

SCC FANTASY BASKETBALL PROJECT



**Sports Career Consulting
Fantasy Basketball Project**



SCC FFL COMPETITION PACKET

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CHALLENGE #1: MARKETING PLAN

1.1 - OBJECTIVE

The primary objective with the first challenge is to demonstrate the fundamental importance a marketing/business plan plays in the overall success of any sports or entertainment organization. The plan DOES NOT NEED TO BE overly detailed or contain any specific data, rather it should just demonstrate your “franchise” has a plan in place to provide a business and marketing game plan the season. No need to overthink anything, just instill the idea that developing a plan will provide a road map to success for your team this season. Review lesson 3.2 (financial structure of sports), lesson 3.5 (Economic Impact) and Unit 5 (Marketing Plan) in your book for guidance on this challenge.

1.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

This challenge aligns with Lesson 3.2, Lesson 3.5, and Unit 5 of SCC’s textbook. Review those areas of the textbook before tackling challenge #1 and creating your marketing plan.

The first sports marketing challenge in the fantasy basketball project requires students to gain a fundamental understanding of the economics behind professional sports. They will learn the concept of budgeting, revenue, forecasts, and expenses, along with economic impact.



The second part of the challenge will require the development of a marketing plan overview...the operative word here is “overview.” Students will provide the league office (SCC) with a general synopsis of how they plan to market and promote their expansion team throughout the season while keeping an eye on that financial bottom line!

Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.

1.3 – ADVICE FROM LEAGUE OFFICE

QUESTION: When it comes to the city, should students consider whether an NBA team already exists in that market or should they pretend that they are the only franchise?



ANSWER: It can be any city students choose...however, the league office would advise against a market with an existing franchise from a competition standpoint but consideration of teams other than NBA should also be in play...some quick research online will provide any info you need. Also, we will address this topic in a little more detail in a later activity/challenge that focuses on understanding the market and your consumers.

QUESTION: How are students supposed to come up with a budget and revenue / expense forecast?

ANSWER: In evaluating the response to the first sports marketing challenge, the focus will be more on determining how well students understand how a “big five” (NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, MLS) professional sports team generates revenue and where their primary expenses come from rather than a specific dollar figures or data.

That said, the NBA salary cap this year is \$109 million per team. Not all teams spend that much, however, and there are no guarantees that roster investment will translate to a winning season on the field. To get a general feel for other expenses a professional sports franchise might typically incur, we would suggest reviewing the latest Green Bay Packers’ financial report, highlighted in lesson 3.2 of our textbook. We would also suggest paying careful attention to the team’s revenue streams.

QUESTION: How are students supposed to come up with economic impact data?

ANSWER: Specific figures are not all that important, just be sure students are “in the ballpark” with their ideas and estimates. Students are encouraged to reference lesson 3.5 in SCC’s textbook, and remind them that Google is their friend. 😊

🏀 1.4 – INSTRUCTIONS & KEY CONCEPTS

Please submit ALL the required documentation to the league office (your teacher) using whatever method they have instructed you to use. Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.

Key concepts: Students are expected to demonstrate a basic understanding of how a professional sports team generates revenue and (hopefully) achieves profitability as well as the impact the franchise might have on the local economy. Students should also explain the difference between direct and indirect competition, and how each might impact front office marketing strategies.



CHALLENGE #1 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

Your response to sports marketing challenge #1 must include, at a minimum, the following marketing plan elements:

- Team name / location
- Mission statement
- Executive summary
- Budget / Revenue & Expense Projections
- Identification of direct and indirect competitors
- Explanation of how the new franchise will impact the local economy
- Marketing goals / objectives
- Marketing strategies

Additional details to include in your report:

- Roster strategy (player payroll): Are you spending as much as the salary cap will allow on your roster? Why or why not?
- Front office strategy: How much will you invest in your coaching staff?
- Total expense: What will the team's total expenses be this year?
- Revenue streams: How will your franchise generate revenue this year? *How much* do you anticipate the team will generate in revenue?
- Profitability: Do you anticipate the team will make money this year? Why or why not?
- Identification of competitors within the market and description of your franchise competitive advantages

Good luck!

KEYS TO THE GAME:

Students who typically perform well in projects like this do an excellent job paying attention to details. When offering explanations to support strategy, be sure to offer specific detail as to *why* the strategy will be successful. Be sure to review the lessons from the textbook that align with each challenge, as a demonstration of key sports business concepts is essential for success in SCC's Fantasy Basketball Project.

Also, creativity is always a huge plus and great way to distinguish your response to each sports marketing challenge from others in this competition! Good luck!



CHALLENGE #2: BRANDING

🏀 2.1 – BRANDING CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

Branding is one of the most important aspects to any sports team's marketing strategy, particularly for an expansion franchise. With this challenge, students will develop a branding strategy around the team nickname they selected and franchise location. Branding and extensions of that brand will help build enthusiasm for the new franchise as they get set to kick off their inaugural season in a new city. Students will be required to submit an overview of their overall branding, licensing, and merchandise strategy.

🏀 2.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

Challenge #2 in SCC's fantasy basketball project aligns with Unit 6 in our textbook, the Business of Sports & Entertainment. The challenge requires students to demonstrate a basic understanding of the concepts of branding, licensing, and merchandising.

🏀 2.3 - RESEARCH

The league office highly suggests doing a little market research to help spark the creative process with this challenge. A few links are provided below, but any additional research online would certainly help as well.

It is also recommended that you spend a moment reviewing the first part of lesson 6.1 from SCC's textbook for some additional background on the concept of branding.

A sports brand is more than just a logo:

<http://www.sportsnetworker.com/2011/06/20/a-sports-brand-is-more-than-a-logo/>

Importance of a strong logo:

<http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/260104/memorable-logos-drive-brand-affinity.html>

Philadelphia 76ers "rebranding" effort:

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nba/2015/09/28/philadelphia-76ers-rebranding-since-1776/72964748/>



In-depth look at branding a new ECHL franchise:

<http://www.pressherald.com/2017/08/25/portlands-new-hockey-franchise-wants-a-name-thats-got-game/>

Chicago Cubs' introduce inaugural mascot:

<http://m.cubs.mlb.com/news/article/66538892>

NASCAR and brandy loyalty:

<https://www.ama.org/publications/MarketingNews/Pages/fast-track-loyalty.aspx>

Akron RubberDucks & Daytona Tortugas logo design / rebranding:

<http://ballparkdigest.com/2014/11/03/2014-logobranding-of-the-year-akron-rubberducks/>

<http://ballparkdigest.com/2015/10/05/2015-best-new-logosbranding-daytona-tortugas/>

Washington Wizards "alternate" branding:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wizards-insider/wp/2015/09/30/wizards-to-wear-sleeved-red-baltimore-pride-uniforms-this-season>

Creative branding on social media from the Baltimore Ravens:

<http://www.sporttechie.com/2015/07/27/baltimore-ravens-go-emojis/>

2.4 – INSTRUCTIONS & KEY CONCEPTS

Please submit ALL the required documentation to the league office (your teacher) using whatever method they have instructed you to use. Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.

Key concepts: Students are expected to recognize the importance of branding and describe why brand image, brand loyalty and brand awareness are of particular importance as the organization begins building a fan base in an expansion market, as well as the potential to generate revenue through merchandise sales.



CHALLENGE #2 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

Your report should include ALL the information below at a minimum (plenty of room to get creative here)! This sports marketing challenge will be evaluated based on the following:

- Demonstration of a clear understanding of branding, brand extension, licensing, and merchandising concepts.
- Recognize the importance of brand image, brand loyalty and brand awareness as the organization begins building a fan base in an expansion market
- Effective communication of branding and merchandising strategies
- Include and describe **creative** and **unique** ideas

Answer the following questions:

- What is a brand?
- Why is branding important?
- Big picture: How will developing a brand benefit your franchise?
- What is brand loyalty? Why is it important to a sports team?
- What is licensing? Describe how the licensing process works.
- What is licensed merchandise? How will your branding strategy increase sales of team-branded licensed merchandise in your inaugural season as an expansion franchise?

Overall branding strategy to include (but not limited to):

- Team colors
- Logo
- Slogan for this season
- Uniform design
- Brand identity: Is your team aiming to project a family friendly image? Fierce and competitive? Socially aware and environmentally friendly? This is an important consideration when trying to establish your brand identity!
- Description of how the organization intends to build brand awareness and brand loyalty



Brand integration strategy to include (but not limited to):

- Will your team feature a mascot?
- Will your team feature a cheer team?
- How will the arena provide an extension of the brand?
- Who will serve as brand ambassadors? Players? Front office? A street team to lead a grassroots marketing efforts?
- Will your franchise have a popular game day tradition or in-game entertainment, promotions, signage etc. that helps to extend the brand?
- Will you feature alternate jerseys at any point during the season? What might they look like?

Merchandising strategy to include (but not limited to):

- What types of licensed merchandise will you sell?
- How much will you charge? Identify at least two products you anticipate will be popular sellers and how much you will charge for each.
- Where will fans be able to purchase your team-branded merchandise?

GOOD LUCK!



CHALLENGE #3: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

3.1 – COMMUNICATIONS PLAN OVERVIEW

CHALLENGE # 3 OVERVIEW: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Win or lose, fans want a team they can be proud of. When players are in the news for making a positive impact on the community, it helps boost franchise image and build an authentic connection with the fan base. On the flip side, negative publicity can have an adverse impact on a franchise, particularly when if the team is not winning.

In the third sports marketing challenge as part of the fantasy basketball project, teams will be required to provide a brief overview of your franchise community relations philosophy and communications strategy (how will you create awareness relating to your community involvement). **HELPFUL HINT:** To remain “on-brand”, consider what you submitted as your organizational mission statement from challenge #1 when creating your community relations plan.

As part of this activity, you will also be required to create a **PRESS RELEASE** communicating information relating to a specific community relations initiative organized by your franchise.

3.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

Challenge #3 in SCC’s fantasy basketball project aligns primarily with Unit 11 in our textbook, the Business of Sports & Entertainment. The challenge requires students to demonstrate a basic understanding of the concepts of communications in sports. As part of your review of Unit 11, the league office would recommend highlighting the following principles of sports communications:

- Publicity
- Public relations
- Community relations
- Media relations
- Goodwill
- Foundations
- Crisis management
- Press release



3.3 – INSTRUCTIONS & KEY CONCEPTS

Please submit ALL the required documentation to the league office (your teacher) using whatever method they have instructed you to use. Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.

Key concepts: Students are expected to demonstrate a clear understanding of key sports communications concepts, including publicity, public relations, media relations and community relations.

CHALLENGE #3 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

Please submit documentation of the following to the league office via your school/team Google Drive folder:

- Franchise community relations/communications strategy
- Answers to the following questions:
 - What is publicity?
 - How does publicity impact a professional sports franchise like the one you are running in class?
 - What is the difference between public relations, media relations and community relations?
- Team press release communicating information about a community relations initiative

This sports marketing challenge will be evaluated based on the following:

- Your overview of the organization's community relations philosophy and communications strategy (how will you create awareness relating to your community involvement)
- Demonstration of a clear understanding of the PR concept (by answering the questions below)
- Development of a PRESS RELEASE communicating information relating to a specific community relations initiative organized by your franchise

GOOD LUCK!

CHALLENGE #4: FAN EXPERIENCE



4.1 – FAN EXPERIENCE CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

CHALLENGE # 4 OVERVIEW: THE FAN EXPERIENCE / ARENA DESIGN

The fan experience has always been one of the most important aspects to any sports team's ability to engage fans and build loyalty. You have already created a strategy for branding your franchise, now it is time to determine how fans can interact with and experience your brand. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has added a new challenge for sports management and marketing professionals as they try to balance between fan, player, and staff safety with the team's bottom line.

With this sports marketing challenge, teams will be required to design an arena and provide an overview of how your franchise will develop and maintain a positive fan experience strategy, including a decision as to whether to even allow fans into the arena, along with any safety precautions or arena technology that will be implemented to create a safe environment for anyone in the facility. This should be a fun activity and the league office is anxious to see what you all come up with!

4.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

Challenge #4 in SCC's fantasy basketball project aligns primarily with Unit 10 in our textbook, the Business of Sports & Entertainment. The challenge requires students to demonstrate a basic understanding of the concept of fan experience. In addition, students should also review lesson 2.5 (technology and its influence on a quality product), 3.4 (industry trends), and 9.2 (influence arena amenities on attendance). As part of your prep for this challenge, the league office would recommend discussing the following sports business principles:

- Fan experience
- Impact of technology on the sports and entertainment product
- Industry trends
- Ticket sales (influence of arena amenities on ticket sales)



4.3 - RESEARCH

The league office (Sports Career Consulting) highly suggests sharing a few articles (links below) with your students to help spark the creative process in class. Additional research online would certainly help as well.

It is also recommended that you spend a moment quickly reviewing unit 10 from SCC's textbook for some additional background on the concept of the fan experience.

Ranking of the "Best Ballparks" in Minor League Baseball

<http://www.baseballamerica.com/majors/best-ballparks-minors/>

Stadium Journey's "Top 100" stadium experiences

<http://www.stadiumjourney.com/news/01-05-2015/936/top-100-stadium-experiences-of-2014/>

The 11 craziest concessions items at MLB Ballparks from Fortune Magazine

<http://fortune.com/2015/04/24/mlb-ballpark-craziest-foods/>

How the Golden State Warriors use tech to impact the fan experience:

<http://venturebeat.com/2015/10/04/how-tech-helped-the-nbas-golden-state-warriors-win-a-championship/>

4.4 – INSTRUCTIONS & KEY CONCEPTS

Please submit ALL the required documentation to the league office (your teacher) using whatever method they have instructed you to use. Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.

Key concepts: Students are expected to demonstrate a clear understanding of the concept of fan experience, describing why it is important and how the organization can influence and control that experience. Students should also recognize how the team's stadium can impact the fan experience, including the role technology can play.



CHALLENGE #4 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

Answer the following questions:

- What do we mean by the term “fan experience” and why is it important to a sports franchise?
- How has technology helped to improve the overall fan experience?
- When does the fan experience begin?

Creating Your Arena & Developing a Positive Fan Experience to include (but not limited to):

- GAME DAY experience (Game entertainment? Promotions?)
- Arena amenities
- Game day traditions at the arena (HINT: (refer to your response to sports marketing challenge #2 to stay “on-brand”)
- What role will technology play?
- What concession items will be offered? How will concessions be purchased and/or delivered? Where can they buy team-branded merchandise?
- What role will customer service play at the event? Where can fans find information?
- How will parking, traffic and tailgating (if offered) be managed?
- What will the “in-seat” experience be like?
- What types of premium seating options will be available (see lesson 9.3 for more ideas)?
- How big is your arena? How many people can attend a game or event?
- VISUAL REQUIRED:** What makes your arena unique? Is the architecture unique? **What does the arena look like?**
- Will fans be allowed in the arena this season? If so, how will you keep players, fans, and staff safe?
- Where is the arena located? Why?
- What is the name of the arena? How was the name chosen?





How will the arena impact the overall fan experience?



If fans will be allowed in the arena, how will the design/features/amenities help to attract visitors?



How will the arena help your franchise to generate revenue?

GOOD LUCK!

CHALLENGE #5: TICKETS, PROMOTION & SPONSORSHIP

5.1 – TICKETS, PROMOTION & SPONSORSHIP CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

Sponsorship revenue provides a significant revenue stream for most sports franchises. Sports teams can generate sponsorship revenue through many platforms, including advertising, arena signage, media partnerships, and social / digital channels.

Ticket sales revenue is also critical to the financial well-being of a sports franchise. There are several different strategies for maximizing ticket sales, ranging from single game purchases, mini package sales and season tickets. Ticket sales also impact sponsorship. The more fans that are in the building or supporting the franchise, the greater the value to those companies sponsoring the team. Effective promotions can support the ticket sales and sponsorship growth for the franchise.

SCC's sports marketing challenge #5 will require students to develop a ticket, sponsorship and promotions plan for local fans and businesses.

5.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

Challenge #5 in SCC's fantasy basketball project aligns with Units 7, 8 and 9 in our textbook, the Business of Sports & Entertainment. As part of your prep for this challenge, the league office would recommend highlighting the following sports business principles:

- Sales & service
- Promotion
- Ticket sales
- Sponsorship
- Naming rights
- Sponsorship activation

5.3 - RESEARCH

Have students research how teams are selling tickets – this can easily be done online through team websites. Are teams focusing on packages, single games, or full seasons? Are they targeting businesses or individual fans? Do they offer group tickets? Why do you think they are focusing on those strategies? How are teams creatively attracting ticket buyers? What are they doing for ticketholders during the pandemic?

Also have your students identify at least one example of a company that sponsors a professional sports franchise. Ideally, they will be able to provide examples of more than one way the company is leveraging their relationship with the team to connect with fans.



Another component of this challenge will require students to develop a promotions calendar for the season. Encourage them to look up the promotions calendars of other pro sports teams to help identify some promotions they feel would be effective for your franchise.

You will also want to review units 7, 8 and 9 in your digital textbook, *The Business of Sports and Entertainment*.








5.4 – INSTRUCTIONS & KEY CONCEPTS

Please submit ALL the required documentation to the league office (your teacher) using whatever method they have instructed you to use. Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.

Key concepts: Students are expected to recognize the importance of ticket sales and sponsorship and how promotion can help a professional sports team to increase revenues from both tickets and sponsorship. Students should also understand the strategies used in sports to maximize ticket sales and explain why a brand would want to sponsor a NBA basketball team.





CHALLENGE #5 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

Your report should include ALL the information below at a minimum:

-  Explanation of why sponsorship and ticket sales are important to sports teams
-  Overview of how your franchise plans to handle issues relating to the pandemic as it relates to ticket sales and sponsorship in case games are canceled, postponed, or if you will not allow fans in the arena this season
-  A detailed explanation of your franchise ticket sales strategy
-  A sample of a ticket sales game promotion for your franchise this season
-  An example of at least one team sponsor and how your franchise will provide exposure for that sponsor and create opportunities for them to connect with your fans
-  Promotions calendar for your franchise this season
-  Demonstrate **creativity** and offer **unique** ideas



Answer the following questions:

-  Why are ticket sales important to a sports franchise? What are some different strategies teams use to sell more tickets?
-  What is sponsorship and how does it apply to sports franchises?
-  What is promotion and how do teams implement promotions to build their brand while encouraging more fans to purchase tickets?
-  How can teams use sponsorship, promotions, and ticket sales strategies together to help drive more revenue for their organization?

GOOD LUCK!



CHALLENGE #6: DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

6.1 – DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING OVERVIEW

Digital and social media marketing has become one of the most important components to any franchise's overall marketing strategy. From promotion and sales to fan engagement and brand loyalty, connecting with fans through social networks and their mobile devices is one of the most powerful marketing mediums available to today's sports business professional.

SCC's sports marketing challenge #6 will require students to develop a digital and social media marketing strategy, complete with a brief description as to how the implementation will help grow the franchise's fan base. Students will also describe how their front office will engage the fan base, including on game days with the possibility of fans not being allowed in arenas.

6.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

Challenge #6 in SCC's fantasy basketball project aligns primarily with Lesson 4.9 in our textbook, the Business of Sports & Entertainment. The challenge requires students to demonstrate a basic understanding of the concepts of digital and social media marketing, along with the concept of fan engagement which is highlighted in Lesson 2.7 of our textbook.

6.3 – RESEARCH

Have students research their three favorite teams and identify what digital marketing strategies those franchises have in place. What are they doing on social? How are they engaging fans? What type of content is available on their website? Do they have an app? Have they offered any unique VR experiences or introduced any augmented reality-based promotions?

You might also want to quickly review lesson 4.9 in your digital textbook, *The Business of Sports and Entertainment*.






6.4 – INSTRUCTIONS & KEY CONCEPTS

Please submit ALL the required documentation to the league office (your teacher) using whatever method they have instructed you to use. Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.





Key concepts: Students are expected to demonstrate of a clear understanding of the concept of fan engagement, along with recognizing how digital and social media marketing strategies can help a professional sports team to maximize levels of fan engagement.

CHALLENGE #6 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

Answer the following questions:

-  What is digital marketing and why is important to a sports franchise?
-  What is fan engagement and why is it important to a franchise?
-  How can digital marketing help a franchise to boost levels of fan engagement?

Your Digital Marketing Strategy should include (at a minimum):

-  Description of social media presence (what social media websites will your franchise use?)
-  Explanation of social media content strategy (what types of content will be posted to the team's various social media platforms to boost levels of fan engagement)
-  Description of your mobile marketing strategies (how will you engage fans via their mobile devices?)
-  What will your team website look like? What function/purpose will your team's website serve? Can fans buy merchandise and tickets? Is information about the team available? What other team information will you be communicating to fans through the website?



- Description of team's app (if your franchise will have one) and any unique features or functionality.
- What other digital media will you deploy to maximize fan engagement (e-mail newsletters, digital/augmented reality etc.)?
- What will you do on game days to engage with fans, particularly if you opted to prohibit fans from attending games (or allow fans in a limited capacity)?
- BONUS: Design and/or demonstration of team's app (if your franchise will have one) and how the app can impact everything from fan engagement and communications to the fan experience and sales.

GOOD LUCK!

