
2015

Sport Marketing Plan

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TOMS RIVER TIGERS



Sport Marketing Plan—2015
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Executive Summary

The Toms River Tigers are a relatively new minor league baseball team whose concentrated efforts are dedicated to help perpetuate the work of our organization as a whole, and Minor League Baseball in its entirety. The unique characteristics of our product assists to not only satisfy and retain our consumers, but also to provide a high-quality event experience. All programs and actions within our organization are designed to not only enhance, but also protect our organization's image and values. Our 200+ employees work hard each and every day to ensure that the consumers' best interest is a priority.

In regards to financial controls, all of the staff within our organization will be responsible for reporting all financial expenditures, including personal salaries and direct expenses; a reporting form will be provided for all. Regular expenditures include, but are not limited to, the general upkeep of the ballpark, equipment, supplies (i.e. office), public relations, and employee salaries. In addition, the vast majority of our organization's revenue (approx. \$6 million) will stem from ticket sales, sponsorships, and merchandise; a detailed estimate of our revenue and expenses (approx. \$3 million) is including within this sport marketing plan.

Inevitably, there are challenges within our organization, especially in the areas of increasing profits and reaching the public. However, our staff makes a constant effort to overcome these challenges. An evaluation of the Toms River Tigers' internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats are the foundation for this marketing plan. This plan focuses on the organization's growth strategy, providing ways in which it can establish consumer relationships, as well as strengthen existing relationships. This sport marketing plan



will also focus on the development of potential new products and services targeted at the wants and needs of the consumers.

Introduction

Mission Statement

The mission of the Toms River Tigers' Marketing is to build partnerships with our consumers to whom we will provide consistent marketing strategies, which include advertising and public relations. Our concentrated efforts are dedicated to help perpetuate the work of our organization, and Minor League baseball in its entirety, by fostering quality programs, facilities, and services for our target market. All programs and actions are designed to enhance and protect our organization's image and its values.

Core Product & Product Extensions

Since the outcome of each contest is unpredictable, our organization strives to provide a high quality event experience that attends to the needs and exceeds the expectations of our customers. The unique characteristics of our core product assists to satisfy and retain our customers. Our core product is primarily composed of five components:

- Venue
- Star Power
- Equipment and apparel
- Fan behavior
- Community prestige



The Toms River Tigers organization is committed to offering as much as we can to provide a high quality event experience for all of our customers.

Our core product is supplemented by numerous product extensions:

- Ticket and printed material
- Personnel and process
- Novelties and fantasies
- A sense of belonging

Situation Analysis

Economic Climate & Population Demographics

- The unemployment rate within Toms River has been a steady 6.60%, with a 0.39% job growth
- The income per capita in Toms River is 21.8% greater than the National average
- The median household income is 36.6% greater than the National average
- Population of 88,791, with 52.0% being females and 48.0% being males
- Median age of 41.9 years of age
- Persons under 5 years: 5.1%
- Persons under 18 years: 21.7%
- Persons over 65 years: 16.7%
- Medium household income: \$73,990
- Females: 52.6% married
25.3 % single



-Males: 55.3% married

33.6 % single

-Married (15 yrs & older) 60%

-Average age of children in married couples:

6-17 years of age, 62%

Younger than 6 years of age, 20%

Younger than 6 & between 6 - 17 years of age, 18%

Demand & Technological Trends:

Since our organization is offering the same product as another team—the Lakewood BlueClaws—we feel it would be best to relate our product's demand to such, specifically attendance. In the past three years, the BlueClaws have averaged 5,597 fans at the team's 68 home dates. Particularly in 2013, there were five sell-out crowds of 8,000 people, and thirty eight crowds of at least 6,000 fans.

Social media is prevalent in today's society, and has become a valuable tool for minor league baseball teams. Applications such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have allowed for these teams to both build and develop their brands not only within the ballpark, but away from the field. Social Media is even more critical for teams like the Toms River Tigers in terms of selling a product that does not have a talent level as high as Major League Baseball's. Dominating through this outlet is a great way to separate from competition.

SWOT Analysis



Strengths:		Weaknesses:	
Strong marketing orientation		Product limitations	
Little turnover among employees; small size staff promotes camaraderie with co-workers and customers; fosters communication and quick response to consumer needs		Lack of diverse promotions	
Product attributes		Levels of credibility	
Brand image		Lack of history or tradition	
Technological competence—particularly in social media		Facilities are not top-notch	
Fan loyalty			
Opportunities:		Threats:	
New markets		Competitors	
Developing markets		Constant changes in community values	
Social trends		Economic conditions	
Advances in technology			
Industry trends			



Competitor #1: Lakewood BlueClaws, Single-A Affiliate of Philadelphia Phillies

Product Characteristics: Minor League Baseball team

Strengths: 20 minute drive from Toms River (Average travel time to work: 27.4 minutes)

- In 14th season, landed 14th straight attendance title of the South Atlantic League
- Recently reached the 6 million fan plateau—fastest team in NJ to do so

Weaknesses: Complicated ticket plans/packages

- Lack in publicity outside Tri-state area

Opportunities: Renting out facilities to external organizations and/or teams

(i.e. Camping World Spring RV Show, Job Fair)

Threats: Day of the Week promotions

(i.e. Kids Eat Free, Thirsty Thursdays, Ladies Day Saturday)

- Consistent attempt and success of community engagement
- Enhanced credibility, due largely in part to former BlueClaws in MLB

Current Market Share: No specific company that has a consistent hold on the market share

Current Actions in the Market: Attempt to draw new consumers and partners

Probable Response to Your Actions: An persistent attempt to appeal to the same consumers and partners

Competitor #2: BlueClaws Baseball Academy

Product Characteristics: Baseball academy, training facility

Strengths: Director Joe Agnello worked for Major League Baseball internationally for player development

- Former professional coaches available
- Offer camps, lessons, and youth team practices on the field
- 3,000 sq. foot heated indoor facility, weather is not a factor



Weaknesses: Lack in publicity outside Tri-state area
-Improvement needed on website

Opportunities: Renting out facilities to external organizations, clients, teams

Threats: Available for rent to High School, Little League, or travel teams throughout winter months
-Youth Holiday Camps at discounted price

Current Market Share: No specific organization that has a consistent hold on the market share

Current Actions in the Market: Attempt to draw new consumers, teams, community partners

Probable Response to Your Actions: An persistent attempt to appeal to the people

Target Markets

MIS, & Primary & Secondary Data:

The most effective way to gather data for reaching a target market will be to utilize a complete SWOT analysis of our organization. When analyzing external opportunities, our organization will have a better idea of what our market is, in addition to how we will reach potential consumers. We can seek out this data via constantly active interaction with members of the community in order to muster them into our organization.

It would be most valuable to have the tools, people, and skills to translate data into marketing decisions for detecting my target market. The available resources and methods for gathering primary data include:

—Observation research utilizing people or software programs. This will determine behavior, not what drives consumers.

—Survey research, which will give descriptive data.



- Experimental research, which will evaluate cause and effect relationships.
- Utilizing key contact methods such as mail and telephone surveys, forming focus groups, online research.
- Questionnaires comprised of open and closed-ended questions.

The available resources and methods for gathering secondary data include:

- Information supplied from the government
- Publications
- Internal and online databases

Market Segmentation, Target Market, Buyer Readiness, Consumer Lifestyles, & Opinion Leaders:

Statistical data can be used to determine the following critical factors for market segmentation:

- Identify the least and most profitable customers
- Avoiding markets which will not be profitable, instead focus on the customers who will most likely buy
- Establish and maintain loyal relationships with customers i.e. produce and offer products/services wanted
- Utilize resources in a wise manner
- Increase profit potential = keep costs down, charging higher price in some areas

The product benefits that will be used to segment consumers include pre-sale or promotional access for season/post-season play for season ticket holders, and promotional packages or



anything to entice consumers to come to the ballpark more often, i.e. for meet and greets, running the bases post-game, etc., specifically for families.

Aspects of buyer readiness include:

—Awareness of existence: community outreach, emphasis on branding/establishing and maintaining image

—Knowledge of benefits: consumer feedback, i.e. happy with experience?

--Preference over competition: ticket pricing comparison, travel time, fan-friendly park?

--Purchase: How accessible? Easy? Cheap? (Food, merchandise, certain promotions)

In dealing with consumer lifestyles, questions to consider include:

—Fans: How is the product affecting their life, i.e. How frequent do they come to games? How frequent do they buy food? If so, how much?

—What are consumers spending their money on? i.e. Merchandise? Food stands v. in-stadium eateries? Promotional activities?

Opinion leaders may include:

—Season ticket holders

—Corporate sponsors, and organizations with access to in-stadium specialized seating

—Employees

Marketing Objectives

Accountability, Measurability, & Time Frame

—Increase Tigers' pre-sale and in-season ticket sales for females between the ages of 25-50 by 1,000 (Human Resources will be held accountable)

—Enhance a web presence and expand social networking by 50% (Marketing and Communications/Social Media Coordinators will be held accountable)



—Increase the average order value of online merchandise sales by \$75 per family (Marketing will be held accountable)

—Increase number of promotions within a single season by 4-5 each month (Marketing and Communications/Community Outreach team will be held accountable)

—Improve concession sales by 15% (Food Services will be held accountable)

It is crucial for my organization to evaluate its progress toward accomplishing the above objectives. A customer tracking software system would be beneficial in establishing pivotal moments of the sales and marketing pipeline, while allowing staff members—who interact with consumers—to keep track of the process. This system would track the actual to the projected. In regards to ticket and merchandise sales, tracking these sales calls for an implementation of a system that tracks consumers' URLs if purchasing tickets via the Internet. If consumers are purchasing tickets via direct mail, it would be beneficial to record the number of mailers that are sent out to consumers. Mailers would be utilized to promote season tickets, mini plans, group sales, and individual tickets sales. This same concept could also be used to evaluate the progress of merchandise sales.

It is also crucial for the Social Media Coordinator(s), with the help of the Marketing and Communications team, to consistently monitor the team's social networking sites (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter), paying close attention to the increased (or decreased) number of followers, likes, etc. per week. Lastly, the Community Outreach team, with the help of the Office of Marketing and Communications, must organize promotional plans and present progress reports of



efforts and successful partnerships. Inevitably, an increase in promotions each month throughout the season will help to increase concession sales by generating more people to the park, especially for price promotions—contests, games, activities, etc that provide a discount to consumers on concession items.

Marketing Strategies & Tactics

New Market Penetration

To increase market penetration, the Toms River Tigers will employ two strategies in order to gain sales from competitors: price adjustment and an increase in distribution channels. In regards to price adjustment, in hopes of garnering more sales volume, we will lower prices to attract consumers to our product over our competitors' products. i.e. tickets, merchandise, concessions. In regards to an increase in distribution channels, our organization will strive to increase the methods and timeliness in which we advertise our product to consumers. In addition to selling our product through the media, such as television advertisements, our organization will make an effort to add distribution channels such as direct mailers or personalized phone calls to potential consumers.

Market Expansion & Product Development

The Toms River Tigers have established goals for our entire organization to obtain at least 50% of the market share by the beginning of next season. As a result of the implementation of our marketing plan, our organization plans to gain new consumers within the market—specifically those from competitors—with major focus on quality, reliability, and customer service. All employees within our organization will strive to consistently improve our product. With the rapid changes and trends within the marketplace, our organization knows that consistent



product development is necessary to stay on track. Our organization will achieve this strategy by offering something new to existing consumers. For example, at the ballpark we will occasionally offer video updates of other minor league baseball teams in-between innings.

Diversification & Marketing Mix

Our organization will use our existing capabilities to establish a new venture. For example, our ballpark has the ability to host relatively large events and/or crowds. Therefore, we will offer concerts at our venue which will offer a new product—concerts—to new consumers—music fans. We believe that our expertise in the areas of event promotion, ticketing, concessions, etc will allow us to do so efficiently.

There are ample products/services to be considered within our organization. We offer a fan-friendly atmosphere for the entire family, a minor league baseball team, tickets, including season ticket plans, mini plans, and group sales, a wide variety of merchandise, affordable concessions, an ample amount of monthly promotions, and social networking sites to stay connected with the team (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).

The prices for products and services will be dependent on the consumers. In regards to the consumers' seating within the stadium, the suggested ticket pricing for individual games is \$13. The two Club levels range from \$9 to \$11, Dr. Pepper Porch seating is \$7.50, and the Terrace is \$5. Season ticket plans, mini plans, and group sales vary depending on the season packages purchased (i.e. Tuesday/Friday package) and the size of the group attending. In addition, merchandise and concession prices vary depending on the consumers' purchase.



Our facility lies at the heart of Ocean County in Toms River, New Jersey; our location will enhance some of the promotional activities in which we hope to implement. These activities include community outreach activities and social media campaigns. In regards to community outreach, our organization will implement visits by players and coaches to the Boys and Girls Club of America, the Children’s Specialized Hospital, and the State Veterans Memorial Home located near our facility. In regards to our organization’s social media campaign, we hope to implement aggressive social media campaigns, such as Twitter Tuesdays, Facebook Fridays, and Instagram Your Gram.

Our organization will feature promotions like Tiger Take-out Tuesdays, which will occur every other Tuesday. This promotion encourages attendees to buy their favorite take-out food, which will be sold at the stadium or attendees can bring their favorite take-out food to the game. Our Dress to Impress promotion encourages attendees, like the olden days, to wear their “Sunday best;” this will occur every Sunday day game. Lastly, Christmas in July will feature Santa hats that will be given to the first 1,000 fans; fans are encouraged to wear their best ugly Christmas sweaters and eggnog will be sold at concessions; selfies with Santa will be available as well.

In regards to organizational structure, our Marketing staff within our organization is separated into various divisions, each possessing specific responsibilities related to his/her area of comfortability and expertise:

- Human Resources
- Marketing and Communications
- Social Media Coordinators
- Community Outreach
- Food Services

Lastly, our organization has expectations and will conduct frequent evaluations of that expectation. The Marketing division of our organization is responsible for leading a successful marketing plan. From the time that the current marketing plan is implemented, all tasks are to be thoroughly completed by administration and staff. A monthly report will be created, highlighting each division's accomplishments and/or achievements, current tasks, and future plans, to ensure the appropriate control and evaluation is taking place. To assure productivity, weekly check-ins will be conducted as well.

Implementation & Control

Line #	Item	Justification	Amount
5010	Season and Group Ticket Sales	4,000 per game x \$13 + special seating 45 home games	\$2,341,035
5015	Game Day Sales	1,200 @ \$13 45 home games	\$702,000
5020	Sponsorships	Dr. Pepper and The Boys and Girls Club of America, among others	\$450,000
5025	Merchandise	Team Store, mini merchandise stands spread out within the ballpark (Hats, jerseys, etc)	\$3,110,000
	Total Annual Revenue:	\$6,603,035	
Annual Expenses:			
Line #	Item	Justification	Amount

5030	Equipment	Uniforms, bats, gear, etc.	\$435,000
5035	Paper Handouts	Mail, informational handouts, brochures, etc.	\$12,000
5040	Supplies	Supplies for offices (i.e. paper, writing utensils)	\$14,000
5045	Promotional Item	Any giveaways	\$390,000
5050	Insurance	Insurance (i.e. Life Insurance)	\$800,000
5055	Salaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -General Manager -Assistant General Manager -Director of Human Resources -Director of Marketing and Communications -Director of Food Services -Director of Game Day Operations -Director of Community Outreach -Director of Social Media -Social Media Coordinators (3) -Box Office Manager <p>(Does not include those in concessions or merchandise)</p>	Total of: \$789,500

	Total Expenses:	\$2,440,500	
	+		
	Total Revenue:	\$6,603,035	
	<u>Total Profit:</u>	\$9,043,535	

The control environment will be a result of frequent employee meetings. At these monthly meetings, sales, promotional activities, current marketing activities, and new ideas will be discussed to constantly progress toward improvement.

All of our staff—part-time and full-time employees, managers, and owners—will equally be a part of the decision making process, in addition to the long-term success of our organization. At these monthly meetings, all staff will have the opportunity to facilitate a meeting on a rotating basis. While time is not significant during these meetings, it is imperative that facilitators will continue the discussion from the previous meeting in terms of exemplifying the value of our

organization's past, current, and future marketing programs.

When it comes to new ideas related to marketing for our organization, there is no true value until these ideas are actually implemented. Furthermore, the individuals who propose their idea(s) must wholeheartedly believe in them.