

Marketing Wolfpack Baseball Camps

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Executive Summary

Youth camps are a part of recreation, sport, and social programs throughout America. There are many values associated with attending camps. Youth learn valuable leadership and social skills, technical skills to accomplish a task or project, or tactical skills to learn how to play a game. There are many organizations that are geared to helping youth develop these skills. Research shows that attending camps can have a lasting effect on youth and their future development (Shepard & Speelman, 1986).

The purpose of the paper is to discuss the various benefits of camps and the many ways to market these camps. The purpose is to prove that camps specifically sport-based camps can help develop youth mentally and physically. Baseball camps are run through out the country through various organizations such recreation leagues, high schools, and colleges. The goal of this project is to develop a marketing plan for the North Carolina State University Baseball staff and Wolfpack Baseball Camps. Goals and objectives are stated and strategies and tactics are described as to how to implement and achieve the goals and objectives.

The recommendation for the baseball staff is to implement a marketing plan into the organization. The plan gives the staff an organized plan of attack of how to market their camps. The recommendation is to use the tactics and strategies stated to help accomplish the goals of the staff. The marketing plan will give the staff a specific set of goals and objectives to help achieve the desired outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Sports can provide many opportunities for youth. Each year 30 to 40 million youth play sports. These sport activities range from organized sport teams to backyard pick-up games (Beedy, 2007). The recent surge in sport participation has given way to researching into the possibilities of character development through sport participation. Often times people have disregarded the fact that sports can be a valuable teaching tool to youth. Society today has seen children engage in high risk activities such as drugs and violence (Beedy, 2007). Sports can provide an outlet for youth to learn about leadership and communication, humility and confidence is gained on the playing fields.

Sport based camps can be an outlet for youth to develop life skills that will be used later in life. These camps provide a valuable alternative for youth to turn to outside of school. Sport based camps provide the opportunity to have a life changing experience through making connections with campers and counselors. Camps breakdown the sport into teaching segments and can give the camper a valuable perspective on the sport and social aspects involved with the sport.

College baseball camps are no exception. These camps are offered at all levels of college baseball and throughout the country. College baseball camps allow youth the opportunity to be taught technical and tactical skills by experienced coaches. College baseball camps provide an opportunity to experience college baseball and a college campus first hand. The camps are also used for recruiting potential college baseball players. Coaches at all colleges invite players to come to their university to showcase their talents. Coaches at Wolfpack Baseball Camps give

the campers the opportunity to ask questions, tour the campus, the training facilities, and academic institutions. College baseball camps are a valuable asset to a community and its youth.

Marketing Sport Camps

Marketing plans are often apart of an organization's broader business plan. Every organization needs a marketing plan to carry out its marketing objectives; an organization may have a product, service or brand that it desires to market. The benefits of a marketing plan include: assist in the management and implementation of strategy, promote efficient use of resources, recognize problems, opportunities, threats (Stotlar, 1997). Marketing plans also develop goals, objectives and strategies specific to that organization. The marketing plan identifies specific target markets for the organization. These markets are potential consumers of the product or the event. Marketing is the key to securing and satisfying customers (Stotlar, 1997). In a free market economy consumers have a variety of choices as to how they will satisfy their needs. Institutions that survive are the ones that can identify those needs more efficient than the competitor. Marketing can develop new markets as well as tap into existing markets (Stotlar 1997). Most sport organizations need an effective marketing plan to help accomplish their objectives.

North Carolina State University Baseball does not have a marketing plan for Wolfpack Baseball Camps. These camps are a two man operation consisting of a Volunteer Coach and the Director of Baseball Operations. Wolfpack Baseball Camps do hire instructors which consist of former players; however, they do not assist in day-to-day operations and decision making of the camps. There is no formal plan as to how to identify goals and objectives, develop strategies, or design marketing tactics to help accomplish the strategies. Prior to this marketing plan Wolfpack

Baseball Camps participants enrolled in camp due to word of mouth and repeat participants. The lack of a marketing plan hinders the ability of the camps to increase participation, increase program visibility, identify and partner with local businesses, and increase overall youth participation in baseball in the Triangle area.

The purpose of this project was to develop a marketing plan for Wolfpack Baseball Camps. The marketing plan gives the baseball staff an organized outline and procedure to identify goals, strategies, promotions, strengths, weaknesses, threats and potential opportunities. The marketing plan identifies target markets for the baseball staff to examine for potential participants. The central task of the marketing plan assists the baseball staff in developing and implementing goals and objectives pertaining to Wolfpack Baseball Camps.

The staff goal was to improve Wolfpack Baseball Camps. The significance of the marketing plan is to identify what the staff wants to improve and how to improve the camps. The significance of the project is not just marketing. NC State Baseball wanted to increase attendance at all camps, the staff wants to increase the visibility of the camps, increase youth baseball participation, create an overnight camp for high school teams and attract local businesses to sponsor the camps. The marketing plan establishes concrete goals and objectives that can be seen and put into action. These goals can be improved for future camps as the marketing plan progresses.

Definition of Terms

Marketing goals- includes short-term and long-term objectives of the organization/product/event.

Marketing objectives- marketing plan will state specific goals such as increasing participation by X amount.

Strategies- describe what is to be done to achieve the goals and objectives set by the organization.

Tactics- explain how strategies will be carried out. Include promotions such as brochures, emails, phone calls, radio, television, etc.

Target markets- segment of the population that most identifies with product or service being provided

LITERATURE REVIEW

Each summer youth in America attend summer camps. Youth attend camps for various reasons such as, improving self esteem, enhancing leadership, and social and physical growth (Powell, 2003). Camps include sport-based, recreation based, and social based; these various camps have established that youth can develop many skills while attending camp. Research has shown camps can provide essential life skills to the youth. Life skills have been developed by campers; however the some of the camps researched were not intended to develop these skills for their campers. Sport-based camps can also help provide direction for youth. There is a push to help develop more sport-based camps to help keep youth out of harmful activities such as drugs and video games. Many colleges around the country offer baseball camps as stated previously.

Camps provide opportunities for youth one of those opportunities include physical activity. Physical activity can provide many psychological and emotional benefits. However, participation rates have remained very low for youth ages 12 to 21 (Welk & Schaben, 2004). A study was conducted to examine the benefits of physical activity for adolescents. The study conducted determined the effect of the five self perceived leadership scales of the Leadership Skills Inventory among campers (Welk & Schaben, 2004). The five self leadership skills that were studied were communication, positional leadership, decision-making, working with groups, and understanding self. Participants were asked to reflect on their self perceptions of these qualities before the camp for the first instrument and reflection post camp for the second instrument.

Following the camp completion the study found that camper's self perceptions of leadership skills in all five phases were stronger. The study points out that the camp was not

designed to specifically increase these leadership skills. Therefore, it is important that camps recognize the potential to enhance leadership skills indirectly from the camp's focus. Based on the findings the study made the following recommendations.

“Camp directors should undertake evaluations of their camp programs that specifically examine leadership development in campers. Programs that target leadership skill development may further develop leadership self perceptions among campers. Leadership development could be used as a marketing tool for camp programs. Camp directors should examine the role of single-gender and co-ed camp opportunities and their potential impact on leadership self-perceptions, particularly among female campers. Leadership is increasingly recognized as a valuable skill set in a variety of settings. This preliminary research suggests that camps may contribute significantly in the development of leadership skills and that camps could benefit from further investment in developing these skills (Welk & Schaben, 2004).”

There is a consensus, globally, that the youth of the world can develop and change through sport participation (Beedy, 2007). In 2006, Jeffery Beedy traveled to Cyprus to work with the Doves Olympic Movement (DOM). DOM is an educational sports initiative based on the philosophy and principles of the Olympic Movement and uses sports to promote global citizenship and to facilitate personal and cultural development (Beedy, 2007). Beedy states that DOM and other global sport movements are the building bridges between theory and practice for sport based camps. Beedy (2007) states that new research is being developed to connect certain human values such leadership, perseverance, and respect to sport-based programs.

“Sports provide an optimal vehicle for reaching children outside the classroom and school. In particular, sports provide an environment in which cognitive conflict -- a necessary for learning -- naturally occurs. They promote physical, social, and psychological growth. Because children learn best when involved with activities and people they enjoy, sports can be a highly effective vehicle for learning multiple lessons. And when all children are offered the opportunity to participate, children learn to connect across racial, ethnic, and class lines” (Beedy, 2007).

The recent growth for sport-based youth development brought together a summit of leaders in the field of youth development. The initial summit included Positive Learning Using Sports (PLUS), Harvard University's Program in Education, After-school, and Research (PEAR),

and the Vail Leadership Institute. The leaders proposed the development of a National Sport-Based Youth Development Association that would focus on

- Establishing task forces to oversee research, training, advocacy and knowledge-sharing, and fund-raising functions for the organization;
- Defining measurable standards in the field of sports-based youth development
- Assessment tools to evaluate members' compliance with standards and to evaluate areas where training is needed;
- Surveying existing research and overseeing new studies focused on the impact of sports on youth development;
- Increasing public support and federal funding for membership programs;
- Establishing a website that includes online resources on programs, advocacy, and research;
- Creating ad campaigns to bring national awareness to the issue of sports-based youth development (Beedy, 2007).

The global call to youth development through sport-based programming is a sign of the importance of local camps. Local youth camps from recreation to sport-based camps can use the model set forth by a governing body to help create the best camp possible. Sports provide opportunities to teach leadership skills to those who will be in positions of influence during school and in the global workforce. Lessons of humility, confidence, perseverance, respect, and tolerance can be best learned on the playing fields (Beedy, 2007).

Sports have the potential to transform a child's life and significantly change the way young people think about themselves and the world (Wicks 2007). Whether it is directly or indirectly Wolfpack Baseball Camps can provide this opportunity. A non-profit organization,

Team-Up, aims at placing under-privileged youth in sports-based programs to enhance their development. Although, Wolfpack Baseball Camps will not be solely based on youth leadership, they could use some of the goals of Team-Up to help market their camps. As the previous study pointed out the camps do not have to be directly designed to enhance youth development. Many qualities and skills are learned indirectly. Team-Up strives to increase the overall sport experience, use coaches' skills to help channel leadership skills to participating youth, and spread the word about the value of sports in youth development (Wicks 2007).

Since 1998, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has engaged national partners and local park and recreation agencies to improve the quality of youth sports nationwide. In 2005, the NRPA and Sports Illustrated launched a Good Sports initiative to improve youth sports through the following elements:

- Teach life skills through sports
- Empower success among youth through sports
- Promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles through sports
- Strengthen communities through sports (Spangler 2007).

“The leadership role of parks and recreation in advancing child centered youth sports is increasingly evident. Convening community stakeholders and engaging partners to improve programs, policies, and practices around all youth sports is imperative, and park and recreation agencies sit at the crossroads of responsibility and opportunity to elevate the practice and develop new standards for the benefit of all children. NRPA has committed to continued growth and development in this regard (Spangler 2007).”

These concepts can apply to baseball camps because they can be used as a marketing tool for the staff. The staff should create a camp mission statement detailing the benefits of attending Wolfpack Baseball Camps. The mission statement can include some of the findings listed above to help form the concept of their camps.

Recently, there has been a movement to create camps for the youth of America to enhance their values and address concerns in recent overall adolescent behavior. A recent study was conducted to examine participants in summer camp programs. The study examined values and attitudes of the participants. The National Youth Sports Program was reviewed to study participant's perceptions of the program's ability to emphasize value-based constructs, interest in sports, future expectations, and respect of leadership (Watson, Newton, & Kim 2003).

The study examined 135 participants, male and female (62 boys, 68 girls, 5 non indicators) from all races and ethnicities. The instrument used was a questionnaire developed by researchers. Perceptions of values-based programs, enjoyment, sport interest, future expectation, and leader respect were evaluated based on a Likert Scale pertaining to each set of values.

The results indicated three major findings, (1) participants perceptions of social and personal responsibility did grow throughout the camp, (2), participants did enjoy the camp, demonstrated high sport interest, and respected leaders, and (3) the more the participants enjoyed the camp the more likely they were going to return. Although, the program was designed to enhance these value based objectives, the study revealed evidence that youth can enjoy camps and take away great values from camps.

There are many college baseball teams/programs that conduct baseball camps for youth and high school players. Five schools' websites were viewed to gain knowledge on camp descriptions, website maintenance, registration availability, and brochure availability. These aspects combine to help the baseball program market their camps to potential participants. The schools selected were University of Texas, Louisiana State University (LSU), Florida State University, Arizona State University, and Oklahoma State University. University of Texas, Florida State University, LSU, and Arizona State were selected because they are four of the most

well known baseball programs in the nation. Oklahoma State was selected because the program is similar in size to North Carolina State University. The common denominator among all of these schools is they developed and maintained their websites in house. The websites were a part of the athletic department website.

The LSU baseball program stated that the goal of their camps was to help promote the game of baseball at the grassroots level. LSU states youth today have many more options to choose from instead of baseball. LSU believes that promoting the game of baseball at the grassroots level will help improve their baseball and leadership skills, not only youth today but generations to come (Louisiana State Univeristy, 2008).

Texas had a flyer attached to their website detailing information about the staff, camps, and registration forms. The information on camps included time, dates, location and a brief description of each camp. Texas's flyer stated that their camp goals were to offer players of all ages the opportunity for quality baseball instruction. The primary goal of the camp was to help each camper develop a positive mental attitude about himself and the game of baseball (Univeristy of Texas, 2008)

Florida State's website contained information about upcoming camps, staff information, notable alumni, and registration. The notable alumni link revealed information about current major league baseball players that had attended the camps at Florida State. The link also provided testimonials from players that have attended these camps. The testimonials stated how much each player learned both mentally and physically from the baseball camps at Florida State (Florida State Univeristy, 2008).

The Oklahoma State baseball camps stated that baseball instruction was a number one priority. The website declared Oklahoma State baseball camps provided quality instruction to

young players. The team stated that camps allowed for participants to become involved in Oklahoma State Athletics. The website confirmed that becoming involved within college athletics should help participants develop both mentally and physically (Oklahoma State University, 2008).

Arizona State baseball camps provided detailed information about all of their camps. Arizona State mentioned the goals of their camps were to teach fundamentals of the game, teach valuable work ethic, teach new techniques, and provide foundation for improvement for future skills. The website stated the young campers would also get a chance to take in the atmosphere of a top ten program. Arizona State suggested that the campers would also learn the fundamental values and principles possessed by Arizona State's student-athletes. The camps stated campers will learn to become better teammates and the importance of respecting the game of baseball (Arizona State University, 2008).

All of these camps stated that baseball campers would receive quality baseball instruction while also learning other leadership values. The primary goal of these camps was for youth to gain exposure to the game of baseball. Sport and recreation activities can provide the opportunity for learning basic skills associated with certain activities such as baseball, basketball, and soccer. However, sport and recreational camps could provide other skills such as leadership. These camps all had specific missions to be accomplished, a key to marketing. Potential participants need to know what they are going to get out of going to your camp. Providing a sound mission by stating objectives will help potential participants feel comfortable attending camps.

Marketing Sport Camps

A key to marketing is positioning the product in the eye of the consumer. A key to having a successful product or event is the ability to create a positive brand image for the consumer. Brand positioning is defined as the marketing decisions and activities that shape and maintain a specific brand's image – based on key attributes, and relative to competing brands – in the consumer's mind (Green & Muller 2002). Brand positioning forces the marketer (Wolfpack Baseball Camps) to identify strengths and weaknesses of the product. This allows the marketer to also identify attributes that will be in the mind of the consumer and target market. Brand positioning also allows the marketer to find new markets that have not been reached or have been under-served (Green & Muller 2002). Brand positioning also allows for differentiation between competitors. With several different college camps in the area, the NC State Baseball staff must make themselves different from the competitor.

METHODS

Organization

In the past 12 years NC State baseball has been a fixture on the national baseball scene. The program has been to nine NCAA Regionals and two NCAA Super Regionals in the past 12 years. NC State under the current staff has accounted for 416 victories. NC State has also produced 50 Major League Baseball players in the past 12 years. The baseball staff has extensive knowledge and experience in college baseball. The staff is led by Head Coach Elliott Avent, and he is assisted by Tom Holliday, Chris Hart, and Brian Ward. These coaches have over 100 years combined experience in college baseball and have been a part of some of college baseball's most successful programs. NC State competes in the highest division of NCAA athletics. They compete in the Atlantic Coast Conference for all sports. The NC State Athletic Department goal is to compete at the highest level and win championships.

Wolfpack Baseball Camps have served the local area for over 20 years. According to the baseball staff more than 90% of the participants during the summer camps are within the triangle area. There are three camp sessions; fall, winter, and summer. During the fall showcase a more diverse clientele is served. High school players from all over the state come and some from the southeastern US. The goal for these players is to make an impression on the coaching staff. The reason for the more diversity is the fact that they want to be recognized. If players are not ready to play baseball for NC State the coaching staff may recommend them to another school of a lower division. During the winter camps the customer is more likely to be from the triangle area. According to the staff to occasional out of town camper will visit based on referral.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

A current strength of Wolfpack Baseball Camps is overall program success. The current coaching staff has put together six straight seasons of attending the NCAA Regionals and two NCAA Super Regionals. The baseball staff has also help produce major league talent over that span as well. Over 40 players have been drafted into Major League Baseball. The success speaks to the overall instruction of the baseball players and team.

A second strength is the knowledge and experience of the assistant coaches. The coaches are the ones that will provide most of the instruction and feedback the participants receive. All of the coaches have been very successful especially at the collegiate level. There is also experience at the professional level. These coaches have all combined to play in or coach in some of the biggest games in college baseball. This experience has translated into the success of the program as well. The knowledge can also be transferred to the participants. Baseball is built on fundamentals and many technical skills. The staff at NC State provides vast knowledge of the correct fundamentals that it takes to be a successful baseball player, whether it's at the high school, college, or professional level.

Third, NC State baseball has qualified current and former players to use as instructors. Current players are available for many of the camps and help with the organization of the camps. The players can also help provide positive assistance and feedback to participants. The players also provide an outlet for the participants that is closer in age to the participants. Former players are also used to comeback and provide instruction. These players can provide professional experience and can help with the branding of Wolfpack baseball. Former players as well as

current players can help share their experiences with the participants to help inform them on the excellence of the NC State baseball program.

Finally, the camps allow for the participants to receive feedback from college coaches. No matter what level the participant there is the opportunity to gain advice about their game. This feedback allows the camper to take home the fundamentals learned and expand their game. For the fall showcase camps each participants will receive a letter from the coaching staff that grades each part of their game. This can give the player a sense of where their game stands against similar competition.

Weaknesses

A weakness of Wolfpack Baseball Camps is the lack of an organized plan for marketing the baseball camps. The staff does not have any written goals and objectives to accomplish during the year and future years. The baseball staff also does not have strategies or tactics to improve the camps overall performance. The baseball needs a plan to help guide their marketing efforts. Currently, the camps are operated by two individuals; a marketing plan could help organize their goals and objectives for the upcoming camps during that season. A marketing plan also allows for the organization to set long term goals for the direction of Wolfpack Baseball Camps. Long term goals will help monitor overall visibility and camp success for future years.

A second weakness is lack of promotions to market the camps. Currently, the baseball staff puts together a brochure and a website run by a secondary source. The staff does not actively go out and promote the camps at the grassroots level. Brochures are given out at home games and the website is advertised on the athletic department's website. There are many other

sources and tactics that the staff could use to better market the camps. The staff also does not use the current players to help promote the camps. Players are more visible to the younger demographic and could help secure participation from local little leagues and middle schools.

Third, the camps are not exhausting all possible target markets. The camps do receive a majority of their participation from the Triangle region. However, the camps could grow their camp participation by marketing and promoting their camps more in these areas. Wake County has 23 high schools and 30 middle schools most of which have baseball teams. The baseball staff is not currently giving brochures to these locations. Marketing to the local schools could help spread the word about baseball camps throughout the county. Marketing to the second largest school district in North Carolina should be essential to increase visibility and participation.

Finally, the baseball staff has not identified new businesses to help offset camp cost from sponsorship revenue. The baseball staff is well connected in the community especially the Head Coach and Assistant Head Coach. These two individuals meet with boosters on a regular basis and have local business contacts. These resources should be recognized and used to help endorse the camps. Creating relationships with local businesses could have long term effects as well as helping with current camps.

Opportunities

Potential opportunities create chances for community involvement. This is a chance for NC State baseball to showcase the program and university in the community. There is an opportunity for the baseball program to give back to the youth in the area with baseball

instruction. Also during the promotion and marketing of the camps the baseball staff will be seen throughout the community which can create awareness for the program.

Second, the opportunity to attract local businesses and sponsors is available for the staff. Local businesses and attracting sponsors can allow for the baseball program to receive extra money. The money can be used to enhance the instruction and quality of the facility for potential participants. Being able to attract sponsors will also help with the marketing of the camps. The businesses will provide another outlet to get the word out on Wolfpack Baseball camps.

The staff will also have the opportunity to create more awareness for the camps and program. Marketing to the local community, schools, and little leagues will get more people involved and aware of the opportunities that the camps can offer. This awareness could also create more fans for the baseball team. If more people attend camp they will be a part of the program and want the opportunity to see the team perform.

There is also the opportunity to sell NC State baseball merchandise. Participants and their families could have the opportunity to buy the same gear the players wear. This will create awareness for the program as well. People will feel attached to the program when they have the same equipment that they players wear. This could also create a new revenue stream for the program to help with instructors pay, facilities and equipment upgrades.

Threats

NC State baseball camps have threats that might take business away. The North Carolina, Duke, and Wake Forest all have summer which are all within the area. There are also other surrounding baseball programs that hold summer camps such as East Carolina University, UNC-Wilmington, and Elon. These choices might make it harder for NC State to recruit

campers outside the county. It is also essential for NC State Baseball to monitor the prices of these camps to ensure they have equal value.

The summer months also produce numerous threats to baseball camps. Family vacations, various summer camps, and the variety of summer activities might hinder one's decision on making it to NC State baseball camps. The fall months may have threats from other fall sports that the potential campers may be involved with. The winter camps may fall to the fact that the potential campers may site needing a break from baseball. All of these combined could cause threats to recruiting new and retaining former campers.

With these threats in mind NC State baseball camps can also provide opportunities for campers. Campers will be exposed to the one of the best college baseball programs in the country. The campers will enjoy playing in one of the best facilities in country. The potential campers will also have the opportunity to develop their skills in baseball, leadership, communication, and team-work. These camps also offer the opportunity for physical activity for the youth of the area.

When developing or enhancing a product there are always threats, but with threats come opportunities. NC State baseball will capitalize on the opportunities that are presented and make NC State baseball camps the premiere college baseball camp in the area.

Customers Served

Wolfpack Baseball Camps serve two types of baseball camp participants. The first is youth ages 7-13. These campers attend summer and winter camps for specific baseball instruction from the staff and players. The second type of camper is high school baseball players

ages 14-18. These players come to camp to showcase their skills and abilities to the coaching staff. These players also come to experience playing on a college baseball field and to receive information about playing baseball in college. A third customer to consider is the parents or guardians of the individual camper. More than likely these are the people paying for the participation of the camper.

Customer Demographics

Wolfpack Baseball Camps goal is to serve a wide variety of campers. Their goal is to increase camp participation locally, statewide, and even states surrounding North Carolina such South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia. Baseball is a huge sport in the United States and is played by many Americans. Fourteen million Americans play baseball every year, more than five million of those play baseball more than 50 days a year. There are over 15,000 high school baseball teams in the country with over 400,000 players (SBR.net, retrieved 2008).

Age Breakdown (2007) – numbers represent percentages of all participants

- 7-11 – 28.5%
- 12-17 – 20.9%
- 18-24 – 13.1%

State Breakdown (2007) – numbers represent percentages of all participants

- North Carolina – 5.1%
- South Carolina – 0.8%
- Virginia – 1.1%
- Tennessee – 0.6%

- Georgia – 3.1% (SBR.net, retrieved 2008)

Wolfpack Baseball Camps cost money. The camp staff is looking for parents or players who have discretionary income to spend on camp registration and lodging. Forty percent of the baseball playing population has a total household income of over \$50,000. The median income for Wake County is over \$60,000(wake.gov, retrieved 2008). Fan affiliation is another demographic for the staff to evaluate. NC State has a very strong fan, baseball included. Over the past six years the baseball team has drawn over 50,000 fans (NC State Baseball Media Guide, 2008).

Target Markets

Wake County can produce a big enough population to help achieve the goals set forth by the baseball staff. The market includes youth ages 7-13 wanting to receive quality baseball instruction and potential high school baseball recruits that want to play college baseball. Wolfpack Baseball Camps target markets include Wake County High Schools, local middle schools that feed into local high schools such Broughton, Sanderson, Leesville Road, and Athens Drive, and West Raleigh Little League. Other markets to be considered include potential recruits, NC State fan base most notably Wolfpack Club members and season ticket holders for NC State Baseball.

Wake County high schools present a large local market. There are 23 high schools in Wake County and 18 of those high schools field a baseball team and eight have a Raleigh addresses. Wake County also has 30 middle schools, 13 of those schools have Raleigh addresses. The schools with Raleigh addresses would allow the staff to narrow their focus on where to market their camps. High school and middle school teams average about 15 players per

team, which would total 315 players from the 21 schools with a Raleigh address. The middle school focus could narrow to the schools that feed into the high schools within close proximity of the NC State campus. Broughton, Sanderson, Leesville Road, and Athens Drive high schools could be considered to market to their middle schools (US Census, 2008).

The biggest little league in Wake County is West Raleigh Little League. There are more than 800 children apart of the program from age seven to 12. The spring season for West Raleigh Little League begins in March and end in June. A select few are chosen for All-Star teams and the play runs until August. After the spring season ends is the perfect opportunity for these kids to join Wolfpack Baseball Camps until their fall season begins in September. During the winter West Raleigh Little League has not activities planned. This is another opportunity for Wolfpack Baseball Camps to be involved with West Raleigh Little League (http://www.eteamz.com/west_raleigh_baseball2/, retrieved 2008). The West Raleigh Baseball website offers opportunities for advertisement on their website for upcoming camps in the community.

A third potential target market is high school baseball players. Each year NC State targets about 100 potential recruits from high schools across the country. These potential recruits have email addresses and phone numbers kept in a database available to all college coaches. The goal is to target more of the recruits to make the camps more competitive for the camper. There are more than 350 high schools in the state of North Carolina. Surrounding state high schools can be considered as well from South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia. High school baseball players play baseball for their school in the spring and then play summer ball after the spring season. Most high school players do play fall baseball however, the season is more relaxed and the ability to attend fall camps is more prevalent.

Finally, the NC State fan base is a potential target market for Wolfpack Baseball Camps. According to the Wolfpack Club (university booster club) they have over 20,000 members. There are also season ticket holders for NC State Baseball that can be marketed too. This potential customer is already loyal to the program and over the last six years attendance has increased (NC State Media Guide, 2008).

Procedures

Currently Wolfpack Baseball Camps are providing the service of baseball instruction and recruitment. Camps are organized for the summer, fall, and winter. The summer camp objectives are designed to teach youth about the basic fundamentals of the game. The fall allows the staff to invite potential college baseball players to the campus to showcase their skills. The winter camps are designed to focus on specific positions such as, hitting, catching, and pitching. The current objectives of these camps are to break even in revenue and seek potential players for NC State Baseball.

This project began by contacting the NC State baseball staff to discuss the goals and objectives they wanted to accomplish with baseball camps. The main staff members were Brian Ward, Volunteer Coach, and Nate Birtwell, Director of Baseball Operations. These two staff members operate Wolfpack Baseball Camps. Both develop the criteria for each camp, organize registration, order t-shirts, hire camp instructors, and work as instructors for the camps. Both Coach Ward and Nate detailed what exactly each camp offers and what exactly they want from future camps. The staff and I then came up with some short-term goals, long-term goals, and finally some tactics to accomplish these goals for the future. The information was gathered and then put into a marketing plan along with other key components.

Developing the Product

Developing the paper and marketing plan began with researching marketing, sport marketing, youth camps, benefits of youth camps, and other college baseball camps. The second step in the process was to interview the NC State Baseball staff, most notably the two who operate the camps. The interview took place to gather specific information about Wolfpack Baseball Camps. The goal was to help establish a plan for the baseball staff and then begin the paper and marketing plan.

The third step was to review the literature and explain the rationale behind marketing youth baseball camps specifically Wolfpack Baseball Camps. The literature review provided a foundation to form the goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics stated later. Fourth, was to research potential target markets. Target markets allow the baseball staff and Wolfpack Baseball Camps to form a participation base. This base will serve as participants for the camps and help create visibility for the camps.

A “SWOT” analysis was then performed to help define strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities of Wolfpack Baseball Camps. The “SWOT” analysis allowed for strategies and tactics to be formed. Strategies give the staff the ability to measure their goals and objectives for the camps. The tactics help the staff achieve those strategies.

Timeline

Promotion/Tactic	Month (to be completed)	Responsibility
Planning, design, printing of all promotional items; such as banners on the internet, brochure, radio script for baseball games, etc.	December - January	Coaching Staff and Director of Baseball operations
Place a banner on the athletic website to detail information about upcoming camp. Banner should give website address that describes the camps and registration information.	February- until camps start	Director of Baseball Operations in conjunction with Athletic Department website
Distribute the brochure through email and pass outs at events. Deliver brochure to fans, season ticket holders, Wake County schools, and local little leagues.	February - June	Volunteer Coach, Director of Baseball Operations, and Current Players
Contact Wake County High schools, North Carolina High Schools and surrounding states such South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee.	February - May	Coaching Staff based on previous contacts
Make Appearances at West Raleigh Little League events.	March - June	Head Coach, Volunteer Coach, and Director of Baseball Operations
Order t-shirts, call local restaurants for food to be ordered at later date, and organize how camps will be run and set-up.	March	Director of Baseball Operations and Volunteer Coach

RESULTS

Product

Just like the other colleges around the country the NC State Baseball staff runs their own camps during the summer, fall, and winter. Camps allow the staff to teach youth ages 7-13 the basic fundamentals and skills required to play baseball. The Fall Showcase camps are designed to host the best high school baseball players in the state of North Carolina and around the country. Showcase camps allow for campers to meet the coaching staff and be evaluated from college coaches. Campers are also given access to the facilities and lectured on academics and strength and conditioning. The winter camps are tailored to baseball players ages 7 to 17. These camps are designed to give more instruction and teach the complexities of pitching, catching, and hitting.

There are 897 college teams in North America ranging from junior college, NAIA, Division III, Division II, and the biggest, Division I (Sport Business Research, 2007). Most all of these schools participate in baseball camps during the summer, fall, and winter. Youth from all ages sign up to receive instruction from some of the best college players and coaches in the country, the occasional major leaguer at some programs. Types of camps include basic fundamental and skills camps, winter hitting, pitching, and catching camps, and fall showcase camps.

Examples

Summer youth camp, ages 7-12

- Designed to teach students solid fundamental baseball skills as well as to raise their level of understanding of the game of baseball.
- Provide each camper with the instruction and encouragement needed to develop individual skills to a greater level.
- Want the camper to be aware that individual skills are best utilized when they are incorporated into a team concept.
- Will emphasize how individuals work together on a field to form a baseball "team"
(<http://collegebaseballcamps.com/details.cfm?ID=220&PackageAvailableKey=1458&src=CBC>, retrieved 2008).

Showcase Camp grades: 9th – 12th

- Opportunity for you to meet the coaching staff and familiarize yourself with campus.
- The will provide you with valuable instruction for your development as a player and an opportunity for you to display your talents.
- The two-day showcase will consist of offensive and defensive evaluations and instruction conducted by the coaching staff and professional scouts.
- Participants will be divided into teams for evaluations of their performance in multiple game settings
(<http://collegebaseballcamps.com/details.cfm?ID=188&PackageAvailableKey=1264&src=CBC> retrieved 2008).

Pitching and Catching Camp, ages: 10-17

- This specialized camp is for pitchers and catchers who are serious about their future in baseball.
- Campers will go through two days of intense training.
- A routine is established for the camper that focuses on specific areas needed for success in college and professional baseball.
- Each camper will be working with top collegiate coaches from and current players.
- Players will learn; video analysis, mechanics seminar, conditioning techniques & strategies, bullpen & long toss routines, defensive drills, and much more

(<http://www.asubaseballcamps.com/campdetail.cfm?Camp=30>, retrieved 2008)

Goals

The primary NC State Baseball goal is to create a camp beneficial to all participants.

Working in conjunction with the baseball staff goals and objectives were created. Strategies and tactics were then formed to help accomplish the goals and objectives.

Short Term Goals

- Increase camp participation
- Sell local sponsorship
- Sell NC State baseball merchandise
- Increase revenue
- Create overnight team camps

Long Term Goals

- Have major league baseball players appear at camps
- Create local buzz for NC State baseball
- Create statewide buzz for NC State baseball
- Create new fans for NC State baseball
- Sell sponsorships for overnight camps

Project Goals

- Increase number of camp participants from 400 to 600 campers.
- Sell at least two sponsorship spots to local business to offset camp operational costs
- Invite and sign-up 8-10 high schools for overnight camp next summer

MARKETING STRATEGY

The market for baseball camps already exists; the staff wanted to increase the participation from that market. The first strategy is to increase promotions. More promotions increase visibility to the target markets, therefore hopefully increasing participation. New marketing channels such as local high schools, local little leagues, baseball season ticket holders, and other target markets stated previously will be used to promote the camps.

A second strategy is to involve local businesses previously associated with NC State baseball. The coaching staff is connected in the community and can draw in local businesses to help fund Wolfpack Baseball Camps. Some previous local sponsors have included Danny's Bar-B-Que of Cary and Moe's Southwest Grill of Raleigh. It is vital to have them apart of the program because they can provide new customers and help generate revenue for the camps. Creating this relationship can also help future camps and future program funding.

A third strategy is to enhance coverage of the baseball camps though various marketing channels such as NC State Athletic Department website, radio broadcasts during baseball games, and coaching appearances at local high school and little league events. The staff needs to make information about the camps very accessible to potential participants. This idea will help create an image about the camps in the eyes of the participants. The fourth strategy to increase visibility will be a reflection of increased participation and local business involvement. Having more participants will allow the camps to grow and create more coverage for future camps.

MARKETING TACTICS

1. Pricing

The camp was kept approximately the same prices as that of competitors. Summer camp prices average \$275 for a four day camp. The fall showcase camps average \$250 for Friday through Sunday. These camps are more expensive because of the evaluation process. The winter camps average \$160. These camps are more instructional and are for all ages and generally last only two days.

2. Distribution of Promotional Items

Radio and jumbotron advertisements were recommended. All NC State baseball games are on the local radio and at each home game announcements will be made to notify listeners about upcoming Wolfpack Baseball Camps. Advertisement at men's home basketball games will be used as well. At one home game during basketball season the marketing department puts together an advertisement for the start of baseball season. A potential spot to market baseball camps could be available. Also, the internet and brochures will be available. Brochures are printed each year detailing the information about camps. The brochure will have the slogan and will be made available for all the home games. The staff has partnered with collegebaseballcamps.com to publish their camp information and sign up on their website. This allows the customers to have easy access to information about the camps.

3. Promotion

- To create a buzz and image for the participants, Wolfpack Baseball Camps will have a slogan associated with all camp materials. The slogan will be: Wolfpack Baseball Camps "Learn to Play the Wolfpack Way." The slogan will help set the camps apart from the competitors

because the staff will be implementing fundamentals essential to the style of Wolfpack Baseball.

- Have star players and coaches attend local high school and little league games and pass out brochures.
 - The brochures detail each upcoming camp for the summer, fall and winter. Having the coaches and players pass out the brochures will allow potential participants to ask questions directly to the organizers. Potential participants will also be able to see the players, which can help create a buzz for the camps.
- Email all baseball season ticket holders/offer discount to potential participants and other participants that they can attract.
 - Season ticket holders are already loyal to the program, giving them an opportunity for a discount will help entice them to join the camps. Also, allowing them to recruit other participants at a discount cost may help increase the overall participation.
- Invite local businesses to attend games during the season. The coaching staff has contacts with local businesses and NC State has partnered with restaurants in the past for advertisement. These businesses will be contacted first.
 - Inviting them to game shows that the program wants to develop a relationship with the business. The baseball staff should create a reciprocal agreement with these businesses to create a win-win situation for both organizations. Wolfpack Baseball Camps will receive money from business and business will receive advertisement, tickets to the game, and invitations to other Wolfpack Baseball events.
- Have former/current MLB players come back to join the camps.

- Professional baseball players can help increase attendance and buzz for the camps. Having a professional baseball player also makes the camp that much more credible. Professional athletes show the potential participants that the program is committed to teaching the fundamentals of baseball at the highest level.
- During the season invite campers to the field for pre-game warm ups and game.
 - If the opportunity exists for campers to attend games and get on the field it can create a buzz and increased participation. Access to the field will give the program the opportunity to showcase itself to the campers and show them appreciation for attending camp. This could also result in repeat attendance.
- Advertise in the Wolfpacker Magazine.
 - This is a magazine that is issued to members of the Wolfpack Club. The Wolfpack Club has over 20,000 members and this would give the camps the opportunity to be showcased to loyal NC State fans. This also allows the program to promote to other NC State fans that are not season ticket holders for baseball.
- Send players and coaches to USA Baseball's free camps.
 - USA Baseball, located in Durham, holds free baseball clinics to kids in the Triangle area. This is an opportunity for NC State players and coaches to show up in uniform and give out information on Wolfpack Baseball Camps. The camps generally have about 100 kids from around the area. The staff can reach kids in the area and their families. It is also an opportunity to give back to the community, helping the brand of the Wolfpack Baseball Camps.

- Call and email High School coaches from Wake County, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee to gain interest in overnight team camps.
 - Calling the coaches makes the contact more personal. It also gives the staff a chance to gather more contact information so that camp information can be passed along. The email would send them the informational brochure that is produced each year.

Budget

The budget for Wolfpack Baseball Camps varies from year to year. According to the baseball staff the each camp costs \$2500, on average depending on the number of participants. The amount that was used for camp expenses was an estimate from previous camps. The youth baseball camps are not part of the university and therefore the funding comes from the baseball program. Expenses are paid as required. However, the camps do make a profit, when holding summer camps workers are hired based on the number of campers. Also, extra shirts are sold to participating campers. The brochures and potential advertisement will cost as stated above, however, these cost will be offset by campers. The key is to enhance the budget even greater by obtaining sponsors, more participants, and the selling of NC State merchandise.

NC State baseball camp is an elastic product the prices of the camps should be kept around the average of the other camps in the area. Elastic products are products that are not seen as a necessity to the consumer. This allows participants to view the product as a good value. When demand increases from marketing the prices can be raised because it will show participants that the product's quality is great.

Promoting the baseball camps is essential to increase exposure and help the tactics that have been put in place. All baseball games are on the radio and will give an outlet to promote the camps, announcements at all home games will be made as well. Both of these promotional items are free because they are run by the university through an outside source helping to promote NC State Athletics. Another promotional item that has changed in recent months has been the name of the camps. The camps were titled Elliott Avent Baseball Camps; they are now called Wolfpack Baseball Camps. This promotional item helps to establish a solid brand name for the consumer. Items listed below will be promotional items that will cost the baseball to print and distribute.

- Facility rent - \$250 per day
- Insurance- \$3 per participant
- Maintenance- coaches maintain field to help curb costs (no baselines are painted in, baseball that are used are leftovers from previous season, and water comes from the tap)
- Website- collegebaseballcamps.com charge \$10 per sig-up on the website
- Staff- 4-8 workers @ \$10/hour, number of workers could change depending on number of participants
- Brochure- will include camp dates, cost, mission statement, registration form, contact numbers, 5000 brochures = \$1000.
- T-shirts to all campers, 750= \$7,000
- Advertisement on West Raleigh Little League webpage, \$100

4. Economic Climate

The economy is not in the best of shape right now, which could affect the future camps. However, there was no decline this past year from an attendance stand point. Though, price changes to affect the sport climate. There are many competitors in the area competing for the same customer. Price of the camps is very important to the customer and must be kept in congruence with the local competitor.

Competitor Analysis

NC State is one of 897 college baseball teams in the country. There are over 5,000 youth baseball camps held every year, whether it be at a college, local little league, or an AAU association (collegebaseballcamps.com, 2008). There are six major Division I baseball teams within 100 miles of NC State's campus. All six of these schools hold baseball camps much like NC State in all seasons, but the spring. These other schools run very similar camps to NC State. Summer camps are for younger children, fall is for potential recruits, and the winter includes all ages. However, what these competitors do inside the camp could be vastly different. According to collegebaseballcamps.com the description of the camps are mostly the same. However, the schools do not relay certain activities that are planned and run during the camp.

Evaluation

The first evaluation method is to measure previous camp participation against current camp participation after the marketing plan has been put into action. Each year the staff keeps records of total number of campers for insurance. Comparing previous years to the current years will give the staff an idea of the marketing plan has had an effect.

A second evaluation method is to issue a short survey to participants and family members (for younger campers). The survey could ask questions regarding overall camp organization, how they heard about the camps, access to website, and description of camps on website. The survey can be reviewed by the staff and final numbers can be calculated to measure impact of marketing plan.

A third evaluation method is to track teams that come to overnight camps that will be put in place. If teams are repeat participants the staff will know that their camps are accomplishing the goals and objectives set forth. Finally, the attainment of sponsors could be an evaluation method. The staff should set out to find sponsors for the camps the price of the sponsor could vary; however, price should help offset costs of the camps.

Discussion

Marketing is a key essential to attaining and retaining customers for a product or event. In this case the event was Wolfpack Baseball Camps. I learned that there are numerous resources and opportunities for the product to grow. Wake County and Raleigh have many outlets for target markets (potential customers). These outlets need to have more information about Wolfpack Baseball Camps so that the camps can reach their full potential.

Camps can be successful and can also provide more than the original objective. Camps need to have a mission to give potential participants a vision. The vision allows the potential participant an idea of what they will receive from the camp. Sports camps can provide more than just fundamentals of the that particular sport. Sport camps can give a participant guidance and teach them leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. Camps can provide guidance for the youth in the area and allow them to learn more than just a sport.

The biggest challenge was creating a plan that a small staff could perform. The staff has time constraints and limited numbers to help market the baseball camps. The challenge was to create tactics that were beneficial to the staff and applicable to the staff. The promotional tactics had to be items that the staff could do in house or in free time. There is no one person that handles the marketing of the camps therefore it is a team effort and the goals are accomplished at various times.

The project will be rewarding when the staff is able to implement some of the tactics and strategies. These strategies and tactics will hopefully help the organization create and operate a better baseball camp.

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