saints of minor league baseball have the right idea. Their slogan says it all: Fun is Good. So have some fun!
As a promotional piece, the above, in the form of a computer screensaver, was provided to fans by Brigham Young University.
Introduction to Sponsorship

According to SponsorVision (SponsorVision.com), sponsorship is defined as “a negotiated partnership between a sponsor and event, organization or property, where the sponsor pays a cash, product or service fee for the rights to the commercial and marketable benefits (or assets) associated with the partnership.”

IEG (Sponsorship.com) defines sponsorship as “the relationship between a sponsor and a property, in which the sponsor pays a cash or in-kind fee in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with the property.”

For our purpose, we will look at sponsorship as a partnership between a business and a property/event. In this partnership, the business typically contributes cash. They may, however, contribute products or services, known as an “in-kind” contribution. If a business makes an investment, they will want a return on that investment. Typically, they will want to align themselves with, or be associated with, the property they are sponsoring.

How important is sponsorship? At the very least, it is as important as the actual event and the audience. These three components make up the event triangle. It is the cooperation and interdependence of the audience, event/athletes and sponsors/corporate partners that are responsible for the growth of the sports industry.

Which of the three components is most important? That is like asking which tire on a car is the most important. If any of them go flat, the car isn’t very useful. The same can be said for the three components of the event triangle.

Events/athletes need corporate partners or sponsors to provide financial support and publicity. Sponsors need the events because they feel the promotional exposure will help them become more successful. Finally, the audience is essential because they generate the interest of the corporate sponsors.
Let’s try and remove the athletes/event. End of story. If there is no event, there will certainly not be any audience. Without an audience as a target for marketing and promotion, there will be no interest on the part of business.

How about removing the corporate partners? Sorry. Now there is no event. With the increases in player salaries, administration costs, venues, etc., all but the smallest events (as in a junior high soccer match) need the corporate dollars to exist.

And finally, remove the audience and, as mentioned previously, you remove the motivation for the corporate partners to become involved. Once again, the end result will be no event.

As stated earlier, each component of the event triangle is critical to the success of the others.

So, as you can tell, the marriage of sports and corporate America is a marriage of necessity. Nonetheless, that doesn’t mean that both parties cannot profit from the arrangement. Sports and business will forever be linked, and your challenge is to understand why.
Sponsorship 101

In the last decade a new discipline has emerged, and it’s capturing the attention of the media, the corporate world, and academia—the business of sports. There are some exciting things happening in this business, and we thought it would be helpful for you to hear about them from The Authority in the industry—the Bonham Group.

From the athletes promoting your favorite brands in commercials to the name of your favorite team’s stadium (Coors Field) to the corporate-sponsored football games that you watch on TV (FedEx Orange Bowl), these are all strategies of the innovative thinking and hard work of sports marketing professionals.

Sports marketing allows corporations to associate their brands and products with the excitement, passion, and admiration that fans reserve for their favorite teams and athletes. For the athletes, sports marketing provides opportunities to interact with fans and to capitalize on the earning potential associated with celebrity. This industry, as a whole, derives its promotional techniques from fields such as advertising, public relations, and marketing.

Sponsorship is one branch of sports marketing. Sponsorship provides corporations with the ability to achieve their marketing goals through a unique approach in an environment that is interactive and exciting. Unlike traditional advertising, which is effective in creating the imagery and impressions that shape a brand’s identity, sponsorship makes the brand “truly come to life.” Sponsorship appeals to consumers on an emotional level, allowing people to develop a relationship with a brand, which results in higher customer retention and loyalty. This creates targeted, quality encounters with consumers, and it gives companies high-profile identification and affiliation with a prestigious property—an association that builds brand equity. Sponsorship marketing provides an exciting environment for companies to reach consumers, and that excitement adds “sex appeal” to the product or service. Companies sponsor particular events for the borrowed imagery and the soul of the property, as well as to tap into consumer emotions. As the fans’ relationships with the team develop and deepen, so do their feelings toward those companies associated with the team.

Sponsorship also enables a corporation to break through the clutter of traditional advertising. It offers a platform for companies to develop ties where their competitors do not have a strong presence; and together with advertising, sponsorship can give companies another dimension for a balanced, comprehensive approach to product marketing. In this regard, sponsorship works in synergy with the rest of the marketing mix. It gives a corporation the opportunity to complement all of its marketing efforts and leverage its sales objectives by creating an integrated marketing program through the use of multiple exposure vehicles.

The above is used with the permission of The Bonham Group (Bonham.com)
Growth of Sponsorship

Look carefully, and at the very foundation of sponsorship you will find the concept of borrowed equity. Equity can be defined as value. But how does sponsorship involve “borrowing” value?

It is very easy to find fans that are extremely loyal to their team. They stick with the team through losing seasons, poor draft picks, coaching changes, and felons as players. Fans spend millions of dollars buying shirts, hats, posters and other merchandise to show their loyalty.

However, it is far more difficult to find individuals who will demonstrate such loyalty for a product, service or company. Can you imagine anyone continuing to buy a product that fails year after year? Probably not. But, you can name several teams whose fans remained loyal through years of losing. Consider the Green Bay Packers of the 70’s and much of the 80’s or the Chicago Cubs. What about the Los Angeles Clippers or the Arizona Cardinals?

Consumers certainly purchase branded merchandise outside the area of sports (like Abercrombie & Fitch, Tommy, etc.) but certainly not to the same degree as with sports. Imagine a bunch of guys getting together to go shopping and making sure they paint their face with the colors of their favorite clothing company. Not happening!

The bond between a team and a fan; although damaged at the professional level because of free agency, outrageous salaries and boorish behavior; is still a very unique aspect of sports.

When entering into a sponsorship agreement, a business wants to have some of the good feelings people have toward a team or event rub off on them. Those “good feelings” are the value or equity the sponsor is seeking to borrow. For instance, when the Chicago Bulls were winning a string of NBA Championships, their relationship with Reebok paid off. But the majority of the high-priced deals are not as obvious.

In 2001, North American companies will spend $6.51 billion on sports sponsorship. The figure has grown significantly in the last 10 years: in 1992, the figure was $2.10 billion.

Sports dominates the corporate sponsorship budget of corporate America: 69 percent of sponsorship dollars are spent on sports, versus 9 percent for entertainment tours and attractions, 8 percent each for cause marketing and festivals/fairs/annual events, and 6 percent for arts.

As sports organizations continue to seek new revenue sources, and as municipalities seek ways of paying for sports facilities, the importance of sponsorship dollars continues to increase. Witness the dollars spent on stadium and arena naming rights in the last decade, including the recent 20-year, $120 million deal by Invesco Funds for the new Mile High stadium in Denver.”

Sean Brenner
Managing Editor of IEG Sponsorship Report (sponsorship.com)
Then . . .  
**ABC, NBC, CBS and PBS**

Now . . .  
**add PAX, FOX, UPN, WB, and all of the satellite and cable networks!**

of NBA Championships, several companies realized that people (particularly in the Chicago area) loved the Bulls. They drew the following conclusion: If the fans love the Bulls, and we support (sponsor) the Bulls, then the fans will love us! That sounds simple . . . and it actually works. Companies were able to borrow the equity the Bulls had developed by becoming an official sponsor of the team.

It may be simple, but it’s not easy. The key to a sponsorship, initially, is having consumers remember the name of the sponsor. However, with increased demand for accountability it is critical that sponsorships go beyond name recognition to generating revenue.

A number of factors have contributed to the growth in sponsorship spending over the past several years. Following are several reasons the use of sponsorship has increased in recent years. Keep in mind that sponsorship is just one component of comprehensive marketing plan.

**Growing Frustration with the Traditional Media**  
Although the cost of traditional advertising continues to rise, in most instances, ratings, viewership, and readership are following a downward trend. The television ratings of some of the recent Olympics, arguably the world’s biggest sporting event, have been disappointing. Even Monday Night Football is struggling for an audience. In many instances, business is growing more frustrated with the traditional media as the major focus of their promotional efforts.

It used to be pretty easy to communicate with the mass market. Just buy a commercial on the three television networks (ABC, CBS, NBC). In fact, when Ford introduced the Mustang they did just that. By buying ad time at the same time, on all three networks, they essentially sent their message to everyone. Now, however, the television market is fractured. With the advent of cable television and the satellite dish the viewing audience is spread over literally hundreds of stations.

Another concern is the clutter that exists in the traditional measured media. Newspapers seem to be pages of advertisements. Listen to the radio and you feel lucky if there is a little music between the commercials. And TV, well, you get the point. True or not, the perception is that the media is becoming more cluttered. As a result, it is increasingly difficult for your ad to stand out. And even if a company has a great commercial, the remote control encourages consumers to channel surf rather than watch it. Even the “button-pushers” on the highways change stations during the commercials.

**Dialogue not Monologue**  
Sponsorship provides an excellent alternative to the mass media and mass market, both of which have become highly fragmented and less personal. As “relationship selling” is emphasized, companies view sponsorships as another means of strengthening their relationships with customers.
Sponsorship is a very direct channel of communication and is perfect for those seeking a dialogue—or two-way communication. In addition to allowing consumers to respond/react to their marketing efforts, sponsorship gets to the consumer under circumstances that match their lifestyle and interests. Consumers choose to be at the event, so the sponsorship message is not as likely to be viewed as an intrusion. The same cannot be said for a TV or radio commercial. Effective sponsorships are developed so the consumers feel they are being talked to, not talked at.

**Higher Consumer Acceptance**
What comes to mind when someone says “telemarketing?” Not a very positive response is it? That is the problem with much of the media available for promotion. What do you think about the advertisements at the beginning of a rented video? Or how about banner ads on web pages? Don’t even mention those pop-up or pop-under ads that seem to come out of nowhere when you are surfing the net.

Public acceptance of sponsorship is much more positive. Perhaps the reason is that it is easy to understand that without sponsors, the event that you look forward to attending might not take place. Although we know television, newspapers and radio companies would go bankrupt if not for commercials, for some reason, we are simply not as willing to embrace these forms of advertising. Sponsorship is viewed as “giving something back.” This is another example that “perception is everything.”

**Cause Marketing**
Several research studies have indicated that consumers are more than willing to switch brands in order to purchase a product that supports a cause they believe in. A 1997 Cone/Roper Survey found that cause related marketing is making a difference. Ninety-two percent of consumers feel it is important that companies seek out ways to become better corporate citizens. Research indicates that when price and quality are equal, 76 percent of consumers would be likely to switch to a retail store associated with a good cause.

Additional studies indicate that 8 in 10 Americans say they have a more positive image of companies that are aligned with social issues, and that two-thirds of them are likely to switch brands to support one associated with a good cause. Furthermore, 87 percent of employees feel a strong sense of loyalty to their companies when their companies have a cause-related program.

There is little doubt that cause marketing works, and sponsorship is an effective vehicle for cause marketing programs.

Refer to performanceresearch.com for information about measuring the effectiveness of sports and event sponsorship as well as case studies.
It is the combination of the increasing effectiveness of sponsorship, and the frustrations associated with the traditional media that has caused an increase in the use of sponsorship as a promotional and marketing tool.

As you can see, sponsorship, as a marketing tool, is here to stay. While the exact numbers vary, nearly every expert agrees that sports and event sponsorship will increase in importance—and accountability.
Why Companies Sponsor

Companies are not increasing their use of sponsorship as a means of replacing advertising, or any other element of promotion. Sponsorship is not intended to replace advertising, rather to act synergistically with advertising and other promotional efforts to benefit business. There will no doubt always be room for traditional advertising in a promotion plan.

Sponsorship, however, does offer some unique promotional advantages over other options. Above all, remember that sponsorship, like any other promotional effort, works best when part of an integrated plan. Historically, sponsorship was something thrown in to the promotional mix as more of an afterthought. Today, it is part of promotional planning from the onset.

Following are some of the most common reasons companies turn to sponsorship:

**Increase Visibility**

Although increasing visibility is not sufficient to justify expenditures for a sponsorship, it is still important. Sporting events enjoy a great deal of exposure in both the electronic and print media. Although most of this exposure is paid for, sports events also generate a number of opportunities for publicity. Publicity is a benefit the company enjoys free of charge.

Feature articles or stories, human-interest ties, or signage that may be seen during news coverage of an event are considered “above and beyond” the promised benefits of a sponsorship. Although media coverage cannot be guaranteed, the effective development and implementation of a sponsorship can increase the opportunities for publicity.

Examine the trend of expensive naming-rights deals between companies and major sports venues and you will see the visibility is still an integral
Property . . .
is something that can be sponsored, such as a team, arena, athlete or event

Target market . . .
those consumers (or fans) at which promotional efforts are aimed

part of sponsorship. With their name on a stadium or arena, a company gets visibility and media mentions any time an event takes place in the venue.

Associate with Particular Lifestyles
A large international company with a significant advertising budget does not count on sponsorships to deliver visibility. In fact, they do not necessarily need visibility. Rather, the company may desire to be associated with the lifestyle the property (event, game, venue) represents. For instance, a luxury automobile company may desire to associate with the golf “lifestyle” so as to have their product linked with the audience of golf events.

To get a better understanding of what we mean, go to xgames.com and click on the “sponsors” link. At the time of this writing, the following companies were listed as partners:

- Jeep
- Motorola
- Right Guard
- Mountain Dew
- Taco Bell
- 1-800 CALL ATT
- Bagel Bites
- Levis Type 1 Jeans
- Play Station 2
- Reese’s
- Verizon Wireless

Each of these businesses is tied to the xGames primarily because they want to be linked with the participants and fans of this event. Why? Because the participants and fans match the target market of their products or services.

The xGames has built equity among Generation X. Most participants in extreme sports express a greater loyalty to the sport than to a particular wireless service provider or candy. As discussed earlier, the sponsor seeks to “borrow” some of the equity (loyalty) from the xGames to create loyalty for their products.

Business-to-Business Marketing
Go to a grocery store and watch the Coca-Cola and Pepsi delivery guys fight over shelf space. It can get ugly. The competition for shelf space, end-aisle displays, or display space in general is a significant issue facing companies today. Several are responding to this challenge through the use of sponsorships.
Category exclusivity . . . is an arrangement that allows a sponsor to be the only company associated with a property from a specific product or service category.

For instance, suppose your local Coca-Cola bottler is struggling to gain shelf space and preferred display space in area grocery stores, supermarkets, and convenience stores. On the national level, Coca-Cola has a sponsorship with the NBA, and, for the sake of discussion let’s assume there is a team in your market. Coca-Cola would be in a position to offer certain perks or benefits to their points of distribution (stores) in order to encourage them to provide better displays, purchase more product, etc.

Specifically, Coca-Cola could arrange for the stores to have special in-store appearance by players, free tickets or ticket vouchers with proof of purchases, or a sales promotion/contest with the winner having the use of the Coca-Cola luxury suite at the local basketball arena for one game.

In this example, a business (Coca-Cola) uses sponsorship benefits to improve a relationship with other businesses, specifically retailers who sell their product.

**Distinguish from the Competition**

Just as *product differentiation* is critical, so is *company differentiation*. One effective means of separating yourself from the competition is through “category exclusive” sponsorship of a sporting event. With category exclusivity, a company essentially locks out the competition and creates the enviable position of being the only sponsor from their industry for a particular event. As a result, the company is given the opportunity to use sponsorship benefits to court their customers.

For instance, a bank becomes the exclusive financial institution sponsor of the local minor league baseball team. Benefits of this partnership may include tickets, player appearances, VIP seating, etc. The bank makes these benefits available to its customers as a means of providing added value. It is also a means of distinguishing itself from the competition since no other financial institution can offer these benefits.

In this example, the financial institution benefits from sponsorship by being able to offer something that cannot be offered by their competition. They are able to differentiate their financial institution from all the other banks and credit unions.

**Hospitality and Entertainment**

Although a company is unlikely to enter into a sponsorship agreement solely for the hospitality and entertainment opportunities, it is certainly a significant consideration.

As the sponsor of a stop on the PGA Tour, you would have several ways to develop networking opportunities with your current or potential clients. A spot in the Pro/Am, a table at the related charity dinner, tickets to the sponsor party or preferred seating in the corporate pavilion, are all examples of possible sponsor benefits. These benefits give sponsors several opportunities to meet with customers outside normal business hours.
with the ultimate goal of turning the golf tournament into a revenue-generating event.

Another critical component of hospitality is the luxury suite. These suites are in such demand—and generate such a large amount of revenue—that a significant number of professional teams are replacing relatively modern venues with new structures primarily to increase the number of suites. These suites literally become “satellite offices” for the owners as they are used to entertain clients and generate new business.

If you have a hard time imagining how a suite at a sports event would provide an atmosphere for developing client relations simply look at the features of the suites at the Pepsi Center, home of, among others, the Denver Nuggets and Colorado Avalanche. (See http://www.pepsicenter.com/Facility/suites.asp):

Suites at Pepsi Center are reserved luxury boxes for virtually every event held in Pepsi Center. Pepsi Center Suites are sold out. However, deposits are being taken for seating as suites become available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIP Privileges:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tickets and close-in parking spaces to every covered event in Pepsi Center - approximately 160 throughout the year - including Avalanche and Nuggets regular and post-season play, concerts, family shows and touring events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concierge ticket management services—state-of-the-art ticketing, opportunity to purchase additional preferred seats for events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special discounts on merchandise, plus free game programs and stat sheets delivered to your Suite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly newsletter detailing upcoming events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-of-the-art business services, such as access to modems, computers, fax machines, audio and visual equipment and video conferencing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to your Suite and private meeting rooms, many with mountain views, available every business day, even when there are no scheduled events. You can book your next retreat, business meeting or presentation at your Suite or at Pepsi Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to promotional opportunities including public address and scoreboard announcements, program advertising, player appearances and special client networking events such as golf outing and Tip-Off and Face-Off Luncheons with the players.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in managing ticket donations for charitable causes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Also increasingly important, to sponsorship sellers and buyers is structuring deals that work. Companies increasingly are demanding sponsorship that generates bottom-line results, so properties that set up smart deals that drive sales or other quantifiable benefits will be at an advantage. This is true not only for major league teams, but also for organizations like the national governing bodies of Olympic sports, grassroots sports and college athletics.”

Sean Brenner
Managing Editor of IEG Sponsorship Report
(sponsorship.com)

Furnishings:
Seating in extra-wide, theater-style leather seats.

Your suite is fully carpeted and detailed with milled wood and granite countertops. A fully furnished lounge area complete with bar stools for additional seating, a wet bar, refrigerator and icemaker.

Just for Kids:
Children’s menus in the suites; Clinics and autograph sessions; Special merchandise discounts; Appearances by mascots; Birthday surprises

Annual Fees: Range from $125,000 to $250,000

Lease Options:
5-year lease: Increase in years 2-5 tied to Consumer Price Index. A 3-year option is available.

7-year lease: No increase for years 1-3. Increase in years 4-7 tied to Consumer Price Index.

10-year lease: No increase for years 1-5. Increase for years 6-10 tied to Consumer Price Index.

Deposits:
A waiting list exists and deposits are currently being taken for Suites at Pepsi Center. Suite deposit is $1,000. Information is available by calling Premium Sales & Service hotline at 303.405.1250.

Treat your group of VIP’s to a baseball experience they’ll never forget. Dodger Stadium Suites are the ultimate baseball experience for both business and pleasure and offer the perfect platform for all your entertainment needs. First-class service and amenities compliment exciting Dodger baseball. Dodger Stadium Suites can accommodate from 15-80 people. Also, for a limited time only, call about our all-inclusive suites with a special food and beverage package.

Every Dodger Stadium Suite comes equipped with:
• Six television monitors, VCR and stereo sound system
• Theater-style seating in comfortable Herman Miller Aeron chairs
• Preferred parking adjacent to the Suite entrances
• Private concourses with lounge areas
• First class catering by Wolfgang Puck and Levy Restaurants
• Large floor plans and spacious interiors (up to 600 square feet)

Of, how about a suite at Dodger Stadium? (See http://losangeles.dodgers.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/la/ticketing/la_ticketing_stadium_suites.jsp?club_context=la)
Conference rooms, the Business Center and concierge service

We will be happy to show you our available selection. To schedule a private tour of Dodger Stadium Suites, please call 323-224-1320.

Stadium Suites are also sold on an individual game basis and can accommodate up to 75 guests. All-inclusive packages are also available, consisting of a food and beverage package, and special Dodger gifts for all guests in attendance.

As you can see, the luxury suite provides a nearly unbelievable array of benefits. It should also be easy to connect the popularity of these benefits to obtaining and retaining clients in addition to employee recognition.

Opportunities to Merchandise
All indicators point to an increase in the number of buying decisions being made in-store. Retailers who wish to remain competitive will find it necessary to develop consumer promotions at or near the point of purchase (POP).

Sports tie-ins bring excitement to POP displays by featuring teams, players and leagues. Sports and sports-related merchandise are viewed as being current and popular, and are also “in demand” by the consumer. A retailer who is an official sponsor of a team or league will have the option of having branded or co-branded merchandise for sale, discounted through a sales promotion, or as giveaways.

Show Off a Product or Service
Through sponsorships, companies are given opportunities to call attention to specific product benefits. When a loudspeaker manufacturer provides equipment for an outdoor athletic venue, or a motor oil company sponsors auto racing, both are utilizing a sponsorship to demonstrate product attributes.

The value of a sponsorship increases when your product or service can be seen in use during the event.

Drive Sales
The demand for incremental sales as a result of sponsorships is increasing significantly. Visibility is no longer enough—sponsorships are expected to move product.

When a sponsorship includes a coupon on a ticket-back that requires a visit to a restaurant for redemption, it will likely drive sales. When a credit card company promises to donate to a team or event whenever their card is used, they are doing so with the hope that it will increase card usage and sales. If a sponsor requires you to come to their store to register for a halftime event, you can be sure they will be glad to help you make a purchase when you are finished completing the entry blank.

Incremental sales . . . sales that are “above and beyond” the sales that would have been made without the sponsorship.

Co-branded merchandise . . . features the logo of the sponsored property (team, league, event) as well as the logo of the corporate partner.
A well-developed partnership agreement should include a component that will drive sales, and a means of measuring any incremental increase in sales.

Some of the previously mentioned reasons for a company getting involved in sponsorship will apply more than others, depending upon the nature of the business. Nevertheless, it is apparent the reasons are sufficient for a company to include sponsorship in their marketing plans. The question becomes not *should* we sponsor, but *what* should we sponsor.

From the perspective of the property, it would be wise to determine which of the above factors are most important to a specific potential corporate partner. Then, make sure you include components in your proposal that will address these interests.
Why do it? Ten beliefs why sponsorship works.

1. Creates competitive advantage.

2. Allows you to cut through media complexity. Sponsorship provides the means to reach consumers in an environment of their choice.

3. Gives trade and retail a reason to support your product, particularly when tailor-mades can be created.

4. Offers a physical demonstration of corporate values. This is especially important when product and price differentials are small.

5. Provides a meaningful mechanism to building customer relations - which advertising in isolation cannot do.

6. Adds brand value through the equity and imagery of an event to enhance brand health, which in turn builds loyalty and trust.

7. Enhances shareholder value. PricewaterhouseCoopers has studies which show measurable growth in share value directly linked to the announcement of major sponsorship programs.

8. Provides a platform for integrated communications.

9. Generates new distribution and sales channels.

10. Motivates and mobilizes staff, and provides a reason to participate and activate.

(The above is used with the permission of Redmandaran)
Deciding What to Sponsor

Companies, regardless of their size, are literally flooded with requests to become corporate partners and sponsors. The requests come so often that some companies have established toll free numbers that connect to recorded messages explaining how to request sponsorship support.

As a result of the seemingly unlimited number of sponsorship requests, and the limited budgets of potential sponsors, selecting the appropriate properties to support is critical.

Following are several criteria used in determining whether or not to partner with a particular property:

**Property and Company Image Compatibility**
When selecting a property to sponsor, a company wants to make sure it reflects the image they are trying to develop or maintain. A property does not necessarily have a good or bad image—just one that does or does not compliment the potential partner’s image development efforts.

For instance, consider the type of image Cadillac wants for its automobile. Would sponsoring the WWF be consistent with that image? How about the Masters? Since the difference is rather extreme, it is an easy decision. It is not always that simple. Honda was an advertiser on broadcasts of XFL games. After seeing that the broadcasts did not mirror their “family” image, they pulled their ads.

The size and scope of an event is also a concern. Is the property so “big” the sponsor will get lost? In this case, “big” refers to its reputation or image. If a property is “larger than life” it is often difficult to design a sponsorship that allows a company to create an impact. The Super Bowl and the Indy 500 are examples of events that are, in many ways, bigger than life. Sponsoring one of these events will certainly expose you to a large audience, but you may be dwarfed by the “size” of the event.
The Audience
In sports marketing we define audience in a unique manner. Obviously, those in attendance at the game are part of the audience, but so are those who are watching on TV, listening to the radio, and reading about it in a newspaper or magazine.

Look at the demographics and buying habits of the core audience of the property under consideration. Is it a match with the target market of the potential corporate partner? According to Performance Research (a Newport based sponsorship market research company) the X-Games audience is the coveted 13-24 year old market. In fact, over two-thirds of the on-site audience at a recent event was under age 21. Remember, these facts are neither good nor bad—it depends upon the match with the sponsor and the product/service. Selling computerized accounting software? I’m guessing you don’t think the X-Games is where you want to be. But, if you are Taco Bell or Mountain Dew, this could be the place for you.

How loyal is the audience to the property under consideration? This is an important factor because the more loyal the audience the more likely they are to have their buying behavior influenced by sponsors. NASCAR fans are perhaps the most loyal in sports, as are fans of the America’s Cup. Performance Research conducted several studies of sailing fans, and one of their findings indicated that 44 percent of the fans interviewed said that they would “Almost Always” or “Frequently” select America’s Cups sponsors’ products over those of non-sponsors. This type of fan loyalty is encouraging to potential sponsors because they are looking for additional sales.

If you recall, in our definition of audience we included TV audiences, radio listeners, etc. These individuals would be part of the extended reach of a property. Extended reach refers to the individuals exposed to the sponsorship efforts beyond those who are in attendance at the event. If you can increase your reach with a significant broadcasting audience it is an obvious advantage.

Remember the geographic aspect of your audience as well. If your product, service or company would benefit from regionalized exposure, be sure you are not paying for “wasted” circulation with coverage outside of your desired geographic market.

Working with Retailers
Many companies use sponsorships to secure new retail outlets or improve their working relationships with current retailers. If this is the case with a potential partner, a retailer tie-in may very well become a critical component of the sponsorship. Look for a sponsorship that offers an opportunity to create a tie-in that will benefit the retailer through increased traffic, sales, visibility, etc.
For instance, Pepsi would benefit greatly from a sponsorship that drives customers to their retailers. An example would be the “under the cap” promotions. Consumers interested in the promotion have no option but to purchase Pepsi product from a retailer (who, of course, purchase their products from Pepsi). Everyone involved benefits with a promotion that increases retailer traffic and sales.

Another consideration involves the number of different or competing retailers a company may have. Continuing with the Pepsi example, there are likely several competing retailers (supermarket chains, discount stores, convenience stores, etc.) that would have an interest in a Pepsi promotion. That interest would no doubt increase if each of these competitors had the opportunity to take advantage of a promotion designed specifically for them. This would allow the retailer to differentiate themselves and provide the Pepsi bottler with a variety of promotions.

One distribution point may feature a player appearance, another could concentrate promotional efforts on a proof of purchase program that includes discounts on tickets, while a third offers customers a chance to win a VIP package for an upcoming game.

Media Impact
Ask yourself if the property you are considering is one that will generate media attention. If the property is appealing to the media you may be the beneficiary of unexpected publicity and add significantly to the value of your sponsorship. If you represent the property, do what you can to attract the media. This will benefit your event as well as your corporate partners.

Keep in mind that different things appeal to different media. While television may require something visually stimulating, the same is not necessarily the case for newspaper coverage. Evaluate the possibility of coverage from all types of media.

Media coverage is not enough. There is no value to the media covering the event you sponsor if you are not visible and/or identified as a partner. Consider whether or not you can create a presence so significant that your involvement will be recognized. This includes placing signs where they are most likely to be seen on television coverage. Do you think the courtside signage you see on a NBA broadcast is placed where it is by accident?

Exclusivity
Nearly every sponsorship agreement includes category exclusivity. Nevertheless, one of the first things you want to check is how broadly the category is defined. For instance, does your pizza company have exclusivity in the category of delivered pizza? Or is it all pizza? Or is it quick service restaurant? Or is it the Italian food category? Or . . . ? There is no universal definition of categories for sponsorships; it depends on what is agreed upon in the contract.
The Olympics has a long list of sponsor categories. For the 2002 Winter Olympics this list includes the following TOP (The Olympic Partners) Sponsors:
The Coca-Cola Company
John Hancock
Kodak
McDonald’s
Panasonic
Samsung
Sema
Sports Illustrated / Time Inc
VISA
Xerox

In addition there is the Olympic Properties of the United States (OPUS) which is a joint marketing program between the USOC and SLOC. OPUS has 6 Partners, 14 Sponsors and 28 Suppliers. All have “category exclusivity.”

Generally, the broader the definition the better for the sponsor, since that allows them to effectively block out more competitors. When a request for exclusivity is granted it means the property has eliminated several potential sponsors. As a result, sponsors may be required to pay considerably more for a broad definition of a category.

The following are all samples of categories that could be used by a major college:

- After Care
- Airlines
- Athletic Shoes
- Automotive
- Bank Cards
- Banks
- Beverages
- Soft Drinks
- Water
- Replenishment Fluid
- New Age
- Brokerage Houses
- Catering Services
- Clothing Manufacturers
- Credit Unions
- Department Stores
- Discount Stores
- Electronics
- Grocery Stores
- Hardware Stores
- Hospitals
- Hotels/Motels
- Insurance
- Auto
- Life
- Health
- Prepared Food Products
- Burgers
- Chicken
- Mexican
- Pizza
- Printers
- Radio Stations
- Restaurants
- Sporting Goods
- Telephone Services
- Wireless
- Long Distance
As you can tell, there is literally no limit to the number of potential sponsorship categories that can be developed.

If you have ever participated in a “fun run” of some sort, you probably left with an event T-shirt. If it was like most “fun run” t-shirts, the back was covered with the logos of the sponsoring companies. So many, in fact, that they were probably too small to read from a few feet away. While that may be fine for the T-shirt, it’s not fine for your sponsorship.

Before deciding to partner with a property, always determine whether or not the property is saturated with sponsors. Will you be just “one more logo” in the program or just “one more banner” hanging up on the fence? While being the sole or major sponsor of an event may not always be financially feasible, be careful not to become involved with a property that has so many sponsors you will have difficulty being noticed.

Consider how easily a sponsorship could be ambushed. Although ambush marketing is covered in detail in another section, it is the effort of a non-sponsor to create the impression that they are an official sponsor. After paying a fee to be the official sponsor of an event you will not be pleased to have another company negate that sponsorship through ambush marketing. Instances exist when the “unofficial” sponsor actually generates more visibility and recall than the official sponsor.

**Increase Consumer Sales**

A sponsorship that allows a business to design a consumer-oriented promotion that will sell product is always desirable. The most common such promotion involves turning in one or more “proof-of-purchase” labels for event tickets or vouchers. The benefit of such an arrangement is that it leads to an increase in sales for both the sponsor and the event. In addition, it provides an easy means of measuring participation levels.

Another common example is selling a branded item (an item bearing the name of the sponsored team, league, etc.) at a discount based upon making a minimal purchase. Service stations frequently make items available at a discount with a “fill-up” of gas. Once again, this is a promotion that encourages/requires the sale of product in order to take advantage of the offer. It may also help the sponsor liquidate, or recover, the cost of sponsorship.

Also, consider the possibility of on-site sales, and the value of those rights. If Pepsi is a partner of a particular team, you can be assured that the sponsorship includes the pour rights to the team venue. Pour rights simply refer to the right to sell a particular beverage. The revenue Pepsi generates from sales will allow them to recover a portion of the cost of their sponsorship.
Pricing Sponsorships

When a company decides to use sponsorship as a method of marketing and promotion it is getting involved with a medium that can be very difficult to value. One reason is that the majority of what is being purchased is intangible—the “association” with a team or venue, the “right to use the properties logo,” an “official sponsor” designation, etc.

With most media, the standard CPM (cost-per-thousand) can be used in the process of determining value and price. Yes, it say CP"M" but it really does mean cost per “thousand.” In sponsorship, however, the benefits with the potential for the greatest payoff are often qualitative as opposed to quantitative. As a result, the CPM is not necessarily an effective method of determining value.

The International Events Group (IEG) reports that in their annual survey of properties “the sum of all tangible benefits contained in a sponsorship package—i.e., tickets, program ads, etc.—is almost always worth less than the fee paid.” That does not mean that sponsors pay for more than they receive; it means intangible benefits are an important part of most agreements.

The Olympics are arguably the largest sporting event in the world, and command prices for sponsorships that reflect their dominance. A TOP sponsor may pay in excess of $50 million to be part of the Olympics. What does a company get for that kind of investment? Well, here’s what they don’t get. They don’t get signage. They don’t get tickets. They don’t get an ad in a program. In fact, they don’t get most of the benefits typically associated with sponsorships. What they receive is the right to use the Olympic name and to tie themselves and their products to the event.

As the Olympic example illustrates, companies are willing to pay for intangible benefits. The truth is, pricing a sponsorship is far from a science. This is an area where a great deal of “instinct” must be utilized. The goal is to get as much as possible for a sponsorship while keeping the price at a point where the potential partner feels it is a fair exchange for the value of the benefits. Perfect . . . another ambiguous definition. It is difficult to give a very useful answer about pricing. There is no specific formula that is considered an “industry standard.” And yet, “charging more than it costs” is simply not enough direction.
To help better understand the difficulties in pricing, examine this actual example of a sponsorship involving a high school sports program. A proposal was developed for a halftime slam-dunk contest, and was presented to the owner of several units of Cost Cutters, a discount hair-care franchise. The contest would feature three contestants, and would be held during the halftime of ten games (five men’s and five women’s).

Each participant was to receive a Cost Cutters SlamFest T-shirt and have their dunks evaluated by a group of celebrity judges (teachers, cheerleaders, special guests, etc.). The winner of each halftime was invited back to defend their title. A final championship “slam-off” was held during halftime of the last game of the season.

Following is a list of the benefits offered to Cost Cutters in conjunction with the Title Sponsorship of the SlamFest.

- Minimum of 75 radio spot mentions during the season
- Inclusion in a minimum of 5 ads in the local paper
- Coupon opportunities at all games
- 1/4-page advertisement in the Winter Sports Guide
- Sponsor logo painted on the backboard of the portable basket used in the competition
- Signage at all home basketball games (sign provided by school)
- PA announcements and opening/closing mentions
- Participants would wear the SlamFest T-shirt during the event
- Complimentary tickets as requested

Based on the list of rights and benefits, how much should they ask for the sponsorship? First, the cost of the benefits must be determined. The costs shown refers to the money spent to provide the benefits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title in all advertising (Cost Cutters SlamFest)</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum of 75 radio spot mentions</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion in a minimum of 5 ads in the local paper</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coupon opportunities at all games</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4-page advertisement in the Winter Sports Guide</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor logo painted on the backboard</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage at all home basketball games</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA announcements and opening/closing mentions</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will wear the SlamFest T-shirt</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complimentary tickets as requested</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$3,100 Total Cost

As you might expect, it would be nice to make a little profit, or at least cover the cost. Therefore, the sponsorship package must be priced at least $3,100. Anything above the $3,100 would be profit. Be careful. The
cost of an item is not necessarily the same as the value. Value is simply what someone is willing to pay. For instance, look at the memorabilia market. High priced memorabilia is always sold for far more than the original cost. Supply and demand determines value.

In addition, even though a benefit has no actual cost, it may still have value. In this example, providing an opportunity to distribute coupons, reading public address announcements, and complimentary tickets have no cost; however, they certainly have value.

Also, keep in mind that the goal is to convince or “sell” your potential sponsor on the value of your package.

The next step is to take the items and attach a “value” to them. Everything you offer must have value—or do not offer it. And, keep in mind that the value should exceed the cost. For example, in this case the school was given favorable rates from the newspaper and the radio station. As a result, they were able to purchase the time and space from the media at lower rates than would be offered to a regular advertiser. This means that when discussing the media, the value is greater than the cost. Below is an example of the values that could be assigned to each benefit.

$750 Title in all advertising (Cost Cutters SlamFest)
$2,250 Minimum of 75 radio spot mentions during the season
$1,425 Inclusion in a minimum of 5 ads in the local paper
$200 Coupon opportunities at all games
$200 A 1/4 page advertisement in the Winter Sports Guide
$225 Sponsor logo painted on the backboard
$1,250 Signage at all home basketball games
$200 PA announcements and opening/closing mentions
$250 Participants will wear SlamFest T-shirt
$3 each Complimentary tickets for Panther basketball games as requested (This could vary)
$6750 Total Value with addition for tickets

Notice there is value to being the Title Sponsor and being directly tied to the event. There is value to PA announcements. There is value to tickets. There is value to the opportunity to distribute coupons. There is value to having your corporate logo on the basket used in the promotion. And, there is value to having signs at an event. In each case, the value exceeds the cost, which is typical.

Can you ask $6,750 for the sponsorship? Of course, you can ask whatever you want. Will it sell at that price? That depends on how good of a salesperson you are and on what the potential sponsor perceives as the value of the benefits.
Here is the real catch. For the time being, ignore the actual costs. Would the value be the same at all high schools? Of course not. A high school basketball team that regularly attracts 3,000 fans can value signs, PA's etc. at more than the team that only averages 750 fans a game. The value would also vary depending upon the specific game(s) involved. The game against the cross-town rival is worth more to potential business partners because of the emotional investment by the fans. And the value could further vary depending upon the success of the team.

Even though you have determined the cost and value, you must still set a retail price. What should it be? Well, to start with, more than the cost and less than the value! The specifics will have to be determined by your local market conditions.

Factors in Determining Price
As you might expect, there are several factors involved in determining the price of a sponsorship. Two have been mentioned, tangible and intangible factors. Make sure the difference is clear. Tangible factors are those that are easier to place a price on . . . and are typically items with values or prices that are somewhat objective. These tangible items could include ID during the broadcast and on event materials, tickets, hospitality, on-site sampling or an advertisement in the program.

Intangible items are more difficult to assign a value or price. The value will vary from one property to another or from one sponsor to another. These intangible items could include the prestige of the property, category exclusivity, cosponsor opportunities and the chance of the event attracting coverage.

The reach and impact of the event will also influence the price of a sponsorship. In simple terms, how many people will be exposed to the sponsor message? Is it a global event? A national event? Statewide? Is it simply a local event? Obviously, the greater the reach the greater the value, and of course, the higher the price.

There are several additional factors that may affect the price of the sponsorship. Are there on-site sales rights or pass through rights? Is there a discount for a multi-year commitment? Is the property particularly valuable to specific sponsor categories?
There are market factors at work as well. How much are other properties asking for similar sponsorships in your market? It would be wise to “shop the competition” as much as possible. Although it will be difficult to make direct comparisons, you will be able to get a general idea by looking at the tangible items in each proposal.

Take into consideration the cost of traditional media (newspaper, radio, and TV) in your market. Compare the cost of purchasing time/space in these media with the cost of the sponsorship.

Pricing will always be a challenge to properties offering sponsorship opportunities and to the potential partner. The bottom line is, the price set by a property is appropriate if a corporate partner purchases the sponsorship. Like any other product or service, supply and demand will determine the success of the pricing decision. More experience developing proposals and making presentations will certainly help one effectively price sponsorships.

Sportainment, a sports marketing program at Kenosha Bradford High School in Wisconsin, worked with sponsors to acquire this tunnel for football and basketball introductions.
Leveraging Sponsorship

A company will never enjoy all of the benefits possible from a sponsorship unless that sponsorship literally becomes the focal point of their promotional efforts involving the consumer, employees, industry, and the media. Many companies make the mistake of writing a check for the sponsorship and moving on to the next opportunity or responsibility. The truth of the matter is, writing a check is just the beginning.

The same is true from the perspective of the sponsee or property—they must not simply take the check and run. In order for the relationship to be a success, both the corporate partner and the property must be pleased with the results. In order for this to occur there must be considerable effort expended in the activation of the sponsorship.

Getting more “bang for the buck” is always the goal of those purchasing a sponsorship, and providing the “bang” should be the goal of the sponsee. The process of increasing the value of the sponsorship is referred to as leveraging. Just as getting leverage, in the physical sense, allows one to lift or move more than otherwise possible, leverage in the sponsorship sense allows a firm to enjoy greater benefits than they may have expected.

The key question then is “how can a sponsorship be leveraged to maximize benefits?” The following are examples of using sponsorship as the center of promotional efforts and as a means of generating greater value through leveraging.

Drive Consumer Sales
One of the most popular methods of utilizing a sponsorship to drive sales is offering a ticket discount with a purchase. In its simplest form, a manufacturer would offer free or discounted tickets to the see the Orlando Magic with proof of purchasing a specific product or a specific dollar amount of purchases of the company’s products. Variations of this approach would include the manufacturer making donations to the Children’s Miracle Network (CMN) with every purchase made, with the CMN being the charity of
choice of the Magic. Or, the manufacturer could run a sweepstakes awarding a trip for two to accompany the Magic on a road trip.

In each of the above instances the goal would be to drive sales. Since the only way to get the tickets, help the charity, or win the sweepstakes would be to purchase the manufacturer’s product, any of the promotions would likely generate increased revenue.

**Added-Value for Consumers**

A sponsor can also develop programs designed to generate revenue while providing consumers and fans with added value. A minor league baseball team creates “family night” for Saturday night games. As the sponsor, a convenience store chain offers ticket vouchers good for a bleacher seat, or $3.00 off any other ticket. In addition, the voucher comes with a coupon good for a soft drink and hot dog, and stadium cups can be used for refills at the various convenience store locations.

**Self-Liquidators**

Many sponsors will seek rights to sell event related merchandise as a part of their sponsorship agreement. For instance, a sponsor of the xGames may negotiate for the right to sell a videotape of the highlights of the games, or a CD soundtrack. With exclusive rights to these items, the sponsor would attempt to cover the cost, or at least a portion of the cost of the sponsorship. This is referred to as *liquidating* a sponsorship. As the “Official Gasoline of the 1999 All-Star Game,” Gulf Oil leveraged their sponsorship in several ways, including having Gulf stations sell 75,000 baseballs with the All-Star logo for $2.49 with a fill-up. The profit generated through the sale of these baseballs would help reduce, or liquidate, the cost of the sponsorship.

**Retailer Incentives**

Increasing in-store presence is a typical goal of a manufacturer or wholesaler. For instance, take General Mills and some of their cereals. General Mills, the manufacturer, would likely increase sales by having increased POP displays and shelf space in their points of distribution. One popular method of doing so is providing the retailer with incentives to provide those benefits.

In the past, General Mills did an excellent job of providing incentives for retailers by using their NASCAR sponsorship. Since a significant percentage of NASCAR fans are female, Mills’ “Race Weekend at the Daytona 500” promotion offered retailers lobby displays featuring the Cheerios car and savings on participating brands. They helped drive traffic to these retailers through extensive promotion of the “Race Weekend.” Packages included a mail-in offer for special race-themed products and a sweepstakes in which consumers could win tickets to Daytona.

This promotion encouraged retail accounts, particularly in Southeast markets where NASCAR is most popular, to build *incremental* volume...
Trade-out or In-Kind

Occurs when a corporate partner provides products or services rather than cash for all or part of their sponsorship fee.

Cross-promotion...
Involves two or more corporate partners working together to develop a promotion to maximize their benefits.

Cross-promptions
Sponsors of a particular property often become partners with each other in cross-promotional efforts. CBS Sportsline and Oldsmobile are both corporate partners with the NCAA. They joined forces during a recent March Madness basketball tournament in a campaign to encourage online users to test-drive an Olds. Visitors to either the CBS Sportsline or the Oldsmobile Web sites could enter to win an Oldsmobile car in two different sweepstakes.

The partnership between CBS Sportsline and Oldsmobile utilized a variety of promotional efforts including banner ads, buttons, and pop-up ads as well as off-line elements to promote Oldsmobile’s sponsorship of the NCAA tournament brackets.

Another cross-promotion might involve two corporate partners such as National Car Rental and MBNA. They might join forces for a promotion that would allow them to reward customers they have in common. Possibilities include discounts on car rentals when using an MBNA issued credit card or a program that enables consumers to enter an MBNA sweepstakes with every National Car Rental.

Companies value co-sponsorship opportunities so much that properties often put a great deal of effort into bringing sponsors together to make arrangements for cross-promotions. Companies that form promotional partnerships are more likely to have a positive experience with sponsorship in general.

Media Involvement
If you do not have a media sponsor, it will be well worth the effort to partner with one. In most cases, the media is not interested in making significant cash investments. They are, however, often willing to work a trade-out with time or space. The value of having media involvement goes beyond the simple opportunities to increase advertising.

For instance, with a radio station as a partner, a property such as a team can benefit from a variety of on-air promotions. Contests, interviews, sweepstakes, ticket give-a-ways, and an endless array of exciting promotions can provide a great deal of visibility for an event, and as a result, for the sponsor as well.

Pass Through Rights
Pass through rights can be a significant leverage point. These rights allow a sponsor to “pass through” certain sponsorship benefits to distribution points, branches, etc. For example, if VISA has a sponsorship with (sales above what would have been expected without the sponsorship) for multiple brands. Retailers who were able to drive incremental volume for the General Mills’ brands by a predetermined quantity were rewarded with VIP treatment at Daytona during the race.
the NFL, they will likely have the rights to use the NFL logo, and the logos from the individual teams. In addition, they would also likely negotiate the rights to allow their member banks to use these same logos. These rights then would “pass through” to the banks.

**A Sample of Leveraging**

To demonstrate the potential of leveraging a sponsorship, once again look at an actual high school proposal. This is a multifaceted proposal given to the local franchisee of Little Caesar’s Pizza. This proposal was in the form of a letter since it was a follow-up from the initial meeting. The key points are provided below:

**Holiday Hoopla Reception**

Last year Holiday Hoopla proved to be a major success, particularly in terms of attendance. Once again, we would like you to host a reception for the parents from all four participating schools. Little Caesars will be responsible for providing pizza and beverages for the reception.

**Little Caesars Parent’s Night**

We propose that Little Caesars provide pizza for a Little Caesars Parent’s Night for each of the fall and winter sports teams. Little Caesars Parent’s Night allows parents, student-athletes and coaches to gather in an informal setting after a predetermined game.

**Official Pizza**

In addition, Little Caesars will become the “Official Pizza of Panther Sports” and we will encourage student organizations to use Little Caesars whenever possible. Furthermore, Little Caesars will have the right to distribute tickets for free admission to select Panther athletic contests, primarily basketball. These tickets will be available at each location, and may be included with pizza deliveries.

The above activities will provide exposure at a minimum of 27 athletic events. In addition, the consistent promotion of Little Caesars as the “Official Pizza of Panther Sports” will increase name recognition and drive traffic. Your participation in distributing free admission tickets to select games will allow you to provide true “value added” to your product and further enhance your image in the community.

Our partnerships are generally cash-only agreements. However, in this case, we recognize it is appropriate to have a combined cash and trade-out arrangement. Therefore, the total cash investment for Little Caesars for the above sponsorships is just $xxx.xx. With the constant exposure and additional merchandising opportunities the value will significantly exceed your investment.
Our community is one of the most competitive “pizza markets” in the area. We fully intend, through this partnership, to help you continue your quest to become the major player in the “pizza wars.” We feel we can deliver a significant market segment with our fans and their families.

We are looking forward to working with you, and I will contact you in the near future to discuss the details of this proposal.

As you can see, this is a rather comprehensive proposal for a high school sports program. Nevertheless, there is ample opportunity to further leverage the sponsorship. Following are a few examples of how the sponsor (Little Caesar’s Pizza) can increase the value of this agreement. The property (Panthers sports) would be wise to cooperate with the leveraging attempts since it will help ensure a satisfied client and build equity in the Panthers “brand” as well.

Drive Consumer Sales-Free tickets with a specified purchase at LCP. Register to deliver the game ball at LCP. Coupon on the back of a ticket that can be redeemed for discount/free menu item.

Added-value for Consumers-Show a ticket stub at LCP when ordering and get free Crazy Bread or beverage.

Self-Liquidators-LCP could sell co-branded Panther apparel from their retail locations. Vendor rights at sporting events (profit from sales could cover/offset sponsorship fee).

Cross-promotions-Get together with a cellular phone company as co-sponsors of the Little Caesars Pizza Call and share exposure and investment. Combine promotional efforts with other school sponsors, such as the soft drink partner.

Media Involvement-Creative game ball delivery can increase the likelihood of media coverage. Arrange for appearances by the LCP Mascot at select events/activities.

It is obvious, that as valuable as the sponsorship would be as shown, it would certainly increase in value with the addition of some or all of the suggestions for leveraging. The bottom line for both the property and partner is to implement a successful sponsorship, and effectively leveraging the rights and benefits can make this possible. To do so, the corporate partner must invest additional resources (time, money, etc.) beyond the sponsorship fee and they must have the cooperation of the property.

There is no set ratio for the additional expenditure beyond the sponsorship fee. Generally, one to three dollars for every dollar spent on the fee is the typical for leveraging. In other words, if a company spends $10,000 on a sponsorship fee (and the rights and benefits that go with it) they should
be willing to spend another $10,000 to $30,000 to ensure the successful implementation of the agreement.

Keep in mind that the two parties (property and sponsor) must agree on the benefits and rights that are included in an agreement. However, it is also beneficial to everyone involved to discuss methods of leveraging those benefits. Much of the value of a sponsorship is derived from the activities and promotional efforts developed after the agreement is made.
Ambush Marketing

Imagine the following. You are in Atlanta in 1996 for arguably the largest athletic event in the world—the Olympics. As you walk toward Olympic stadium a young man in shorts and sunglasses politely offers you a free plastic holder to preserve your Olympic tickets. The ticket holder and the cord, which allows you to wear it around your neck, both feature the Nike swoosh. You accept, and continue toward the stadium.

On this typically hot day in Atlanta you are approached by an athletic looking young woman and offered a fan to use once inside the stadium. Again, you accept, and notice the fan features the face of a well-known participant in the Olympics, who happens to be a Nike spokesperson.

Once inside the stadium your eyes gravitate to the gold shoes worn by Michael Johnson, soon to be a gold medallist and world-record holder in the race that is about to begin. Those now famous gold shoes were provided by his sponsor, Nike. After the session you end up in a building featuring athletic apparel, interactive entertainment and memorabilia from famous athletes. Everything bears that now familiar swoosh.

So, when asked to name the official athletic footwear sponsor of the Olympics you confidently respond “Nike.” And you are wrong. Instead, you have named the company that is among the best in the world at ambush marketing.

When a company invests in an event or property by purchasing a sponsorship, they often negotiate for category exclusivity. A major sponsor of an event desires exclusivity for several reasons. Obviously, they would like to be the only company in their line of business that receives exposure during the event. Equally important, however, is their desire to become synonymous with the event—at least as far as their product category is concerned. In particular, if a company invests heavily in an event, they would do so with the desire to gain equity or value through association with the event.
The amount of the sponsorship investment will vary from several hundred dollars at a local event, to $20,000,000 for naming rights of a major venue to over $50,000,000 as a TOP Olympic Sponsor. Regardless of the size of the investment, the company will want to protect it by prohibiting other companies from infringing upon their marketing efforts.

When a company works to create the appearance of an official association with an event when that association does not exist, it is ambush marketing. Ambush marketing has increased as both the value and cost of official sponsorships has escalated.

Examples of ambush marketing include commercials from American Express during a past Olympic Games which featured an Olympic-style stadium; Wendy’s spots during the 1994 Winter Games picturing founder Dave Thomas skating with Olympian Kristi Yamaguchi; Nike purchasing every bus-stop poster site around a marathon course for

If, as a sponsor, you do not purchase advertising time on the broadcast of your event, do not be surprised if you are “ambushed” by a competitor!
Individual athletes are often sponsored by companies other than the “official” sponsor of their sport or team. This is one way for a business to get sponsor attention without “official” status.

Individual athletes are often sponsored by companies other than the “official” sponsor of their sport or team. This is one way for a business to get sponsor attention without “official” status.

Ambush marketing efforts range from having fans wear a shirt with a non-sponsors logo on the front and positioning themselves to be seen on television to spending large sums of money to advertise on the television broadcast of a major event. The most common methods of ambushing include the following.

Television Advertising
If the sponsor of an event does not either purchase the broadcast sponsorship or have a contract clause that prohibits direct competitors from doing so, the television audience becomes fair game for ambushers. Typically, the broadcast audience reflects the in-person audience in terms of demographic makeup, but is much larger.

For example, if a quick-serve restaurant chain sponsors an event they must take into consideration the possibility that a competing restaurant may purchase advertising time during the broadcast of the event.

Minor Sponsor that Leverages Effectively
As opposed to being a major or Title Sponsor to an event, a company may purchase a smaller package. Perhaps they are the presenting sponsor, or even the sponsor of an “event within the event.” Then, they creatively and effectively leverage that sponsorship. Through creative promotions, contests, and visibility this “lesser” sponsor may be able to create the image of being the main supporter of the event.

On the local level, a company that sponsors an entertaining halftime act for a basketball game, such as the High Impact Squad, may generate more visibility than the title sponsor of the game. They may actually create more good will and positive PR that the title sponsor, despite the fact that the title sponsor would have spent more.
Promotions that Coincide with an Event
A company may heavily advertise a promotion during the same time period of a major event. The promotion must be carefully designed so it will relate to the event being ambushed. The general public may make the assumption that since the promotion or contest takes place at the same time as the event, it must be “officially” tied to the event.

For instance, assume your community is the site of a triathlon. A local sporting goods store, though not a sponsor, arranges for personal appearances by a series of triathletes. Fans would naturally jump to the conclusion that the sporting goods store is, in some way, affiliated with the triathlon.

Sponsorship of Teams/Individuals
Frequently, a company will sponsor a particular team (usually in European countries) or an individual athlete. As a result, if this particular team or individual competes in a major event they will benefit from that association. Remember Michael Johnson and his gold Nike shoes in the 1996 Olympics?

Is It Really a Big Deal?
How big of a concern is ambush marketing? As evidence of the new focus on minimizing or eliminating the practice, the Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) had a staff of 60 individuals with legal backgrounds combat ambush marketing.

With some sponsors having spent as much as $50 million to borrow on the equity of the Games, one of the greatest fears is competitors trying to align themselves with Olympics without having paid a sponsorship fee.

Prior to the Sydney Olympics, Qantas (airline) ran a billboard campaign trumpeting the Spirit of Australia. The board, by no coincidence, featured Olympic swimmers Susie O’Neill and Ian Thorpe and athlete Cathy Freeman—all of whom were individually sponsored by Qantas, and well known in Australia. Quantas, although not an Olympic sponsor, was certainly able to create the impression they were.

Many of the pre-Olympic violations addressed by SOCOG involved smaller companies that misused the Games branding/logos, and often did so because they had little or no understanding of the sometimes complicated rules and regulations governing the use of such marks.

SOCOG went so far as to arrange for a ban on billboard construction near any Games venue—with the hopes of eliminating any last minute “surprises.” An aircraft exclusion zone over Sydney during the Games removed skywriters from the list of potential ambush tools as well.

In light of recent ambush marketing efforts, in particular at large worldwide events such as the World Cup and Olympics, the concern and preventive measures taken by SOCOG were anything but an over reaction. These efforts were designed to avoid a major concern of sports marketers everywhere—that ambush marketing could discourage sponsors from...
Closing ceremonies every night at 9:00.

We deserve a medal for this.

Proud host of ZERO Olympic events.

500" of snow.

*2 kids 10 and under per paying adult.

www.brightonupthegames.com

This outdoor campaign for Brighton Ski Resort was developed by Spiker Communications. Is this an example of creative advertising, or was the intent to ambush the Olympics?
Measuring Sponsorship Results

Measuring sponsorship effectiveness is very difficult to do. Difficult, but not impossible. And, even though it is a challenge, it is very important. The importance can be looked at from two perspectives.

As a property, you want to be able to “prove” your sponsorship opportunities have been successful in order to encourage involvement from potential corporate partners or to gain renewal from current partners. In your negotiations you made certain promises or assurances during the evaluation process, and you have to back them up.

From the perspective of the sponsor, you want to know whether or not to continue a sponsorship in the future based on the value of the benefits in relation to the financial investment. In other words, did you get what you paid for—or more? In addition, measuring sponsorship effectiveness may provide insight into certain components of the package that should be modified or eliminated, thus making the overall sponsorship more effective. Most sponsorship professionals agree there are three main categories of evaluation:

- Sales results
- Awareness levels or changes in attitudes
- Value of media coverage

In order to measure sales results you need some type of starting point. Assume you purchase a sponsorship and record the sales during this period of time. To determine if the sponsorship was effective you must compare it to something. What? That’s the point; there must be a benchmark or starting point with which to compare post-sponsorship results.

Now, let’s assume the sponsorship is implemented during the months of May, June, and July. At the end of July you compare sales for the three months to last years sales figures for the same three months. Fair? Not necessarily. In addition to having a starting point, you must be sure to...
maintain consistent levels of advertising and other marketing during the sponsorship. If not, you will have difficulty assigning the increase in sales to the sponsorship, because sales may have been impacted by other marketing efforts.

For example, during the three-month period of your sponsorship you also had a significant price-oriented promotion and were featured in a national publication. As expected, your sales for the three months were greater than during the same period of time last year. Now, here’s the question--was the increase in sales a result of a) the sponsorship; b) the price-oriented promotion; c) the publicity from the article or d) some combination of all three. The truth is, d is likely the best answer. As a result, you cannot accurately identify the cause(s) of the increase in sales. Even if you are consistent with your advertising there are other variables that may affect your efforts to measure sponsorship effectiveness.

For instance, Pepsi has a sponsorship with a baseball team and takes both of the above precautions (establish a benchmark and maintain consistent marketing/promotion) with the goal of measuring sales increases. At the completion of the sponsorship they find that sales did not increase sufficiently to justify the cost of the sponsorship. Does the baseball team have anything to say in their defense? They might. In this case, other possible variables that could skew the sales figures would include weather (cooler than normal-so a decrease in soda sales), competition (Coca-Cola runs a significant promotion at the same time), or even labor (production or distribution employees strike against the company). Since you cannot control all variables, it is critical that you establish a benchmark and maintain consistency in your promotional and marketing efforts.

While speaking of measuring sales as a means of determining the effectiveness of a sponsorship, it should be noted that there are often other objectives besides total sales. Possible sales-related objectives include the following:

- Increase sales to business customers
- Increase distribution outlets (add more stores, different types of stores, vending machines, etc.)
- Generate additional product display opportunities (more or better shelf space, end aisle displays, P.O.P. displays, etc.)
- Increase traffic for retail outlets (manufacturer drives traffic to retail)

In the example above, we compared sales from a three-month period to the same period in the prior year. This is just one of several options available for measuring sales. Others include:

- Measuring sales in the immediate geographic area where the sponsorship has been implemented and compare it to national sales figures.
Keeping track of any increases in the number of outlets offering the product for sale (perhaps a chain of service stations decides to carry your motor oil based, at least in part, upon the exposure from your sponsorship efforts).

Measuring changes in consumer brand preference (you increase your share of the market by either growing the market or taking share from competitors).

Monitoring any increases in shelf space, end aisle displays, or POP displays (as a result of the sponsorship and retailers/grocery stores benefits, several retailers provided additional display space, including end aisle display space).

**Changes in Attitudes and Awareness**

A corporate partner will often have an objective of increasing awareness of either the company or a particular product/brand. Or, they may simply desire to alter the attitudes or perception consumers have of the company or product. As with measuring sales, prior to the start of the sponsorship the corporate partner must determine the current level of awareness as well as the perceptions held by the consumers—particularly among their target market. After establishing the current status it will then be possible to both set goals and to measure changes.

A company will often do research to determine the perception customers or potential customers have of their company or products. As an example, they may have several lists of words, and have respondents select which word(s) best describes the company or products. This information would be used as a point of comparison for post-sponsorship research.

**Media Coverage**

Publicity in the form of media coverage is often the by-product of a sports sponsorship. In fact, when determining the value of a sponsorship, the likelihood of media coverage is often taken into consideration. Why? Because it has value, and since media coverage cannot be guaranteed it is often value that is not paid for in the cost of the sponsorship—at least not directly.

In addition to the publicity component of media coverage, a sponsor must also consider “screen-time” that results from television coverage of an event. Do you think a NASCAR team sponsor values the television coverage of their logo on a car? Sure they do. But how much do they value it?

As mentioned, it is critical to measure the effectiveness or value of a sponsorship. Depending upon whether you are the sponsor or property, the findings can be valuable in making future sponsorship decisions or in developing future proposals. But how do you put a value on media coverage?
The most common method makes use of the rate-card. First, you document the number of seconds of TV and radio coverage as well as the column inches in the print media. Next, you calculate the cost of purchasing the same amount of time or space by using the rate card for the specific station or publication.

For example, a sponsor of a regional extreme sports event is fortunate to receive coverage on the nightly news during sports on several stations. In addition, since the sponsorship includes a cause-marketing component, there are several “human interest” stories in the print media featuring individuals who benefit from their charitable contributions. The value of the coverage would be determined as follows:

Take the airtime on each specific television station and price it based upon the purchase price of a similar amount of advertising time. Twenty seconds of coverage on a particular television station would be worth $469 if a 30 second spot on the station sells for $700. (Twenty seconds is 67 percent of 30 seconds. A 30 second spot costs $700. Sixty-seven percent of $700 is $469). This same process would have to be followed for each television station that covered the event and made specific audio or visual mention of the sponsor.

For the print media, a similar process is followed. Determine the total number of column inches of the articles. Then, multiply that by the cost per column inch to purchase advertising space. If the sponsor receives mention in a 12 column-inch article, and the going rate is $23 the publicity would be valued at $276.

Since it could be argued that an article that simply mentions the sponsor should not be valued at the full advertising rate, some organizations and companies will use a specified percent of the rate card. Furthermore, some companies will evaluate the article differently if the company name is in the headline or if it is mentioned several times. And finally, the value may be different depending upon the publication, particularly when coverage is gained in magazines.

Each year a number of sponsorship agreements are not renewed because neither the sponsor nor the property took the necessary time and effort to measure the effectiveness of the activities involved in the agreement. This is not to say that the sponsor did not get a fair return on their investment. Rather, there was no proof, or even an accurate indication, of the value because it was not measured.

Despite the fact that there is no universal method of measuring sponsorship effectiveness, there is no excuse for neglecting the process. Sponsors must justify their expenditures, and as a property, it is your responsibility to help them do so. Without some sense of the value of a sponsorship, the renewal may not happen. And remember, it is much more cost effective to renew a corporate partner than to prospect for a new one.
Why Sponsorships Fail

Until relatively recently, the major cause for failure of a sponsorship was the fact that the boss simply sponsored what he “liked” as opposed to what would be effective. As pointed out previously, early sponsorships were simply based on the desire of the CEO to golf with a pro, or impress her friends with great seats at a sporting event.

Decision makers are now much more accountable to stockholders or the financial side of a company, so decisions are certainly more objective. Nonetheless, ineffective sponsorships do exist, and the causes are many and varied. Some of the more common reasons for failure follow.

Pay and Run
If a company expects to get their “moneys worth” from a sponsorship by simply paying the fee and moving on—they are in for a shock. Sponsorships simply will not deliver sufficient promotional value through on-site visibility and a few complimentary tickets. If a company wants to fully capitalize on a sponsorship it must be leveraged with additional funds and promotional efforts.

Although leveraging a sponsorship has been covered in detail, it is important to understand that a business must spend above and beyond the cost of a sponsorship to ensure its success. That additional spending may be as little as one dollar or as much as several dollars for every dollar spent on the sponsorship, depending upon the property sponsored.

In the case of a sponsor of a golf tournament, how much value is lost by not buying advertising time during the event? An effective sponsorship must impact an audience much broader than simply those in attendance.
Also, a company cannot "pay and run" because they must make sure that all components of the sponsorship are activated. A sponsor has an obligation to make sure they monitor the implementation of the agreement.

The Details
Before signing a sponsorship agreement there should be an understanding of what is and is not included. As the sponsor, do you have a total understanding of how category exclusivity is defined? Does that exclusivity include all forms of media? Do you have the right of first refusal for advertising during the broadcast of the event? What happens if the event is cancelled or shortened for some unforeseen reason?

Although it is the responsibility of the company purchasing the sponsorship to be sure to check the details, it is best for all concerned that there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions. From the property perspective, a renewal of the sponsorship will not happen without a satisfied partner.

Impatience
Both the property and the sponsor must have patience. It may take several years for a sponsor to develop a significant association with a particular property. Short-term agreements provide no long term, and little short term, benefit. Effectiveness will more likely result when both the property and the corporate partner make a significant commitment over a period of time.

A Little Here and A Little There
In order to truly benefit from sponsorships it would be wise to avoid purchasing a number of small sponsorships as opposed to concentrating your efforts on a few significant sponsorships. An effective approach would be to either purchase several moderate sponsorships within a specific category of properties or a few higher-level packages for one or two properties. One goal should be to build equity, and that is difficult to do if sponsorship dollars are spread too thin.

No One to Run the Show
Regardless of the sponsorship, even if it is a turn-key agreement, it is critical that the corporate partner provide staff dedicated to the sponsorship. Whether hosting clients to take advantage of hospitality benefits or giving final approval to advertising content or schedules, time, effort and energy will be required from the corporate partner. An absence of this will no doubt cause a decrease in effectiveness if not outright failure of the sponsorship.

The “Inside” is Left Out
As a sponsor of an event, a company must be sure to "sell" the sponsorship internally. The sponsorship will not be successful in the consumer market if the employees are not sold on the idea.
As a sponsor of the area’s NBA team, your company should “smell” of that team. Posters, specialty advertising items, and team apparel should be evident throughout the organization. From custodian to CEO, the sponsorship should be a part of the corporate culture. In many cases it is the frontline staff and employees who must sell the day-to-day promotional elements to the consumer. The need to sell the investment internally is often addressed with contests and promotions open only to company employees. They will not sell it if they haven’t been sold.

Fans? What Fans?
One reason sponsorship is effective, when properly administered, is the audience does not feel as though it has been “advertised to.” Instead, the audience or fans leave an event with the feeling that the sponsor made the event possible.

Although advertising on television makes it possible for us to see a show, can you remember the last time you finished a program and said, “that was great, I sure appreciate the companies who advertised during the show?” It can be different with sponsorship—if both the sponsor and the property communicate effectively to the audience. The fact that the audience is getting some type of tangible benefit must be noticeable—reduced ticket prices, a unique opportunity to be part of the audience of an event that would normally not be in their market, limited edition merchandise or memorabilia, etc. You should look at the property you have for sale (such as your sports teams) and create your own inventory list.

Sponsorships that do not communicate that the corporate partners are providing a service with real benefits will undoubtedly be less effective than those that are successful at delivering this message.

Avoiding Failure
The common causes for sponsorship failure can all be eliminated through a concerted effort on the part of both parties. The sponsor and the property owner must understand that it benefits both parties to have a successful event. Overlooking details, assuming someone else will take care of a matter, and the infamous “that’s good enough,” can lead to disaster.
Ten reasons Why Sponsorships Fail.

1. Not understanding that the sponsorship has to be led by the consumers needs, not yours.

2. Not enough resource allocated to manage the sponsorship properly.

3. Not understanding the right due diligence on the property before signing the check.

4. Paying for rights fees and doing nothing with the sponsorship.

5. Misunderstanding the relationship between the different stakeholders in an event.

6. Jumping from one sponsorship to another without making the most of long term involvement.

7. Insufficient integration with other communications channels.

8. Failing to secure trade interest and support in the sponsorship.

9. Not understanding that an event you create takes time to build and grow too.

10. Failure to specifically measure ROI of the sponsorship activity.

(The list is used with the permission of Redmandaran)
Sponsorship Rights and Benefits

A property must be able to offer rights and benefits to the sponsor in exchange for the sponsorship fee. These rights and benefits are often referred to as inventory. Just as the inventory in a retail store is used to describe the items for sale, the inventory of a property consists of items that can be sold.

Following is a rather generic inventory list of items. Even the most comprehensive sponsorship for a property will not include each one. This list is not necessarily all-inclusive, but rather a starting point. You should look at the property you have for sale (such as your sports teams) and create your own inventory list.

Sponsorship Types

There are a variety of types or levels of sponsorships. How many you utilize will depend upon the complexity of your event and the number of sponsors you desire.

- Title Sponsorship (The Tostitos Fiesta Bowl. Enables the corporate partner to appear as though they have “ownership” of the event.)

- Presenting Sponsorship (The "eXtreme Games" are presented by . . .)

- Title Sponsor or Presenting Sponsor of a section, area, entry, or team (Toys R Us Kids Section, Six Flags Family Fun Park at a baseball stadium, etc.)

- Title Sponsor or Presenting Sponsor of a day, weekend, or week at the event (SuperValu Day at SummerFest)

- Title Sponsor or Presenting Sponsor of an event-driven award, trophy, or scholarship (Subway Sub of the Night, Footlocker MVP).
Title Sponsor or Presenting Sponsor of a related or subordinated event (DeRango’s Parents Reception held at the Holiday Hoopla Basketball Tournament)

Exclusivity
Category exclusivity could be defined in a variety of ways:

Available at or above a given level of investment (sponsorships over X$ include exclusivity)

At any level of investment (exclusivity included in all sponsorships)

In event-driven advertising or promotional media (exclusivity in advertising and promotion for the event)

As a supplier or seller at the event (no competitors allowed to be an official supplier or seller)

Once again, the way you define category exclusivity will depend upon several factors, including the demand for your event, the opportunities available, and the additional fees sponsors are willing to pay for exclusivity.

License
Use of logo(s) and trademark(s) (use of logo in advertising media and sales promotions as well as supporting materials)

Merchandising rights (rights to sell event merchandise, on or off-site)

Media Inclusion
Inclusion in all print, outdoor, and/or broadcast advertising

Inclusion on event promotional materials (apparel, fliers, brochures, etc. - logo or name)

Ad time during televised event Ad space in event program

Broadcast rights

On-Site
Sampling opportunities (hand out samples to fans)

Demonstration/display opportunities (set up a display, best if interactive)

Coupon or premium distribution
The growth in the popularity and value of web sites has led to countless new sources of revenue for property owners.

Signage
Venue signage (signs that are placed in the actual venue i.e. stadium, arena, track, course, etc.)

Pre-event street banners, flags, etc. (used to promote the upcoming event)

Press conference signage (backdrop behind the individuals who are being interviewed. If press conferences are televised the value is even greater)

Hospitality
Event Tickets (luxury boxes, preferred seating, or general admission) VIP tickets/passes (sideline pass, pit passes, press box, etc.)

In-Kind
There are certain things that may be as valuable as a trade-out or in-kind as an actual cash sponsorship. These items could include equipment, services, technology, expertise, or personnel. In addition, a particular sponsor (especially a retailer) may provide additional in-store and media promotion for an event in exchange for a reduced sponsorship fee.

The Web
“Signage” or banner on event Internet site Promotion or contest on event Internet site

Links to sponsor Internet site from event Internet site (for instance, Pepsi, as a sponsor of an event, would have a link on the event site that would take people to Pepsi. And, it is likely that the Pepsi site would have a link to the event site as well.)

The above are general opportunities that may apply to a variety of events. Following are some additional inventory possibilities for a high school basketball team. Remember, this is just a partial list. You will likely be able to add to this list as you brainstorm benefits to offer your potential corporate partners.

Ball Racks—Can be seen at center court during pregame and half-time warm-ups and on the sideline during the game. Great visibility and relatively inexpensive.

PA Announcements—Include general announcements as well as during specific sponsored events if appropriate.

Warm-ups—Some athletic associations prohibit corporate identity on uniforms; this might not apply to warm-ups.
Is everything “for sale?” One college sports marketing director sold a sponsorship for “dead ball” penalties during football games. He sold it to a funeral home!

Player Introductions—"And now, the starting lineup brought to you by." Is there a time in the game where more people are paying attention?

Halftime Stats—Stats can be given over the PA or on paper, or both.

Stats Crew—Do you have a stats crew that basically donates their time? Get them a few perks by having them sponsored. Arrange an agreement that will provide them with apparel, concessions, etc.

Three Point Shot—An announcement for the sponsor every time a 3-point shot is made (by the home team!). Or, what about a T-shirt flying into the stands for every 3-pointer?

Blimp—These are getting more affordable, and all of them have the option of a method of attaching a banner on the side. Due to the price, this is more practical than a single sponsor on the blimp. With the use of banners you could share the cost of sponsorship (a different sponsor on each side or different ones for each half).

Pocket Schedule—One or more sponsor logos on the pocket schedules. To be of value, they must be distributed in an effective manner.

Basket Standards—Is there a place on your basket standard that a logo can be screened? If so—put one there.

Scoreboards—Signage on scoreboards is coveted because of the number of times fans see them while checking on the score.

Ball Boy/Girl Uniform—As part of a package, have your ballboys/ballgirls sponsored, including their uniforms.

Halftime Entertainment—Sponsors love these performances if they are unique. If they are expensive (and they can be) you may have to create a larger (and more valuable) package that includes the halftime entertainment in order for your corporate partner to justify the investment.

Game Night Sponsorship—Why not have the entire game sponsored. Homecoming and cross-town rivals are the games in most demand.

Game Ball Delivery—Every game needs the ball before the opening tip. Get the game ball delivered, and have the delivery sponsored. You could have a partner such as a florist or pizza delivery restaurant sponsor the delivery for all games. Or, you could have different sponsors depending on how the ball is delivered.
are a few ideas for having your game ball delivered:

Cheerleaders/Pom Pons line up and pass it in
Members of another sports team
Remote control vehicle
Drop/lower from ceiling
Mascot (yours or another team's)
Gift wrapped around Christmas time or Santa
UPS delivers and the referee signs for it Limo
Police or emergency vehicle
Clown/unicycle
Miniature auto or vehicle
Distinguished individual from the community
Motorcycle, with the mascot in a sidecar

Holiday-oriented deliveries such as Elvis on/near his birthday, costumed “Father Time,” etc.

Tip Off-The opening tip can be sponsored, or included as part of a larger sponsorship.

And a few more-Game attendance guessing game, noise meter, free-throws, player of the year, game MVP, Super Sub, move of the game, locker room signs, locker room for the game officials (how about in Braille!), National Anthem singer . . . and the list goes on, limited only by your creativity.

The opportunities to provide benefits to sponsors are unlimited. In addition to the more common options, creative marketing and promotion personnel are continually developing innovative ideas . . . ideas that you should adopt as your own!

There are countless businesspeople looking for opportunities to trade their cash for your sponsorship opportunity . . . help them out!
Sponsorship Sales

Selling is selling -- sort of. Most sales books and professionals will list the following as the steps in a sales process:

- Preapproach
- Approach
- Determining needs
- Feature/Benefit presentation
- Overcoming objections
- Closing the sale
- Suggestion selling
- Post-sales follow-up

Although much of the sales information you will be exposed to in your marketing classes applies to retail sales, this section will use the familiar steps listed above and apply them to sponsorship sales.

Preapproach
The preapproach is about getting ready to sell-preparing yourself as well as possible in order to increase your chances of success.

First of all, be very familiar with your product. In this case, your product could be considered the sponsorship, but it could also be considered the property you are selling. If you are selling sponsorships for a team, know the team inside and out. Sure, you will want to be familiar with their on-field performance. But, more importantly, be sure you know the details of their off-field performance. Know the attendance figures, increases or decreases in attendance, broadcast arrangements, fan demographics, number of season ticket holders, the identity of current corporate partners and so on. While knowing the batting average of every member of the team may seem impressive to some, the potential corporate partner is more concerned with information that can help them achieve their business goals.

Finding Prospects
In addition to knowing your product, you must also know your clients. However, before you get to know them, you must identify who they are. Part of the preapproach is finding new customers. Remember that you
Go to a sporting event as a businessperson as opposed to a fan and make a list of all the companies who have a presence as advertisers or sponsors.

need to match your fan demographics with the customer profile of your client. With that in mind, there are several methods of generating leads for potential clients.

Observe who is sponsoring what. You may find companies that are currently involved in sponsorships with other properties. If so, determine whether or not you can offer a better value, or more effectively deliver their target audience. If so, pursue them as a potential partner.

Examine the possible sponsorship categories that would be appropriate for your property (financial institutions, soft drinks, wireless services, etc.). Next, generate a list of companies in each category that do business in your geographic area. This will also result in a list of possible sponsors.

Contact your local chamber of commerce and find out if there are any new businesses coming to the area. If so, there is a good chance they will want to create a presence in your market.

An easily accessible and often overlooked resource is the local newspaper. Read the business section on a regular basis and look for new businesses or companies that are relocating, expanding, celebrating an anniversary year, etc. In each case, this might provide them with the motivation to invest in your property.

Remember to talk with your current corporate partners. If they are pleased with their involvement with your property they may very well recommend business associates (from a different sponsorship category) for you to contact. A referral is a very valuable resource.

One additional source of new business is... old business! Be sure to develop a good relationship with your current partners so that you have a sense when to offer them new, and “bigger” opportunities. It is much easier, and less expensive, to generate additional sales from current clients than to develop new partnerships.

Know the Customer
Now that you have identified potential partners, find out everything possible about them. Know the business they are in. Know their current advertising and promotional efforts. Know about their involvement in any nonprofit organizations. In short, find out everything you can.

This information can be determined with a trip to the library, or by logging on to the Internet and doing a search on the company. If they are a local company you should be sure to visit the business before your sales presentation. Take time to talk with employees and customers and get a “feel” for the company.
Approach
In the world of business-to-business (B2B) sales, the approach is much different than in the world of retail. You will generally go to the client, as opposed to them coming to you.

Your first challenge is to find out in advance whom you need to speak to. Try to get the name of the decision maker. Locally, which is where the majority of your sponsorships will originate, you can try a few simple techniques. First, contact your chamber of commerce and simply ask them for the name of the owner or manager. You may also contact the business directly and ask for the name of the manager for the purpose of sending him or her correspondence. Do whatever it takes— you want to get to the boss. How impressed are you when your mailbox is filled with letters addressed to “occupant?” That is the same feeling a manager gets when she is referred to by her position rather than her name.

Once you know who you are looking for, make your initial contact by phone. Simply tell the “decision maker” what property you are with and ask him for an opportunity to explain how you can help them effectively reach their target audience and achieve their business objectives. Avoid the temptation to explain everything over the phone. If you are pushed in that direction, simply explain that it would be better if you could meet and discuss the details.

When seeking an appointment, be sure to offer a choice of dates for the businessperson to choose from. Don’t ask if Tuesday would be acceptable. It is too easy to give a “no” response. Rather, ask them “which would be better, Tuesday at 3:00 or Thursday at noon?” It is always preferable to offer a choice between something and something as opposed to something and nothing.

You should know that not every business will be willing to meet with you. That is fine, just put them on your list to contact at a later date with a different opportunity.

A few key reminders:
Arrive early for your appointment
Dress professionally (businesspeople do not generally expect that from high school students)
Introduce yourself and your school/organization with a firm handshake
Look the businessperson in the eyes and smile
If you have a business card (and you should!) give her one at this time
Be ready to discuss a current business-related event or something about the business (this puts everyone at ease)
Determine Needs
At this point, you will probably be in one of two positions. You have either created a “generic” proposal, or you will use this visit to determine the client’s needs.

It is best to use your first visit as an opportunity to determine the needs of the business. However, at the high school level you may have less flexibility in developing proposals. As a result, it is acceptable to bring a prepared proposal, but be willing to make changes and return with a modified proposal at a later date.

If you do not have a prepared proposal, this will provide you an opportunity to uncover the needs of the business. Review the section on “Why Companies Sponsor” to develop a list of company concerns that you could address.

There are two keys to a successful meeting. Listening and questioning. During this meeting keep the following in mind: You have two ears and one mouth. Use them in that proportion. You need to listen carefully to what the company representative is saying. You may very well find that you have to “read between the lines.”

Here are a few keys to effective listening:

Maintain good eye contact

Provide both verbal and nonverbal feedback

Focus your total attention on the client

Listen with empathy

NEVER interrupt

Ask good questions. Avoid the “yes or no” questions, opting instead for questions that will require more of an explanation, thus providing you with more information. Do not ask a question unless the answer will help you determine the customer’s needs.

The Feature/Benefit Presentation
When making your presentation, be sure to focus on the benefits, not the features. Although features are important, what really matters to the client is what’s in it for them.

If you have a prepared proposal be sure you can explain how this opportunity will satisfy some of their needs. Will it help generate incremental sales? Will it allow the company to capitalize on the loyalty of your fans? Will this opportunity help raise funds for a charity that is supported by the firm? Whatever the case, be prepared to show how the business will benefit from partnering with your team.
Remember, just as in any type of selling, you must sell benefits not features. A company does not care that you will allow them to distribute coupons at your event unless you can explain how that will be of benefit to their firm. They will not care that your proposal includes an opportunity to distribute tickets, unless you can explain what that means to the business.

If you have done your homework, the benefits you mention will be those that satisfy the needs of your client.

You should use sales aids during your presentation if you have them. Video footage from an exciting game can get the client enthused, particularly if that video shows effective promotional elements for a current partner. A chart showing increased attendance figures or the demographic information about your fans would be useful.

Do whatever you can to make it easy for your potential partner to see the value of what you have to offer. Whenever possible, get your customer involved in the presentation. Get their opinions. Get their input. Continue to ask them questions.

**Objections**

You are going to hear objections during your presentation. It's unavoidable. Since you cannot avoid them, anticipate them. Objections can occur throughout the presentation, and you need to be prepared to answer them immediately. Contrary to what you may think, objections are good. They will often provide you with insight into your clients thinking, and keep your presentation on track.

If you analyze your presentation in advance you should be able to anticipate possible objections. You will also be more prepared to respond to these objections if you identify them prior to the presentation. You may also be able to incorporate some of these anticipated objections into your presentation as well.

Most objections will fall into a few specific categories-concerns about need, product, price, or time.

- **Need**- Objections involving needs typically revolve around the difference between a “necessary” marketing effort and a “nice to have” partnership.

- **Product**-These objections would be based on the actual proposal, or a particular component of the proposal.

- **Price**-There will always be an objection regarding price, even if it is just an attempt to get it reduced. Don’t sell price-sell value.

- **Time**-A client may not like the timing of the proposal (in terms of the time of year/season, or even as it relates to their fiscal year).
Once you begin your presentation you should be prepared for an objection at any time . . . anticipate them and be prepared to respond. There is a generally accepted four-step process to handling objections.

1. Listen carefully (be attentive, let the customer talk).

2. Acknowledge the customer’s objections (this shows you are listening and that you care).

3. Restate the objections (this will make sure you understand the objections and demonstrate empathy).

4. Answer the objection.

Most sales books list several specific methods of overcoming objections. You would do well to read about these methods. They include, among others, the boomerang, superior point, and direct denial.

When making your sponsorship sales presentation simply take on the objections and address them directly. If the objective is inaccurate, deny it. If the objection involves price, emphasize the value-and show that what you are offering is worth what you are asking.

In addition, if the objection involves a concern that you can address through altering your proposal, make arrangements for a second appointment. Once again, identify the needs and address them.

Closing the Sale
There is no satisfaction in preparing a great presentation, delivering it and then failing to close the sale. The closing is the key.

Timing is everything. You need to attempt to close the sale when you believe the client is ready to buy. Some clients will be ready sooner than others so you must be flexible. One presentation may last only a matter of minutes and end with a sale. Another may last for an hour and require a follow-up call. It depends a great deal on the customer.

Watch for buying signals. A buying signal might be an expression, or maybe even a seemingly insignificant comment. One key in sponsorship sales is to listen for the client to use ownership terms. When they discuss implementation of the agreement or make comments such as “when we . . .” those are signals that it is time to close the sale.

Take advantage of opportunities to summarize the benefits of your proposal. This process helps the client make decisions. Although you want to close the sale, do not get impatient and push the customer. If you keep in mind that your primary interest should be to help the customer meet her needs, the close will come.
Follow-ups are very important. They should occur immediately after the sale, as well as throughout the term of the contract.

If you overcome a major objection be sure to use it as a means to help close the sale. The effect of moving a major roadblock to the proposal will make the client more agreeable to purchasing.

Throughout the presentation look for areas where there is agreement, and focus on those areas. Capitalize on the interest of the client in certain benefits and emphasize them.

**Suggestion Selling**
In terms of sponsorship sales the suggestion selling options are rather limited. In general, after the sale is closed you may consider suggesting additional components to the agreement, or lengthening the term of the contract.

**Post-sales Follow-up**
It is critical, regardless of whether or not you close the sale, to follow-up after your presentation. If you make the sales, your responsibilities are just beginning. You are now facing the task of implementing the components of the agreement.

If you do not make the sales, you will no doubt be moving on to the next potential client. Although you may not have successfully closed the sale, you will want to make sure the appointment has been a positive experience. After all, there may be future opportunities to approach this business.

In either case you must follow-up with a letter expressing your appreciation for their time and considerations. Obviously, the contents of the letter will vary considerably depending on whether a sale was made or not.

**Selling is Critical**
Why is selling critical . . . because nothing happens until a sale is made. Jon Spoelstra, in his book *Marketing Outrageously* drives home the point that when things are tough—bring on more salespeople. Effective salesmanship is central to the success of marketing efforts.

Remember, selling only gets easier by doing it! Keep at it until you succeed, then keep at it some more until you succeed often!
The success or failure of your event will, in many respects, depend on your ability to develop corporate partnerships with businesses in the community.

This will not be as difficult as it seems. The businesses in your community are probably contacted by students from your school quite often for donations. Although most will try to be helpful, it is difficult to turn a profit if you are constantly making donations.

That's where your offer has an advantage.

You should not approach a business with the idea that you are seeking a donation. Instead, approach them from the perspective that you are offering an opportunity to form a partnership that will benefit their business. A donation offers nothing in return. Your proposals, if they are developed properly, will offer a great deal in return.

When you approach a business with the offer to develop a partnership, you need to keep in mind their needs as well as yours. Following are several factors a potential sponsor may consider when evaluating your proposal:

**Does it Fit Within the Budget?**

In most cases you will have proposals at a variety of price points, with one to fit nearly every budget. If your least expensive proposal is deemed too costly by the prospect you may offer them an ad in your program or the opportunity to purchase tickets.

Keep in mind that objections over price are really objections about value. You have the responsibility of justifying the price by explaining the value.
Does it Create a “Bond” with the Fans?
Does the idea you have create a situation where the fans will “connect” with the corporate partner? Will fans appreciate their support because it made your event (or a part of your event) possible? Will the proposed sponsorship generate loyalty to the business as a result of their support? You must make sure your corporate partners are shown in their best light, and always come across as “heroes” to the fans because of their support.

Does it Drive Sales?
In today’s economic climate you will almost guarantee a successful partnership if you can develop a proposal that will drive sales for the business. Send them to your partner to purchase discount tickets, enter a contest, or redeem a coupon. If you can get fans into the business, and then to make a purchase, you will be successful.

Does it Tap into a New Market?
Will partnering with your program and event help your corporate partner expose their product or service to a new audience? This can be a real plus. Just a few years ago cell phone companies would have laughed at the idea that high school students would be a profitable market for them. Now, they would love to get access to your student body. Look for opportunities to introduce your fans to a company or product that, until now, did not consider your audience part of their market.

Is it a Turnkey Event?
A turnkey event is simply one that involves little or no effort on the part of the corporate partner. In other words, they write the check and you take care of all the work. While some partners may want to “micro-manage,” most will appreciate the fact that you will take care of them, and not require any additional effort or personnel on their part.

Other considerations
Does your proposal provide an opportunity to distribute coupons? Will your partner be able to display their product at the event? Are vending rights included in the proposal? Will the event or particular sponsorship opportunity tie-in with current advertising and promotional efforts? As you can see, a potential corporate partner will consider many things before agreeing to a sponsor your event. Although every proposal will not address these concerns, it is to your advantage to anticipate the needs of your prospect and be prepared to address these issues.

The Proposal Format
There are very few “ absolutes” in sports marketing, and the format of the proposal is no exception. Although general guidelines have been provided, the most important thing is to use what works. The following suggestions will help you develop effective proposals.
You should develop letterhead for your program. In fact, you should
make sure your sports marketing class or program has a name. I worked with an advertising professional in early 1990’s and we developed the name, logo, etc. for Sportainment. This is still the name of the sports marketing program at Bradford High School in Wisconsin . . . and it is also a name that has been pirated by other programs!

Decide on your name, develop a logo, (contact TheMarketingTeacher.com for help with this) and then place that logo on professional letterhead. With the availability of color printers it is not necessary to have reams of letterhead printed. Instead, print it as you need it, along with business cards. As you might guess, all proposals should be typed (or whatever word we use to mean computer-generated and not handwritten!).

At the top of the page there should be a heading that identifies the event, and the potential corporate partner. Even though you have not reached an agreement, use every opportunity available to create a psychological tie between your event and your prospect by using their name in the proposal.

The first paragraph should provide background on your organization. The business is “buying” your organization (sports marketing class/club) as much as they are buying the event. Let them know who you are.

In the second paragraph, tell about your event. A great deal of detail is not necessary, just enough to paint a positive picture. Next, explain how the partnership will work followed by a list of the sponsor rights or benefits.

This general format may vary to some degree based upon the relationship you develop with the business. Some proposals are less formal, while in some instances a great deal more detail may be necessary.

On the next several pages you will find suggestions for developing a winning proposal, as well as examples of simple proposals that have been used at the high school and collegiate levels. In the Appendix at the back of the book are several additional sample proposals, including some that are significantly more in-depth. The following page provides you with a guide to developing effective proposals.

Keep in mind that the actual rights and benefits offered will undoubtedly change based upon your individual circumstances. You may not have a local television station. You may choose not to advertise on radio. Be sure to use the samples for formatting purposes and generating ideas. You will need to make some changes for them to work for you and our school.
Five Steps to a Winning Proposal
This information adapted from an issue of The Bottom Line, the CBA Newsletter

Step 1 - Benefits
You must first start by asking yourself what your potential sponsor may want as a result of an association with your team/organization. Keep in mind that a sports sponsorship offers more of a qualitative benefit than a quantitative one. Traditionally advertising will usually win on a cost-per-thousand (CPM) basis.

Your sponsorship therefore must deliver benefits such as potential product sales, hospitality, sales incentive programs, in-kind media trade, on premises signage, complimentary tickets, etc. Be sure to tailor your proposal to fulfill your sponsor’s objectives.

Step 2 - Target Your Proposal
Tell your sponsor the benefits you can deliver. Include the following points:
• Reach/audience
• Types of packages: title, game sponsor, official supplier, product/category exclusivity
• On-site impressions such as signage, exhibits, displays
• Game tickets and VIP passes
• Hospitality options
• Product sampling opportunity
• Discount on group tickets or team merchandise
• Media co-sponsor tie-ins
• Publications/media carrying sponsor ID

Step 3 - Sponsor Partners
The proposal should include a brief outline or commentary on your sports marketing class and your team. You may include a brochure, season summaries, comments from satisfied clients or a list of other sponsors, etc. Sponsors are often interested in knowing the other companies or organizations they may be partners with during the season. This concept also opens the door to cross-merchandising opportunities that a sponsor may be interested in for his product.

Step 4 - Attaching Value
Pricing your package competitively becomes the next step. During this process you should put a specific value on each item you may be selling. These items may include:
• Tickets, VIP passes, hospitality
• Media trade with co-sponsor outlet
• Advertising time/space on TV, radio, game programs
• Public address announcements
• On-site signage
• Off-site opportunities
• Mailing lists
• Ticket backs, newsletters
• Game nights as a title or presenting sponsor
• Premium / entertainment tie-ins

Step 5-Specific Considerations
Is the proposal offering something special to the sponsor? Does it include category exclusively, value-added benefits, renewal incentives, special ticket allocations? After you've established a value of "all" the items you have to sell, you can then make adjustments for your specific sponsor. Generally selling a variety of "levels" or "tiers" will improve your chances of closing a sale.

The final structured proposal should offer a bonus to your sponsor to jump on a complete package. For example, if your sponsor were to purchase each item on an individual basis the cost might be 25% more than the package deal. At a certain level of sponsorship this may prove to be the difference in a successful sale.

There is no such thing as the "one" way to write a proposal. Follow these general guidelines and continue to modify your proposal until you find a combination that works. And working is all that matters!
It is proposed that the Sports Physical Therapy Center become the title sponsor of the “Kick for Kash” promotion. The promotion works as follows: During each of the five home football games two individuals will be selected at random for a chance to win $10,000 in cash. They will win the cash if they are able to kick a field goal from the 40 yard line. If the kick is “good” the participant wins $10,000 in cash.

Of course, you will not be asked to provide the $10,000 in cash. Sportainment will purchase an insurance policy to cover the winnings.

Benefits to Sports Physical Therapy Center:

- Title to a unique and innovative promotion—Sports Physical Therapy Center Kick for Kash
- Logo included in two advertisements in the Kenosha News the week before two select home games
- Title mention in a minimum of 25 radio spots at the beginning of the season to introduce the event
- On-site sign/banner (provided by Sports Physical Therapy Center) displayed in the stadium
- Title sponsorship of the Red Devil Football page as previously agreed upon
- Public address announcements at all home games (minimum of 3 during the first half, and title mention during the promotion)
- Title sponsorship mention in game day programs
- Sports Physical Therapy Center will receive the first opportunity next year for this promotion
- An explanation of the event will be included in the fall sports guide on the same page as the football team picture
- Participants will be selected through a random drawing of tickets which will include the corporate logo

The above items will be provided as part of the sponsorship agreement. Although not part of the agreement, past experience suggest a great deal of publicity in the form of newspaper articles, mentions by radio sports announcers, and visibility on television as they cover the half time event. We consider these benefits as “value added” and are not included in the formal sponsorship agreement.

Total investment for the Sports Physical Therapy Kick for Kash promotion is just $650. If you desire, the payment may be made in two installments: $325 due September 1st and the balance due October 1st.
Western University Athletics submits the following sponsorship proposal to:

Steve Blatter
Vice President-Marketing
ISL Inc.

In return for its investment, ISL Inc. would receive the following benefits from Western University during the term of the agreement:

Print Advertising

- **Schedule Cards** – company logo will be displayed on all Western University Men’s Basketball, Women’s Basketball, Men’s Hockey and Women’s Hockey schedule cards. Over 150,000 schedule cards will be produced and distributed throughout the state.

- **Player Trading Cards** – ISL Inc. will receive one of only two sponsorship opportunities for Men’s and Women’s Basketball Player Trading Cards. The trading cards will be distributed at four different basketball games as a giveaway to fans. The ISL Inc. logo will be displayed on one trading card panel per giveaway.

Signage

- **Press Row** – company logo displayed at press row, courtside, at all Men’s Basketball home games at the Western University Arena.

- **Alumni Hall** – company logo displayed on sponsorship banner at all Women’s Basketball home games at the Western University Arena.

Internet

- ISL Inc. will be listed on the Corporate Sponsorship page of the Official Western University Athletics website at [www.WesternUniversityAthletics.com](http://www.WesternUniversityAthletics.com)

Game Promotion

- **Public Address** – company name and tag line will be read twice a game, while company logo is displayed on scoreboard, during all Men’s Basketball home games. Public address announcement will also be made at all Women’s Basketball and Men’s Hockey games.

Length of Proposed Agreement

- This proposed agreement would be in effect for two years, extending from September 1, 2000 through August 31, 2002.

For its sponsorship, ISL Inc. would provide Western University with the following during the term of the agreement:

- $16,000 rights fee per year.
- Right to distribute Western University Athletics promotional collateral at ISL Inc. consumer outlets.

The terms of this proposal are available to ISL Inc. exclusively until September 1, 2000.
GAME ROSTER SHEETS
- 8 1/2' x 11' Official Game Roster Sheet given away at all home games, which includes advertiser information, schedule, results and team roster*
- Ad run for both the men’s and women’s seasons (ad is 3’ x 3’)
- Couponing opportunity on Game Roster Sheets
*Estimated number of Game Roster Sheets given out for both seasons, 10,000

- Net Sponsorship Fees: $1,000

VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE POSTERS
- One-thousand (1,000) posters of both teams (Men’s & Women’s) featuring team photos, schedule information and participating sponsor advertisement
- Posters will be distributed throughout the UC Irvine campus, to local Irvine Businesses, and Elementary and Junior High Schools
- Art Specs: Size - 17” x 23”, (100) lb. gloss book, Color - Full Color

- Net Sponsorship Fees (both teams): Full Color $3,000

FLOOR SPONSORSHIPS
These integrated sponsor packages will allow a corporate sponsor the ability to completely dominate advertising impressions to in-arena and television audiences. An average of four WU Volleyball Matches per season are televised on ICI Cable, which reaches more than 200,000 Western County homes. Televised matches are then replayed throughout the week.
- One (1) 3’ x 8’ feet illuminated courtside sign (TV-side)

- Net Sponsorship Fee: $2,000
- 3-Year Net Sponsorship Fee: $5,000

PROMOTIONS
- Game promotions or contests are a great way to enhance your company’s image and allow for couponing opportunities with exciting on-field/court exposure.
- UCI Athletics will work with you to create a promotion that will incorporate your company’s logo, advertising message/customer service philosophy, and focus on your target audience.

- Net Sponsorship Fees will be charged according to corporate sponsor’s promotional opportunity and impression on in-arena audience.

PREMIUM ITEM GIVEAWAYS
- Your company can use UCI Volleyball games to distribute premium items or promotional material to all fans in attendance at a selected game.
- Sponsors may distribute materials during the in-flow and out-flow of games at the main entrance to WU Arena (materials distributed by sponsor’s staff); also includes concourse display rights.

- Net Sponsorship Fee: $100
The Jones Intercable Couch Potato Shot is an exciting new promotion developed by Sportainment to generate excitement at both Men’s and Women’s Red Devil basketball games (total of 16 home games). In addition, the Jones Intercable Couch Potato Shot will certainly generate a great deal of publicity, visibility and positive public relations for Jones Intercable.

The concept is as simple as it is unique. During the time between the third and fourth quarters of all home varsity basketball games a fan will be selected to participate in the promotion. This individual will be supplied with a pair of slippers, a robe, a liter of Pepsi (or TV remote control if a presenting sponsor is found) and a basketball. The contestant will have one shot to make a basket from the free throw line while sitting in the couch.

If the basket is “good” the contestant wins one-year of cable service provided by Jones Intercable. If they miss the shot, they win a bag of potatoes! (If a presenting sponsor is obtained they will also win the TV that goes with the remote control).

As the Title Sponsor of the Jones Intercable Couch Potato Shot the benefits are as follows:

- Title reference to the event in all promotions
- 1/4 page advertisement in the Winter Sports Guide, specifically for the Couch Potato Shot, with 10,000 copies inserted in the Kenosha News and 3,000 copies distributed at home sporting events
- An editorial explanation of the promotion to appear in the Winter Sports Guide
- Public Address announcements at each home game (minimum of two prior to the contest and title reference during the event)
- Reference in a minimum of 50 radio spots throughout the season on WLIP
- Reference in advertisements in the Kenosha News that appear on game day for a minimum of 10 games
- Display of banner on site during all games

Jones Intercable advertisements may be run on the 5 foot video screen utilized at all games broadcast by Jones because of the uniqueness of the promotion we anticipate a good deal of press coverage. Publicity opportunities are increased as a result of the excellent photo opportunities provided by the event. You will have a great opportunity to further promote your involvement at those games with you televise.

Jones Intercable is responsible for providing a one-year cable subscription for each winner. Beyond providing the prizes, the total investment to be the Title Sponsor for the Jones Intercable Couch Potato Shot, which runs from November thru February, is just $____.
Now What?

You have completed the first part of this book that deals with how sports are used to market non-sport companies or products. Actually, this section looked at the issue of sponsorship from “different sides of the same coin.” While we discussed companies using sports, we also talked about how you can partner with companies to benefit your teams.

So, now what? Well, it’s time for you to select or create an event and seek out corporate partners! Use what you have learned and help a company in your community tie-in to one of your teams. Help them borrow your equity!

The second section of our book emphasizes the efforts of a team or property to market themselves. The focus is on the marketing plan and how a team can be successful “off the field” in order to improve their chances of being successful “on the field.”
Sports Marketing Defined . . . Again!

In the beginning of the book we took a shot at developing a definition of sports marketing? We decided that for the sake of this book, we would look at sports marketing from two perspectives: 1) the marketing of sports and 2) using sports to market non-sport products or services.

The marketing of sports is generally looked at as applying marketing principles to a team, sports, venue, athlete, etc. That is what we will discuss in this section of the book.

The key to the success of any organization, including sports organizations, is a marketing plan, and you will learn how to develop and implement one with the help of marketing research. In addition to the importance of a SWOT analysis, you will study event management and find out how important it is to put a great deal of thought and effort into developing Fan Fun events, obtaining halftime entertainment, and creating a fan friendly and exciting environment. You’ll also learn to target your marketing efforts and generate publicity.

The last section is one of the most difficult to write about—the Internet and the World Wide Web. It is challenging to put something into print about a technological innovation that changes daily. Nevertheless—the basics about using the Web to market sports have been covered.

You will notice that specifics about advertising—such as media selection, advertisement layout and design, determining a budget, etc.—are not included. There are several publications and resources that cover these aspects of marketing plans. The book is intended to focus on sports specific content as much as possible.
Every sport, regardless of the “level of play,” needs a marketing plan.

Overview of The Marketing Plan

Whether you are with a professional, collegiate or high school program, a marketing plan is a must. If you are working with a specific team you will most likely create one marketing plan. If, however, you are working at the collegiate level you will find yourself (with the help of the entire department) creating a marketing plan for every sport . . . perhaps over 25 plans. Stop for a minute and think about how many sports teams you have at your high school. 12? 15? More? Each team, in a perfect world, should have a marketing plan.

In this section the marketing plan will be briefly explained. Please keep in mind: regardless of the sport, a marketing plan is essential. Sports such as golf, cross-country or tennis used to be called “minor” sports. While they are now often referred to as “Olympic” sports, many still view them as being “minor.” Not you. Not if you are going to do your job right. Every sport, regardless of the popularity or revenue they generate, must have a marketing plan. Having said that, obviously the complexity and investment in the plan will vary from sport to sport.

Although the information that each plan must have is relatively consistent, the format varies greatly. You should design a plan that allows you to include the following information/sections in an easy to read manner. Following this brief overview of the marketing plan are detailed explanations of the major sections. You will find several sample marketing plans in the Appendix. These samples can be used as a guide. Simply adjust them for your sport and specific circumstances.
The typical marketing plan will have the following sections:

Executive Summary
Introduction
Situation Analysis
Target Market Identification
Goals
Strategies
Implementation
Evaluation

Executive Summary
This is the last section you write . . . but normally the first to be read. The Executive Summary provides a concise overview of the entire plan, allowing your athletic director or marketing director to get a quick feel for your approach to the season. The Executive Summary should, at the very least, address the following issues:

Description of your “product” including any changes in how you plan to position your product.

An overview of any general theme or approach you plan to implement.

An overview of the financial commitment.

A brief description of plans to evaluate the success of the plan including projected financial returns.

Introduction
This section is handled in a variety of ways. One approach is to provide a review of the past season. While wins and losses may be included, remember that this is a marketing plan. The overview must be written from a marketing perspective (ticket sales, attendance, sponsorship renewals, etc.).

Others view the introduction as an opportunity to spell out their mission statement or provide a brief history—particularly if the plan is for an event as opposed to a team.

Situation Analysis
In this section you will provide the reader with an understanding of the environment within which your must operate. Going through the situational analysis will prove invaluable to you as you prepare the plan because it will both highlight opportunities and uncover any challenges you may face.
You will want to look at the economic climate, your demographics, the demand for your product, your competition and all internal aspects of your organization. Perhaps the best method of effectively analyzing your situation is to use the SWOT technique discussed later in the book. SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The process allows you to identify internal and external factors that could contribute to, or impede you success.

**Target Analysis**

Who are your fans? When you answer that question you have pretty much identified who is most likely to purchase tickets to your games! Your target audience is that group of individuals at whom you will “target” your marketing efforts. If your fans are male, aged 24-45, married, with some college education you will market to them differently than if they were female, aged 12-24, single, with a high school education. Although all your fans will not fall into the “profile,” the majority will. As a result, that will likely be your target audience.

Factors used to determine the target audience include demographics, psychographics, and geographics.

**Goals**

Like any other business, your team will need to establish goals and objectives. There are a number of reasons for this, but perhaps the most important ones are that they provide something to strive for and a means by which you can determine your success. If you have no goals regarding ticket sales, how will you know if you did a good job selling tickets? If you have not determined how many new sponsors you want to attract how will you know if you partnership acquisition efforts were worthwhile?

You will want to consider setting goals in a variety of areas including, but not limited to, ticket sales, season ticket renewals, attendance, sellouts, sponsor acquisition, and group sales.

**Marketing Strategies**

You have set a number of goals, at least some of which should be pretty ambitious. Now what? You have to develop marketing strategies that will help you achieve those goals.

For instance, a strategy of focusing on group ticket sales could lead to achieving your stated goals of increasing overall sales by 10%. Or, the development of a new customer service position responsible for taking care of corporate partners could help with your goal of reaching a 90% sponsor renewal rate.

There must be strategies that match up with each of your goals. As a result, not only have you identified what you want to achieve, you have established a strategy that will help you reach those goals.
Implementation
In this section of the marketing plan you will want to identify what your team or organization must do in order to meet the goals you have set. Take into consideration whether or not you will have enough employee to achieve the goals, whether there is a need for additional staff training, who will have both the responsibility and authority to make decisions, etc.

This is also where you should place a monthly calendar showing who is responsible for each planned activity. The monthly calendar should include the following for each goal or activity: a starting date, an ending date, who is responsible and, if you choose, the financial considerations.

Evaluation
You would be surprised at how many teams and organizations go through all the steps of the marketing plans, spend countless hours—and dollars—on it and then neglect to evaluate its effectiveness at the end of the season!

Following are some of the concerns that should be addressed in this part of the plan:

- How will staff members be evaluated and paid for their work?
- Is everyone, from “top to bottom” committed to the plan?
- What corrections or modifications in the plan can be made if it appears as though objectives are not being met?
- For each goal, is there an objective criterion for success?

Situation Analysis
Since “the only constant is change” it is important that you continually evaluate the factors that will likely influence your marketing plan. In reality, you have two choices. First, you can refuse to look at your environment and circumstances. Simply ignore what is going on around you, write your plan and move full speed ahead. The result . . . potential disaster. Second, you can evaluate your surrounding, recognize the circumstances and challenges and develop your marketing plan accordingly.

Experts generally agree that the following should be taken into consideration during your situation analysis:

- Demographics
- Internal factors
- Consumer Trends
- Technology
- Economics
- Competition
Characteristics of the population are considered demographics. This includes everything from age, income, marital status, education, employment, etc. Demographic information is important as you develop a profile of your target market. The target market is that group of individuals at which you plan to “aim” your marketing efforts.

For instance, a collegiate sports team may select one or more of the following as target markets:

- Alumni
- Businesses
- Youth
- Students
- Families

By determining the demographic characteristics of your target audience you are better able to seek out individuals with similar traits . . . and hopefully similar purchasing habits. For example, a wireless communications company may determine the teenage market is one they would like to target. Among other traits, they will determine the common demographic traits and then target that audience with their marketing and promotion efforts.

This information can also help you determine the potential size of your market. For instance, if your Utah-based company was targeting males and females aged 18-29 you could check the census records and determine there are nearly 500,000 people in this age group, or about 22% of the population of the state of Utah. You would further discover that is the largest percentage of 18-29 year olds in any state in the country, certainly a good sign for your company.

**Internal Factors**

What is going on inside your team or company? This is certainly something you need to consider. Let’s assume you are the director of marketing for a Division I University. Internal factors that should be taken into consideration might include the following:

- Financial strength of the department.
- Past performance of the teams and anticipated performance for the upcoming year.
- Changes in conference affiliation or members of the conference.
- Quality of schedule including the home schedule and out-of-conference schedule.
- Changes in personnel of in the athletic department.
Each of these factors could have an influence on the specific objectives and strategies highlighted in your marketing plan. You may, after looking at the schedule, determine to focus some of your marketing efforts on the high quality of teams coming to play at your school. You may take a very conservative approach financially if the past few years have ended in red ink. Or, you may focus on the advantages and opportunities of the new conference you have joined.

Regardless, you need to take an honest look at the internal circumstances of your organization while developing your plan.

SWOT
One of the most effective methods of assessing an organization’s position is through the use of a SWOT analysis. SWOT, an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats is the industry standard when it comes to a model for developing a successful event.

SWOT is a process through which you can critically examine both internal and external conditions and factors that may affect your event. Strengths and weaknesses are primarily concerned with internal factors, while opportunities and threats focus on external factors.

Try to be familiar with every aspect of your event before doing a SWOT analysis. It could, however, be beneficial to use an abbreviated version of the SWOT analysis to determine the viability of an event. This may save a great deal of effort as opposed to planning everything and working out the details, only to find that SWOT reveals that your event is unlikely to be successful.

For our example, we will use the Cougar Tip-Off as our event. Although a high school event, the Cougar Tip-Off is modeled after the increasingly popular collegiate Midnight Madness. The Tip-Off is an event that will allow your organization to introduce the fans to your men and women’s basketball teams. The Tip-Off, although an introduction of the teams, is very fan-oriented and includes countless Fan Fun events, contests and prizes. It is scheduled for October 27th, the first Friday after practices begin. The event will take place in the Cougar Arena which seats 2,200 fans.

Strengths
What strengths does your organization bring to the Tip-Off? Look at your organization as a whole (large number of dedicated students, great deal of interest, some experience in event management, a mix of males and females, several basketball fans) and also at the individual members.

Some members may have specific experience or contacts that could benefit the organization. Others may be former basketball players or have attended a collegiate Midnight Madness in the past. Are there any members who have contacts with entertainers, like the local college or pro
mascot or a band? Does anyone in your organization have a graphic arts and/or printing class so they can help with tickets and programs?

There are several skills necessary to successfully implement an event such as the Tip-Off. You must assess whether or not your members have those skills personally, or have contacts that do.

Weaknesses
To be honest with yourself and your organization you must assess your weaknesses as well. Identify the internal areas that are weak. Furthermore, identify whether or not these weaknesses can be overcome in time to present the event. Once again, although you are assessing the organization, look at individual members as well. Do you lack sufficient start-up funds to get the Tip-Off underway? Do your members have the dedication and commitment necessary to sell tickets? Are your members “afraid” of selling sponsorships? Do you have the writing skills to issue press releases?

Having weaknesses is not necessarily bad. Every individual and every organization has them. What is dangerous is either not being aware of them, or not being willing to work on them. You may very well uncover weaknesses that can be developed into strengths, or “worked around” so they do not have an adverse effect on your event. Or, you may actually find a weakness that cannot be overcome. Better to find that out in advance and change the nature of your project than to ignore it and be part of the group who will be remembered for putting together a total flop!

Opportunities
Take a look at the opportunities that may be present. These opportunities may provide you with additional benefits that you might have overlooked. Is there another event happening at or around the time of the Tip-Off that you can tie in with? Any new businesses opening that have a target market with demographics similar to your fans? Is the timing such that fans will be looking forward to their first taste of basketball? Does it appear as though your team will be improved from last year? Is there a graphic artist that can develop a great T-shirt that will sell at the event?

Threats
A threat that you do not anticipate can literally close down your event. But, a threat you identify ahead of time can be dealt with. Is it likely that the weather could affect your event? Is there another event scheduled at the same time that could attract the same audience—therefore forcing fans to “make a choice?” Is it possible that fans from a competing school could show up in large numbers and cause problems? Is security available? Is there any event that would be able to displace you from the arena should they have a need?
The majority of these threats can be controlled, and the possible effect minimized. Others, such as an act of God, cannot be controlled but contingency plans can be made.

**SWOT Keeps You Honest**
The use of the SWOT analysis simply allows you to take an objective look as the potential success of your event. Typically, you will not find problems that cannot be overcome with minor changes in plans or increased attention. However, these same concerns, if they go undetected, could result in the failure of your event to reach its potential.

Conversely, an opportunity that is not exploited is also a strike against your event. You may never compensate for failure to fully leverage the event by taking advantage of every opportunity. This is true financially, as well as from the public relations and promotional perspectives.

Take the time, bring together everyone involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of your event, and go through the SWOT process. The time spent doing so will be minimal when compared to the time wasted making last minute modifications and adjustments because you failed to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
Target Market Identification

Your strategies for selling tickets, selecting promotions, booking entertainment and advertising will all vary depending upon your target market. As a result, this is where you make your commitment to the markets you will target for ticket sales.

You could say that the potential target market is everyone in the United States . . . around 300 million people. Somehow I doubt that is very realistic. A true market would consist of individuals that are:

- Interested in your product or service.
- Have the money to purchase your product or service.
- Are willing to spend their money on your product or service.

Suddenly that group of consumers looks a lot smaller than 300 million! For instance, I may have an interest in season tickets to watch the Utah Jazz (despite the departure of both Stockton and Malone they are an exciting team). I might even be willing to spend the cash necessary to buy those tickets. But, if I do not have the money I am not a part of the market. Or, if I have the money, but am not a Jazz fan, once again I am not part of the market.

All markets consist of consumers, and consumers are all different. Marketing professionals use these differences to their advantage by dividing markets into groups of similar individuals—or at least individuals with similar characteristics. The process of doing this is called market segmentation—simply taking a market and breaking it into smaller groups. The most common method is to use demographics. Traits such as age, income, education and marital status are often used in the segmentation process. While common, it may not be the most effective method.

What is really important is consumer behavior or purchasing behaviors of the individuals in the market. So, just because you can divide a group
into “males” and “female” or by age groups doesn’t necessarily mean it is the best thing to do. If, however, the purchasing behavior differs because of their gender or age, then it would make perfect sense.

The same can be said for segmenting by race or education. There are many instances when a mass marketing appeal to consumers will be received by African-Americans or Asian-Americans in the same manner as other consumers. However, there are also instances where it makes perfect sense, because of buying behavior and interest, to deliver a different message to an African-American, Asian-American or Hispanic audience. In addition, the age of consumers may or may not have an effect on their buying behavior. It often depends on the product/service and other demographic traits.

There will no doubt be several potential target markets, depending upon the level of your team (high school, small or large college, minor league professionals or major leagues).

The following are examples of potential markets that you might target for your ticket sales:

- Families
- Students
- Corporations/business
- Youth
- Parents
- Alumni
- Faculty/Staff

Select the key audience and consider them your primary target market. Next, select additional audiences that will be necessary for success, and identify them as secondary market(s). Also, include a brief description of these target audiences.
Ticket Goals and Pricing

In this section of the marketing plan you want to reveal the details of your marketing goals. For the sake of discussion, we will focus on ticket sales goals.

In this section you are going to set your goals for ticket sales. You should, of course, set goals for overall sales/attendance. However, you should also set goals for increases in each category of tickets available. Since very few teams have season-long sellouts, most teams will have room for growth.

A chart showing last season's purchases at each ticket level as well as the goals for the upcoming season would be appropriate.

This section also provides an opportunity to focus on your ticket prices. This will vary greatly from one team to another because of the differences in seating at individual venues and other ticket sales requirements. In most high school venues all tickets will be general admission. Most colleges and all professional teams offer a variety of options based upon seat location.

For instance the Cleveland Cavaliers have a variety of ticket locations/prices available to their fans. Since the drafting of LeBron James the fan base has certainly increased.

The Cavs offer the following locations/prices for the 2003-2004 season (from http://www.nba.com/cavs/tickets/arena.html). The following are in addition to suites and floor seats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Price 1</th>
<th>Price 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Club Seats</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$3,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Level Centers</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>(sold out, price not listed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Level Corner</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$2,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Level Center</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$2,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Level Corner</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$1,968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Level Ends</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$1,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Level Center</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$1,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Level Ends</td>
<td>$36</td>
<td>$1,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Level Center</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td>$1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Level Corners</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$  820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Level Ends</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$  410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A college ticket chart may be similar to the following; simple, concise, easy to understand and communicates the prices effectively.

### Single Game Prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Bowl</td>
<td>$4</td>
<td>$3</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Zone</td>
<td>$6</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Zone</td>
<td>$8</td>
<td>$7</td>
<td>$6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP Section</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$9</td>
<td>$8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Season Tickets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Bowl</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$49</td>
<td>$33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Zone</td>
<td>$98</td>
<td>$81</td>
<td>$65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Zone</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$114</td>
<td>$97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP Section</td>
<td>$162</td>
<td>$146</td>
<td>$130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Group Tickets (Groups of 25 or more)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Bowl</td>
<td>$3</td>
<td>$2</td>
<td>$1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Zone</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$4</td>
<td>$3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Zone</td>
<td>$7</td>
<td>$6</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP Section</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To set goals for ticket sales you will need the sales figures from the prior season. Once you have those numbers, you can add the sales goals for each price point.
Ticket Sales Strategy

“Season Ticket Sales Solve Marketing Problems.” That was the sign above the desk in the office of Dave Champlin when he was the Director of Marketing and Promotions for Brigham Young University. Are there any words that can better express the importance of selling tickets? Ticket sales are the key to a successful season. Sponsorships are important, but no more so than tickets. Media contracts are critical, but not necessarily more important than ticket sales.

If you take into consideration all sports, at all levels, tickets are still the major source of revenue for teams. Although there may be exceptions at the high end of the spectrum, generally, the sale of tickets is what keeps a team alive. As far as the media is concerned, research has indicated that, typically, the more tickets a team sells the more it will generate from television or radio contracts. Why? Ticket sales are still the best indicator of the popularity of a sport and the loyalty of its fans. As a result, the demand for media coverage of a team that consistently sells out will certainly be greater than for those teams who have a stadium full of fans disguised as seats.

The same can be said for sponsorships. A packed stadium or arena is a major consideration of potential sponsors. Coupled with the increased media visibility (as a result of ticket sales) the opportunities to sell sponsorships are also enhanced by successful ticket sales.

In this section of a marketing plan you must identify your strategy. A marketing strategy is an explanation of how you plan to accomplish your goals and objectives.

The goal for ticket sales is simple: Sell out all games. Simple, but not necessarily easy. As the individual in charge of ticket sales there are several factors that will have an effect on your sales success.

Fan Support- It is impossible to regularly sell out games without great support from the local fans. Therefore, your team must be pretty successful, or at the very least, be competitive in every game.
Visiting Team-The quality of the opponent will often influence the number of tickets sold. During his career, Michael Jordan always played before a packed arena. The opposition, although not pleased with continually losing to Jordan and the Bulls, did enjoy increased ticket sales and an increase in the related revenue as well. It is typically easier to sell out a game against the cross-town rival, or the top team in the league. Do the Lakers draw better than most visiting teams? Will Cavs games with LeBron James suddenly be a better draw? Do games against your biggest rival have larger crowds?

Day of the Game-The day of the week on which the event occurs is also of importance. At the high school level, your events likely take place on the same two nights each week. Is one a Friday? Does that night attract more fans? In the pros, Saturday night and Sunday afternoons are the best dates. The NFL has it made . . . they play almost exclusively on Sunday afternoons. You’ll notice they also play in sold out stadiums.

Time of Season-Spring baseball games are too cold. The NBA doesn’t even show up on TV until after the football season is nearly over. What happens to attendance when weather is a factor? Many high schools begin their football season before school opens. The timing of the season can be a challenge for the individuals in charge of promoting the game and selling tickets.

The order of importance of the above factors will vary depending upon the sport, team and level of play. NBA basketball attendance is affected greatly by the day of the week and the opposition. In the minor leagues a major promotion may be important, although it matters relatively little at the highest level of professional sports.

Ticket Sales Begin Before The Season
If you wonder where ticket sales success begins, it is right here . . . with the marketing plan. You would think that a marketing plan would be a given. However, there are a surprising number of teams that lack this basic tool. Many teams will set ticket sales objective or goals, but they often lack a workable marketing plan that provides the methods of reaching those goals.

In order to approach your goal of selling out games it is imperative that a significant number of season tickets are sold. Whether a pro, college or high school team, successful season ticket sales are essential (remember the opening quote). Industry experts feel that in order to sell out your games it is critical to sell at least 70% of the seats before the season begins. If you don’t meet this goal, it is unlikely that sellouts will be a regular occurrence. This may not apply to all high school situations, since purchasing tickets at the gate has become an accepted tradition.
Why is so much importance placed on season ticket sales? First, if the team has a less than stellar year (in other words they are horrible) the majority of the tickets will already be sold. In addition, bad weather can scare away fans. A fan with a ticket in his or her pocket is more likely to attend in spite of bad weather since they already paid for the ticket. If they still choose not to attend, at least you have the revenue from the ticket sale. And finally, having a significant portion of the ticket sales revenue up front allows teams to more easily make decisions on expenditures and meet financial obligations. In the pros, teams enjoy the additional money generated as a result of the interest earned on the advance purchases.

Although the term “season tickets” has been used, it may not be entirely accurate. In reality, we are referring to advance sales of multiple tickets. Of course, advance sales include season tickets. However, it also includes mini-plans and group sales. Sales of tickets to individual games are not included, since you may not sell these tickets before the season begins.

Season tickets, obviously, include all regular-season games. Mini-plans, however, include only certain “select” games. Mini-plans can have a significant impact on overall advance sales. The marketing challenge often becomes the selection process. The most frequent method of putting together a mini-plan (generally not used for football since there are so few home games) is to select the “best” games and combine them with the “worst” games. Unfortunately, “most frequent” does not necessarily mean most successful.

Many believe adding a “dog” or poor selling game to your mini-plan will hurt the overall sales of the package. Instead, put together a group of games that are the best to make sure this mini-package sells. For example, during the dominant years of the Chicago Bulls, the Milwaukee Bucks noticed a few interesting trends involving ticket sales. Since it was almost impossible to get a ticket for a Bulls game in Chicago, Chicago area fans would drive to Milwaukee to see “their” team. In addition, the geographical proximity of Chicago to Milwaukee, the tendency to support a winner, and the unique attraction of Michael Jordan all combined to make it a given that the Bulls games would be sold out.

Armed with this information, the Bucks created the “10 Pack-Plus” which included tickets to 10 Bucks games plus the two games against the Bulls. In order to make sure they could get tickets to the Bulls games fans either purchased season tickets or the new mini-plan. The Bucks were able to add 10 sellout games by leveraging the demand for the Bulls games. That is the goal of advance ticket sales! By the way, who do you think was devastated by the retirement(s) of Jordan? You’re right, the Milwaukee Bucks. Jordan was a great salesman for the Bucks!
What About Us?
That’s great if you are in the pros or a major college, but what about a high school. First, keep in mind that there are thousands of high schools with varied athletic success. Some high schools sell out a particular sport on a regular basis, while others do not even sellout the “big” cross-town rivalry. Some schools provide season tickets or passes to all students while others sell them only to interested fans. A season ticket may be sold for each sport, or a school may sell an “all sports” pass that includes admission to every athletic event. Because the definition of season ticket varies from school to school, so will the price of those tickets.

Having said that, there are a number of things you can do to help increase attendance at your athletic events (isn’t that the goal of selling tickets?).

Marketing Plan-This is where your marketing plan becomes critical. Develop a workable marketing plan for selling tickets. Then work the plan! Is there any actual marketing or promotion of your season tickets? Doubtful. The extent of the promotion is usually an announcement telling students where to get them and how much they are. As mentioned earlier, examine your target audience(s). After selecting your target markets or audiences—market to them!

The following, taken from collegiate marketing plans, are examples of ideas for increasing ticket sales.

Booster club members personally phone current season ticket holders.

Send out the following items: personal letter from the coach, season brochure, special promotion outline, activities and a postage-paid mail-back envelop.

Having the coaches and players make personal calls (if other than the high school level, usually a smaller school or women’s team).

Using season tickets as a premium item to be given free with a purchase (part of a sponsorship agreement. Used at the college level with single game tickets, as well as season tickets. If season tickets it is usually with the purchase of a larger ticket item because of the higher cost of the tickets).

Door-to-door by the team- One high school team had their players and cheerleaders go door-to-door, in uniform/jersey and give away tickets to the opening game. Why not use the same method to sell tickets?

Select-a-seat- If reserved seating is available, allow fans to come and select their season ticket seat location at the stadium/arena. Available seats should be marked with a flyer or order blank.
Live Remote- a live remote in conjunction with the Select-a-seat from your venue. During the remote, fans are encouraged to come by and pick a seat location and purchase their season ticket.

Order Blanks-Develop a season ticket order form that is easy to understand, simple to complete and can be inserted into an envelope and returned to the school. Then, distribute them everywhere your target audience(s) is likely to be.

Sales Team-An effective means of selling tickets is the development of sales teams. This method, utilized by many colleges and universities, provides an opportunity for sports fans to help out the team and receive awards/prizes in return. Divide your class into sales teams, complete with a captain. Each team should develop a sales plan and sales objectives. In addition, establish a reward program based upon the number of season tickets sold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tickets Sold</th>
<th>Prize</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 tickets sold</td>
<td>Team Key Chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 tickets sold</td>
<td>Team T-shirt plus above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 tickets sold</td>
<td>Team sweatshirt + above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50 tickets sold</td>
<td>Team Jacket plus above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50 tickets sold</td>
<td>$50 cash plus all of the above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Keep in mind; these awards/prizes are not intended to provide the only motivation for selling tickets. The members of the sales team are hardcore fans (or members of your organization that have either volunteered or been volunteered by your teacher) and they believe in the ticket sales campaign. The prizes are just frosting on the cake and a little extra incentive.

Activities to help sell tickets may include a neighbor-to-neighbor campaign by members of your organization, direct mail of a personal letter, inclusion in a coupon mailing, making season ticket order forms available in appropriate places, and advertisements in various media.

Premiums-Include additional benefits with each purchase of a season ticket. For instance, some high schools include membership in a student club such as the Bleacher Bums, Scream Team, Bleacher Creatures, etc. The membership might also come with additional benefits and privileges such as reserved/preferred seating, tailgate parties, transportation to away games, etc.

You may consider a coupon package. Contact your current or potential corporate partners and get them involved with the coupon program that is “exclusively” for season ticket holders. This can be a revenue stream if you charge companies to be a part of the program, or it can be done on a cost-recovery basis in an effort to simply provide value-added to your fans. These coupons could be for food, entertainment, sports-related merchandise, etc.
Prices—You may or may not have a great deal of influence over the pricing of season tickets. If you do, examine the prices. (If you don’t, examine them anyway. Then negotiate yourself into a situation so you can have some say in the pricing.) You likely have a single price for season tickets, or perhaps two prices: adult and student. Consider youth, family, senior citizen, or alumni.

As you can see, there are a number of approaches you can take to selling tickets to your sporting events. The best method is the one that works for you. You may have to try several approaches before you determine the most effective ticket sales strategy. Make sure you monitor the success of each strategy so you can easily identify the most successful approaches.
Promotions

The term “promotions” is used in many ways in the area of sports marketing. In this case, we are referring to activities that can be done to make an event more entertaining. In terms of promotions, we will briefly look at the following types: in-game, single game, season long, theme nights and premium give-a-ways. In addition, the entire area of game operations should be looked at carefully. Individuals in this field often make the difference between your game being a true “event” and just “another” game.

In-game Promotions
In-game promotions are just that, promotions that occur while the game is in process. Specifically, these are promotions that happen at a time other than a quarter break, halftime or time out.

Because of the timing, these promotions must create a minimum of disruption and cannot take away from the actual game. Some in-game promotions involve only the public address announcer. Lucky programs, prize drawings, etc. can be done by the announcer whenever there is a slight break in the action. These activities do not use the valuable quarter breaks or halftime. Following are a few possible in-game promotions.

Trivia Questions
One of the easiest in-game promotions is the trivia question. Have the PA announcer read a question with the winner being the first person to answer it correctly. Make the questions challenging, but realistic. Prizes do not have to be expensive for this to be fun. You may even have different categories of questions at each event (sports, school, community, music, etc.).

Dirtiest Car in the Parking Lot
Make sure you have a car wash as a sponsor and put them to work for you. During any athletic event, have a couple of students search the parking lot for a car in dire need of a wash. The dirtier the better.

Get the license number and description of the car and have your PA announcer page the owner and direct them to come to the announcer’s table. After getting the person’s name, announce that the owner of the car is “so and so” and he/she has the “dirtiest car in the parking lot”. As a result, they are the winner of a free car wash from your sponsor.
This is a very simple promotion, but one that is well received and can be done using short periods of downtime during the event. Using a time out or stoppage of play for an injury is fine—it is not necessary to use your valuable quarter breaks or halftime.

**T-shirt Toss**

If food is always a winner, T-shirts are a close second. Not only does everyone like getting a free (there’s that key word again) T-shirt, most sponsors will have some already printed and ready to go.

There are several ways you can distribute T-shirts to your fans and create goodwill for your sponsors. In most sports the starting lineup is introduced prior to the game. Give each starter a shirt and have them throw it into the stands as they are introduced.

During the basketball season, toss a shirt into the stands for every three-point basket. Or, during volleyball, how about for every ace or spike?

As mentioned, in most cases a business will have standard or “generic” shirts available. As part of an exciting sponsorship you may decide to design shirts that are tied into your team and the “reason” for giving them away. For instance, if you are going to give away a shirt for each ace in a volleyball match, design a shirt that features a volleyball player or your mascot serving an ace.

**Single Game Promotions**

Single game promotions are simply activities that take place at one game, as opposed to promotions that are run over several games or an entire season. Called “Fan Fun” events by many, there are several listed in the section “Fan Fun and More.”

Single game promotions may be tied into the theme for the night. For example, if you have a basketball game on or near Valentine’s Day, tie everything into a Valentine theme. During halftime, invite only your female fans onto the court. Have them shoot free throws and give them a box of chocolates or a rose if they make one. Have a drawing and give away a night on the town (dinner, movie, etc. for Valentine’s Day). During a quarter break feature Fan Fun events that require the participants to be “couples” (three-legged race, blindfold basketball, etc.). Play some sappy love songs during the game. Have a contest that requires fans to submit, in advance, their “broken heart” story with a prize for the best story.

Regardless of the theme (mascot, Elvis, family, etc.) it is to your advantage to have your promotions relate to it.

**Season Long Promotions**

In some cases you may want to develop a promotion that continues throughout the entire season. This could be a single game promotion that you repeat each game or a promotion developed specifically with the
intention to use it throughout the season. A season long promotion may also be the result of the desire of a corporate partner to have visibility at all games.

The Cost Cutters SlamFest discussed earlier in the book is an example of an activity that was developed specifically to be a season long promotion. The winner from this halftime event returned to defend their title at the following game. This provided fans with a built in interest in the next game, and provided Cost Cutters with continual exposure to the fans.

Nearly any event can be turned into a season long promotion by either having the winning participant return to “defend,” or by having the fan with the highest “score” during the season be the winner.

**Theme Nights**
A great way to create a fun atmosphere and target an audience for attendance is to develop theme nights. There is no reason that each of your games cannot have a special theme. There are many different possibilities for themes, limited only by your imagination. Once again, theme nights are covered in more detail in the Fan Fun and More section.

Theme nights can easily be centered around holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Halloween, New Year’s, Valentine’s Day, and the list goes on). Your actual game does not have to take place on the holiday, simply close to it. Invest in a copy of Chase’s Calendar of Events. This lists every “official” event, anniversary or historical event of significance by date. And, don’t be afraid of making up your own holiday or observance!

Theme nights can also be developed around target audiences in an attempt to increase your attendance. Try a Family Night, Team Night, Honor Roll Night, Elementary School Night and so on. Identify those target markets you want to attract, and designate a specific “night” for them. As mentioned previously, be sure to use these fans in your Fan Fun events, or develop promotions specifically for the targeted audience.

**Premiums**
Premium items, also called specialty advertising items, are a great way to provide additional value to your fans. Select items that are appropriate for your event, secure a sponsor that will co-brand the item with their logo, and give them away.

If you have a theme for the game, tie your premium item to that theme. Nerd Night was mentioned previously. This is probably the only theme that would provide an opportunity to give away “pocket protectors” and Nerds candy. If you have a Salute to the Military, give away American Flags. Your theme night may also reflect your corporate partner. If you have a “Company” Night, the business will often identify a branded item they would like to give away.
Possible Theme Nights...
- 70's, 80's, 90's Night
- Fan Appreciation Night
- Military Night
- Youth Teams Night
- Scout Night
- Church Night
- Grandparents Night
- Honor Roll Night
- Perfect Attendance Night
- Alumni Night
- All Sports Night
- Special Olympics Night

and the list goes on!

If you cannot identify a natural tie with the night, or if you do not have a theme, it is safe to go with any premium that makes noise. Look at the success of Thunder Stix or Cheer Stix! T-shirts are another popular item among fans, as are mini balls, megaphones, foam #1 fingers and seat cushions. Contact gameops.com for a comprehensive list of sports-related premium items.

If you handle your prospecting and sales effectively you will be able to have the entire cost of your premium item covered by your corporate partner.

Creative promotions can help make an event memorable. A great halftime show or a hilarious quarter break Fan Fun event can help make up for a disappointing game, or add to the excitement of a win.

Bill Veeck is well known for his promotions. He also had an interesting philosophy about “promoting promotions.” He would often keep promotions a “secret” and surprise his loyal fans with something a little extra. As a result, the fans would go home feeling as though they were treated special. At times, particularly if he felt the promotion would actually increase attendance, Veeck would “promote the promotion.”

Whether your promotion provides additional motivation for fans to attend your events or if they are viewed as value-added, your fans will have more fun at your games.

Look in the section on Fan Fun ideas and develop some of your own. You may even develop a promotion that becomes such a fan favorite that you will use for several years to come.

If you come up with any great promotions, send them to PrepSportsBiz and maybe we can use them in future editions of this book! We can be contacted at reachme@prepsportsbiz.com
Game-by-Game Summary

Your game-by-game summary provides a snapshot of each game. This portion will likely be modified and updated throughout the season since the marketing plan is typically “competed” long before the first game. Using basketball as an example, the following information should be provided for each game:

- **Date of the game:** Include day of the week as well
- **Starting time:**
- **Opponent:**
- **Sponsor:** Note title sponsor and additional sponsors
- **Theme for the night:** Generally one overall theme
- **Pregame activities:** Anything happening pregame? Band, pep rally, tailgate party?
- **National Anthem performer:** Always have a recorded back-up in case of a no show
- **Game Ball Delivery:** Do this for every game and get creative. Be sure to inform the officials in advance
- **Honorary Captain:**
- **Ballboy/girl:** Works best to have one on each end of the court
- **Band:** Does the school band or a pep band perform?
- **Groups in attendance:** You can have more than one group featured on a “group” night
- **Quarter break activities:** Remember, you only get about 45 seconds to make it happen!
- **Halftime activities:** Be sure to factor in time for cheerleaders, band, etc. in addition to your promotions
- **Broadcast/Telecast:** Are your games broadcast on radio or television?
- **Post game activities:** What’s happening after the game?
This is **Sports Marketing** . . . you better be having fun!
Fan Fun . . . and More

This section provides you with several examples of Fan Fun Events that can be used during a game. Several of the events are appropriate for a single game, while others may be great for season-long promotions. Certain ones are designed to increase attendance, and others simply to increase the fun.

This section provides just a few examples. Use some. Improve some. Combine some. And, throw some out. Whatever you do, use this list as a starting point for coming up with activities that will make your games and events more fun for your fans.

**Couch Potato Shoot**

The Couch Potato Shoot is a humorous and entertaining activity that can be used at either the quarter break or halftime of a basketball game.

At the designated time, a couch should be carried to the free throw line. The selected fan should be introduced, and of course, they should be dressed in a housecoat, slippers, and night hat. The fan takes their place on the couch and gets one shot at making a basket.

The winning prize will depend upon the sponsor of the event. Suggestions include a year of cable television (sponsor: local cable company); a television (sponsor: department store); or a couch potato party pack consisting of chips, dip, soda, etc. (sponsor: grocery store). If the participant misses the shot, a bag of potatoes is a good consolation prize.

In addition to having a sponsor for the prize, it would be to your benefit to have an agreement with a furniture store to donate the couch. During the day the couch could be left in the teachers lounge or some other relatively safe location. At the end of the season have a drawing from among the unsuccessful participants with the winner getting the couch.

Although results will vary, past experience indicates there will be one winner in every 6 to 8 attempts. Be sure to have a rule regarding what consti-
Musical chairs can get rough if you do not properly prepare your participants.

Remote Control Car Races
There are several uses for remote control cars, therefore, purchasing two or three (make sure they have different frequencies) is a worthwhile investment. Depending upon the type of cars purchased, this event can be used at nearly any game (indoors or outdoors . . . and with remote controlled boats you can even run it at a swim meet!)

The first option is a simple race. Two contestants stand at a particular spot (free throw line, end line, mid field, serving line, etc.) and race to a particular object and back.

The key is the object around which they must race. Make sure it relates directly to the sponsor. For instance, having a real estate company as the sponsor would allow you to use a “for sale” sign as the obstacle. Any item that represents the sponsor and can be easily placed on the playing surface will work.

Variations on the race include having the drivers compete for a certain section or group of fans. For instance, pass out color-coded coupons to the first X number of fans. Then, each car is assigned to one of the colored coupons. Those fans with a coupon that matches the winning car get a prize. Prizes can be as simple as a candy bar, an order of French fries or an ice cream cone, depending upon the sponsor.

You might also consider having each car assigned to a specific section of the fans. For instance one car competes for the west bleachers and the other for the east bleachers. The fans then cheer for their car, with the winning side having several prizes randomly thrown into the stands.

Yet another variation includes having a contestant from both the home and visiting team. Each drives for their school, once again having prizes thrown into the stands of the winning driver. In fact, with the excitement generated by “school vs. school” format it may not even be necessary to throw prizes into the stands . . . unless, of course, your team wins!

Pizza call
The pizza call can be used at any sporting event, and does not have to be done during a quarter break or halftime. Any momentary stoppage of play allows time for this event.

A lucky fan is identified and then has a cellular phone delivered to them in the stands. From the stands the winner calls and orders a pizza for delivery. Later, when the pizza arrives, the PA announcer recognizes the sponsor again.
With this event, two sponsors are ideal, and rather obvious. A cell phone provider and a pizza restaurant work well. Either cash or a cash/trade combination is acceptable. For instance, one school arranged for the free use of the cellular phone for their sports marketing program as a part of the sponsorship agreement.

Musical chairs
Although in its original form the musical chairs event can be used at any sporting event, a modification makes it particularly fun at a basketball game. The length of this activity suggests that it would be great for halftime.

Select 8-10 contestants and have them meet with 2 minutes left in the half. At this point explain the event. Each participant will be given a basketball and placed in a chair (chairs should be placed in a circle at center court).

When the music stops playing contestants must go to one end of the floor and make a basket before returning to a chair. Each time one chair will be removed, thus one individual will be eliminated.

Warn them not to purposely interfere with another contestant and to not get overly rough. Be warned, this can get ugly if you do not prepare your contestants properly.

Quite simply, the last one with a chair is the winner. Prizes once again will vary with sponsors. A nice touch is having contestants wear T-shirts provided by the sponsor. It provides a lot of positive exposure and serves as a participation prize as well.

A good emcee providing creative and humorous comments can enhance this event a great deal. The time this event takes can be greatly influenced by the length of time the music is played between baskets.

Dash 4 Ca$h
Everyone likes cash . . . so everyone will like the Dash 4 Ca$h. Once again, there are several variations of this event. In its simplest form, cash is spread out on the playing surface and contestants are allowed to gather it up for themselves. Following are a few variations to the event.

Blindfolds-To stop this event from becoming a case of the “strongest” contestant wins, it is highly recommended that the participants be blindfolded.

Winnings-Take your pick: Every one keeps what they pick up; everyone keeps what they pick up and the one with the most gets whatever is left; only the individual with the most cash gets to keep it; or . . .
How Much Ca$h? - There are several options as to the amount of money placed on the floor. Tie it in with a significant event such as an anniversary, a team’s record, the points scored by the team last game, all season, etc. Or, partner with a radio station and bring in an amount representing their frequency (one school did this with a station found at 1050 on the dial so there was $1,050 on the court). Be sure you pick an amount of money you can afford to lose!

Suppose you decide to have $200 on the court. You then must decide what denominations to use. There is a lot to be said for having as many bills as possible on the floor—therefore using primarily one-dollar bills. But, you can increase the excitement considerably by including a $100 bill.

Time—Limit the participants to 30-45 seconds to gather up the cash. Any more and the activity actually seems to drag on. The sense of urgency is lost. You may also tie this number into the game itself. Perhaps the time limit should reflect the points your team has scored in the first half, or the combined score, or the temperature outside, or better yet, tie it into the sponsor of the event.

Extras—How about having the money brought in by an armed security guard? A Brinks truck? Invite members of an area martial arts school to perform at halftime, and while the Dash 4 Ca$h is taking place have them “guard” the money from any overzealous fans. Get creative and have fun.

Splash 4 Ca$h
A close relative of the Dash 4 Ca$h, this event is best suited for outdoor sports. Obtain a small children’s pool and have it filled with water . . . the colder the better. Then, place the cash (preferably coins) at the bottom of the pool. See the above explanation for determining the amount of cash. Once again, have two contestants go at it for the rewards. Options include blindfolding the participants. Hopefully they will splash a lot . . . that’s what makes this event exciting.

Candy Dash
You guessed it, one more event from the Dash 4 Ca$h family tree. This works great for a Halloween-related activity and gets the young fans involved. At a football game simply have all fans aged 8 and under meet at a specific location prior to halftime. At halftime spread several bags of candy on the grass at midfield. Then, allow those young fans to run in from the sideline and pick up all the candy they can hold.

This might have to be adjusted based upon the ages of the children to avoid any injuries to very small children. Another option is to include this as part of a Halloween promotion and any child under a certain age who is wearing a costume is allowed on the field as a participant.
Sticky Buns
Just one more relative of the Dash 4 Ca$h! In this case the participants are outfitted with “sticky buns.” In other words, their back end is dressed with tape, and the sticky side is out. (One college actually had the participants sit in honey in order to create the “sticky” of the Sticky Buns.)

Cash is spread around the playing surface and the participants are given a specified period of time to bounce around on their back end with the objective being to get as much cash to “stick to their buns” as possible.

As in the previous cash related events, you may blindfold them, vary the time limit, and select from several options to determine the “winner” and how much money is given away. It is recommended that the money be placed in a relatively small area, such as the center jump area circle of a basketball court.

The 5 Spot Shot
In its simplest form, the “5 Spot Shot” identifies five different spots from which contestants must make a basket. The major variables involve how these spots are identified, where they are located, and the prizes. Following are a few suggestions:

Location of Spots—Since everyone, sponsors and fans included, like to see winners, it is recommended that some of the spots be located so it is almost guaranteed that every contestant will make at least one or two baskets. Of the five, place one near the basket as a “lay-up,” and another between the basket and free throw line. Other spots should be determined based upon your desire to give away the prizes. If you have a great (meaning expensive) prize for someone who makes all of the shots, you might want to place a spot in a more challenging location-perhaps even half-court! (see sample layout).

Prizes—There are several options when determining what prizes should be used and how they should be awarded. In each case, the sponsor(s) obtained would influence these decisions. Following are examples of how prizes could be awarded:
One Sponsor-Your sponsor is the local pizza restaurant. A pizza delivery box designates each of the five spots. Inside each box is one of the following gift certificates:

1. Small Pizza
2. Medium Pizza
3. Large Pizza
4. Pizza Party for two
5. Pizza Party for five

In this case, where you place the spots will once again depend upon your agreement with the sponsor and how many gift certificates they wish to give away. Obviously, the better prize should be with the tougher spot. However, sometimes the excitement is increased when the prizes are randomly distributed so the difficulty of the shot does not matter. After the time is up (30 seconds is recommended), the boxes are opened and the prizes are announced.

Several Sponsors-You may choose to have 5 different sponsors for this event. If so, each would have a particular spot, identified with their logo (see your local quick printing service with help on this). Your prizes might be as follows:

1. Six pack of Pepsi
2. Full service car wash
3. Dinner for two
4. $50 gift certificate to a department store
5. Season pass to a ski resort or amusement park.

Once again, either place the prizes on the court based upon value, or try a random approach. You may want to try both a few times and judge the reaction of the crowd or participants.

TV Tunes Trivia Contest
This is a fun event, and one that attracts a sponsor relatively easy. The sponsor needs to provide a television as a grand prize. Create entry blanks (which include the sponsors logo!) with 6-8 blanks lines for the names of the featured theme songs and space for the name, address, etc., of the entrants.

As fans arrive, pass out entry blanks (have a plan for pencils as well) for the TV Tunes Trivia Contest. Prior to the game, explain the contest, and do so each time a song is played.

During each break in the action play a song for the contest. Fans must write in the name of the TV show on the entry blank. Do this throughout the game, allowing you sufficient time to collect entries and determine the winner prior to the end of the game. The winner gets the TV set and you have started a database of fans for future use.
Memory Game
The memory game can be played at nearly all sports contests, although wind or rain can cause some problems. First, determine whether you are going to award actual merchandise, cash or gift certificates as prizes. This will depend upon the sponsor, and each option works well.

Using poster board, make 8 “cards” that feature the same artwork (sponsor logo) on one side. The other side of the “card” should indicate the prize (item, amount of $, etc.). These should be laminated if possible.

Two contestants are selected to participate in this event. The first contestant picks two of the cards. They are turned over to reveal the prizes. If they match, they are a winner and the game is over. If not, they are turned over and the other contestant gets a chance. Contestants take turns until one of them turns over two cards that match. When they select two matching cards they win that prize and the game is over. Remember: large cards, large logo, and large prize identification—you want the entire crowd (or at least the home fans) to be able to see the prizes when they are turned over.

Dribble, Stuff, and Shoot!
Based upon the name, this event is intended for use during a basketball game, but can be modified for nearly any sport.

The number of contestants is flexible. They will start at one end of the court and must dribble a basketball to half court where there is a slice of pizza (or whatever food item you wish) waiting for them. They must then eat (stuff) the pizza. After they finish eating the pizza they dribble to the basket with the winner being the first one to make a shot. Obviously, an event like this can be modified. They might just dribble to half court, eat, and dribble back. They might start with pizza in their hand, dribble to half court and eat the pizza, and then dribble to the basket to make a shot. It’s not important. What makes it exciting is the “race” between participants and the “stuffing” of the food. Caution: place some type of protective covering on the playing surface where the food will be eaten and be sure to clean up any spills.

Airplane Toss
Fans are provided with a sheet of paper to use to make a paper airplane. There are several computer programs that will even print out directions for folding on a blank sheet. These sheets may be given away, or you may require that fans purchase them. If they are given away there will be more participants, but you may also have a problem with fans flying them before they should. If you charge for them, although there may be fewer participants, at least the fans have a minor investment (.25-.50 cents per plane is appropriate) and may be more likely to hold on to them until the appropriate time.
Be sure to include sponsor identification on the paper as well as a place for the fans to write their names.

At halftime place a target at center court (although this can be done with outdoor sports, the weather is a major variable and the distance from the stands to the target may be a deterrent as well). In volleyball, place it on one side of the court. For a gymnastics meet place it in the center of the mat—you get the idea!

The target could be a banner from the sponsor, or a large trash can painted with the sponsor logo. At the designated time, all fans should throw their planes at the target. The winner is the one that lands in, on, or closest to the target. It all depends upon your rules. Be sure to announce in advance what will happen if there are two or more planes that tie for the prize. Do you split the prize? Award multiple prizes? Draw one winner from those that tied? It’s up to you, but announce it in advance.

Volleyball Serving Contest
As you probably have figured out, this one is just for volleyball, and it’s pretty straightforward. Between games of a volleyball match, have two contestants participate in a serving contest. Because of time constraints, you will probably have one fan serve after the first game, and one after the second game. They must serve from the official service line at targets on the other side of the net.

The target could be a variety of items, hula-hoops, actual prizes such as school apparel, signs, etc. Keep in mind that it is rather difficult for the average fan to hit a target—so make it big.

Select two contestants. Give each of them 30 seconds to serve as many balls as they can. If you use non-prize targets, give each contestant points for every target they hit. The one with the most points wins the grand prize. If you use prizes as the targets, simply give the contestant the prize they hit.

This is a contest that works great with adults as well as with students. Caution: Be sure to have several students prepared to shag volleyballs or they will end up all over the gym!
Leadoff Hitter
Here’s one for baseball or softball. Provide fans with an opportunity to complete an entry form giving name, address, and phone number (more names for your database!).

Before your team bats, select a name from the entries. The participants will be eligible to win a prize depending upon the success of the lead-off batter. For instance, the following could be the prizes if you have an ice cream shop as a sponsor:

- Batter gets a single=an ice cream cone
- Batter gets a double=a sundae
- Batter gets a triple=a banana split
- Batter gets a home run=all fans get a coupon good for a regular ice cream cone and the contestant gets a banana split

This promotion is exciting because you have a different contestant every inning, and yet there is a chance for everyone in the stands (or you may go with everyone who is entered) to win a prize.

Dizzy Bat Race
An old favorite originally used for baseball but has made an appearance at nearly every type of sporting event. Two fans are given a baseball bat. They must lean over and rest their head on one end of the bat, with the other end on the floor. The fan must then spin around the bat 10 times (less and the person isn’t usually dizzy, more and there might be serious problems!)

After the 10 spins, the next step will vary depending upon the sport. Keep reading and you’ll see what I mean:

- Baseball: The fans race from 1st/3rd base home
- Football: The fans race to pick up a football located 15 yards from where they spin.
- Basketball: The fans pick up a basketball and dribble to the basket. First to make a shot wins.

You get the point; you can vary the rules by the sport. Swimming could be a challenge. (headline: Dizzy Swimmer Drowns!)

Caution: Be sure to have your event management staff serve as “spotters” for participants. A World Team Tennis franchise used this event (with a tennis racket in place of the bat) and had a participant take a dive and lose a couple of teeth. It wasn’t pretty!

Music Bingo
Each fan entering the game is given a Music Bingo Card. Each square of the card has the name of different music groups. Throughout the game music is played and fans mark the cards based upon the musical artist. If
There is no reason you could not have “football” bingo, “basketball” bingo or bingo for many other sports.

In all forms of Bingo, be sure to control the # of winners, unless you have a large quantity of relatively inexpensive prizes. This can be done through the design of the cards or in some other manner, such as “the first to bring a winning card to the concession stand.”
You can create a different card each time you use Music Bingo as an event.

You might select an “era” of music, a “type” of music, a specific theme, or simply a variety of tunes and artists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chuck Berry</th>
<th>Beatles</th>
<th>Chubby Checker</th>
<th>Righteous Brothers</th>
<th>Rolling Stones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Richard</td>
<td>Mitch Ryder &amp; Detroit Wheels</td>
<td>Everly Brothers</td>
<td>Four Seasons</td>
<td>Elvis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shangri-Las</td>
<td>The Supremes</td>
<td><strong>FREE</strong></td>
<td>Beach Boys</td>
<td>Martha Reeves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Wells</td>
<td>The Drifters</td>
<td>Dave Clark 5</td>
<td>Ben E. King</td>
<td>The Ventures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson Picket</td>
<td>Isley Brothers</td>
<td>The Kinks</td>
<td>Otis Redding</td>
<td>Del Shannon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Return your winning card to the Press Box!**

**Coupon**

**CROSSROADS**

CD’s and Tapes

**MUSIC BINGO**

any regular priced CD/Cassette valued at $6.99 or higher. One coupon per person per visit

8046 22nd Avenue • 555-8800

Expires June 30, 2001

**$2.00 Off**
you hear an old Beach Boys song, mark out the square (or “punch” it out if you have perforated cards) with the Beach Boys on it. Once a person makes a BINGO (completes a row, diagonally, four corners-whatever rules you decide to abide by) they win.

You can create a different card each time you use Music Bingo as an event. You might select an “era” of music, a “type” of music, a specific theme, or simply a variety of tunes and artists.

How do you control the number of winners? Here is a secret. All of the cards are not the same—they just look the same. Since you want everyone to feel like they have a chance, all of the cards should include the names of the first several performers. Then, start to eliminate a few by leaving certain musical groups off the list. For you to do this effectively, you will have to plan your playlist in advance very carefully. Finally, since you will have a limited number of prizes, you will limit the number of cards that contain the name of the group performing the last song of the night. Remember, you will seldom if ever get 100% redemption of the winning cards.

Note: you are not “fixing” the promotion. Even though you are limiting the number of possible winning cards, they are still distributed randomly. Everyone still has a chance to win. You might even have a prize drawing using the cards from everyone who did not win.

Baseball/Softball Bingo

Baseball or softball Bingo works essentially the same as Music Bingo. Replace the names of the musical groups with different offensive plays such as single, double, strike out, walk, etc. Whenever the home team is at bat, fans can cross off squares on the bingo card based upon what the batter does.

To control the number of winners, simply make sure that the majority of cards have at least one very unlikely play included in each “row” of squares. For instance, a grand slam or a ground into triple play will greatly decrease the chance of a winning card.

Half Court Shot

Here is an event that will give all fans a chance to win. Get together with a sponsor who will provide a relatively small prize for everyone in the gym if a fan can make a basket from half-court. Although the odds are long, do not convince your sponsor that they should not worry “because it will never happen.” Why? Because if it happens you might have an angry sponsor! Instead, find a sponsor who wants the publicity of giving away several hundred prizes. Free personal pizza, free movie passes, or free bottles of pop all make acceptable prizes. The majority of the excitement comes from the fan making the shot. The actual prize is just “icing on the cake.”
In an event like this you should randomly select the participants from the stands. A maximum of three contestants is recommended. Emphasize how important it is that the fans shoot from behind the half-court line. Get a banner from the sponsor and lay it on the floor at the half-court line. This provides great visibility for your sponsor and makes sure the contestant does not go over the line.

Get a few T-shirts from your sponsor and have the contestants wear them when shooting. If a fan does make a shot, it would be ridiculous to try giving away that much pizza or pop. It would be wise to develop a coupon that can be redeemed by fans at the sponsor’s location. In addition, this will create traffic in the store. Something like a movie ticket could be handed out to fans as they leave.

The same concept could be used in football (kicking a field goal), or even golf (sinking a put) so allow yourself to get creative.

**Blindfold Basketball**

There are a couple of ways to play blindfold basketball. First of all, invest in a few real blindfolds, the kind you find in a drug store that are used by people trying to get a little sleep.

Next, decide if you will have two pairs competing against each other or one pair competing against the clock.

If you have two teams, send one team to each end of the court. One partner is blindfolded and placed at the free throw line. The other partner is given the basketball and placed directly under the basket.

The object of the game is simple. One partner (the one who is not blindfolded) has to give directions to the blindfolded partner so they can make a basket. The first team to make a basket wins.

One of the most entertaining times is when you start the contest. To begin, the ball must go from the “sighted” partner to the one with the blindfold. Almost without exception, one of the teams will be caught up in the excitement and will throw the ball to the blindfolded partner! Think about it!

Also, even though you start the blindfolded partner at the free throw line, a shot can be made from anywhere on the court.

If you have only one team, it works the same way, except they must make a basket before time expires (30 seconds is recommended).

**Cellular Twist**-To shake things up a bit, try the same event, but this time have the partner give directions to their blindfolded teammate from the stands via cellular phone. It can get wild.

Although everyone likes a free t-shirt, spend some time on the design to make sure the fans will want to wear them!
**Time Out For Pizza**

Here’s a great way to get a little enthusiasm from your fans. One thing is for sure—free food never fails. During a time out, dress up one of your fellow students in a shirt from your pizza sponsor. This “pizza delivery” person should egg on the crowd by giving the pizza to the loudest section. Moving quickly around the gym creates a great deal of noise and excitement.

One particularly successful ploy . . . send the student behind the opposing teams bench. Fans get so loud the players can’t hear the coach. Just a little home court advantage!

**Scrambled Sponsor**

This activity provides an opportunity to entertain fans, give away a prize and provide exposure for your sponsors. Create cards similar to those used in the Memory Game. Each card has a letter from the name of one of your sponsors. Lay the stack of cards on the court/field and give the fan 30 seconds to unscramble the cards and spell out the name of the sponsor.

Since you want your sponsor to get visibility through this activity, it’s best when the fan wins. As a result, don’t worry about watching the clock very carefully!

Vary the sponsor each game to keep it fresh and to provide more sponsors with the visibility.

**T-shirt Toss**

If food is always a winner, T-shirts are a close second. Not only does everyone like getting a free (there’s that key word again) T-shirt, most sponsors will have some already printed and ready to go.

There are several ways you can distribute T-shirts to your fans, and create goodwill for your sponsors. In most sports the starting lineup is introduced prior to the game. Give each starter a shirt and have them throw it into the stands as they are introduced.

During the basketball season, toss a shirt into the stands for every three-point basket. For volleyball, how about tossing out a shirt for every ace or spike?

As mentioned, in most cases a business will have standard or “generic” shirts available. As part of an exciting sponsorship you may decide to design shirts that are tied into your team, and the “reason” for giving them away. For instance, if you are going to give away a shirt for each ace in a volleyball match, design a shirt that features a volleyball player or your mascot serving an ace.
At a football game, send a few students out to midfield during halftime, a quarter break or a time out. Arm them with giant water balloon slingshots and have them “shoot” T-shirts into the stands. Warning: you would be surprised at the size of the welts caused when you shoot a T-shirt at someone in the front row! Be sure to give them some arch and shoot them from far enough away.

Starting Line-Up
This is an activity that can make you a hero with kids and their parents. Select an elementary school for each athletic contest. Have the principal select a group of students, equal to the number of starters for the sport. When it is time for the starting lineup, introduce one of the elementary students for each starter. Either introduce a starter followed by an elementary student or read all of the students followed by the team. A nice touch is to get the sponsor to provide jerseys or T-shirts for the “junior starters.” Of course, these students and their parents are admitted free.

Hot or Cold
Let everyone in the arena help a fan win! This event can be played in most sports, either indoors or outdoors.

Select a fan and blindfold her. Now place a prize somewhere on the playing field. Then, spin the fan around in a circle a few times (get her a bit disoriented, not dizzy!). The rest of the fans are instructed to cheer louder as she gets closer to the prize, and softer as she gets farther away. A time limit is suggested.

Human Dot Races
Almost every stadium or arena scoreboard has some form of the original animated “dot” races developed several years ago. The original dot race featured three different colored dots that “raced” through a course on the video screen. Fans in the stands would cheer for one, and in many cases place a friendly wager on “their” dot.

Since there are few high schools that enjoy a budget that allows them to have a video screen, the Human Dot Race is the next best thing.

You will need three XXL T-shirts, each in a different bright color (they should have your sponsors logo on them!). Each fan puts on a different colored T-shirt for the race. You may decide to assign different sections of fans to cheer for each colored dot.

The rest is easy; the “dots” race each other. No, not just a running race. Try a potato sack race. Or use pairs and go for the wheelbarrow race. Maybe a three-legged race. It doesn’t matter as long as the fans are entertained by the Human Dots. Remember, the better the chance for embarrassment the more the fans enjoy the event.

“Hot or Cold” can also be done by having your mascot (cheerleader, fan, etc.) hold up a large “BOO” sign when the participant is moving away from the prize and a “CHEER” sign if they are getting closer.
Instant Vacation
Invite fans to come to your game prepared to win an Instant vacation. Because of the nature of the prize, it may be wise to restrict it to individuals over 18.

With a travel agent as a sponsor, provide an “Instant Vacation” to the winner of this event. And instant is the key. The winner will leave from the arena/stadium via limousine directly to the airport. That’s right, the fans that enter must bring their luggage for the weekend trip.

Have the entrants meet before halftime to review the rules of the event. During halftime, place several pieces of luggage on the court/field (you will need at least one piece of luggage for each entrant). Inside each piece of luggage place a travel related prize. In one piece, place a sign that says Congratulations! You’re Going to (destination)!

The individual who picks the right suitcase is introduced to the fans and then driven away in a limo to the airport for a weekend getaway for them and a guest.

Suit Up!
The average fan has no idea how difficult it is to put on a football uniform. So why not let them find out? Have three fans stand along the sidelines for this halftime promotion. Each has a football uniform lying in front of them (be sure you get the largest uniform possible). Don’t include all of the pads, but be sure to have at least the shoulder pads.

The event is simple . . . but can be very entertaining! The first contestant to get fully dressed wins! With extra-large uniforms, and a helmet that is sure to fall all over their head, the fans in the stands are treated to a little unexpected comedy. (This event works best with girls who are less likely to be familiar with some of the odd-looking pads and uniform parts!)

Quarterback Challenge
This can be a great pregame event to entertain and occupy fans as well as a quarter break promotion. Paint a picture of a receiver with outstretched hands on a piece of plywood. If you can’t find an artist simply find a picture and project it onto the board and copy it.

Next, cut a hole in the board large enough for a football to easily fit through (larger hole=more winners). And finally, attach a net to the backside of the board so any ball that goes through will be caught in the net. This will eliminate any discussion as to whether or not the ball went through the hole.

If you have a sponsor (and you should!) place their logo on the board as well. Determine a fair and yet challenging distance from which to throw
and you can now operate the Quarterback Challenge! Use a slightly smaller version of a football since many participants will be kids. You may even have two different types of footballs and two different lines to throw from depending upon the age of the participant.

If this is a pregame event it works great to give everyone who can hit the target a small prize. Or, make it more challenging and require them to hit two of three for a better prize.

As a quarter break event, have one contestant throw as many through the hole as possible in 30 seconds during the first quarter break. During the third quarter break have the second contestant do the same. The individual with the most throws in the target wins the top prize, with the other fan receiving a participant’s prize (sounds better than a consolation prize).

Eating Contests
An oldie but goodie! Any type of eating contest can be exciting for the fans as well as the participants. As you might expect, messy or difficult to eat foot items get the best crowd response. A few suggestions include pie, spaghetti, ribs, or even a slurpee with the ever present fear of a “brain freeze.” Add to the fun by not allowing the fans to use their hands.

Be sure, particularly if you are doing this on the actual playing surface, that you use some type of tarp or ground cover. One warning, it would be wise to always make sure you have someone with medical training because choking is a real possibility. If you have a doctor or nurse make them part of the act by having them observe the participants . . . ham it up a little.

Mascot Night
Take a close look around your community and you may be surprised at how many mascots there are. Check with area sports teams, the police and fire department, museums, etc. In addition, many franchises and companies either have a mascot, or have access to one. Contact Pepsi, Coke, 7-Up, Subway and the list goes on.

A Mascot Night featuring a halftime basketball game will attract the elementary school crowd, and they will bring parents. Or, simply having them at any sporting event to “meet and greet” fans will draw the kids.

Add to the fun by allowing fans to have their picture taken with their favorite mascot or the entire group. Get a sponsor to offset the cost of film.
Salute to the Military

This works at any sporting event, but perhaps best with football and basketball. Contact all veterans groups and let them know you are having a Salute To Military Night and offer them as many complimentary tickets as they would like.

Contact the area Armed Forces Recruiters and invite them to show off military vehicles and place other items on display. It won’t be difficult to get recruiters to attend an event that involves a lot of teenagers since they are their prime market.

Check for an Armed Forces (Army, Air Force, Navy, etc.) Reserve band to perform the National Anthem. If you cannot get the entire band, there is a good chance you can get a member or two. Seek out the oldest veteran in your community and make them Honorary Captain. Look for other veterans to recognize for various reasons. There must be a veteran that played sports for your school . . . bring them in.

Can you have a fly over . . . or maybe just a helicopter delivering the game ball? Be sure to have a moment of silence for those who gave their lives defending our country. Get creative . . . there are several options for making this both a big attendance night and a genuine show of respect for the Armed Forces.

Be on the ball with press releases to your local media since these types of events often attract their interest.

Adopt A Player (or Adopt A School)

Select members of your team, especially your starters, and have them get “adopted” by their elementary school. Then, pick a particular game at which everyone from the elementary school comes to support his or her adopted player. In basketball you can have a game for every player, in football or other you can combine nights. On this night, students from the elementary school should be selected to do the following: be ball boy/ball girl, honorary captain, game ball delivery, sing the National Anthem and even participate in your Fan Fun events throughout the game.

Make this an “X” Elementary School Night, but tie it in to having them cheer for their adopted player. One lucky student can sit on the bench (or behind the bench), hand out placards with the adopted players name or jersey number on it, have the cheerleaders create a special cheer for that player, bring his or her parents to the game and treat them like royalty, etc. You get the idea, just have fun with it. The goal is to create excitement for both the elementary school and the adopted player.

If it works out well, many of the fans will return for other games and cheer for the team, not just their adopted player. You are trying to build a little brand loyalty, and your team is the brand.
Pack The Place/Jam The Gym
Whatever you call it, your only goal is to get as many people out to a game as possible. If you have sellouts or near sellouts for most of your games, skip this idea. If you struggle, keep reading. This activity works particularly well for women’s basketball if the team has a hard time drawing fans.

Pick a game, and make sure it is early in the season and on a good night (Friday if your team plays then). Put your marketing skills to work and promote the game big time. Offer free or discounted tickets. Give a prize to the elementary and/or junior high school that brings the most fans, have a major promotion that night or bring in a guest that will draw fans.

While you are putting all your effort into promoting the game and getting “seats in the seats” do not forget the second phase. Wouldn’t it be a waste to have a packed house at the game only to have them be bored? Make sure your entertainment is top notch. Get as many fans involved as possible. Play fun music. Give away premium items, etc.

There is a good chance that this is the first time many of the fans have attended one of your games. Show them a good time and you increase the chances of them becoming a real fan and returning for more games.

If you have an “official” attendance record, this would be a good time to try and beat that record. Fans like to rally behind such efforts and be a part of something big. If you don’t have an official record, don’t worry about it. Make one up! Make it a believable number, and a challenging one, and then beat it. If you do beat it, you will now have an official record to shoot for next year.

Family Night
High school sports are often positioned as fun and affordable family entertainment. Select a game and promote it as family night. Create a special admission price for the entire family and have family members participate in Fan Fun events and other activities. This is another activity to promote heavily at the area elementary schools.

Uniform Night
Whatever sport you are promoting, have a special night when anyone (generally youth) wearing a team uniform for that sport is admitted free. With all of the soccer, football, basketball, and baseball leagues for youth there should be a significant pool of potential fans. Once again, get the elementary-aged fans and you win twice: They come with their parents and you create “brand” loyalty. Be sure to have some of these fans participate in your Fan Fun events.

Alumni Night
Although most schools have a homecoming football game, there is nothing stopping you from an Alumni Night for any sport. Invite all graduates

"Pack the Place" is an activity that is effective for a team that does not draw well. In fact, generating revenue is not a key—getting fans in the stands is the goal. If possible, distribute free tickets in order to get a better turnout. The reason you do this early in the season is to encourage fans to continue to come to games.
and consider recognizing the one that travels the farthest, the oldest one (or one who graduated “first”), the class with the most alumni in attendance, etc.

**Fan Appreciation Night**
At the end of the year (or why not at the beginning?) Have a fan appreciation night. Treat your fans like royalty: discount or free tickets, food, all kinds of prizes and contests, etc. One reason this works well at the beginning of the season is that it encourages fans to return for future games.

**Others**
The above are just a few of the possibilities. Use your imagination and develop a “2 for 1” Night, “Senior Citizens” Night, “Food Bank” Night, “Kids Klub” Night, or “School Colors” Night. Surf here for more ideas [http://www.gameops.com/assets/pdf/promo_days.pdf](http://www.gameops.com/assets/pdf/promo_days.pdf)

How important are “theme” nights for sports? Check out minor league baseball, where you will find the real creative marketers, and see for yourself. Minor leagues are known for the frequency and uniqueness of their promotions. Below are some examples, taken from the web site of the St. Paul Saints (spsaints.com). These are a few of the promotional themes for Saints’ home games during the 2003 season. The marketing genius behind the rise of the Saints is Mike Veeck, son of perhaps the greatest promoter ever, William “Bill” Veeck. Look over this schedule of promotions, and use it for a jump-start to your own creative ideas:

**May**
16 Exhibition Opener. Be the first on your block to see the 2003 Saints.
17 Our second exhibition game. It will be even better than the first.
23 Opening Night with Calendars presented by Carl Buddig meats
24 Fireworks presented by Minnesota State Lottery
25 Bat Giveaway presented by Rainbow Foods

**June**
6 Schools’ Out for the Summer presented by Twin City Co-Op
7 Inflatable Bat Giveaway presented by J.P. Morgan
8 Rain Poncho Giveaway presented by Rainbow Foods
9 (Your) Back, Back Back Hair Gone presented by Sona Laser Center
10 A mooooving experience. Cow Appreciation Night presented by Minnetronix
11 Our annual midweek game. Saints/Twins DH package. Just like the old days.
16 I’ve got the Blues, baby. It’s a tribute to the Blues.
17 Famous “Frank and Beans” Night by Old Fart Baked Beans Co.
18 Brush With Fame (toothbrush giveaway) presented by Delta Dental
23 Saints’ cap giveaway presented by Lucky Charms from General Mills.
24 Celebration Of Stupid Festivals presented by Leonard, Street, and Deinard
25 Saints’ stress ball giveaway presented by Memorial Blood Centers
26 Salute to Local Heroes (with fire helmets) presented by Regions Hospital
27 Win Bill Murray’s money. Eight fans get a chance to pocket $50,000
28 Back to Back Movie Night with a Saints’ coffee mug giveaway presented by Lifestyle Chiropractic
29 No joking. We honor famous Poles throughout history.

July
1 Happy Half Year Celebration. Kite giveaway presented by TCF Bank.
2 Lincoln loses. You win. Get a free GA ticket to another game if the Saints win on Guaranteed Loss Night. Sponsored by Wendy’s.
3 Independence Day with Fireworks presented by Minnesota State Lotto
8 Cheerios Book Giveaway presented by General Mills.
9 Celebrate the ghost of Christmas past with a Christmas tree giveaway
10 Plastic bat giveaway presented by Fruit By the Foot from General Mills.
14 This bobblehead is divine. St. Paul Bobblehead giveaway.
15 Calling all collectors. Saints’ team card giveaway.
16 Relive history. A salute to the Negro Leagues.
17 Irish Night presented by Mulchy Inc.

August
1 Check out this night presented by Deluxe Corp.
2 Train Whistle giveaway presented by Local Motion
3 Light up the day with a flashlight giveaway presented by Gillette-Duracell.
8 White elephant gift exchange. Who knows what you might get?
9 Seat and Cushion Night presented by Clock and Globe
10 A Picture Is Worth a $1000. Camera Night giveaway presented by ProEx
11 Teddy Bear Appreciation Night presented by Minnesota Survivors
12 Minnesota’s Funniest Home Videos will be on display for all to see. Sponsored by Midwest Dairy.
14 Minnesota Nice night. A very happy logo baseball presented by Gustavus Adolphus College.
15 Celebrate the Saints’ Three Million Fan March presented by Carleton College.
16 Randy Moss Hood Ornament giveaway presented by Toshiba.
17 Teacher Appreciation Day (with backpack giveaway) presented by General Mills.
29 Fan Appreciation Night. We give you the shirt off our backs.
30 Fireworks presented by Minnesota State Lottery
31 Grand Ol’ Day at the Ballpark presented by M.R. Studios
Take some time and go to the St. Paul Saints web-site (spsaints.com) as well as other minor league baseball web sites for creative and innovative promotional ideas!

Someone has to be in the booth on headphones coordinating the cheer squad, band, on-field events, sound effects, etc.
Publicity

The most common definition of publicity is “free” advertising. It’s true; the purpose of publicity is to get information about your organization or team placed in the media. The right kind of publicity can help create a positive image (see public relations) or help the organization maintain their existing image.

In addition to being free, publicity is viewed differently than advertising. Many look at advertising somewhat cautiously. After all, if you purchase advertising you are obviously going to place your team in the best possible light. Consumers may question the honesty of an ad. Publicity is different. Most consumers feel that if something is covered by the news media, it must be true. Despite some evidence to the contrary, the media is still considered unbiased.

The down side of publicity is that you give up control of your message. You may send a well-written and detailed press release only to have the media edit it to a statement or two. They decide what is important, not you. And of course, there is negative publicity as well. Once again, you would not run an advertisement about the ticket snafu at last night’s game. The media, however, may very well make it into a story.

With publicity you often get the good with the bad. The challenge is getting as much “good” as possible. The basic news or press release remains the most common method of generating media coverage.

Press Release

One of the major sources of publicity is a well-written press or news release. The press release is the most popular method of communicating information about your event, team, player, etc. to the media. At that point, it is up to each media outlet to determine if the press release is newsworthy.

Your events will typically present three opportunities for sending a press release.

- **Before**-A story in advance of the event provides an opportunity to generate publicity that may help with attendance or participation.
During—Media coverage that includes photos of the event, reports on results, coverage of special entertainers, etc.

After—Follow-up stories could include discussions on the results, impact on future games/events, special performers, etc.

These opportunities exist for nearly every event. For instance, during the glory years of the Chicago Bulls, a high school invited their famous announcer Ray Clay to do the public address announcing at their “Bulls Night” game.

A pre-event press release generated an article telling of the special night, the promotions, and specifically the appearances of Bennie the Bull (mascot) and announcer Ray Clay. The press release no doubt resulted in increased attendance as well.

The “during” coverage included a picture of Clay behind the microphone and Bennie the Bull entertaining kids at the game.

And finally, a few days after the game there was an in-depth article based on an interview with Ray Clay.

It is obvious that the multiple press releases sent to the local media resulted in coverage from a variety of angles, in this case primarily from the print media.

The Elements of a Press Release
A typical press release will follow several general guidelines. Here are the basic elements of a press release:

Release Statement: The words FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE should appear in the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead. You should capitalize every letter. Of course, if you do not want the information released immediately, replace this with TO BE RELEASED ON . The stated date should be the earliest date on which the information should be released.

Contact Information: Skip a line or two after the above release statement and list the name, title, and telephone and fax numbers of your spokesperson—the person with the most information. It is important to give a home number since reporters often work on deadlines that do not allow them to contact you during regular business hours. Even better, provide a wireless number.

Headline: Skip two lines after your contact information and use boldface type. The headline should not necessarily be written as though the media will use it. Rather, it should be written in an effort Maybe the news is not of interest to the editor. You may have to
Publicity stunts are difficult to create, but the payoff can be significant. Although it would be too demanding to expect a publicity stunt for every event, extra effort should be expended to generate publicity for “special” events or significant games.

to get the attention of the media. You need them to read the release in order to “sell” your information.

**Dateline:** This should be the city your press release is issued from and the date you are mailing your release. If you are sending to local media only, it is not necessary.

**Lead Paragraph:** The first paragraph needs to grab the readers’ attention and should contain the relevant information to your message such as the five W’s (who, what, when, where, why).

**Text:** The main body of your press release is where your message should fully develop.

**Format of the Press Release**
As far as the format is concerned, there are a few general guidelines. The overall layout will likely vary from one organization to another. Here are some common guidelines regarding the format of your release:

- Use 8 1/2” x 11” paper. You may use team or school letterhead of this size.
- Use a minimum of one-inch margins on each side of the page. Two inch on the top is recommended. Single-space is preferred if longer than two paragraphs.
- Capitalize the first letter of all words in the headline (with the exception of: “a” “an” “the”, or prepositions such as: “of”, “to”, or “from”). The combination of upper and lower case makes it easier to read. To further clarify... DO NOT USE ALL CAPITAL LETTERS!
- Complete the paragraph on one page instead of carrying it over onto the next page. Most press releases will be one page.
- Use only one side of each sheet of paper.
- Use the word “more” between two dashes and center it at the bottom of the page to let reporters know that another page follows:
  -more-
- Use three numbers symbols immediately following the last paragraph to indicate the end of the press release:
  `###`

**No Coverage . . . What’s The Problem?**
If you consistently send out press releases and seldom, if ever, see any coverage from the media—there might be a problem.
Maybe the news is not of interest to the editor. You may have to send it to a different editor. Remember, just because you are working with a sports team doesn’t mean that the sports pages are the only place for your news. How about a feature article? Look for interesting angles on your team members, coaches, stats crew, or manager. An article for the women’s page on the benefits for girls involved in athletics could get the editors attention. Wouldn’t some of your activities be great entertainment alternatives . . . then contact the entertainment editor!

Press releases should be limited to one-page if at all possible.

Be careful how you write your headline and lead sentences. If you send the editors in the wrong direction you may have your entire release sent to the “circular file.”

Reporters are busy. If they have to contact you for missing information you will not have as good of a chance of getting coverage. Smaller papers, and in particular weekly papers, may simply print your release in its entirety-if it has all the information.

Don’t go overboard patting you and your organization on the back. Another “turn off” to the media is going on and on about your wonderful corporate partners. Sure, they’re wonderful, but that is not necessarily “news.”

Does your release have a strong angle? Some of the keys an editor will look for include drama, human interest, a local touch, something odd or out of the ordinary, and timeliness (a tie in to a current event).

Publicity Stunts
An effective means of generating media coverage is through publicity stunts. In other words, develop an event or activity with the sole purpose of obtaining media coverage for your team, organization, or major event. It is difficult to draw the attention of the media, so you must make sure your “stunt” is creative. It should be something out of the ordinary, or you will not accomplish your goal of getting media coverage. Examples include:

A game by the Harlem Globetrotters is publicized through public appearances made by one of their players a few days before the actual game.

Your football team decides to allow fans to submit suggestions for plays. Then, they actually use one in a game.

You invite a member of the media to submit a football play and use it (at least their station/paper will cover it!)

You have pictures of your mascot printed in the paper and encourage fans to put the picture in a window in their house. The mascot then delivers prizes to houses that display the picture.
Your mascot is missing and the radio station/newspaper receive ransom notes with clues. Whoever finds the mascot is rewarded appropriately.

You need a new football field so you hold football practice in the parking lot of the district offices prior to a school board meeting.

Whatever you do, remember to work “with” the media. A mutually beneficial relationship will bring you more coverage than always trying to “pull one over” on someone. Help them when they need a story or interview and they are more likely to be cooperative in the future.

Below is a sample press release you can use as a guide.

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**Flint Flyers**
1442 Stone Avenue • Beloit, Wisconsin 53511 • 801-555-FLY1

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Kelly Kent
801-555-FLY1 (W)
801-555-1523 (H)

**Flyers In Youth Movement**

(Beloit, WI) The Flint Flyers are pleased to provide Beloit youth with affordable and wholesome entertainment in the form of the Flyers Kids’ Klub.

Flyers Kids’ Klub members will receive free admission to all home sporting events, an official Kids’ Klub membership card, button and hat, special parties each season, and a reserved seating section. In addition, each member will receive a free birthday lunch courtesy of Kids’ Klub sponsor *All U Can Eat.*

Membership to the Flyers Kids’ Klub is available for just $5.00. To join, simply send the name, address, age and elementary school of the member, with a check payable to Flyers Kids’ Klub to:

Flint Flyers
1442 Stone Avenue
Beloit, WI 53511

Phone 555-FLY1 with questions.

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Distribute a press release before, “during,” and after an event.
Swimming doesn’t get much attention in the media. That’s a fact — at least for most swim clubs. But it doesn’t need to be that way. If you understand what the media is looking for, and how to work with it, and if you plan your work and work your plan, your club has an excellent chance of getting media attention. What follows is a brief explanation of how the publicity game is played - and what you need to do to get media coverage.

**Some basic points to remember:**

· Effective publicity doesn’t happen by accident (at least over the long term). Someone from your club — whether a committed volunteer or a coach — has to be responsible for it, and has to work at it.

· It takes a plan — and hard work over time. It takes cold calls, lots of writing, and lots of continued effort.

· Education is a big part of your job. Keep in mind that most editors and reporters don’t know the first thing about our sport. You understand the jargon, you understand the significance of your swimmers’ achievements, you know which meets in your calendar are routine and which are special. All of this you have to communicate in your contacts with the media and in the written material you prepare for them.

· Be persistent. Even if you do everything right, your efforts may not always pay off at first. But be patient, and keep working your plan.

· Understand that the news media is not in business to give publicity to your club, they’re in business to bring the news to their audience. If they report your news, what results is publicity for your club — but remember that that’s not their job, just the result from your point of view. When you write them a thank-you note for using your news, thank them for doing more to bring the news of our sport to their audience, not for the wonderful publicity they’ve given your club (although it’s quite true that their coverage may have done just that).

· There are two things that fill a newspaper or the news segment on TV or radio: news and advertising. What you are providing is news, NOT advertising. Nothing you can do will convince an editor more quickly of your ignorance of the news business than to call your news advertising. It’s not advertising (unless you pay for the space), it’s news. And remember, it’s always the media’s right to decide what news runs and in what form it runs. A big part of your job is to make your news attractive to an editor and to deliver it in a format and a fashion so that it’s easy for an editor to use.

**What the media needs and expects from you:**

· Information that is comprehensible to and genuinely interesting to their audience.

· Information that is timely. Do you think that the results of a professional basketball or football game would be delivered to the media three or four days after the event — and that they would still be interesting to readers if delivered that late? Of course not! What the media wants and expects is news delivered in a timely fashion.
- Professionalism. In addition to the above, that means an understanding of the environment that the media works in. Find out what their deadlines are, and respect them. Find out how they prefer to receive information — by hard copy, fax, email, or over the phone. Learn and use the formats in which they prefer to receive the news. (Follow this link for more on news releases.)

**The key types of news**

There are two. First is hard news. Hard news reports an event, and loses its value as that event recedes in time. The headline stories of the day are hard news. Most of what you see in a newspaper or on TV or hear on the radio is hard news. Your meet results, your swimmers’ qualifying for a national meet, the announcement of a new coach or the honorees at your team’s annual awards banquet — these are all examples of hard news.

Features are the second type of news. Although a feature will usually have a news hook — something which ties it to an event, which makes it relevant from a news point of view — the emphasis is more on background and personalities. News hook aside, a feature doesn’t date — if it sits for a few days, no big deal.

On the sports side, a feature may be a profile of an athlete: his or her background, what makes him or her tick, what sets him or her apart. A good feature works with a quirk — maybe your athlete is headed for Juniors (that’s the news hook), starred for your local high school team last year (that’s background that local sports editors usually appreciate), works out four hours a day (that’s what sets your athlete apart, makes your athlete tick), but maybe she also plays lead trumpet in the school jazz band or writes poetry or has a pet saluki — something a bit unusual. Don’t hesitate to sell those quirks as part of your pitch — the media loves them!

**How do you start getting publicity for your club?**

- Gather background information on your club and on your swimmers. Develop a fact sheet with a couple of paragraphs of key information: your club’s name, your affiliation (mention your LSC and USA Swimming affiliations), where you work out, how many swimmers you have, ages of your swimmers, how many kids you’ve sent to regional/LSC championship/national championship meets, how well you’ve done in local championship meets, name(s) of coach(es), etc. etc. Once you’ve done that you can put together one-page biographies of your top-notch swimmers — the ones who are going to regional/national meets and winning consistently in local meets. Get black and white head shots of these swimmers made and have them on file (color slides too if you’re getting TV publicity).

- Get to know the media you’re targeting. Make a list of the media outlets (print and broadcast) that cover your serving area. Be realistic, especially if you’re in a major metropolitan area. Start local and expand your horizon. Don’t ignore anything — even the throwaway weeklies that land in your driveway. Read the sports sections of the local newspapers, watch the sport segments of the TV news. Review carefully for potential outlets for your news. In addition to sports, do they have a youth/high school section? Do they take announcements? If there are several teams in a given newspaper’s serving area, it may be worth approaching the media as a group, and working together to get publicity for the sport.
Identify potential stories. In addition to meet results, your news can include swimmers qualifying for and attending camps, major regional and national meets; recruitment-oriented activities; learn-to-swim programs; honorees at team award nights; and new coaches. And don’t forget announcements of tryouts and other events of general interest to the community.

Get acquainted. Once you’ve done some groundwork, it’s time to start making calls. You’ll usually find the phone numbers of the editors on the editorial page or in the section you’re targeting. Call the sports editor of your local daily or the news editor of your local weekly. Morning or early afternoon is best for morning newspapers; afternoon for afternoon newspapers; mid-week or late in the week is typically best for weekly newspapers (most publish mid-week and are on deadline Monday and Tuesday). Introduce yourself and tell them you want to start getting your team’s news to them. Is there a specific reporter you should be working with? What are their deadlines? How should you send them your news — by fax, email, or through the mail? Keep good notes, and build a list of contacts at all the media outlets in your area this way.

When you have news, always call first. Once you’ve made those contacts, keep working them. A well-written news release is your most substantial tool for getting your news to the media, but personal contact with an editor or writer, in advance, is critical. If you have an idea for a feature, the telephone is how you present it.

Be persistent. Keep sending your news, and keep suggesting feature ideas. And be realistic. Don’t complain when your news doesn’t get picked up, and when the editors you talk to seem disinterested in your story ideas. Just don’t give up the next time you have a story. One of the reasons for calling routinely when you have news is to help give the media an idea of the relative importance of your news.

Tell a continuing story. Link your current news to previous releases you’ve sent out and to past stories that have run (or aired). Build threads to previous coverage.

Remember that it’s about people. Don’t just think hard news — think features. USA Swimming’s excellent Club Publicity Guide (available from USA Swimming) makes the point that the real story is about the people involved in the sport, and suggests focusing on selling swimmers, not swimming. Once you’ve made those contacts, it’s just a matter of following through. You’ll need to make arrangements with your coaches to get the results of a meet, and to get your coach to interpret the results for you. Put together a news release and get it off to your contacts in time to meet their deadlines. If an editor seems interested in a feature idea you’ve suggested, you do everything possible to make it happen.

Covering your meet in person
How do you get the media to cover your meet in person? First of all, think visual. Your local paper may not want to send a reporter to cover your swim meet, but suggest that they send a photographer. Second, work to build the relationship. They have to know you and understand the value of your news and the importance of your story. Third, be realistic. Media outlets are like any other business these days. They have scarce resources and have to allocate them in a realistic matter. If you have a major meet and your local media outlet is going to cover it, you’ll need to take care of the following:

Be sure the media knows when and where to be. If it’s a trials and finals meet, make sure they know what time finals start and when the action is.
·Be sure there’s a quiet place, a phone line, and access to hospitality.
·Work with coaches — in advance — to help facilitate the media’s access to athletes.
·Stay with them to serve as a resource — stand by, answer questions, give them background, help explain what’s going on.

The high school connection
One issue which comes up frequently among swim clubs who have worked hard on publicity is what they see as a bias on the part of local media toward high school sports. Maybe the perception, say, is that your local paper covers high school swim meets and ignores USA Swimming meets, which are year-round instead of seasonal and frequently feature higher-level competition. Part of that may be habit on the media’s part — the audience for high school sports news is well-established, no sports editor is ever going to be shot for publishing a high school sports story, and the high schools are used to feeding their news to the media. Maybe it’s just the latter — that the high schools are getting their results out and you’re not.

The best long-run solution is to use the media’s focus on high school sports to your advantage. In your news, stress your swimmers’ high school connections. If your senior swimmers are swimming for, and starring on, local high school teams, mention that in the news releases you issue that feature these swimmers. Tell a continuing story, so that the editors, and ultimately the readers, will begin to associate these athletes just as strongly with your club as with their high school. Also, encourage your local high school swim coaches (who may be USA Swimming coaches too) to mention the USA Swimming affiliation of their key swimmers in their news releases — so that the “continuing story” is reinforced both ways.

Getting Help
Three ideas for improving your effectiveness at publicity. The first is pretty obvious — if you have a parent on your team who is in the media business, get him or her involved in your publicity effort. Although this is a bit cynical for my taste, I have even heard of teams that have gone out of their way to recruit the local news editor’s kids for their team.

Another idea: if you have a college or university nearby, check and see if they offer any communications, public relations, or journalism programs. If they do, there may be some students (maybe even a former swimmer!) who might be looking for an opportunity for some practical experience and might be willing to work for your team as a volunteer. Sports publicity is a big speciality these days, and there may be several students looking for practical experience. Check out the web site of the Public Relations Student Society of America to see if a school near you has an affiliated program, or check out the school’s web site.

Also, the communications office at USA Swimming has a variety of resources for helping clubs learn how to do publicity more effectively. Check out the Club Toolbox on the USA Swimming web site for a variety of web-based publicity and media relations resources.

Your major tool in communicating with the media is a news release. Follow this link for a look at what goes into a successful release.

Public Relations

Public relations is a critical component of a marketing plan. Public relations is simply any activity designed to create good will for a business or enhance its image. The “publics” of PR include employees, customers and the community. Publicity is often an excellent, and very inexpensive, source of good PR. However, since publicity cannot be controlled it is essential to include planned public relations efforts in your marketing plan to augment any positive publicity.

Cause marketing, an attempt to link a sponsors marketing directly to a not-for-profit organization or cause, has become an important component of a public relations plan for any property. Cause marketing is, basically, a tie-in to a charity.

The increase in the use of cause marketing is primarily the result of two factors. For one, as competition in the business world intensifies, the bottom line (profit) becomes increasingly important. As a result, philanthropy often takes a back seat. Philanthropy is similar to sponsorship because it involves providing cash, product or services to not-for-profit organizations or events. The big difference, however, is that a philanthropic contribution is made with no commercial expectations. It is the lack of concern for a commercial benefit (as in profit) that often pushes these items far down the priority list. Cause marketing efforts benefit the charity as well as the business.

The second factor, according to several surveys, is that cause marketing is, plain and simple, effective. Studies indicate 8 in 10 Americans say they have a more positive image of companies that are aligned with social issues. Even more impressive is the fact that two-thirds of the respondents indicated they were likely to change brands to support one tied to a good cause.

A nationwide survey conducted by Cone Communications, Inc., (coneinc.com) in 1998 found the following:

- 63% of the respondents were very likely or somewhat likely to consider a company’s reputation for charitable donations when buying...
Fibrosis through the annual golf tourney. The money has been used to establish a CF resource center at St. Vincent Hospital, hold semi-annual medical clinics (so patients don’t have to travel to Milwaukee or Madison) and train doctors and medical staff in the latest CF treatments. (www.packers.com/community)

As another example, a high school worked with an insurance company to donate $10 for each 3-point basket made by the men and women’s basketball teams to the local KinShip program.

A motorsports cause-marketing program demonstrates the opportunity to get creative and to provide significant support for a particular cause. The program, known as “Team CAN” joined driver Buzz Calkin and Bradley Motorsports with the Cure Autism Now Foundation (CAN) to field a car in the 2000 Indianapolis 500.

The program featured CAN as the title sponsor. The car had a 1/2 black and 1/2 white paint scheme representing the belief that there is no gray area when it comes to raising awareness for autism and funding for research.

More unique than the sports/cause marketing partnership itself, is the fact that CAN received its signage on the race car for free. The support from the team and cosponsors/partners allowed CAN to participate as a title sponsor. In exchange, the cosponsors receive the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of aligning themselves with the Indianapolis 500, as well as a good cause.

In addition, the honor of driving the pace car in the 2000 race went to CAN’s national spokesman, TV and movie standout Anthony Edwards. Edwards stars in the television program “ER”.

This successful program provided exposure for CAN and their corporate cosponsors through TV, radio, print, and the Internet. (see www.teamcan.org/ for great pictures and sponsorship details.)

Photos on the following page show the car, transport truck and driver uniform. These photos also show the locations of signage/patches for corporate cosponsors.

Beyond specific cause marketing, it is critical that teams and businesses participate in activities and programs that help create a positive image with the community, consumers, and fans. From the team perspective, recent involvement by the Utah Jazz of the NBA includes the following sampling of their community relations efforts (utahjazz.com):

JR. JAZZ
One of the largest youth sports programs in the world, the Jr. Jazz involved 65,000 youth between the ages of eight and 18. With participants
in four different states, young players have the opportunity to learn basketball fundamentals and practice those skills as they play games against other youth in their league. The highlight for many youth is when a Jazz player makes a personal appearance at their recreation center. Jazz players run drills, answer questions, and leave a picture for each child in the program. Jr. Jazz sites outside a 50-mile radius from the Delta Center are provided with a player clinic during the summer months, when a player takes to the road and travels to outlying locations.

BE A TEAM PLAYER – READ!
Schools along the Wasatch Front who hold one Scholastic Book Fair are eligible to participate in “Be A Team Player - Read!” a program that logs students out-of-school reading time during the month of February. The 12 schools whose students record the most minutes reading will have a Jazz player visit their school, and students will be treated to an ice cream party.

NORTHWEST MIDDLE SCHOOL
Students at Northwest Middle School who receive only A’s and B’s on their report card receive a T-shirt from the Utah Jazz. Those shirts, when worn on Fridays, allow the students special privileges at their school.

CHRISTMAS HOSPITAL VISITS
A tradition for Jazz players, coaches, dancers and Bear is the annual Christmas visit to Shriner’s Hospital and Primary Children’s Medical Center. The entourage goes from room to room, visits with children and gives autographed Jazz mini-basketballs as presents. This special visit brings Christmas cheer to children unable to be home for the holidays.

TOYS FOR TOTS
Jazz fans are encouraged to bring a new, unwrapped toy to two Jazz home games before Christmas. Partnering with the Marines and their Toys for Tots program, the Jazz collect toys for children who need help during the holiday season. A drawing for an autographed Jazz basketball is held at halftime for those who have brought a toy to the game.

JAZZ AND GEOGRAPHY
Trivia spotlighting the Utah Jazz and geography facts on places where the team travels, runs in the Deseret News sports section every other week for 10 weeks. Sets of newspapers are made available for teachers who wish to participate in this program. A drawing is held during halftime of a game, with the grand prize being a classroom visit by a Jazz player.
COMMUNITY MVP
Utah Power and Light and the Utah Jazz have teamed up to honor outstanding volunteers in our community. Each month a community MVP will be honored at halftime of a Jazz game where they will be presented with a Utah Jazz jacket. Nominations can be made in the categories of education, environment, public safety and health and human services.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
A long-term partnership between the Utah Jazz and Boy Scouts of America continues with boys who sell the most tickets to Scout-A-Rama being invited to the Delta Center for dinner. Winners are acknowledged at halftime of a Jazz game, and the Jazz award basketballs, tickets other prizes to scouts who meet selling goals.

THANKSGIVING DINNER
A traditional Thanksgiving complete with all the trimmings is served to over 1500 homeless and low-income people in the Delta Center the day before Thanksgiving. The Jazz and Delta Center partnered with the Salt Lake Mission and Utah Food Services to provide this holiday meal.

GIRL SCOUTS OF AMERICA
The Utah Jazz has teamed up with Girl Scouts of America, encouraging young girls to increase their sales of Girl Scout Cookies. Girls selling over 1,000 boxes of Girl Scout Cookies spend an evening in a Jazz Club Suite, having dinner and enjoying a Jazz game. The top three sellers are acknowledged at halftime of the game on center court. Girl Scout Cookie sales jumped significantly the first year of this program, while the number of girls participating increased more than 400%.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM
Youth were encouraged to read during the summer months as part of the Salt Lake County Library’s summer reading program. The Utah Jazz donated game tickets for the 2002-03 basketball season to the 2500 teens that completed the reading program.

PSA CONTEST
During the 2002-03 season, the Utah Jazz will implement a program for high school students in the state of Utah. Students submit a script for a 30 second PSA entitled “Read to Achieve.” The winning script will be produced and run during Jazz games in the month of March. The winners will also receive $5000 dollars for a reading and learning center at their school.

Effective community relations programs are not limited to the professional ranks. Many colleges and universities are involved in sold PR efforts. For instance, the Wisconsin Badgers (uwbadgers.com/badgers_give_back/index.aspx) sponsor “Hoops for Hope”
The event, held at The Kohl Center, featured members of the Wisconsin women’s basketball team and coach Jane Albright along with corporate partner Oscar Mayer Foods in a free all-day basketball skills clinic.

The event encourages the children from the Boys and Girls Club, Atwood Community Center and East Madison Community Center to reach their full potential through team sports and education. Boys and girls ages 9-12 were coached in basketball and team-building skills.

In addition to shooting, passing and dribbling with the Badgers, Hoops for Hope featured nationally known motivational speaker and ball handler Robyn Rodgers, as well as area Celebrities.

The event wrapped up after the kids used their new basketball skills to play in games and contests with the volunteers. Each child was given a Hoops for Hope T-shirt and duffel bag.

Perhaps the most common public relations effort of college teams is a “kids” program. Nearly every college or university Athletic Department has a program targeted at young fans. While the programs or clubs provide affordable participation by youth, they also hope to develop a lifelong fan. The benefits of these programs to the youth are rather standard.

For instance, kids who join Cosmo’s Kids Club (http://192.108.102.222/kidsclub/) at Brigham Young University enjoy the following benefits:

- Two tickets to a football game
- Four tickets to a men’s basketball game
- An “all sport” pass that allows admission to all other sports
- Access to kids tailgate section at football/basketball games
- A Cosmo’s Club T-shirt
- A Birthday card
- Newsletters 9 times a year
- A membership card
- $25 discount on a Cosmo Birthday Party
- A chance to meet Cosmo and BYU athletes
- And, of course, other great stuff!

The cost of membership is just $20 per child. Although it is certainly a marketing effort, it is also a great PR tool.

An excellent public relations plan, supported through continual efforts to generate positive publicity, can do a great deal to create a positive perception from fans or clients. In addition, the importance of cause marketing cannot be understated. Although effective cause marketing can enhance the perception, as well as the bottom line of a team or corporate partner, there is something to be said about doing the “right thing” simply because it is the “right thing.” Socially responsible organizations, be they teams or corporations, contribute to our economy as well as our society.
RAISE THE ROOF!

Put me in your window and win great prizes!

If you see this in your window, step by and drop off a 12-Pack of Pepsi for any Red Devil home athletic event ... and maybe even a 6-Pack of Pepsi! In addition, each day one person will win a gift certificate from one of our sponsors. It’s easy, just place this poster in your front window, then sit back and wait for your doorbell to ring! All gift certificate winners will be invited to the final home football game and compete for the grand prize — a Gateway Weekend at the Holiday Inn Express, 2 tickets to a Dodger game, and a $200.00 Red Devil wardrobe compliments of Intraled Bradford’s store.
Collateral Materials

Your marketing plan will include collateral materials such as schedule posters, schedule cards, ticket backs, etc. These items, while not considered “major” advertising, help by keeping your message in front of your potential customers—the fans. In addition, in each case they provide an opportunity to involve another corporate partner and to generate revenue.

Northwestern University has several print sponsorships that would be considered collateral materials. The following opportunities were listed on their web-site:

- Ticket Brochures
- Schedule Posters
- Schedule Cards
- Schedule Magnets
- Football Ticket backs
- Men’s Basketball Ticket backs
- Parking Passes

In minor league baseball, a mainstay of creative marketing ideas, the Western Michigan Whitecaps offer several opportunities including the chance to “Be a part of the action between the lines.”

- Ticket Envelopes, 6” x 2.75”, circulation 20,000
- Autograph Card, 8.5” x 11”, circulation 70,000
- Pocket Schedules, 2.5” x 3.5”, circulation 100,000

Collateral materials, such as those described above can increase visibility a great deal. There is no limit to the variety of collateral materials that can be used to market your team or event.

What about door hangers left on neighborhood front doors with an invitation to the next game? Or bottle toppers with the team schedule placed on bottle tops by your soft drink sponsor? Or collector cards featuring your mascot with anti-drug or stay in school messages?

Keep in mind that every item adds to your marketing campaign and either increases the number of partners or the involvement of current partners.
Keep in mind that every item adds to your marketing campaign and either increases the number of partners or the involvement of current partners.

Collateral materials may include ticket brochures as well as schedule cards or schedule magnets.

(Courtesy of University of Utah)

The above poster was used to promote the Holiday Hoopla. The design was coordinated with the program cover, tickets, ads and billboards.

BYU improved the distribution of their schedule cards with the simple counter display designed to “hold” the cards.

(courtesy of Brigham Young University)
Bringing Entertainment to the Event

There was a time when halftime of a basketball, football, or any other sports event was reserved for the band and cheerleaders. That simply isn’t enough any more. Fans, somewhat spoiled by the vast array of entertainment options, want to be “WOWED” at halftime. They want something new. Something different. You, as the marketing guru, have to give it to them.

The task of bringing entertainment to a sporting event is both exciting and challenging. What kind of act? Where can I find out about them? How much will it cost? Where do we get the money? What if they’re a flop? It seems as though there are a hundred questions to ask prior to contracting with an entertainment act.

Halftime, as well as pre and post game entertainment, has a variety of purposes. Chances are your team will not go undefeated, so fans may need some type of a diversion from those tough losses. The fact is, a growing number of individuals no longer attend sporting events because they are “fans.” Instead, they view it as a social event. For that reason alone, entertainment is a must.

Quality entertainment also gives the fan a feeling of getting “something for nothing,” or a value-added benefit. They do not pay any more for their ticket (in most cases) and yet they are given an opportunity to see a halftime act. These entertainers often provide additional incentive for fans to attend future games.

In most cases, the entertainment comes at halftime. However, this is not always the case. At the professional level it is not unusual to have roaming entertainers in the stadium or arena as fans arrive. Jugglers, magicians, a house band, or a sports related contest such as shooting baskets or throwing a football are common before games.
Types of Entertainment
The type of entertainment act you book will depend primarily upon your audience. At some high schools, the fan base is almost entirely students, while at others the parents and alumni dominate the stands. This may make a difference when selecting an act.

The nature of the sport may play a role in entertainment selection, but not as much as it used to. There was a time when any entertainment at a basketball game would have to be basketball oriented. The same would apply for football, soccer, or whatever the sport. That is not the case anymore. The main concern is that the fans enjoy themselves. Many of the top acts have nothing to do with sports. People are at the game to have fun. Even the “serious” fan will not mind a little change of pace during halftime.

Entertainment acts range from professional mascots such as Bernie (Heat), Boomer (Pacers), The Gorilla (Suns), Hugo the Hornet (Charlotte) and The Bear (Jazz), to mascots not associated with a particular team like The Chicken, Birdzirk, and Dingo. Working with the pros (mostly basketball) will help you book dance teams such as The Luvabulls, The Laker Girls, or The Miami HEAT Dancers.

Basketball related performers include the High “Impact” Squad, Sandy “Spin” Slade and Tanya Crevier. Some performers defy labels such as the Alexis Brothers (a pair of muscular contortionists!) and The Amazing Christopher (don’t even ask, you have to see it to believe it).

Another option is to book an entertainer that keeps fans involved by performing throughout the game. If this is the case, try Krazy George or Myron Noodleman. Following are descriptions of a few of the more popular acts. Keep in mind; the descriptions are their words. For a comprehensive list of performers see gameops.com and go to the “white pages.” If you want to contact a talent rep. that will answer your questions about booking acts go to www.gameops.com

2 Extreme Dunk
Team members of the former Bud Light Daredevils have reunited as the 2 Extreme Dunk Team. These extreme performers use their years of touring experience to bring your crowd out of their seats.

Sport
SPORT is a real comic character. He is a big, blue, furry traveling dude who loves kids, crowds, and dancing. He has become legendary working stadiums full of innocent fans into frenzies. SPORT performs at various venues... baseball, hockey, basketball, golf, soccer . . . even corporate outings . . . in short, anywhere there’s a crowd!
Skip Banks
Skip Banks does it all: The Balloon Man, Inflatable Elvis, The Little Kicker or the all-new Mr. Slinky. Thousands agree that Skip Banks is a one-of-a-kind performer. A quick five-minute Balloon Man show at your game and your crowd will be riveted to their seats. Let Elvis sing your theme song at your next corporate event. Skip Banks is nonstop fun and will be the hit of your game or event.

The King of Sports
The act your fans will love . . . to hate. After his debut over seven years ago, the King has expanded his Kingdom from minor league hockey, baseball, basketball and arena Royal Rogue has received high praise for his unique ability to draw a strong response from even the most conservative crowds. The King plays the role of your opponent’s mascot. Lights a fire under your fans and makes your mascot the star of the show.

Mascot Battle Royal
The show is an 8-minute comedy spoof of a wrestling battle royal. It’s a turnkey halftime and comes with complete script, all the props needed, and a host train the participants. Makes your mascot the star of halftime and allows exposure to up to eight of your sponsor’s mascots. Perfect fit for mascot birthday parties.

Hoops Wizard
The Hoop Wizard (aka Black Jack Ryan) is the country’s premier basketball trick performer. Considered the pied piper of the hardwood, the charismatic Ryan performs a fun filled presentation loaded with audience participation and comedic basketball stunts. His display of ball handling skills is phenomenal. Peter Vescey, INSIDE SPORTS said “90% of agents wish their clients could shoot like Jack Ryan”

High Impact Squad
Known as the World’s Most Dynamic Sports Super Heroes, The High “Impact” Squad has elevated the sport of Acrodunking. Innovative and hip, the Squad flies higher, floats farther and flips with more flavor. With skills unmatched, they are the global provider of Entertainment and Inspiration solutions!

Myron Noodleman
Nerd is the Word! Myron is the original cool jerk. No matter the sport, Myron is full game fun. He dances into the game and quickly gets your fans going nuts for his wacky dancing and comedy routines. Utilizing players, coaches, referees, and fans. Myron gets everyone involved in the act. Your fans will be totally won over by the Nerd of the New Millennium.
Tanya Crevier
Tanya is simply one of the best acts in sports and a full halftime of energy and excitement. In her finale she spins 10 balls at one time.

The cost of bringing in one of these acts can be significant. The majority are priced between $1,000 and $2,500. In addition to the fee, the typical act will also require you to cover transportation and housing. Just as a sponsor must leverage their sponsorship to get the full value, you must leverage an appearance by an entertainment act to get the most value.

The first step is to select a game at which you will feature the act. Do not assume you should select a game where poor attendance is expected and depend upon the performer to bring in the crowd. This could happen, but it is not likely. There are very few acts that will result in a significant increase in attendance, particularly the first time they appear. For most of the acts, fans will have to see them to truly appreciate them. There are certain acts that, when making a return visit to a team, will bring in the fans.

Selecting a big game may very well make more sense. And if possible, make it an early season game. One of the reasons for bringing in an act is to entertain your fans. A more important reason is to convince them that coming to your games can be fun and exciting. A packed arena makes that easier to do. The more fun people have at your event, the more likely they are to return for another game. And imagine the great word-of-mouth advertising!

Step one is complete; you have selected the game. Next, you have to cover your expenses. You may be fortunate and have a team that draws several thousand fans. In other words, you may be basketball in Indiana or football in Texas. If that is the case, it would be very reasonable to seek out a sponsor to cover the costs of your act. However, if you are located in a smaller market, have an “average” team or for any other reason do not draw thousands of fans, it will be a little more challenging.

There are a couple of options. You may decide to have two or more co-sponsors for the entertainment. This may work. A hotel would certainly be willing to provide housing, and a travel agency should be able to take care of transportation. Next is the performance fee. Perhaps three local companies would purchase $500 sponsorships. The major downside of multiple sponsors is the need to share exposure. Everyone wants to be the center of attention, and multiple sponsors makes this difficult.

If you choose to seek a single sponsor for the act you will likely have to create a fairly comprehensive sponsorship package. In the section on pricing sponsorships there were several examples of benefits/inventory items that have value, but not necessarily a direct cost. Include these items (PA announcements, complimentary tickets, program ads, etc.) in the package. In fact, depending upon your circumstances, you may have
to offer season-long exposure for your sponsor, with the featured benefit being the entitlement to the entertainment act at the “big game.”

If a single sponsor would have trouble justifying the expense based upon limited exposure, there is still an option. If you really want to bring in the act, seek a sponsor for part of the expense and cover the rest with the profit from other sponsorships. Consider this an investment by your organization that will lead to increased interest by potential sponsors.

The game is selected and the sponsor(s) secured. Despite the fact that a particular entertainment act is seldom the reason fans attend a game; you must further leverage the event by promoting the performers appearance. In this instance, simply promote, promote, promote.

Creativity can count when promoting your act. Seek out publicity opportunities through both traditional press releases and novel ways of attracting the media. Get your entertainer on the local radio station for an interview the day of the game. Have a newspaper reporter contact the act while they are on the road in order to run an interview the day before the game. Generate ideas for a publicity stunt that will get the attention of the media. Work closely with the media and give them what they want—help make their job easier!

Depending upon the performer, you may be able to leverage their appearance by using them for more than your game. The High Impact Squad will do assemblies at local elementary or junior high schools. Sandy “Spin” Slade or Tanya Crevier make good draws for basketball clinics held before the game. Myron Noodleman is a major hit at pep assemblies, and may even encourage additional attendance because of the excitement he generates. You need to get creative in order to get the biggest “bang for your buck” when bringing entertainment to your events.

**Evaluation**

How do you know if booking an entertainer was worthwhile? It is difficult to provide an objective method of answering this question. Often, it is a “gut feeling.” Seldom will booking an entertainer pay off financially, at least in the short term. Determine if the fans enjoyed the act. Were people talking about the performance the day(s) after the game? Was the overall atmosphere of the event improved?

Measuring effectiveness is challenging. Use your best judgment and if you are not impressed with the first act, give it a second chance and try a different performer. You may feel you are a sports marketer . . . but you are an entertainment marketer as well!
Event management can include many things . . . even renting chairs for use in the stadium.
Event Management

Pregame/Event Setup

The amount of setup necessary prior to a game or event will vary a great deal depending upon your responsibilities. If you are in charge of the entire event, the setup might be considerable. If you are simply handling Fan Fun events and programs, it will be more basic. Regardless, you must understand that pregame preparations can often eliminate, or at least reduce, the number of problems that may occur during the event.

It is wise to have some type of a container or box, preferably on wheels, that you can use to store all of your Fan Fun event equipment and materials. Depending upon your Fan Fun events, this box might include several prizes, T-shirts, remote control cars, pizza boxes, costumes, basketballs, footballs, and . . . Having all of the necessary materials in one location helps a great deal, especially when you have to complete the event in a manner of minutes . . . or seconds.

Are you in charge of the music? If so, have it well organized and sorted so the particular song or sound effect is easy to find. Better yet, invest in Stadium Click Effects or Game Ops Commander. These programs allow you to have all of your music, sound effects, and commercials on a computer. As a result, to play a sound or song you simply click the mouse on the desired icon. Compare this to having CD’s falling all over the place and never being able to find the right song when you need it.

Will you be hanging sponsor banners? If so, be sure you have all of the materials to do so in your box/case. These materials may include duct tape, or banner stands. Banner stands that are convertible for both in-
doors or outdoors are very convenient. They can be adjusted to the desired length and width. If you want to save some money, you can make your own using PVC pipe. These types of banner stands can be used on the sidelines of a football, soccer or base/softball game as well as indoors for basketball or volleyball.

In some cases banners are hung in a “semi-permanent” manner. For instance, if a sponsor has season long exposure in their agreement, it might make sense to avoid the weekly hassle of hanging the banners and mount them on the wall in your arena, or on/under the scoreboard in the stadium.

If you are responsible for the distribution of programs there are a few details you may want to keep in mind. If you are selling them, be sure to have a cash box with sufficient change. And, whether selling or giving away programs, have a table near the door where they can be distributed. Even if they are free, have a member of your event management staff hand them out. Done professionally, this can enhance the overall image of your event.

Other considerations for the pregame setup include: Are you responsible for the team bench or chairs? If you have a scorer’s table, do you have to set it up? Is your sound system part of the venue, or must you set up a portable one? Are you in charge of concessions? Is there VIP seating you must monitor?

The major focus of pregame setup is to take care of everything possible before the event. In doing so, you will have time for putting out the fires that inevitably arise during the event.

Creating a Fun Atmosphere
As has been stated before, a game or event must be considered a form of entertainment. Therefore, you must do everything within your power to make the game fun. The slogan of the St. Paul Saints of minor league baseball is “Fun Is Good.” It is that mind set that has helped them sell out their games and generate publicity unheard of for a minor league team. The team has been featured on CNN/SI, 60 Minutes, CBS Sunday Morning, ABC World News, Wide World of Sports, NBC’s Today Show, ABC’s Nightline, CBS’s 48 hours, MTV’s BuzzKill, This Week in Baseball, the Discovery Channel, and ESPN. And that is just television!

What can you do to make your event fun? The first step is to make sure everyone on your event management staff understands that although they have a “job” to do, the must have FUN!

Next, make use of music, because it can have a major effect on a game. Don’t go to the extreme of Arena Football and their nonstop music, but use it to your advantage. First, a warning about music. Your purpose is not to turn your event into a dance or play only the “Top 10” or most
“popular” songs. Music used at sporting events differs from the music your fans would normally listen to on the radio during their drive to work. There are actually several songs that have become “sports anthems” and are almost a “must” for sporting events. Sporting events provide a chance to play “old” songs, “goofy” songs, as well as current popular songs.

As far as the “sports anthems” are concerned, here is a list of some of the more popular titles:

- Gonna Make You Sweat
- Play That Funky Music
- We Will Rock You
- The “Hey” Song
- Bad To The Bone
- Twist and Shout
- Macho Man
- Hand Jive
- No Limit
- Eye of the Tiger
- I Feel Good
- Bad Boys
- Cotton Eye Joe
- Pump It Up
- Hey Ho! Let’s Go!
- We Are The Champions
- YMCA
- Bang The Drum All Day
- The Chicken Dance
- Pump Up The Volume
- I Like It Like That
- Hot Hot Hot
- Get Ready For This

Take the previous list and mix in current hits or additional songs from the ESPN Jock Jams/Jock Rock series. In fact, if you have the CD’s in this series you will have everything you need. There are other “songs” that you need to consider using as well. Some are full songs, while others are excerpts from songs.

For instance, consider the songs/excerpts found below and the possible uses:

- Awesome Baby (Dick Vitale)
- Final Countdown (great for introductions)
- Sirus (great for introductions)
- Let’s Get Ready To Rumble (just before the kickoff)
- Our House (just before start of the game)
- Welcome to the Big Show (beginning of the game)
- ESPN . . . DA DA DA, DA DA DA (after a great play)
Simply en Fuego (when someone is “hot")
He Could Go All The Way (football)
Jeopardy theme song (while officials discuss a call.)

Another use of music is to create traditions that are used at each game of a particular sport. At all football games use specific songs in the following circumstances:

When the team comes onto the field
While announcing the starting lineup
During the kickoff
After a turnover
After a score
After a victory

When you are consistent with the songs you play during these situations the fans know what to expect and have a tendency to “get into it” more. In addition, you may create some sports “anthems” of your own.

You can create additional “fun” at your event with a little showmanship. For example, spice up your player introductions. Music and lights are a given for indoor events. Try rolling out the red carpet (or use school colors if you want) for the starters (basketball, volleyball, etc.). Make use of honorary captains, a creative game ball delivery and your mascot. Have the starter throw T-shirts or mini-balls into the stands when they are introduced. How about fireworks? Yes, even indoor fireworks.

**Theme Nights**

Make sure you consider the fun and entertainment value when selecting themes for your games. Check over the St. Paul Saints list as well as the themes of other teams (use the Web) and notice how many of their themes are off-the-wall and just plain fun. Bring in Myron Noodleman for a “Nerd Night.” Have your event management staff dress up like nerds. Give out free Nerds candy to the fans. Have a sponsor give out “nerdy” glasses. Have a best-dressed nerd contest. The best way for you to make sure the fans have fun is for you to have fun!

How about a birthday party for Elvis. His birthday falls during basketball season; so get an Elvis impersonator to entertain at halftime. Have some birthday cake for your fans. And, since Elvis is spotted every so often, leave a ticket at the door for him and reserve a VIP seat in case he shows up!
Holidays and special events provide excellent reasons for theme nights. But remember, you don’t need a reason . . . have a theme night just for the fun of it.

**Prestums**
Work with your sponsors to have a free give-a-way (known as a premium or specialty advertising item) at your events. Check out your state athletic association rules, and if permitted go with premiums that make noise. Cow bells are great, as are clickers, clappers or anything else that makes noise and creates a home court advantage. If you can’t give away noise-makers, give away anything. The only thing all fans have in common, regardless of their demographic profile, is they like “free stuff.” The only caution is to be careful with indoor events that the premium items are not thrown onto the court. An injury to a player is difficult for the marketing/event management staff to explain.
Most of the music, sound effects, and commercials used at sporting events are played with the help of a computer program such as Stadium Click Effects or GameOps Commander.
The competition for the leisure time of consumers is continually increasing and there is a steady pressure for teams, venues and Athletic Departments to be profitable. As a result, it is critical that marketing plans become more effective and efficient. As one might expect, marketing research is a critical part of successful sports marketing plans. The information gathered through marketing research can be as basic as identifying where your fans live, how far they travel or how old they are. However, research can also be used to help accomplish more challenging objectives such as determining the reasons fans attend or do not attend specific sporting events or predicting consumer reaction to selling corporate naming rights to a sports venue. Additional questions, which may be answered through marketing research, include:

- How often do consumers visit the team web site?
- What does our typical fan spend during a game?
- How is our team perceived in the community?
- How much will our fans pay for season tickets?
- What are our fans major sources of news?
- How effective is our advertising?
- Does halftime entertainment bring fans to the games?
- What new concession items would our fans prefer?
- How do our fans feel about changing team colors?
- What do our fans feel about our mascot?

As you might expect, marketing research can be used to answer an almost unlimited number of questions. Look at the above questions again. Can you imagine the time, energy, financial resources and effort that would be wasted by incorrectly answering them because you did not want to bother doing the research? Effective marketing research enables a team or organization to operate more successfully.

The type of research utilized will typically depend upon the problem being addressed. However, it will likely be advertising research, market research or sales research. As you might expect, advertising research focus on measuring both the effectiveness of the advertising message...
and the effectiveness of the media in which the advertising is placed. Market research concentrates on the customer (fan) and the market. This would include everything from customer attitudes to the potential market for a product or service. Finally, sales research includes analyzing sales data to determine the potential sales.

There is a specific process that well-organized and effective marketing research must follow. This process remains the same, regardless of the problem to be addressed. The commonly accepted steps in the marketing research process are:

Define the problem of question to be answered
Obtain the data
Analyze the data
Recommend solutions to the problem
Apply the results

Each of the steps in marketing research is briefly described below.

**Define the problem**

Although seemingly simple, defining the problem can be a challenge. The business or team must clearly identify the problem and state the information necessary to solve the problem. For example, a problem may be that ticket sales have declined. The team wants to determine how to increase ticket sales. To accomplish that, they will want to know who is currently purchasing tickets, why some fans have stopped buying tickets, the media fans are exposed to, feedback on ticket prices and distribution, what fans are doing for entertainment rather than attending the games, etc.

Research can be directed at any aspect of the marketing mix. As a result, the team might look at the problem from the following perspectives:

- Are our fans satisfied with their experience at the games?
- How do fans feel about our ticket prices?
- Are our fans exposed to our promotional messages about our games?

The key is to determine the problem and then move on with the process.

**Obtaining Data**

After the problem is defined, data relating to the problem must be collected. The research must include both *primary data* (facts you obtain for the first time) and *secondary data* (facts that are already collected and available).

A far as secondary data, the team should have a great deal of information available. Season ticket holders will have likely provided detailed
information about themselves. In addition, any Fan Fun events or promotions that require registration would provide additional information. There is also a wealth of information available about the specific trading area and general population. Although not specifically targeted at your fans, this information could prove very useful.

It is doubtful that you will find all of the necessary information from secondary sources. As a result, you will have to collect your own data. Although this requires a great deal of effort, the data will often be very useful. Regardless of the type of information you are seeking, there are three basic methods used to collect primary data:

Survey
Observation
Experimental

The observation method involves observing and recording the actions of people. This method is frequently used to gather information about fan behavior or preferences. In its simplest terms, team management might observe the crowd reaction during different Fan Fun events or in-game promotions. Or, for example, team personnel might observe the interaction between the fans and the team mascot.

If the observations are properly conducted and recorded they are more valuable than surveys because what people do is a more accurate indicator than what they say they will do. However, if you are interested in the “why” of behavior, the observation method is not very useful.

The experimental method is a technique in which controlled conditions are necessary. With the controls in place, different marketing variables are changed one at a time. A team could use this method to determine which colors fans would prefer for a new logo. Two similar sets of fans would be shown a logo. The only difference would be the colors in the logo. Since everything else is controlled and remains the same, the experiment would reflect the attitudes of the fans regarding the colors. For several reasons, including the cost, the experimental method is used least often.

The survey method is the most frequently used research tool. In this case, the team would gather information through the use of interview or questionnaires.

One of the challenges of using a survey is determining the number of individuals to contact. For instance, if you were interested in surveying your season ticket holders it would be fairly easy to contact each of them. However, if you wanted to survey your “fans” it would be nearly impossible (assuming you have a lot of fans and all of them do not buy season tickets).

A sample will generally be used when the target population is too large. The sample, which is a part of the target population, must represent the
entire population. The size of the sample will depend upon a number of factors, including the amount of money available to invest in the process. Typically, the larger the sample size the more accurate the research.

A data collection instrument must be created after the sample size has been determined. A popular option is a survey or questionnaire; a written list of questions designed to get the data necessary to solve the problem.

A personal interview may be conducted to get responses to your questions. This may take the form of a focus group of eight to ten individuals who are brought together for what appears to be an informal conversation. The discussion, however, is carefully crafted to obtain the critical data. Although the responses might be more honest and detailed in an interview, once again the costs can be a concern.

Telephone interviews are quick and relatively inexpensive. However, the increasing number of telemarketing calls received by the average consumer has created a situation where individuals are often unwilling to answer questions over the phone.

Mail surveys are also relatively inexpensive. The major concern is that a return rate of over five percent is considered pretty good. Mailing surveys has a greater rate of return when using a "friendly" mailing list, such as current season ticket holders. These individuals already have a connection to the team, and as a result are more likely to reply. Many teams will include a small token of appreciation for returning surveys or enter respondents into a drawing for prizes.

**Constructing the Questionnaire**

Survey questions can be either open ended or forced choice. Forced choice questions require the respondent to choose answers from among the options provided on the survey. Forced choice questions can be two-choice questions ("yes" or "no"), multiple choice, or rating questions (on a scale of 1-5, rate the following reasons for purchasing season tickets).

Open-ended questions allow the respondent to write in their own response. The good news is that open-ended questions will generate a greater variety of responses. The bad news is that they are very hard to categorize and tabulate. You will want to keep the number of open-ended questions to a minimum, particularly if you are using a large sample.

In terms of formatting, you should have a variety of questions on your questionnaire (yes or no, agree/disagree, scaled-response, etc.). Be sure that the directions for answering each question are easy to understand. Finally, number each question and indicate if the questions continue on to another page.
Analyzing the Data

After you gather both primary and secondary data you will need to compile, analyze, and interpret the results. Using the survey found in this section, the staff of the Athletic Department would look at the results from several perspectives. For instance, they might compare the responses of men and women. Perhaps there is a significant difference in how men and women were influenced by the factors listed in question #17. Or, maybe there was a major difference between the radio stations listened to by males and females.

Another example could be the travel time. You should look for trends, such as the effect of travel time on the number of games attended. The analysis might get even more detailed. For instance, how do attendance habits compare between male graduates of the university who have had season tickets for over ten years and male fans that have had season tickets for over ten years but did not attend the university? There is literally no limit to the number of ways the data can be manipulated in the search of solutions to the original problem.

Recommending Solutions to the Problem

If the research is successful, the result will be information that will help solve the problem. Assume the problem was the need to sell more season tickets. After analyzing the data it was discovered that the percentage of female season ticket buyers was much lower than expected. In addition, the radio stations listened to by female fans were not currently being used for advertising.

Those in charge of the research recommended the Athletic Department focus on attracting female fans and adjust their advertising accordingly.

The data also indicated that season ticket purchases among recent graduates was much lower than among older alumni. The recommendation was made to develop a program aimed at recent graduates (1-4 years) intended to “bring them on board” as season ticket holders as soon as possible. Several aspects of this program were also influenced by the research results. Recommendations regarding the media selection and focus of the program were determined by analyzing the responses of the younger alumni.

Applying the Results

The report is used by research managers to make decisions regarding any action that should be taken as it relates to the original problem. Depending upon the effectiveness of the research, the managers may determine the results are inconclusive or that additional research may be needed. Or, they may suggest specific action based upon the findings.

Continuing with our example, it is likely that the research managers would make specific suggestions for action to be taken. Suggestions would
likely include an increased effort to reach the female fan, including an advertising schedule on those radio stations that ranked highest among female season ticket holders. In addition, the Athletic Department would likely be directed to develop a program targeting recent graduates of the University.

The results from going through the time and effort necessary to conduct marketing research can be very valuable in helping you address your marketing challenges. At the very least you will want to develop a fan profile. This will allow you to more effectively target your advertising and promotional efforts. In addition, the profile will assist in selling corporate partnerships because it will make it easier to demonstrate that your fans are similar to the customers or clients of a particular company.

It may also be worth your while to research the effectiveness of meeting the objectives of your corporate partners. This will be beneficial as you strived to both renew current partnerships and develop new relationships.
1999-2000 NCAA Championship
Patron Questionnaire

In an effort to continue providing quality championships, the NCAA would like to learn more about the championship patrons. Your completion of this brief survey is instrumental in achieving this objective. Each item simply needs the appropriate response to be filled in.

The NCAA would like to thank you in advance for your willingness to assist with this project. To be entered into a drawing for NCAA merchandise and other great prizes, please provide the following information.

Name: _______________________________________
Address: _______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________

1. Your decision to attend today’s event was made within the past:
   ☐ 24 hours ☐ 2-7 days ☐ 8-14 days ☐ 15-30 days
   ☐ 31 days or more

2. How many nights will you spend in the host community for this event?
   __________________ nights in the host community. ☐ Zero, I live nearby.

3. How did you travel to the host community for this event?
   ☐ Car ☐ Plane ☐ Bus ☐ Other

4. Which of the following information sources do you recall seeing or hearing for this event? Please check all that apply and circle your initial source for event information?
   ☐ Magazine/Trade publication ☐ Newspaper advertisement
   ☐ Radio advertisement ☐ Television advertisement
   ☐ Radio/TV coverage ☐ Direct mail/flyer
   ☐ College publication/schedule ☐ Internet
   ☐ Billboard ☐ Attended last year
   ☐ NCAA corporate partner promotion/display

5. How did you purchase your ticket for today’s event?
   ☐ Mail order ☐ Telephone order
   ☐ Ticket was given to me ☐ College box office
   ☐ Purchased at the door today ☐ Internet
   ☐ Scalper ☐ Other

6. You purchased/received your ticket for today’s event within the past:
   ☐ 24 hours ☐ 2-7 days ☐ 8-14 days ☐ 15-30 days
   ☐ 31 days or more

7. How would you rate the price of your ticket for this event?
   ☐ Very low ☐ Low ☐ Moderate
### NCAA Corporate Partner

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<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepsi</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix Insurance</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pizza Hut</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawlings</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sears</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taco Bell</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
<td>Yes No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Respondent Profile:

9. What is your gender?  
   - Male  
   - Female

10. What is your marital status?  
    - Married  
    - Unmarried  
    - Widowed  
    - Living with significant other

11. What is the highest level of education you have completed?  
    - In high school  
    - High school graduate  
    - Trade/tech school  
    - Some college  
    - College graduate  
    - Graduate degree

12. What is your age? ______ yrs.

13. What is your annual household income?  
    - Less than $25,000  
    - $25,000 - $49,999  
    - $50,000 - $74,999  
    - $75,000 - $99,999  
    - $100,000 - $124,999  
    - $125,000 or more
14. Please check 3 all of the following that apply to you:
   - Dine at a fast food restaurant 3 times a week (avg. bill $____)
   - Have food (pizza) delivered once a week
   - Have two or more credit cards (avg. balance $____)
   - Own my home or residence
   - Use a cellular/mobile phone (avg. bill $____)
   - Travel out-of-town for business at least once a month
   - Travel out-of-town for pleasure at least twice a year
   - Use a professional financial planning service
   - Have at least one home computer (Home Internet access? Y  N)
   - Consume at least one 12 oz. can of soda daily
   - Consume at least one 12 oz. bottle of water daily
   - Spend at least $25 on sporting goods equipment monthly
   - Plan to purchase/lease a new vehicle in the next year
     (Anticipated model ______________________)

15. Please provide 2 or 3 words that best describe the sporting event you are attending today. ________________________________________________
Western University

Men’s Basketball Season Ticket Holder Survey

1. How many total years have you purchased season tickets for WU Men’s Basketball? ______ years

2. How many season tickets for WU Men’s Basketball did you purchase for the 1999-2000 season?  
   - One  
   - Two  
   - Three  
   - Four

3. What sections(s) of the WU Arena are your seats located?_____

4. Of the 14 regular season home WU Men’s Basketball games, how many did you attend?  
   - Less than 3  
   - 4 to 7  
   - 8 to 11  
   - 12 to 14

5. When you attended WU Men’s Basketball home games this season, who did you attend the games with? (check all that apply)  
   - By myself  
   - Family  
   - Friends  
   - Clients  
   - Other, please specify___________________

6. If you were not able to attend all of the regular season home games, which statement best describes what you did most often?  
   - I gave my tickets to family or friends  
   - I gave my tickets to clients  
   - I re-sold my tickets  
   - The tickets were not used by anyone  
   - Not applicable—I attended all of the home games

7. Did you purchase any single home game tickets games during 1999-2000 WU Men’s Basketball regular season?  
   - Yes  
   - No

8. Did you purchase a season parking pass through the WU Athletic Ticket Office this season?  
   - Yes  
   - No

9. How many away games did you attend during the 1999-2000 WU Men’s Basketball regular season?  
   - None  
   - One  
   - Two  
   - Three or more

10. On average, how long is your travel time from your home (in minutes) to the WU Arena? _____________

11. In the past year, did you attend any of the following WU athletic events? (Check all that apply):  
   - Football  
   - Women’s Basketball  
   - Wrestling  
   - Volleyball  
   - Men’s Soccer  
   - Softball

12. Please rate the following WU Arena features as you relate them to the 1999-2000 WU Men’s Basketball season:  
   (1)Poor  (2)Fair  (3)Good  (4)Very Good  (5)Excellent  (DK)Don’t Know  
   a) ___ Availability of parking  
   b) ___ Attractiveness of the interior of the facility  
   c) ___ Friendliness of ushers and ticket takers  
   d) ___ Location of your seats  
   e) ___ Selection of food items at concession stands  
   f) ___ Quality of food items at concession stands
13. In general, how would you rate your overall level of satisfaction with your experience with the WU Arena? 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Thinking about your typical “Game Day” experience, please rate the following factors as you related them to the 1999-2000 WU Men’s Basketball season:

(1) Poor (2) Fair (3) Good (4) Very Good (5) Excellent (DK) Don’t Know

- a) ___ WU Band performance
- b) ___ Quality of sound system
- c) ___ PA announcer
- d) ___ Timeliness of scoreboard game statistics
- e) ___ Quality of scoreboard graphics
- f) ___ Mascots performance
- g) ___ Cheerleaders performance
- h) ___ Dance squad performance
- i) ___ Halftime contests
- j) ___ Special halftime performances
- k) ___ Pregame giveaways
- l) ___ Quality of souvenir game program
- m) ___ Student section behavior/activity
- n) ___ Overall fan behavior/activity

15. In general, how would rate your overall satisfaction with your typical game day experience? 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Thinking about your experiences at WU Men’s Basketball games this season, how would you rate your overall level of satisfaction with being a season ticket holder? 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Please rate how each of the following factors influences your decision to attend a home WU Men’s Basketball game this season:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Influence</th>
<th>High Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Had season tickets</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The opponent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The opponent’s record</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) WU’s win/loss record</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Day of week of game</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Game’s starting time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Special game promotions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Weather conditions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Media attention</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) The game is not televised</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k) Travel time to the Arena</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. Which area radio stations do you listen to regularly? (Check all that apply) 

- [ ] KCER 89.9 FM
- [ ] WKUE 92.1 FM
- [ ] WKWE 98.1 FM
- [ ] KLOP 102.5 FM
- [ ] WKWU 101.5 FM
- [ ] None of the above
19. Which of the following area radio stations do you listen to most for sports information and sports news? (Check one)

- [ ] KYE/ESPN 1070 AM
- [ ] KWLA 1310 AM
- [ ] KKD 1480 AM
- [ ] Other, please specify __________________

20. Which of the following area television stations do you watch most frequently for local news coverage? (Check one)

- [ ] KWU (Ch. 5)
- [ ] KOW (Ch. 7)
- [ ] KWTV (Ch. 12)
- [ ] KMJN (Ch. 40)
- [ ] None of the above

21. Which of the following newspapers do you read for information about WU Athletics? (Check all that apply)

- [ ] State Journal
- [ ] The Capital Times
- [ ] WU Sentinel

22. Have you ever visited the official WU Athletic Department website? [ ] Yes [ ] No

23. How are you affiliated with WU? (Check all that apply)

- [ ] WU fan
- [ ] WU alumni
- [ ] WU faculty
- [ ] WU letter winner
- [ ] WU staff
- [ ] No affiliation
- [ ] Other, please specify_______

The remaining questions would be demographic related (age, income, gender, occupation, etc.) and not necessarily unique to sports.
The “e” in eMarketing

Despite the fact that the Internet and its influence seem to be everywhere, it is truly in its infancy. And yet, there is one thing we know for sure: the Internet will play a significant role in the future of sports marketing. The Web is not a fad; it’s here to stay. The only question is: What will that role be? That is a question that truly has no answer—yet.

While some will look at the Internet as a rather mysterious technological innovation, the sports marketer should look at it as another resource. Maybe a mysterious technological resource, but a resource nonetheless!

The Audience

The basic Internet audience consists of individuals with access to computers, primarily younger adults, and more educated than the general public. Although you can certainly draw additional generalizations regarding the Internet audience, the fact is, a team or property can influence that audience by the features and design of their Web site. Like any other marketing effort, the design and implementation of a Web site must be done after establishing specific goals and objectives.

Historically, Web site launchings have been targeted at the highly desirable 13-25 age group. Establishing brand loyalty early on can create a long-term customer. When Disney owned Go.com launched EXPN.com aimed at surfers, snowboarders and skateboarders, the debut, by no accident, coincided with the beginning of the Winter X games. The site has a goal of becoming a source for information about extreme sports and related topics such as fashion and music.

Other examples include the New York Islanders launching of X Ice Online (www.xice.com) that is targeted at the “twentysomething” fans and the NFL site (www.nflhs.com) with the goal of increasing teen interest and developing future generations of NFL fans.

Check out EXPN.com. How can you determine the demographics of the audience they are targeting?
We are going to look at the Internet and Web sites from a marketing perspective. Specifically, we will explain how teams can reach fans and generate revenue through the Internet.

**Contacting and Keeping Fans**

One of the best ways of reaching the fans, and expanding the fan base, is to make a big deal out of the introduction of a Web site. You may consider it a “grand opening” of sorts. The difference, however, may be found in the public perception. When a retail store has a grand opening the typical consumer may think “no big deal, just another store looking to take a piece of my check.” However, when a team announces the “opening” of their Web site it is viewed with excitement and anticipation. It’s viewed as more of an entertainment opportunity as opposed to a commercial endeavor. At least that’s they way it may be viewed by the fans. But you, the sports marketer, better make sure you view it as a commercial venture.

Since the success of a Web site requires return visitors, a Web site launch must attract fans, and the Web site itself must make it worthwhile for the fans so they return. Attracting fans is often a significant challenge. Attracting the “serious” fan is relatively easy. However, getting the participation of the casual fan, which is necessary for the success of both the team and Web site, is a different story.

To attract those initial visitors several teams have combined with more traditional media to promote interactive activities on the Web site. Whether naming a mascot or chatting with a player, the opportunity to “be heard” is relished by fans that are used to being on the outside looking in.

Although a creative launch may attract fans to your site, it is critical to continually reinforce the Web site as a location of information and entertainment. Keep the traditional media busy with press releases describing new site features and make sure the Web address is printed on every promotional piece possible. Advertisements in the mass media, signage, business cards and premium items should include the Web site address. Frequent reminders to “check the official Web site” during television and radio broadcast of games can increase awareness and traffic as well.

Keeping fans is referred to as “stickeyness.” The average stay on all web sites is approximately ten minutes. The longer fans stay on your site, the better. Games and contests are among the stickiest sites on the Internet, so add games and contests to your team site.

**E-Mail as a PR Tool**

Nearly every team or sports related Web site collects e-mail addresses for a database. Although there is always a concern about sending unwanted e-mail, most teams are correct in assuming that fans who communicate with a team via the Web site will not be offended if the team responds by putting them on a e-mail list. Some teams prefer to collect
addresses from fans by allowing them the opportunity to register for a free “fan e-mail” service. This is referred to as “opting in.”

As a result of being on this list fans receive frequent updates, new releases, and “special” opportunities to purchase merchandise and tickets. In order to develop serious fan loyalty there must be significant value-added associated with the e-mail newsletter or e-letter. This value added does not necessarily have to be huge discounts on tickets or merchandise. Loyal fans are often more interested in being the “first to get the news” about trades, schedules, promotions or online chats. Specific “members only” opportunities make it desirable to be on the list.

An e-letter can do a great deal to attract fans that are not located in the teams market. With the e-letter it is no longer difficult to access team information from across the country or around the world. Suddenly, in terms of information, the team becomes local and the fan loyalty is enhanced.

Blah, blah, blah
An excellent feature to add to a team Web site is a chat room. A chat room will allow fans to “talk” to members of the team, or even individuals such as the trainer, a member of the dance team, a coach or manager. Although a feature such as this is appropriate for any fan, it appears to be particularly effective in drawing young fans. A chance to ask a question of a player, with a real-time response, is a dream come true to many fans.

And there is more... Consider the value of Web pages for individual players that include up-to-the-minute statistics, bios, audio clips of a recent interview, and an individual e-mail address. Audio Webcasts are opening entirely new avenues for teams to attract fans that may not be located in the broadcast area of traditional radio or television. And of course, the potential for new revenue is virtually unlimited. As you might expect, the most recent move has been to video Webcasting. Although relatively new, you can expect a great deal of growth in this area.

Generating Revenue from the Web
Of course, the major motivation behind any marketing effort is to generate revenue, and the use of the Web is no different. Everything is about selling. Selling tickets. Selling merchandise. Selling advertising and sponsorships. And now, the Web is providing another medium through which to sell.

Selling Tickets
When the Detroit Tigers were preparing to open the new Comerica Park, fans were able to purchase their tickets off the Internet. Since Comerica was a new park, fans had never been there to watch a game. No problem, the Tiger Web site gave fans a “virtual” view from their seats, allowing them to get an idea of what they would see in person.
The airlines may have been the first industry to use ticket discounts for online customers to fill empty seats, but the trend is moving into sports.

The New Jersey Nets offered discounts to anyone who signed up for their online newsletter, including $50 seats to a Detroit Pistons game for $20. Texas Rangers and Dallas Stars fans that signed up for the team’s fan club received e-mail offers of steep discounts.

For added convenience, the fans can print tickets on their home computer. Tickets printed at home on standard paper and printers will include bar codes that can be scanned by readers at stadiums. These printouts might also include directions to the stadium, seating charts, or restaurant coupons.

As further evidence of the spread of online ticket sales, Olympics officials used the Internet for the first time to sell seats to the 2002 Winter Games. Tickets.com Inc., a small Costa Mesa ticketing firm, was hired to sell about 800,000 tickets to the public both online and conventionally.

The decision to sell online reflects how people increasingly are turning to the Web to buy seats for sports and entertainment events.

The Internet isn’t for just buying tickets from a team. Several Web sites are offering the opportunity to exchange tickets—helping customers sell tickets to games they cannot attend. Xscape, an Internet design group based in Sunnyvale, Calif., has a ticket exchange on its Web site. It’s not an auction site, and no ticket may be listed for more than 25 percent above face value. In San Francisco, KFOG radio has a Ticket Swap Web page. On this site, tickets must be sold at face value.

There are generally two methods of selling tickets online; either through an online service such as TicketMaster or in-house, where the team handles the entire process. Using an online service is likely easier, although less profitable since revenue is shared. However, the in-house approach has a few drawbacks as well, including the need to employ staff, and the lack of online sales experience by most teams.

Selling Sponsorships

Although sponsorship sales via the Internet are rather limited at this point, look for this to be another growth area. Generally, a team, conference, or event will simply provide a brief commentary on the value of becoming a sponsor/corporate partner and provide a few rather generic examples. They will then ask that you e-mail them if you are interested and assure you a member of the sales staff will contact you.

Go to [http://umterps.fansonly.com/marketplace/sponsorships/sponsorships-body.html](http://umterps.fansonly.com/marketplace/sponsorships/sponsorships-body.html) and look at the sponsorship opportunities offered by the Maryland Terps. At [http://www.hartfordmarathon.com/GHMspsr_opp.htm](http://www.hartfordmarathon.com/GHMspsr_opp.htm) there is information about the Greater Hartford Marathon and how a company can partner with the event.
The Federal Express Orange Bowl solicits interested parties at their web site (www.orangebowl.org/sponsors/opportunities.asp). At http://web.indstate.edu/athletics/Marketing/gamesponsorships.html there are sponsorship options for men’s basketball, women’s basketball, football, volleyball and baseball at Indiana State University.

In the future, teams will likely add more and more information to their web sites, including essential details about partnership opportunities.

The Basics . . . and more

(This section taken from selling.sports.on.the.Web published by Team Marketing Report. Find them on the Web at teammarketing.com)

The experts agree there are certain “must haves” for a team web site. Here are the recommendations of Team Marketing Report.

Archives and team records
A reference tool that gives fans incentive to sign on to find answers to their own team trivia questions. Information that’s already accessible in the team media guide can be easily used here. This can be used to draw the “real” fan with an interest in facts, facts, and more facts.

Contact Us
It’s imperative to give fans the chance to talk to the organization through the Internet-and to respond to all inquiries within 24 hours. Users of the Internet expect immediacy and teams must give them that. The most effective way to achieve that is through an automated response system that sends an immediate return e-mail to the user.

E-mail Database Builder
This feature can come in the form of a fan club, promotion or survey that invites users to submit basic database-building information. A database can be used to e-mail ticket and merchandise offers, press releases and general team information.

Kid’s Features
A simple feature like a collectible card series, coloring book or online game can help teams attract younger fans. Child-focused features may be basic, but should be updated frequently to keep children interested in returning to the site.

Merchandise/publication Catalog
Teams must make items available for viewing and purchase year-round. And the Internet allows teams to gain immediate exposure for selling time-sensitive merchandise tied to events like a post-season appearance, league championship or all-star game.

Player Information
This basic feature allows fans to have access to the same information as members of the media. Appropriate information should already be
available in the team media guide. Teams should include photographs, biographical profiles and statistics.

Schedule of games, broadcasts and promotions
A handy feature for fans to frequently check dates and times of upcoming games in one consolidated location.

Stadium Map and Information
Stadium seat locators allow fans to access and view their exact seat locations before purchasing tickets. This feature should also include information on traveling to and from the stadium, and locations of parking and entrance gates.

Ticket Information
A timesaving device for team staff members that allows fans to simplify the ticket buying process by answering a lot of their own questions. The ability to have online purchases should also help increase impulse buys following night and weekend games.

What’s New?
This will benefit the frequent visitors and give them incentive to sign on daily. A simple feature like a preview of the next game should entice users to sign on again and again.

Auctions
Many sports programs are taking advantage of the popularity of online auctions. As a result of strong brand loyalty among fans and the novel items that can be offered for sale, teams have the chance to offer fans, boosters and sponsors access that is truly unique. A team would have access to events and celebrities that typical online auctions would not, and this allows them to offer fans, booster and sponsors a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

TeamLink Auction is a leading company in the area of providing online sports auctions, and is the company of choice of the National Association of Collegiate Director’s of Athletics (NACDA). TeamLink Auctions benefit teams by generating additional revenue and taking your message to a global market. In addition, TeamLink Auction also provides sports programs incremental revenue by creating multiple income opportunities through auction items and sponsorships.

Basic TeamLink Auction services include:
- Implementation of a branded auction site specific to your program
- Usage reports and technical maintenance
- All email addresses and all bidder information
- Customized auctions site
- A Content Manager and their staff to manage auction

A major advantage to an online auction is the additional revenue streams that are available. TeamLink Auctions lists these sources of revenue as
auction sponsorship, banner ads, fulfillment sponsors and losing bidder promotions.

With the constant search for additional revenue and the desire to add new sources of inventory for corporate partners, online auctions are sure to grow in popularity.

**So, What’s Next?**

No one seems to know exactly where the influence of the Internet on sports marketing will end. One thing is for sure, there will no longer be “business as usual” because of the rapidly changing and developing Internet. The future may belong to those teams and properties that learn how to effectively create and use an online presence.
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