



SPORTSBIZ MADNESS 2022: CASE STUDY TOURNAMENT

CASE STUDY #4: NICHE SPORTS MARKETING

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Read/review the case study with your team (student group or class).
- 2) Review the evaluation criteria.
- 3) Create a response to case study.
- 4) Submit your response **to your teacher**.
- 5) Be sure to include a team name, the names of team members, your school and class period.
- 6) Reminder: Your entries are limited to **no more than two pages!**

IMPORTANT: If you send something via Google Docs, please remember to make sure you turn on permission to review/edit the document!

GOOD LUCK!

BACKGROUND

The fastest-growing sport in America is pickleball. According to the [USA Pickleball Association](#), the sport has more than doubled the number of total participants in the last five years. In the last two years alone, the sport has grown by nearly 40%, with 4.8 million people playing pickleball in the United States.

According to USAPA, a “core” player to be one who plays 8 or more times a year. Statistically, 60% of those core players are 55 or years or older, but the strongest growth is among players under 55. However, the explosion in popularity has created one key challenge: there aren't enough courts. In the USA, there are only about 10,000 places to play throughout the country.

If the sport hopes to continue its growth, it must both expand the number of courts to better meet participation demand, but also boost the sport's visibility from a spectator perspective. Developing a connection with a younger audience would also provide a long-term benefit to the sport.

SCENARIO

You own a small sports marketing agency. The USA Pickleball Association contracted your firm to create a strategic growth plan for maintaining the sport's short and long-term growth.

Your client has identified several specific challenges the sport faces, including:

- Not enough courts / venues to meet demand
- Limited options for consumers to watch games on TV or streaming
- Room for growth with pickleball as a spectator sport
- Not enough young participants and fans
- Lack of following on social media

Your client has asked you to address all of these challenges and create a report communicating your strategies.



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YOUR CHALLENGE:

Your plan must include, at a minimum, the following information:

- Explain the concept of a niche sport
- Create a situation (SWOT) analysis describing pickleball's current market position
- Strategy for addressing each of the sport's challenges as identified by your client
- Identification of a strategy for generating more interest within a younger demographic
- Creation of three individual pickleball events that will generate interest among spectators
- At least one sample of a social media post

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

We would recommend a brief review of units 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 11 in SCC's textbook to make sure you have a firm grasp on the sports business concepts most applicable to this case study. Specifically, you may want to consider the topics of event marketing/management, digital marketing/social media, branding, sales/promotion, sponsorship and publicity.

GOOD LUCK!