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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Rachelle Manning entitled "Marketing Intercollegiate Women's Softball: Important Considerations." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science with a major in Human Performance and Sport Studies.

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Marketing Intercollegiate Women's Softball: Important Considerations

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Presented for the
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ABSTRACT

A selected group of 42 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I softball head coaches were sent the Softball Marketing Questionnaire. Sixty-four point three percent of the questionnaires were returned. The purpose of this study was to determine the different types of marketing strategies used by the NCAA top Division I softball programs, which were then identified by their teams' overall success. This was broken down into six categories: (a) 1994 national rank, (b) attendance, (c) corporate sponsorships, (d) budget, (e) number of scholarships granted, and (f) image. The study also included a marketing plan, based on the research findings, as the model to be utilized in the marketing of the newly formed softball program at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The study was divided into four sub-topics: (a) programs similar to The University of Tennessee, (b) aspects of marketing, (c) attendance, and (d) the top 5 most successful Division I softball programs based on attendance. The final results will help existing programs as well as new programs in ascertaining their respective needs, developing their objectives, and successfully implementing a suitable marketing plan by providing them with the necessary, most current information with which to do so.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Because of the lack of research and published information on marketing women's athletics, the researcher developed the Softball Marketing Questionnaire and a model marketing plan for National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I softball programs.

Most NCAA Division I athletic departments, both men's and women's, do not receive revenue from their sports. As for women's athletics, basketball is the first sport to make money over the last three years. For example, the women's Final Four has been sold out for three years in a row, and is currently sold out for the 1996 Final Four in Charlotte, North Carolina.

This study identifies softball as the next women's sport likely to reach a national interest. It was developed to identify the various marketing strategies used by the different programs. The final results will help existing programs as well as new programs in ascertaining their respective needs, developing their objectives, and successfully implementing a suitable marketing plan by providing them with the necessary, most current information with which to do so.

Across the breadth of marketing literature published in the 1990s, many similarities were included in the final analysis of a marketing plan for an NCAA Division I women's softball program. A variety of articles were used for a background in three main areas necessary to market non-revenue sports: (a) corporate sponsorship, (b) signage, and (c) marketing and promotions.

Many of the similarities included how companies or sport organizations could increase their revenue. The underlying goals of the various marketing strategies were to make money, increase exposure, and gain publicity. An organization can obtain these goals in a number of ways which vary from sport to sport, but the desired outcome is basically the same.

A consistent finding among the articles included the degree of importance placed on the organization's perceived image. In order for an organization to endorse a product, it must have a respectable image. Turco (1994) believed sport sponsorship was primarily used by corporations to change, enhance, or develop the image of a product or service. In Martin's (1994) study, it was suggested that the richness of a consumer's image presented both opportunity and risks for firms considering association with sports in order to enhance their own image.

After reviewing the selected articles, a number of key differences and similarities were noted. The most obvious differences were the types of marketing techniques used to increase attendance and revenue. Hansen and

Gauthier's (1992) study indicated that various sport organizations pursued different operative goals depending on their individual circumstances. The differences included herein should not be considered negative because they are important in order for the sport manager to understand the proper ways to market an organization. Hansen and Gauthier (1992) also stated that organizations developed distinct marketing objectives in order to fit their organization's projected mission.

Certain implications became apparent after completing the research for a marketing plan. A marketing plan is not a guarantee for success, but marketing research can lower the chance of failure. Important research information can be obtained through questionnaires, surveys, and interviews to aid directors with their potential target market. Huggins (1992) implied that marketing research for sport organizations is important in order to determine the demographics and geographics of the fans who attend games.

Just as Mawson and Coan (1994) indicated, sport organizations take on the nature and function of a business by developing a mission statement, objectives, revenues, advertising cost, operations, policies and procedures, investments, and marketing techniques. The most important and final goal, in order to increase exposure and generate revenue is to analyze the organization's strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, there is no right or wrong way to market an organization.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to determine the different types of marketing objectives used by the NCAA top Division I softball programs. The study subsequently includes a marketing plan based on the research findings as the model to market the newly formed softball program at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. It is important to note that a marketing director will not know if a marketing plan will be successful until the plan is implemented. However, the director can put himself or herself in a less vulnerable position by doing the appropriate research prior to initiating a plan and later to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. The study was divided into the following sub-topics:

I. Programs Similar to the University of Tennessee

II. Aspects of Marketing

III. Attendance

IV. Top 5 Most Successful NCAA Division I Softball Programs Based on Attendance

Sub-Problems

1. Programs similar to The University of Tennessee concerning three variables are used: (a) number of scholarships, (b) university's enrollment, and (c) softball budget.

2. What are the different types of corporate funding and/or donations available to the various programs?

3. Comparison of the sizes and contribution levels of the booster clubs from the various regions.

4. Is there a relationship between the need for corporate involvement and the program's image and overall success?

5. How great is the potential increase in Division I women's softball attendance?

6. Do a program's overall attendance figures relate to its win/loss record?

7. To what extent are the programs involved in the community?

8. Does each program define a target market?

9. Are the marketing efforts consistent with the programs' success rate and attendance figures?

Each of these issues will be addressed through the Softball Marketing Questionnaire (SMQ). The questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed by the researcher as the pilot instrument used in this study. A panel of NCAA Division I softball and athletic marketing officials from The University of Tennessee reviewed the Softball Marketing Questionnaire.

Definition of Terms

The following list of terms contains the theoretical and operational definitions of the topics discussed in this study. The list is provided to give the reader a better understanding of the material.

Image. The overall representation of the form and features of a group or organization. In this study, image is used to depict the selection of corporate sponsors and/or sport organization.

Marketing plan. The strategic framework used to determine a successful marketing process which includes the development and implementation of objectives, priorities, budgets, strategies, and the checkpoints needed to market a sport organization.

Marketing research. In 1961, the American Marketing Association (AMA) defined marketing research as the systematic gathering, recording, and analyzing of data about problems relating to the marketing of goods and services (Huggins, 1992). In reference to sport, marketing research is defined as the systematic gathering, recording, and analyzing of data about problems relating to the marketing of a sport. This information is gathered through questionnaires, surveys, demographics, and geographics. In this study, a questionnaire (Appendix A) specific to the needs of the marketing proposal provides the information needed to design a model marketing plan for The University of Tennessee women's softball program.

Marketing tactics/strategies. The methods used to accomplish an organization's marketing objectives. These differ from organization to organization. Hansen and Gauthier (1992) believe organizations develop distinct marketing objectives in order to fit their organization's projected mission.

Non-revenue sport. College athletic teams that operate from year to year without making money. These sports must be subsidized by other sources or by the revenue-producing sports. Examples of non-revenue sports include almost all NCAA Division I men's and women's sports: volleyball, baseball, softball, golf, tennis, and, at most schools, women's basketball.

Revenue sport. A collegiate sport that makes more money than it spends. Examples of revenue sports include various NCAA Division I men's football and basketball programs.

Signage. Any advertisement in the form of a banner, sign, or visual apparatus used to promote a company or product.

Sport organization. A sport organization is a group of people united for the development and success of a sport-related business.

Sport sponsorship. A company chooses to advertise through some form of sporting event to gain exposure through media coverage and the event's spectators. Examples of sponsorship include signage, use of corporate name in tournament title, and promotions during competition.

Target market. A specific group of people on whom a company focuses its campaign in order to achieve its mission statement. In this study, the target market is identified by determining the demographic and geographics of the fan base through the utilization of the Softball Marketing Questionnaire.

Trade-out. An agreement between a sport organization, corporation, and an athletic department for the exchange of merchandise and/or services for advertisements or sponsorships.

Assumptions of the Study

It is assumed that participants answered the questionnaire honestly and to the best of their knowledge. It is also assumed that the coaches who complete the questionnaire are knowledgeable about NCAA Division I intercollegiate women's softball and the different target audiences.

Scope of the Study

This study identifies the different types of marketing techniques used by NCAA Division I softball programs. The study focuses on NCAA Division I intercollegiate women's softball; however, the results could be applied to other intercollegiate sports. The principles identified can be used to market any type of collegiate, non-revenue sport organization, though certain limitations and delimitations do exist. One limitation is the inability to ensure the honesty of participants who answer the questionnaires. Another limitation is that the questionnaires were sent only to 42 NCAA Division I women's softball coaches. The coaches were identified by their teams' overall success, which was broken down into six categories: (a) 1994 national rank (Appendix A), (b) attendance, (c) corporate sponsorships, (d) budget, (e) number of scholarships granted, and (f) image. The delimitation of the study was that the study focused on women's intercollegiate softball programs at the Division I level.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study serve two purposes: (a) it provides The University of Tennessee Women's Athletic Department with a model marketing plan for the newly formed softball program, and (b) it also offers the various Division I softball programs across the country a sample of marketing ideas to promote their women's sports program. A number of people can benefit from the results of this study, including individual coaches, athletic directors, student-athletes, and the NCAA. In the 1996 Summer Olympic Games, softball will be a medal sport for the first time in the history of the game. The 1996 Summer Olympic Games should help with the exposure of women's softball and, subsequently, there may be a great demand for intercollegiate softball programs throughout the country.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

College athletic administrators are frequently challenged by the task of finding ways to fund a full complement of sports programs (Branvold, 1992). The most recent National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) study indicated that the average revenue provided by NCAA Division I football and basketball programs was 65% of the total revenue (Branvold & Bowers, 1992). Other sports in the athletics programs generally produced very little revenue and were therefore subsidized by the major revenue sports or in some other manner (Branvold & Bowers, 1992). The following review explored the diverse types of marketing plans associated with different sport organizations and had three major purposes: (a) to define and discuss different types of corporate sponsorships, (b) to analyze the importance and utilization of signage, and (c) to review aspects of marketing and promotions for sport organizations.

Corporate Sponsorship

The following section provided the background and development of corporate sponsorship for intercollegiate athletics. It also detailed the development of sport organizations' images through corporate sponsorship.

Irwin and Asimakopoulos (1992) indicated that corporate sponsorships have become the fastest growing element in a $63.1 billion Gross National Sports Product. North American companies spent an estimated $2.94 billion on sporting events in 1991. Sport sponsorship has become a significant corporate communication tool, and it should be treated as such both professionally and commercially.

The proposed model for the Irwin and Asimakopoulos (1992) study was composed of a six-step sport sponsorship management approach that consisted of: (a) a review of the corporate marketing plan, (b) the establishment of specific sport sponsorship objectives, (c) the identification and weighing of evaluation criteria, (d) the screening and selection process, (e) the implementation of the selected sponsorship, and (f) the post-event evaluation. The purpose of their paper was to give a corporation a comprehensive analysis and an evaluation instrument for assessing sport sponsorship proposals.

Step I in the planning process was to review the marketing plan and objectives. Two important elements of Step I included the budget and the cost considerations, as well as event management considerations. The cost effectiveness of the sponsorship was of primary importance in the preliminary evaluation stages (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992). Important elements must be considered while choosing a sponsor. Sponsorship proposals were guaranteed relative to media exposure and facility cooperations that should have been evaluated by the potential sponsor. It was also important that athletes would wear or carry merchandise bearing the sponsor's corporate logo for interviews and other public appearances (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992).

The setting and prioritization of the organization's objectives was Step II in the planning process. This step divided the process into two parts, (a) corporation-related sponsorship objectives, and (b) product brand-related objectives. Irwin and Asimakopoulos (1992) suggested that the following five objectives are used in aiding corporations reach their capacity in corporate sponsorship: (a) increasing public awareness of the company and its services, (b) enhancing company image by altering the public's perception, (c) involving the community, (d) building business and trade relations along with goodwill, and (e) enhancing staff relations and motivation. The important product brand-related objectives included such elements as increasing target market awareness, identifying and building images within the target market, increasing sales and/or market share, and blocking or preempting competition. The selected objectives should be prioritized prior to the sponsorship evaluation process (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992).

Step III in the planning process was the establishment and weighing of evaluation criteria. Based on the prioritization of selected sponsorship objectives, it is recommended that a weighing system ranging from 1 (extremely insignificant) to 10 (extremely significant) be used for individual criterion. Upon completion of the prioritization and weighing process the formal evaluation of the sponsorship may be initiated (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992).

The final step included the evaluation and selection of sponsorship proposals. An objective screening of a sponsorship proposal resulted from a comparative analysis of the corporate sponsorship criteria and the proposed sponsorship's ability to fulfill them (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992). For the proposed evaluation model, a four-step screening process was necessary. This included (a) grading the selected proposal criteria; (b) scoring the selected proposal criteria preassigning weight grade, (c) cumulative scoring of the proposal, and (d) ranking multiple proposals (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992).

In conclusion, this six-step approach to sport sponsorship included a model for the evaluation of sport proposals which offered assistance in the process (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992). The use of this model would assist in planning and organizing a sponsorship agreement and would provide grounds for an effective post-sponsorship evaluation process (Irwin & Asimakopoulos, 1992).

Image is Everything

In a similar study, Turco (1994) believed sport sponsorship was primarily used by corporations to change, enhance, or develop the image of a product or service. From the sporting event organizer's perspective, sponsorship and advertising, i.e., signage, were major sources of revenue (Branvold, 1992). Increasing public and target market awareness of the company and its products or services was a primary objective of corporations engaging in sponsorship (Turco, 1994).

The purpose of Turco's (1994) study was to determine whether or not the spectators' perceived image of a corporation and its products were enhanced due to the corporation's sponsorship of a large-scale international sport event. Sponsor awareness data were collected at the 23rd Annual Kodak Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (KAIBF) (Turco, 1994). A secondary purpose of this study was to determine whether or not a spectator's perceived image of a sporting event's title sponsor was enhanced by the presence of that sponsor's products (Turco, 1994). The nature of the KAIBF enabled corporations to advertise their corporate logos on the "floating billboard." The event created promotional visibility and a number of opportunities for sponsor exposure. For example, some balloons are shaped in the form of a corporation's product, e.g., Pepsi can, Burger King burger, Famous Footwear athletic shoe, or a prominent icon, e.g., Kellogg's Tony the Tiger, Klondike's polar bear (Turco, 1994).

Data were collected from 591 spectators during seven days of a nine-day event. It was coded, entered, and analyzed using the statistical program for social sciences to generate descriptive statistics and to determine statistical significance between the various levels of consumers (Turco, 1994).

The results of Turco's study indicated that approximately 22% of the spectators identified Kodak as the sponsor. A chi-square analysis was performed on responses from spectators who identified Kodak as the sponsor to determine if relationships existed between spectator product consumption levels and enhancement of the sponsor image (Turco, 1994). The chi-square analysis confirmed the existence of said relationships.

Turco (1994) concluded, "The results of this exploratory research study indicated that corporations can enhance consumers' image of corporation products as a result of sponsorship of special events/festivals" (p. 37). Event organizers can gain financial resources by the enhanced corporate image of their sponsors as seen by the spectators.

Developing a perceptual map of sports for the specific target market of concern for the sponsor is one method identifying the critical elements of consumers' image of, or schema for, sports (Martin, 1994). A firm wishes to use sports to enhance its image. The sport will, in turn, enhance the firm's image. Corporations must research the sport and the image of the sport to ensure that their image is consistent with the ideas of the company. Martin (1994) explored the following ideas to determine if consumers have images of sports that are complex enough to identify differential fundamental dimensions and to see if the differences were perceived to be similar, according to the consumers.

A questionnaire was developed and administered to 141 college students with an average age of 21. In this exploratory study, the questionnaire asked the students to rate the similarity of pairs of sports on a scale of 1, extremely dissimilar, to 7, extremely similar. Sports were selected based on two criteria: (a) respondents' familiarity with the sport, and (b) a desire to include sports that were highly similar, moderately similar, and highly dissimilar (Martin, 1994).

The analysis included a 2-, 3-, 4-, 5-, and 6-dimensional solution (Martin, 1994). Stress values, R-squared values, and interpretation of the six dimensions were considered the best at capturing why certain sports were rated as similar or different to one another. The first dimension was developed to reflect whether the emphasis of the sport involved more speed and endurance with less precision or less speed and endurance but a slower, more methodical and more precise type of movement. The second dimension was analyzed to reflect whether the sport included "official" organized athletes only or "weekend warriors." The third dimension was interpreted as skill type, which evaluated whether the focus of the sport was on some type of impact with an object (through kicking or hitting) or focused more on the movement of the body. Dimension 4 reflected the manner in which the sport's requisite skills were developed and practiced. Dimension 5 was concerned with the age of the players participating in the sport. The final dimension, 6, separated sports by the perceived masculinity of the sport (Martin, 1994).

Martin (1994) concluded that, since the images were complex, the sport-sponsoring firm's target market must understand that the images of different sports were important for three reasons: (a) the meaning or image of the sport could be transferred to the image of the firm or product, (b) the degree of complexity of the sport's image suggests care must be taken when associating with sports or events, and (c) if planned in advance an opportunity for firms to further enhance their image can be exploited. Understanding the important dimensions that constitute the image of different sports can help the manager evaluate exactly what the sports image can bring to the image of the firm (Martin, 1994). Martin (1994) also concluded, "This study suggests the richness of consumers' image of sports presents both opportunities and risks for firms who are considering associating with sports for the purpose of enhancing their own image" (p. 31).

Signage

A new and upcoming phenomenon in college athletics is the use of signage in arenas, football stadiums, and the less exposed non-revenue sports, baseball and softball fields. Branvold (1992) indicated that other college athletic administrators are frequently challenged by the task of finding ways to fund a full complement of sports programs (Branvold, 1992). These athletic administrators struggle from year to year to make ends meet. As the cost of operating an athletic program continues to increase, a broader range of funding alternatives is being considered (Branvold, 1992). The purpose of Branvold's descriptive study was to report on the status and revenue potential of using fence signs for women's softball.

Questionnaires were sent as the research tool to 111 NCAA head baseball coaches. This sample was selected primarily on the basis of the programs' success and was designed to include programs likely to use fence advertising (Branvold, 1992). The questionnaire developed three basic issues: (a) the number of collegiate baseball programs that use fence advertising to generate revenue, (b) the amount of revenue generated from fence sign advertising, and (c) the reasons for not using fence signs (Branvold, 1992). The sample consisted of 55 NCAA Division I institutions, 28 Division II, and 28 Division III institutions.

Seventy-three of the 111 programs surveyed responded. Of the 73 programs that responded, 44 were from NCAA Division I schools, 11 from Division II, and 18 from Division III. The result concluded that 23 of the 73 subjects utilized fence signage, 18 of which were NCAA Division I schools. NCAA Division I schools averaged 28 billboards ranging from $500-$4800, with the gross revenue averaging $36,660. The price per sign ranged from $200 to $4800, with an average of $1,230 (Branvold, 1992).

The factor analysis portion of the study proved that the utilization of fence signage by NCAA Division I schools was far more prevalent than at the lower levels of competition. There were four main reasons for not using fence signage. Branvold (1992) concluded that the most common reason was institutional restrictions, along with facility limitations. The remaining two reasons for no signage were that the department did not like the appearance of advertising, and government regulations prohibited commercial advertising on any state facilities (Branvold, 1992).

Branvold (1992) had four main suggestions for a program looking at the revenue potential in fence advertising. First, look for ways to increase the amount of exposure the fence signage would receive; for example, increase attendance or utilize other organizations (American Legion or a state tournament). Second, tie fence sign advertising to other advertising or sponsorship. Third, use graduate assistants or student interns in the selling of fence signage. Finally, use advertising space for product or service trade-outs that your program needs (Branvold, 1992).

Branvold (1992) suggested that this study proved that there was more potential to increase revenue with NCAA Division I programs due to both the competitive level of play and the product quality. Advertisers preferred the image that went with being affiliated with winners (Branvold, 1992). Stotlar and Johnson (cited in Branvold, 1992) projected that stadium signage would be an effective way to reach sport spectators.

Marketing and Promotions

With marketing and promotions, many steps must be followed to ensure that a correct and thorough proposal has been made. In this section, certain guidelines for proper marketing and promotion design are presented. Also, an actual marketing plan from a previous study will be analyzed.

Background of Marketing Research

The American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1961 defined marketing research as the systematic gathering, recording, and analyzing of data about problems relating to the marketing of goods and services, as cited in Huggins (1992). Marketing research in reference to sport marketing would be defined as "the systematic gathering, recording, and analyzing of data about problems relating to the marketing of a sport." Huggins (1992) believed that her study was a must for every sport organization because it highlighted three basic questions to aid marketing managers with different types of marketing research. Sports marketers needed to determine what marketing research is, why they should do marketing research, and who should do the marketing research.

Marketing research is important for sport organizations essentially to determine the demographics and geographics of the fans who attend home games. Data can be either secondary or primary. Secondary data comes from existing sources, such as mailing lists, while primary data are the result of direct contact, such as a questionnaire or survey (Huggins, 1992). Many questions can be asked on a survey (or questionnaire) in order to obtain valuable information. Huggins (1992) refers to a sample of questions such as: What percentage of the fans were students? What geographic area had a high concentration of fans attending the games? What was the average income of non-student adults attending the games? What was the male-to-female ratio of fans?

The principal focus of the marketing function in a sport is not so much to be skillful in making sport fans and participants do what suits the interest of the sport, as to be skillful in conceiving and doing what suits the interest of the fans or participants without changing the sport itself (Huggins, 1992). Marketing managers also need to know the people they are targeting in terms of demographics--educational background, sex, age, occupation, income, disposable income, and household size (Huggins, 1992). Marketing managers need to know who their sport fans are in order to appeal to sponsors and advertisers. Once the marketing research is completed, this information can be used to develop a strategic plan for advertising, promotion, pricing, and scheduling to each prospective fan or participant, and to increase repeated business from existing research (Huggins, 1992). Marketing managers need to realize that sponsors and potential advertisers are more willing to spend money when their risk is reduced. Therefore, the marketing research information is worth the time, effort, and money.

The final question raised by Huggins (1992) identified the differences between in-house and outside organizations. In-house marketing research had one notable advantage. Because it involves the expenditure of time and energy, as opposed to money, it is less expensive. Just as carrying out research in-house had advantages, it also had its disadvantages. Staff members may bring serious biases to planning and executing the research, and there may not be enough staff members to continue the needed research. In many cases, a combination of in-house and outside efforts produced the best results at the lowest cost (Huggins, 1992).

Huggins (1992) concluded that good marketing research, used properly, can remove much of the guesswork from developing marketing strategy. This study supports the position that sport organizations that do not use marketing research need to reconsider their decision.

Non-Revenue Sports

College athletic departments are constantly working to enhance revenue production. Football and basketball generally produce the majority of revenue, leaving the non-revenue-producing sports to fund-raise or promote. Branvold and Bowers (1992) stated,

> The most recent NCAA study compiled by Mitchell Raiborn in 1990 indicated that the average revenue provided by NCAA Division I football and basketball programs was 65% of total revenue. The other sports in the

program generally produced very little revenue and must be subsidized by the major revenue sports or in some other manner. (p. 19)

One approach being used is to find ways for the traditionally non-revenue sports to generate some of their own funding. Branvold and Bowers (1992) addressed the extent to which game promotions are used in the most competitive NCAA Division I programs, including: (a) the types of promotion used, and (b) the differences between programs that use promotions and those that do not use promotions. The purpose of Branvold and Bowers's (1992) study was to determine how the most prominent collegiate baseball programs use promotions.

One hundred questionnaires were sent to NCAA Division I head coaches. The questionnaire was designed to answer three basic questions: (a) Does your baseball program utilize promotions, and, if so, how frequently? (b) What types of promotions are used? (c) What are the purposes for using promotions? (Branvold & Bowers, 1992).

The factor analysis portion of the study developed six categories that encompassed most of the promotions used by college baseball programs: (a) promotions, (b) drawings and contests, (c) special target groups, (d) activities, (e) special themes, and (f) food and concessions. Sponsors were the primary method of paying for promotional expenses, although some programs had occasionally incorporated the expenses into the baseball or athletic department budget (Branvold and Bowers, 1992). When respondents were asked to rate the purpose for using promotions on a 1 to 5 scale, increasing attendance (4.73) and generating awareness (4.65) were ranked the highest of the programs using promotions. Twenty-three of the 26 reported that they targeted various markets. Markets targeted most frequently included students (n=18), community (n=20), children (n=7), and Little League (n=8), as well as senior citizens, faculty, alumni, and families (Branvold & Bowers, 1992). The study also gave several reasons as to why promotions were not used. One reason was that they do not have enough time, money, or personnel to become involved in game promotions. There was a significant correlation between winning percentage and average per-game attendance (r=.66, p. 005) for those programs that do not use promotions where there was not a significant correlation between winning percentage and average per-game attendance for those programs that do not use promotions (Branvold & Bower, 1992). A t-test comparison of per-game and total season attendance between programs using promotions and those not using promotions disclosed significant differences (per-game attendance t-value=1.8311, p=.0377, total season attendance t-value=1.8314, p=.0376).

Branvold and Bowers (1992) concluded that "winning is an important component of attendance, but the attempt was made to control for the effects of winning to some extent by using a sample composed of successful programs" (p. 22). However, the results of this study indicated significantly higher attendance among programs that use promotions.

Marketing Objectives

Due to the lack of literature published on athletic marketing and promotion tactics, Hansen and Gauthier (1992) asked heads of amateur and professional athletic departments to evaluate the importance of 19 marketing objectives by using a 5-point Likert scale. The 19 objectives used were derived from two surveys, one written by Broyles and Hay in 1979 and one by Latham and Stewart in 1992. The purpose of the Hansen and Gauthier (1992) descriptive study was to have prominent figures in the sports field identify the importance of marketing objectives. The study targeted three separate but related organizations: (a) NCAA, (b) Professional Leagues, and (c) Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union (CIAU). Of the three groups, a total of 164 representatives responded to the questionnaire. The study analyzed four responses: (a) attractiveness, (b) economics, (c) utility of demand, and (d) residual preference. These four factors were used to analyze the data in order to develop an attractive marketing plan.

Questionnaires were sent to eight different professional or university sport organizations. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire. Results were analyzed by using the ANOVA evaluation procedure. If the results reached the $p=.05$ significance level, then the Turkey post-hoc procedure was used to determine the type of differences. Hansen and Gauthier (1992) used the third test to determine the differences between professional and university grouping by using the student t-test.

The factor analysis portion of the study developed six different categories in order to aid key decision-makers with the information needed to help promote or market their organization. The 164 teams were then subdivided by significance level into seven separate factors. "For example, the emphasis of the professionals is placed on objectives focusing on entertainment value, team image, and community orientation" (Hansen & Gauthier, 1992, p. 36).

The three separate organizations targeted for this study--professional, NCAA, and CIAU--represented the independent variable, while the dependent variables were represented by two separate factors. The first was represented by the 19 marketing objectives that were used to design the study, and the second was symbolized by six separate factors developed from the factor analysis. The six factors included player quality, community image of the team, entertainment value of sport, team marketing, team as a contender, and attractiveness of game location (Hansen & Gauthier, 1992). Factor #1, player quality, indicated that each organization concentrated on one major objective. The professional organization concentrated on the entertainment value and the community orientation of the team. The NCAA focused on the economic aspects or team marketing objectives, while the CIAU stressed player priority and team quality. The final results indicated that there were no significant differences between the three leagues. However, there was a difference in the community's image of the team and the entertainment value of the sport. There were also six significant differences between the professional sports and sport organizations (professional sports exceeded the sport organizations in all six categories): (a) value of ticket price, (b) location/setting of games, (c) the entertainment value of the sport, (d) the image of the team, (e) community-oriented nature of the team, and (f) availability of athletes for community events (Hansen & Gauthier, 1992).

Hansen and Gauthier (1992) concluded that "various sport organizations pursue different operative goals depending upon individual circumstances" (p. 36). According to this study, each of the three organizations developed distinct marketing objectives in order to fit their organization's projected mission.

Marketing Techniques

The marketing techniques of professional basketball teams are similar to the marketing strategy of any viable business organization (Mawson & Coan, 1994). Professional sport organizations take on the nature and function of a business, including a mission, objectives, revenues, advertising cost, operations, policies and procedures, investments, and marketing (Mawson & Coan, 1994). Mawson and Coan (1994) conducted a study to determine the priorities of marketing techniques used to promote attendance at NBA home basketball games. The marketing techniques of the 11 marketing directors from the NBA franchises with the highest seasonal attendance organizations were compared to the 11 marketing directors with the lowest seasonal attendance.

The marketing technique questionnaire (MTQ) was used as the research apparatus to analyze the marketing techniques of the NBA franchises. The MTQ is a questionnaire composed of 22 marketing strategies relevant to sports organizations. The MTQ data collection was done by mail, with 22 of the 25 NBA marketing directors being contacted.

The priorities of the techniques were arranged in rank order from the mean responses of all subjects responding to the MTQ statement on a 5-point Likert scale (Mawson & Coan, 1994). A response of 1 indicated a strong disagreement, while 5 indicated a strong agreement. Marketing technique priorities were also ranked separately for the low- and high-attendance groups and were analyzed using independent t-tests at the .05 level to determine significant differences between the groups for the marketing techniques utilized (Mawson & Coan, 1994).

Results indicated a significant difference between the marketing techniques of high-attendance franchises and the marketing techniques of low-attendance franchises because the cultural norm in the United States is associated with winning and being the best; it would be expected that marketing directors of winning franchises would exploit the success of the team (Mawson & Coan, 1994). Often, ticket packages include team souvenirs, meals, or parties associated with the game. This is because winning teams have already captured their loyal fans. However, the low-attendance directors used strategic planning, direct mail advertising, and newspaper advertising (Mawson & Coan, 1994). These marketing directors are interested in increasing attendance through a planned marketing approach with a more business-oriented goal. A "winning season incentive" was not used as a marketing technique by teams with low attendance because a losing record was most likely the cause for the low fan support (Mawson & Coan, 1994).

Mawson and Coan (1994) identified some recommendations for marketing directors interested in improving attendance. Marketing directors of the National Basketball Association (NBA) franchise teams with the highest attendance used a "winning season" as an attendance incentive, while marketing directors in the low-attendance franchises used "strategic planning" and "newspaper advertising" more often (Mawson & Coan, 1994). It appears that diversified marketing strategies may be the best formula to assure sport marketers of success in luring spectators or sponsors into financially supporting a professional basketball team in the NBA (Mawson & Coan, 1994).

A Marketing Plan

According to Antonelli (1994), Director of Marketing and Promotions at The Ohio State University (OSU), "corporate sponsors are starting to recognize the power of marketing to women through sporting events" (p. 32). As interest continues to grow, marketing people must be prepared to establish selling inventory and corporate packages to accommodate that interest. The purpose of the Antonelli (1994) study was to increase awareness and corporate support for The Ohio State Women's Basketball team. The study concentrated on five goals: (a) increasing season tickets, (b) increasing attendance, (c) creating a positive atmosphere, (d) signing a radio contract for all home games, and (e) expanding television awareness (Antonelli, 1994). These five goals were used to outline different strategies associated with each issue.

Three hundred questionnaires were randomly distributed to fans during the 1992-93 season. This study was conducted by several graduate students in The Ohio State University Sport Management Program under the supervision of Dr. Dennis Howard, Professor of Sports Marketing (Antonelli, 1994). The study identified some very significant demographic and marketing items: (a) 55% of the fans surveyed were women; (b) 86% of the fans surveyed buy concessions; (c) reasons for attending the games included interest in the sport of basketball, desire to support Ohio State Athletics, and desire to be with the family; (d) OSU Women's Basketball had a large "light user" base with only a small percentage of loyal "heavy users"; (e) of the fans surveyed, 59% expressed interest in season ticket purchases; and (f) 86.4% of the fans surveyed recognized Big Bear (the biggest corporate supporter of OSU) as a corporate sponsor.

Due to the results of the study, the athletic department decided to establish an aggressive season ticket campaign, which required an overall team effort between the marketing department and the ticket office (Antonelli, 1994). The marketing department developed an aggressive and very involved theme to kick off the campaign: Ohio State Women's Basketball . . . You Gotta Be There!

In order to reach their goals, the OSU marketing department outlined seven different aspects: (a) direct mailing to all men's basketball season ticket holders, (b) direct mail to Columbus's major business corporations and Ohio State corporate sponsors, (c) a radio campaign, (d) a television contract, (e) advertising in the Columbus area AMC movie theaters, (f) distribution of poster and schedule cards, and (g) a "Meet the Lady Buckeyes" event (Antonelli, 1994). The committee evaluated the methods needed to lure spectators into the arena and identified the importance of the atmosphere once the fans were inside the arena. "One of the best marketing tools in the marketing profession is a winning product" (Antonelli, 1994, p. 30). The marketing department developed two main objectives to provide a fun and an enjoyable atmosphere. The first objective included "three-point cards," which were given to the first 1,000 fans. The fans would hold up the cards whenever an Ohio State player shot a "three-pointer." On the back of the cards, the department would highlight or stoplight the player of the game. The highlighted player would stay after the game to sign autographs. The second objective to ensure a positive attitude was done during the first half time-out, when a former Lady Buckeye is recognized through the newly formed "Where are they now?" program. The marketing department also makes sure the band and the cheerleaders are actively involved at every home game (Antonelli, 1994).

The marketing department targeted two major media outlets, radio and television. In years past, the Ohio State Women's Basketball games could be heard on the campus public, non-commercial radio station. After the success of the 1993-94 team, the marketing department made the change from public radio to commercial radio. The commercial radio network consisted of 11 radio affiliates which were also a part of football and men's basketball. The article stated that there was an interest in the corporate community based on the realization that radio networking had several selling points (Antonelli, 1994).

The OSU head basketball coach's television program, "The Nancy Darsch Show," generated such a high level of interest and popularity, the time was right to take the show to the next level. The marketing department's priority for the show was to select a corporate sponsor to endorse their product. John Paul Mitchell, the hair salon magnate, wanted to create more awareness of his products, sell more product, and drive more traffic into salons and hair-cutting chains. The marketing department realized the similarities and therefore created a win-win situation for both parties. John Paul Mitchell's buy was based on using women's basketball as a vehicle to move the product (Antonelli, 1994).

Because the two organizations were creative and flexible, they were able to create a good cooperative marketing scheme that increased media support and game attendance.

Summary

Based on the literature in this section, there was evidence to suggest that there is a scarcity of research done for marketing women's athletics. Hansen and Gauthier (1992) expressed that there was a lack of literature published on athletic marketing and promotion tactics. Administrators need to realize the importance of marketing for women's athletics if they expect the interest to continue to rise. According to Antonelli (1994), Director of Marketing and Promotions at The Ohio State University, this can be achieved because corporate sponsors are beginning to recognize the power of marketing in women's athletics. The literature suggests there were a number of different ways to market athletics, but the main key is to target the appropriate interest groups.

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to describe marketing considerations used by NCAA Division I softball programs, and to develop a model marketing plan for The University of Tennessee's newly formed softball program. Questionnaires were sent to a select number of NCAA Division I head softball coaches to identify specific aspects of their program, and important considerations for a marketing plan was developed by using three main ideas: (a) to recognize the different types of corporate sponsorships available for women's athletics, (b) to determine the availability of stadium signage, and (c) to establish the importance of marketing and promotions for an NCAA Division I softball program. This chapter will include the following areas: (a) selection of subjects, (b) instrumentation, and (c) data collection.

Selection of Subjects

The subjects participating in this study were NCAA Division I head softball coaches, who were chosen by four criteria: (a) NCAA 1993-94 Top 25 National Rank, (b) league representation, (c) regional representation, and

(d) newly implemented softball programs. Appendix A provides a list of the 42 coaches chosen from NCAA Division I softball programs used for this study. The NCAA provided the national rankings bi-weekly from the 1994 season (Appendix B), which were determined by the NCAA softball committee.

The head coach of each institution's softball program received a letter (Appendix C) stating the purpose of the study and how the information would be used. Upon request, the coach will also receive a copy of the results.

Instrumentation

The Softball Marketing Questionnaire (Appendix D) was designed to answer specific questions about what decisions a university would have to make while developing a marketing plan for their softball program. The questionnaire requested the current marketing strategies used by the top softball programs in the nation. This information was used to develop a model marketing plan for the newly formed softball program at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The questionnaire included 45 total questions that addressed different aspects of a Division I women's softball program. Three open-ended questions and 42 closed-ended questions were used. There were 18 yes-no questions where the subjects circled the response, and 12 questions that were answered by circling the corresponding answer on a 5-point Likert scale, which also had a space provided to expand on any answers given. The type of statistics used were cross tabulations and frequencies, stated in the results as percentages.

Data Collection

The data collection for this study was compiled from the Softball Marketing Questionnaires which were mailed on February 15, 1995. A cover letter (Appendix C) was included with the Softball Marketing Questionnaire that explained who I am, about my past softball experiences, why their participation was needed, the purpose of the study, and when to return the completed questionnaire. Specific instructions on what to include in the envelope were provided, and that completion of the survey was acknowledgment of informed consent, and anonymity was guaranteed. The following items were requested, in addition to the questionnaire: a current media guide, a booster club brochure, a game program, an advertising rate sheet, and any additional corporate sponsor information. In the interest of confidentiality, two envelopes were provided in which the coaches were asked to return separately the questionnaire and the additional items.

Two weeks after the questionnaires were mailed, each coach who had not returned the questionnaire received a telephone call reminding them that their cooperation was vital to the success of this study and the further marketing development of women's athletics. If the questionnaire still had not been returned after the deadline, a second phone call was made to help secure the information.

The study followed The University of Tennessee guidelines for research with human subjects. The Committee on Human Subjects and Research Participation from The University of Tennessee reviewed and approved this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the different marketing objectives used by the top NCAA Division I softball programs in the nation. An additional purpose was to develop a marketing plan for The University of Tennessee's newly formed softball program. A questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed and sent to 42 select Division I head softball coaches. The different coaches were chosen by previous 1994 national rank (Appendix B), league representation (Appendix C), new programs (formed within the last five years), and regional representation (Figure 1). In NCAA Division I Softball competition, there are a total of 24 conference affiliates. This study targeted 58.3% of those conferences and received results from 45.8% of the conferences. A total of 64.3% of the Softball Marketing Questionnaires were returned. This chapter is categorized into five sub-topics: (a) comparisons to The University of Tennessee, (b) aspects of marketing, (c) attendance, (d) the top five most successful programs based on attendance, and (e) summary.

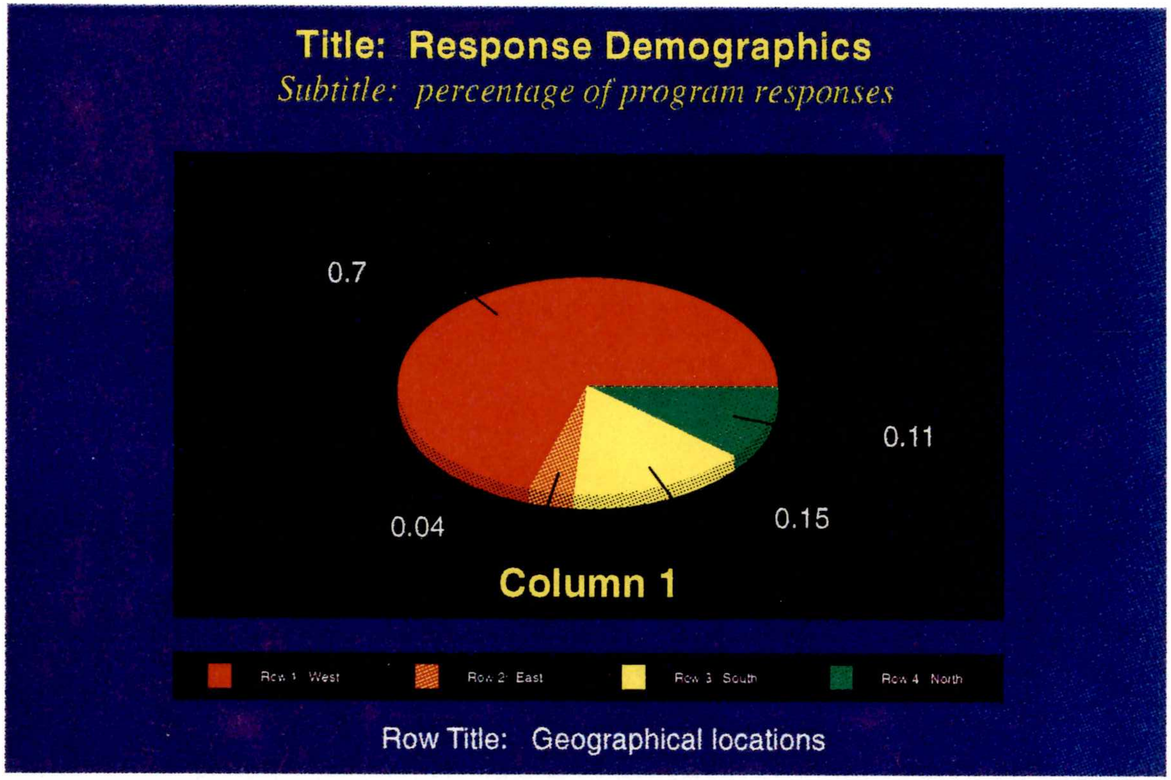

Figure 1. Response demographics

Along with the completed questionnaire, the coaches were requested to send: (a) a current media guide, booster club information, (c) game program, (d) advertising rate sheet, and (e) corporate sponsor information. Of the 27 coaches, 26 returned their individual media guides. However, the other items requested were not returned with any degree of consistency. Following are the response rates of the other items requested: (a) 51.9% of the schools returned booster club information, (b) 26% included game programs, (c) 22% returned information related to advertising rate sheets, and (d) 22% returned information on corporate sponsorships.

The first sub-topic addressed the marketing objectives used by the schools which are similar to The University of Tennessee. Three variables were used: (a) number of scholarships, (b) university enrollment, and (c) softball program budget. Questions 1-37 applied to this particular analysis.

The second sub-topic recognized the different aspect of marketing used by the respondents. They included: (a) corporate sponsorship (questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, and 29), and (b) signage, variety and lack of use (questions 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 11, 20, 21, 24, 28, 32, 33, 34, and 35). The sub-problem relating to the different facilities of each individual softball program referred to questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 20, 25, and 27. The following issues were addressed: the amount of signage, presence of a press box, location of the games, and the presence of lights on the field. Questions 3, 4, 15, and 24 addressed these issues.

The third sub-topic addressed the potential for an increase in attendance in Division I women's softball. This sub-topic addressed how the different marketing efforts affect the program's success rate based on attendance and included questions 7, 12, 13, 21, 22, 23, 26, 32, 33, and 35. This sub-topic also included (a) the demographics of the fans who attended games, questions 26 and 35, and (b) the effects of high attendance vs. low attendance for women's softball, questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, and 37. Additionally, the overall success of the program when compared to attendance was determined from responses to questions 22, 23, and 26.

The fourth sub-topic analyzed the top five most successful programs (from this study) based on attendance. This analysis was divided into four areas: (a) scholarships, (b) budget, (c) national rank vs. winning percentage, and (d) target market vs. marketing strategies. Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 provided information for the fourth sub-topic.

Comparisons to The University of Tennessee

The first part of the study compared the responses of softball programs similar to The University of Tennessee's softball program. Of the schools that responded, 10 were considered similar based on the following four criteria: (a) budget, (b) enrollment, (c) number of scholarships, and (d) number of women's sports. This section included attendance, corporate sponsorship, and facilities. All of the programs chosen had 11 full-ride scholarships, an enrollment of at least 24,094, and between 9 and 11 women's sports. The average winning percentage over three years of the 10 schools similar to The University of Tennessee was .600. Within the past three seasons, 60% of these 10 programs were ranked in the NCAA Top 10 Rankings.

Based on the above results, The University of Tennessee (UT) can develop the following marketing strategies for its softball program. Of the programs similar to UT, 80% used some type of marketing objectives. The most prominent were promotions and giveaways.

Attendance

The average yearly attendance of the 10 programs ranged from as low as 101 to a high of 1,316. It is significant to note, however, that the program that averaged 101 fans per game did not have any type of marketing strategies (Table 1).

Table 1. Average Age and Percentage in Attendance of Fans

Age	% in attendance
< 18	18.6
19 - 25	21.9
26 - 50	41.8
50 >	21.4

The program with the highest attendance was promoted through promotions and giveaways. Of the schools that responded, 80% listed their target market as either senior citizen or children. Ticket prices were identified as an important consideration when attracting fans. Table 2 lists percentages based on age for fans in attendance at softball programs similar to The University of Tennessee.

Table 2. Percentage and Average Price of Tickets Based on Age of Fans

Age	%	Price
> 18	70	Free
19 - 25	60	Free
26 - 50	70	$3.00
50 >	50%	$2.00

The majority of the programs indicated that their games were played in March and April. March was predominantly for tournament play, while April was reserved for conference play. Two hundred and seven games were played in the months of March and April, with a total of 234 games played for the spring season (February, March, April, and May). Establishing convenient start times also seemed to increase attendance. Of the schools with lights, their *weekday* preference was a night game double-header starting at 6:00 p.m. The advantage to *weeknight* doubleheaders was that there is a greater potential for an increase in attendance. However, programs that played on fields without lights preferred *weekday* doubleheaders starting at 1:00 p.m. A weekday double-header was the most difficult to market because of the lack of support for women's athletics by the student body. This, however, would be the prime time to target the student body. First, these students are already on campus; they could attend between classes, and, normally, this age group is the most vocal, thereby helping the home team with the home field advantage. *Weekend* doubleheaders are the easiest to market because most people do not have to work on weekends. According to the study for a weekend doubleheader, the most popular start time indicated was 1:00 p.m.

The formation of The University of Tennessee's softball booster club will take a great deal of planning and formation. The following will supply the administrators with invaluable information about the other top programs and what they do. Six of the 10 schools returned the information requested on their booster club. Nine of the 10 programs had a booster club solely for their softball program, while the other had a joint booster club with the entire athletic department. The softball booster clubs averaged approximately 150 members. Each of the various booster clubs had different donation levels, but the booster clubs each set a minimum donation of $25 per person, per season. Along with joining the various booster clubs, members received items (if available to the program) such as T-shirts, season ticket discounts, schedule cards, media guides, newsletters, sweatshirts, pins, posters, bleacher cushions, hats, key chains, and an invitation to special softball events. Most of the programs stated that members donating $100 or more would have their names published in the media guide.

Of the programs similar to The University of Tennessee, nine schools returned their media guides along with some corporate sponsor information. Fifty percent of the programs did not have advertising in their media guides. Game programs varied from program to program, and only 30% returned an example of their game programs. The programs ranged from a single sheet of paper with rosters and up-to-date statistics to a full 30-page program complete with advertising and signage.

All 10 of the programs similar to The University of Tennessee had corporate sponsors for their equipment, while only 50% of them had sponsors for their uniforms. Forty percent of the programs sponsor a tournament through corporate sponsorships.

Each of the programs sponsored a variety of special events throughout their season. These included: (a) 90% develop youth clinics, (b) 40% develop youth overnight camps, (c) one program promotes a national tournament, (d) 70% have invitational tournaments, and (e) 30% conduct coaches' clinics. Through these efforts the programs raised from $5,000 to $30,000 in addition to their allotted budgets. All 10 of the respondents were from public universities similar to The University of Tennessee.

Facilities

All 10 of the respondents similar to UT played their home games on campus, and 50% of the fields had lights. Nine of the 10 programs had a public address system, and each game was announced. Of the games announced, seven of the programs paid their announcer. Fifty percent of the announcers were sports information interns. Seventy percent of these programs had a press box. Only two of the 10 programs indicated they had no concession stand at their field. Seven of the programs' concession stands were operated by the university, i.e., food services department.

If the majority of the programs were to host an NCAA regional tournament, they would have to bring in additional seating because only 20% indicated they had seats in the outfield. Based on the results, another source of income was corporate sponsor advertising, a potentially large portion of which is available through scoreboards because they are highly visible and usually have the largest fee for advertisements. Of the similar programs, seven of the scoreboards were purchased as part of the university contract, while only 1% of the programs did not have a scoreboard.

Of the programs similar to UT, only 50% of them utilized signage opportunities. Examples of signage used included championship signs, banners, tournament sponsors, and corporate signs.

Aspects of Marketing

The second area of this chapter compared the different aspects of marketing and is representative of the 64.3% response rate from the NCAA Division I head softball coaches. The following section includes four parts: (a) budget, (b) corporate sponsorships, (c) signage, and (d) facilities.

Budget

Of the programs that responded, 62.9% were considered fully funded by the NCAA, with 11 the maximum number of full-ride scholarships (Figure 2). Since the funding is increased through scholarship money, it is important to discuss the different softball programs' budgets. Thirty-three percent of the programs with 11 full-ride scholarships had an average working budget between $100,000 - $199,999 (Figure 3). Eighty-two percent of the respondents' budgets

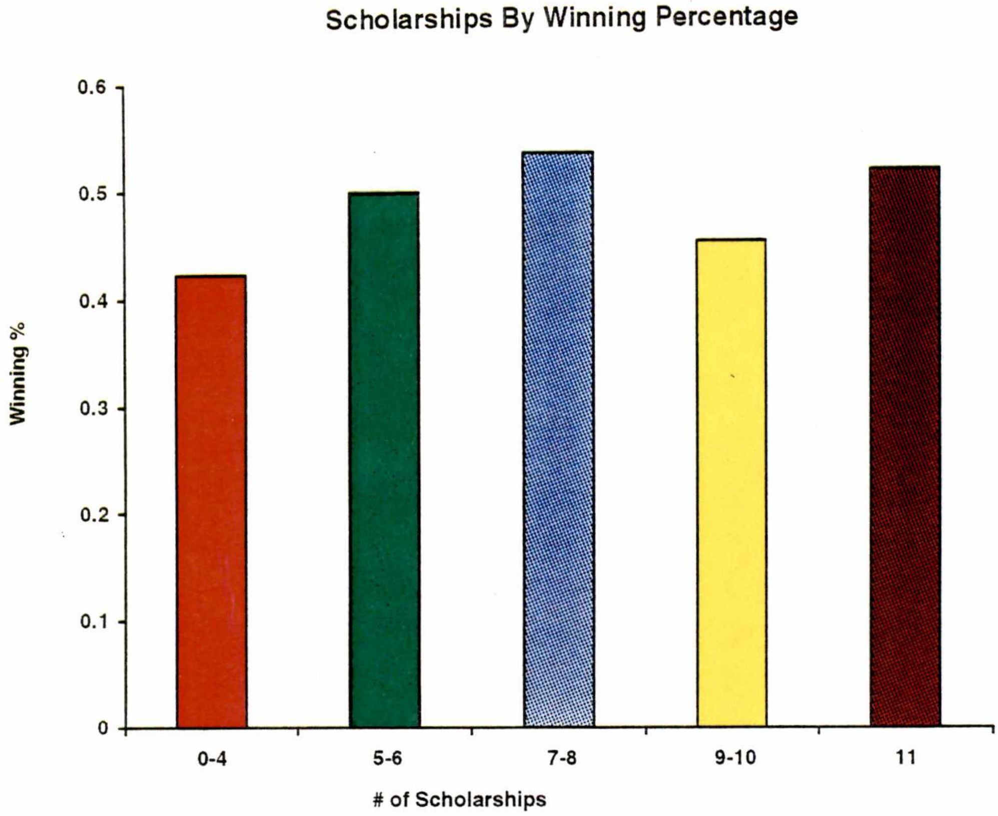

Figure 2. Scholarships by winning percentage

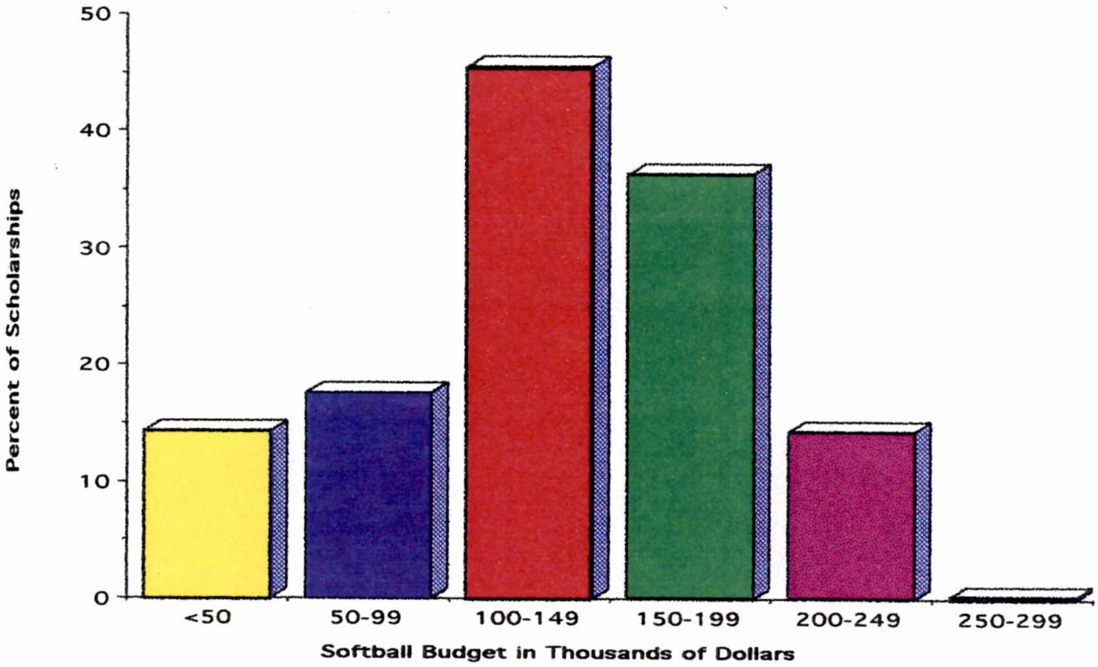

Figure 3. Percent of scholarships

were between $0 - $49,000 and $150,000 - $199,999. These budget figures included everything except coaches' salaries; for example, travel, scholarships, out-of-state tuition, uniforms, meal money, tournament fees, and other related expenses. One budget consideration was geographical location. For instance, the colleges and universities in California and the other west coast programs did not have large travel budgets due to the location of the schools in their region; whereas, the universities in the mid-west and the east coast had much larger travel budgets. Most of the pre-season and early season tournaments fell in the months of February and March and were predominantly held in warm climate areas. The warmer states are usually the only places, due to weather concerns, where a national tournament could be held with any degree of consistency. A program looking for a competitive schedule must be willing to travel to the warmer climates to ensure the maximum number of games. The major tournaments were held in Florida, Texas, Arizona, Hawaii, and California.

Corporate Sponsorships

Along with the completed questionnaire, the coaches were asked to return the following items: (a) current media guide, (b) booster club information, (c) sample game program, (d) advertising rate sheet, and (e) corporate sponsor information. The following percentage of these items were returned: 96.2% of the respondents returned media guides, 55.5% returned booster club information, 14.8% returned game programs, and 29.6% returned information about advertising and corporate sponsorships. Twenty-six of the 27 (96.2%) coaches returned a current media guide. A small percentage sent their 1994 Media Guides because their 1995 guide had not been completed. Of the 26 schools that returned a current media guide, 11 programs had corporate advertising present in their media guide. Louisville Slugger, a famous softball company, proved to be the most popular with an appearance in 5 of the 11 schools' guides. Like Louisville Slugger, many other well-known athletic equipment and/or supply companies were included in the various media guides, including Easton Sports, Dudley, Pony, Bike, Wilson, and Nike. Some major sponsors included a variety of hotels, motels, and restaurants. A large regional sponsor was Wells Fargo Bank of California; their advertisement promoted women's collegiate sports programs at various universities on the west coast. This area of the study seems to have the most potential for revenue enhancement.

Only 29.6% of the respondents returned information concerning corporate sponsors. Respondents indicated that softball programs are able to supplement their working budgets by various corporate involvement. Examples included tournament sponsors, equipment sponsors, head coach contracts, advertising trade-outs, stadium signage, youth camps and clinics, scholarship endowments, and booster club interest.

There is a scarcity of tournaments held in Division I softball. According to the softball marketing questionnaire, only 10.7% of the respondents have hosted a national tournament. This is one area in which universities could expand and thereby increase revenue potential for women's athletics, as well as expand corporate sponsor involvement, news, media, and booster club enrollment.

A large number of programs were able to cut or supplement expenses through corporate sponsorships and trade-outs. Of the respondents, 93% had a corporate sponsor for their equipment, which might include anything from helmets, gloves, batting gloves, and bats. Other means of cutting cost included uniforms and practice clothing trade-outs. Only a small percentage of teams had a sponsor for their uniforms; 82% purchased their uniforms without corporate funding.

Programs can also supplement their budget by sponsoring tournaments or youth camps and clinics. This, however, is much more difficult and more time consuming. Therefore, only 28.6% of the respondents sponsored a tournament that allowed corporate involvement.

College athletics have turned into a form of entertainment. A section of the questionnaire focused on different marketing ideas used by the respective programs. The goal of a marketing plan for women's athletics should include a mission statement. The mission statement would be consistent with "the increase of exposure and support throughout the community." As a marketing director, one would want to make the fans return after only the first visit. This is more likely to be accomplished if the fans leave with a good feeling and the reassurance of quality entertainment.

Signage

Signage is also an area in which women's athletics can expand corporate involvement. According to the questionnaire, only 46% of the programs had no visible signage around their stadiums. The information, according to this study, is not as thorough as the questionnaire intended because the response rate for this particular question was disappointing. The coaches neglected to elaborate on the type of signage used. Of the coaches who responded, 54% indicated that they had a variety of signage.

Facilities

The questionnaire asked the softball coaches to identify various aspects of their facilities. Of the respondents, 96.4% indicated that their home games were played on campus, while only 28.6% of the fields had lights. In order to increase entertainment value, 93% of the respondents' fields were equipped with both an announcer and a public address system. It is also very important for fans to be given the opportunity to eat or drink while attending a game. Yet only 75% of the respondents provided their fans with the opportunity to visit a concession stand.

Concession stands can also become a form of supplemental income, especially if the stand is operated by either booster club members or parents, which was indicated by the study as being at only 14.2%. If the university or food services is operating the stand, that percentage of revenue is collected by the university instead of the individual sports program.

Only a small percentage (17.9%) of the programs had seats available in the outfield. This was positive in one aspect because it allowed spectators (approximately 72.1%) to view signage around the stadium. The downside, however, was the fact that, if the program wants to host an NCAA Regional, eventually they would have to expand on the amount of seating available. Outfield seating will be the next large expansion in women's softball due to the fact that a facility must be equipped to host an NCAA Regional tournament, which requires additional seating.

The marketing emphasis in women's athletics is not as high as in men's athletics. Because of this, a little over 50% of the respondents provided entertainment during the contest. However, 82.1% of the respondents indicated that music was played between innings. According to the survey, a little over half of the respondents indicated that their fans participated in various forms of entertainment during games. Some examples of entertainment listed included giveaways, softball bingo, and contests.

Attendance

The next section of this chapter compares the important aspects of attendance and how it related to the success of the program. The following areas related to attendance were discussed: (a) scholarships and budgets, and (b) corporate sponsorships.

Scholarships and Budgets

The NCAA has two types of scholarships available for different sports, head count sports and equivalency sports. Division I softball is considered an equivalency sport. In an equivalency sport, there is a limit placed on the value (equivalency) of financial aid awards that an institution may provide in any academic year in Division I softball. Coaches are able to split up the total number of scholarships granted not to exceed the limit of 11 as developed by the NCAA. However, in a head count sport, the institution is limited on the total number of athletes receiving aid in that sport.

According to the data, if the program had between 0-4 scholarships, their winning percentage over the past three seasons averaged .423. If the program had between 5-6 scholarships, their average winning percentage was .499. If the program had between 7-8 scholarships, their average winning percentage was .535. This last response skewed the results because only *one* program in this category responded. The program just happened to have a high winning percentage over the past three seasons. If the program had between 9-10 scholarships, then their average winning percentage over the past three seasons was .453. If the team had 11 scholarships, the maximum number allotted by the NCAA, the average winning percentage was .519 (Figure 4). Even though the percentages were similar, it is important to note that the teams with the maximum amount of scholarships had the highest winning percentages, including the category with only one respondent.

In many cases, there has been a direct relationship between the winning percentage of a team and the attendance figures. In the study, the overall winning percentages as compared with the attendance of a program were analyzed and identified in Figure 4. The programs with the highest winning percentages were the programs with the most attendance figures per game. The demographics of the programs that averaged between 101-150 fans indicated that 60% of the fans were over age 50. The demographics of the programs that averaged over 500 fans per game were such that the age groups of under 18 years old and 19-25 years accounted for less than 28% of the fan base, while the age group 26-50 was 33%; the over 50 age group made up 39% of the fans in attendance (Figure 5).

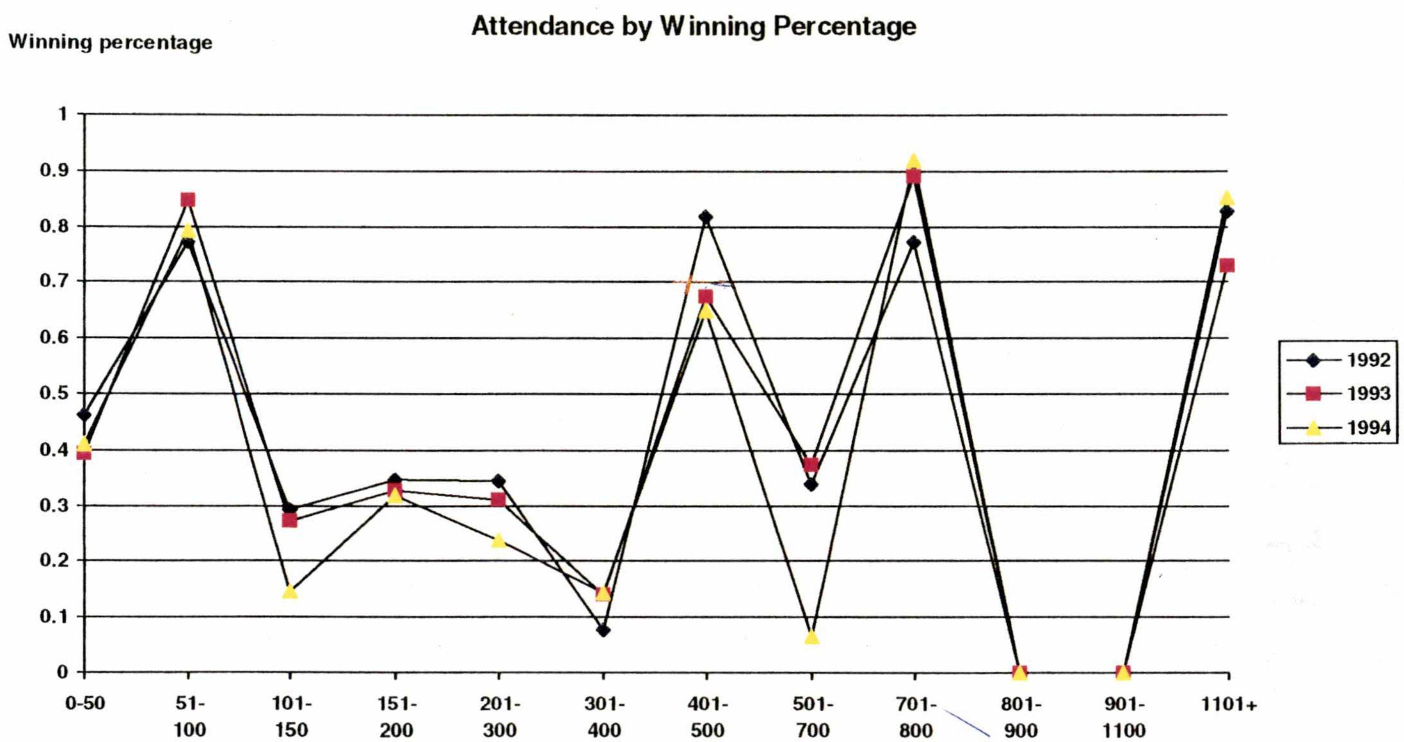

Figure 4. Attendance by winning percentage

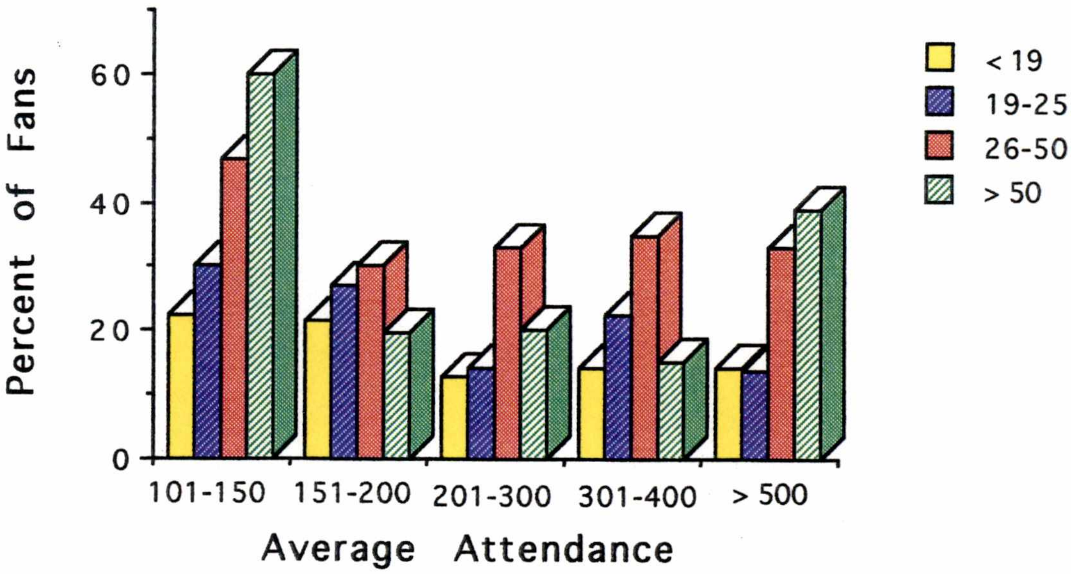

Figure 5. Percent of fans in attendance

Corporate Sponsorships

Does the success of the program affect the attendance and the amount of corporate sponsorship? According to the results of this study, 93% of the programs indicated that they had a sponsor for equipment. An equipment sponsor might provide anything from bats, balls, gloves, and batting gloves, to wristbands. According to the Softball Marketing Questionnaire, some sponsors signed trade-out contracts with the softball coaches and the program for use of their products. Often, a school can have more than one trade-out contract because the company with which they are signed does not offer or make all of the products necessary to run a softball program.

Top 5 Most Successful Programs Based on Attendance

This last section isolated the top five programs (within this study) based on the most successful attendance records. This section analyzed the responses to the questionnaire in the following areas: (a) scholarships and budgets, (b) national rank vs. attendance, and (c) marketing strategies vs. target markets.

Scholarships and Budgets

All of the top five programs with the highest average attendance were fully funded with 11 full-ride scholarships. Along with the maximum number of scholarships, the top five programs also listed their working budgets. Two of the five programs' working budgets fell between $50,000-$100,000; these two programs ranked number one and number two, respectively, in 1994. In addition to the programs' working budget, respondent's indicated that additional revenue must be raised. The programs averaged as low as raising no money to as much as $40,000. One program averaged between 701-800 fans per game and raised $40,000, while the other team averaged 1,316 fans per game and raised only $20,000-$30,000. Conversely, the program with the largest working budget, $200,000-$250,000, averaged between 501-700 fans and finished in the top 10 in 1994. There were only two programs that responded to the study with a budget equal to or larger than $200,000-$250,000, each of which are located outside of the warmer climate states--California, Florida, Hawaii, and Arizona. Therefore, their travel budgets must be larger to cover the additional expense of travel, food, and lodging when playing out of their geographical area. The programs outside of these warmer climates are forced to travel greater distances because of the accelerated talent in the warmer areas.

National Rank vs. Attendance

Of the five responding programs with the highest average attendance, all were ranked in the top 10 in 1994. One, however, had not established a national rank because they were competing in their first season of NCAA Division I play. This program did finish with a winning percentage of .538.

Marketing Strategies vs. Target Markets

The two groups most heavily targeted by the respondents included senior citizens and young children. Children become a large commodity where marketing is important because children cannot drive themselves to a softball game; therefore, they have their parents drive them. Just as these children come to watch their favorite athletes, senior citizens pick a team to support, frequently without any actual affiliation. Senior citizens like to feel a part of something, so it is important to target them; they have proven to be faithful fans and a real asset to any program. The target markets seemed consistent with the marketing strategies of contests, giveaways, advertisements, and an exciting atmosphere being among the most mentioned. However, it is important to note that in many, if not most, cases, marketing directors and/or coaches (whoever was responsible for the marketing of the program) were virtually unfamiliar with what an actual marketing strategy was and were unaware that the marketing strategy must/should be consistent with the target market.

The softball staff was in charge of 80% of the marketing, and the marketing departments split the other 20% with the athletic departments. It is interesting to note that 100% of the participating universities have a marketing director.

Each of the five schools had a booster club. Of the five schools, one of the programs was only in its first year of competition and had not established an actual number of members. However, the others averaged approximately

258 members. At least 50% of the fans who attended the home games of the top five most successful programs based on attendance were senior citizens; the other 50% were made up of young children and people ages 26-50, while zero percent of the fans were the age of the average college student.

Summary

When examining the results, it is important to consider the fact that there was a 64.3% response rate from the selected (42 total) of the top Division I softball programs in the country. These results were, however, accurate for the top softball programs chosen throughout the different regions. Of the head coaches who responded, 85% were women. This percentage would most likely be lower if *all* of the Division I softball head coaches were targeted and responded.

Each of the programs that responded were among the top in their region. Because of this, the results presented indicated the numbers and responses for the top programs in the country. It will be necessary for schools with smaller budgets, less enrollment, and smaller athletic departments to evaluate the needs of their programs and then develop respective mission statements. These programs often cannot afford to spend their time on marketing and public relations, while the top programs can rely on the overall success and record of their team, thus reducing a great part of their marketing needs.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the different types of marketing objectives used by the top NCAA Division I softball programs. Then, based on these results, the study was also done to develop a marketing plan for the newly formed softball program at The University of Tennessee. The marketing plan consisted of a list of important considerations that could be used to market the new program. The study was divided into four sub-problems, as were the results: (a) comparisons to The University of Tennessee, (b) aspects of marketing, (c) attendance, and (d) the top five most successful programs based on attendance.

The Softball Marketing Questionnaire was developed by the researcher as the instrument to be utilized. The participating subjects in this study were Division I softball head coaches who were chosen by four criteria: (a) 1994 National Collegiate Athletic Association Top 25 National Rank, (b) League representation, (c) regional representation, and (d) new programs formed within the past five years.

Comparison to The University of Tennessee

Following are some important considerations for the development of a model marketing plan for the intercollegiate softball program at The University of Tennessee based on the results of the Softball Marketing Questionnaire.

Important Considerations to Develop a Model Marketing Plan

Develop a mission statement. To increase average season attendance and increased public's perceived image of the softball program.

Develop short- and long-term goals.

Determine target market. Three main groups (listed from least difficult to most difficult to market)

1. Youths (under age 18)
2. Senior Citizens
3. College Students

If all three are chosen, a mission statement must be developed, as well as promotions that are consistent with the age groups targeted.

Set specific strategies. Set strategies specific to the mission statement and the target audience.

1. Implement/expand on season ticket sales. Possibilities would be to have sponsors appear inside the season ticket brochure, or combine booster club brochure with season ticket brochure and have the sponsor appear on outside

back cover. Calculate estimated cost of direct mail and printing so each sponsor knows what he or she is receiving in return for their sponsorship.

Target various groups by direct mail brochures:

a. Women's/men's basketball current season ticket holders

b. Baseball season ticket holders

c. Senior Citizen groups - AARP

d. Community City League/Little Leagues

e. High school/Amateur Softball Association (ASA) teams

2. Develop radio promotion. Live radio station broadcasts from softball field thirty minutes before game time. The broadcast could be referred to as a "live" remote broadcast. Daily promotions on the air could give away free tickets to weekend doubleheaders.

3. Select one or two premier games with a highly ranked competitor or conference rival.

a. "Fill the Stadium Day" - Set a goal to fill all of the seats in the stadium on this particular day.

b. Have a Faculty and Alumni Day for all faculty, staff, and alumni (softball alumni should also be able to attend the game for free).

c. Organize day/overnight camps and clinics. Camps and clinics target youth and youth organizations. Children become interested in watching their "coach" play. Because parents must bring their children to the game, the attendance is therefore expanded by two--the more children, the more parents, the better exposure, and the more money. Include in *reasonable* registration fee a T-shirt that the participants could wear to a select number of games with no admission charge. Most programs do not charge for children under age 18.

d. Implement the adopt-a-player program. When players come in as freshmen, sleected families in the community can adopt a player for their entire career at the university. The adopted family is responsible for giving the player continuous support throughout each season. Provide families and players with special events throughout the year. This program is especially beneficial for the players who are not from the communities around the university.

4. Additional revenue-producing ideas:

a. Sponsor a tournament. Start with a small number of schools and then expand as the years progress.

b. Companies or individuals can buy a seat at the stadium for the season and/or life of the stadium for a set amount.

c. Allow potential donors to set up endowment programs; for example, an endowment scholarship for various positions such as pitcher, catcher, shortstop, and outfielders.

d. Implement a matching gifts program where an employer will match any donation of an employee, thereby increasing the total donation by two.

e. Individual game sponsor: An advertisement appears in game program or media guide, with a possibility for signage advertisement; their name is also announced during the doubleheader.

Conclusions

The University of Tennessee

1. The University of Tennessee (UT) currently has one of the largest season ticket bases for its women's basketball program, and it has also led the nation for the last three years in attendance. If the University implements a similar campaign by following the guidelines set forth by this study, it should be among the highest in attendance for the two sports within the next five years.

2. Because NCAA Division I softball is new to the Knoxville area, the athletic department must heavily market the new sport in order to "lure in" the necessary number of spectators for it to become a successful, revenue-producing sport.

Aspects of Marketing and Attendance

1. Based on the results of this study, the average winning percentage over the last three seasons was .519, if the program was granted the maximum number of scholarships allotted by the NCAA. It is significant that the teams with the maximum number of scholarships have the highest winning percentages. The closer to the maximum number of scholarships the program comes, the greater the probability for a high average winning percentage.

2. A number of corporate funding opportunities are available to these "non-revenue" sports. They include sponsorships for uniforms, equipment, and tournaments. Signage is also an area in which the full potential has yet to be reached.

3. Universities can also implement a booster club to help organize and raise revenue to supplement the programs' budget.

4. Of the respondents, 70.1% had some type of corporate sponsorship.

Top 5 Most Successful Programs Based on Attendance

1. Based on the various budgets, it seems apparent that the success of the team does not primarily depend on the amount budgeted.

2. Results indicated that the winning percentage of the program affected the number of spectators present at each home game. Each of the above

programs, except the only new program in this category, had been ranked in the NCAA Top 25 Softball Poll within the last three seasons.

3. The softball staff was responsible for 80% of the marketing and promotions conducted for the softball program.

4. Zero percent of the fans were of college-age students.

Recommendations

Additional Research

1. Questionnaires could be sent to the universities' athletic directors and marketing directors, and the results could be compared with the responses from the softball coaches.

2. After completion of the 1996 Summer Olympic Games, the first time softball will be a medal sport, the Softball Marketing Questionnaire could be administered the same sample to determine if average attendance has increased due to exposure and publicity of the Olympic Games.

3. Conduct a study using all NCAA Divisions, I, II, III, and National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) schools with softball. Compare and contrast the responses by division and then against all other NCAA divisions combined.

4. Of the NCAA Division I softball head coaches, 85.2% were women. An additional study could actually show different results by comparing all male head coach responses with female head coach responses.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Softball Marketing Questionnaire

Directions: Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge. When elaborating on a question, please answer as completely as possible in the space provided. The back of this paper or additional sheets may also be used. Each question is a vital part of this research, and your thoroughness is important to the final results of this study. Completion of this questionnaire serves as informed consent. In order to ensure confidentiality, please do not disclose your name or university affiliation. Please circle the number corresponding to your answer and/or write your answer on the line provided.

1. How many scholarships are granted to your softball program?
   1. 0-4
   2. 5-6
   3. 7-8
   4. 9-10
   5. 11
   6. Other ______________________________

2. What is your softball program's yearly working budget? (Exclude coaches' salaries)
   1. 0-$49,999
   2. $50,000-$99,999
   3. $100,000-$149,999
   4. $150,000-$199,999
   5. $200,000-$249,999
   6. $250,000-$299,999
   7. $300,000-$349,999
   8. $350,000-$399,999
   9. Other ______________________________

(Circle **yes** or **no** in the space provided. Please give more information on the back if necessary).

3. Are your home games played on campus? 1. no 2. yes

4. Does your field have lights? 1. no 2. yes

5. Is your field equipped with an announcer and public address system?
   1. no 2. yes

6. Is there a concession stand at your field? 1. no 2. yes

7. Does your softball program provide between-inning entertainment?
   1. no 2. yes

8. Does your softball program have a corporate sponsor/s for *Equipment*?
1. no 2. yes

9. Does your softball program have a corporate sponsor/s for *Uniforms*?
1. no 2. yes

10. Does your softball program have a corporate sponsor/s for a *Tournament*?
1. no 2. yes

11. Does your softball program have any other corporate sponsor not mentioned? (Please explain.) ________________________________
1. no 2. yes

12. Is music played between innings? 1. no 2. yes

13. Do your fans participate in any entertainment during the game?
1. no 2. yes

14. Does your field have bleacher seats in the outfield?
1. no 2. yes

15. Does your field have a press box? 1. no 2. yes

16. Who operates your concession stand?
    1. Parents
    2. Booster club
    3. University (other than athletic dept., i.e., food services)
    4. Private sector
    5. Other ____________________

17. Is your game announcer:
    1. Paid
    2. Volunteer
    3. Other ____________________

18. Is your announcer any of the following:
    1. Staff
    2. Intern
    3. SID
    4. Other (please specify) ____________________

19. In 1995, how many *home* games will your team play each month?
   1. February ________________
   2. March ________________
   3. April ________________
   4. May* ________________

   *Include only scheduled games.

20. Was your scoreboard: (Please circle correct number)
   1. Donated as a part of University contract (Coke, Pepsi, etc.)
   2. Purchased as a part of University contract
   3. Other (please explain) ______________________________

21. Please indicate what type of entertainment your program organizes during a doubleheader
   (please circle yes/no for any/all of the following):

1.	Music	1. no 2. yes
2.	Contest	1. no 2. yes
3.	Announcements	1. no 2. yes
4.	Giveaways	1. no 2. yes
5.	Other (please explain)	

____

22. What was your overall record from the last three seasons? (include post-season)
   1992 __________ 1993 __________ 1994 __________

23. In the past three seasons, what was your highest NCAA National Ranking?
   Rank __________ Year __________

24. What type of signage is around your stadium? (If possible, could you enclose the cost and sizes of the signage packages?)

   ____

   ____

25. What is the seating capacity at your stadium? ________________

26. In 1994, what was your average attendance for a home game?

1.	0-50	7.	401-500
2.	51-100	8.	501-700
3.	101-150	9.	701-800
4.	151-200	10.	801-900
5.	201-300	11.	901-1100
6.	301-400	12.	Other ____________

27. Please indicate outfield fence distances:
   1. Leftfield Line _____ft. 2. Centerfield _____ft. 3. Rightfield line _____ft.

28. Does your program organize any special events throughout the year?
    1. Youth clinics 1. no 2. yes
    2. Youth camps (overnight) 1. no 2. yes
    3. National Tournaments 1. no 2. yes
    4. Invitational Tournaments 1. no 2. yes
    5. Other (be specific) ____________________

29. What is the approximate total amount of money raised by your softball program through corporate sponsors?
    1. Cash ________ 2. Gift/Trade __________ 3. Other (please explain)
    ____

30. What time do you normally start a *weekday* doubleheader? __________

31. What time do you normally start a *weekend* doubleheader? __________

32. Who is your target market? ____________________

33. What are your *top* three marketing strategies for softball?
    1. ______________________________
    2. ______________________________
    3. ______________________________

34. Who is responsible for marketing the softball program?
    1. Softball staff
    2. Athletic Department
    3. Marketing Department/Sports Information
    4. Outside firm
    5. Other ______________________________

35. What are the demographics of your fans? (Please *estimate* percentage of fans in attendance.)
    1. Under age 18 ________ 1. male 2. female
    2. 19-25 ________
    3. 26-50 ________
    4. Over age 50 ________
    = 100%

36. What is the cost of a softball game program? __________

37. Indicate ticket prices for each category (List other categories not included):
    1. Student ________
    2. Adult ________
    3. Child ________
    4. Senior Citizen ________
    5. Group ________
    6. Other ____________________

38. Do you have a softball booster club? 1. no 2. yes
How many members are in your softball booster club? ____________

39. Is your booster club for softball only? 1. no 2. yes

40. Is your academic institution private? 1. no 2. yes

*****Please send a copy of your game program with a rate sheet for ad prices*****

<u>You may answer the following questions or enclose a copy of your *Softball* booster club information (Brochure or Pamphlet)!!!</u>

41. What is the cost of membership? ____________________________

42. What is the cost breakdown of each ticket category?
____

43. What types of incentives are available to members?
____

44. Is there priority seating available for members? 1. no 2. yes

45. Are there special packages available to groups (families, ASA teams, etc.).
1. no 2. yes
Please explain:____

____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please detach this last page and mail with the following ITEMS:

_________ 1. MEDIA GUIDE
_________ 2. BOOSTER CLUB BROCHURE/TICKET BROCHURE
_________ 3. GAME PROGRAM
_________ 4. ADVERTISING RATE SHEET
_________ 5. CORPORATE SPONSOR INFORMATION

☐ Please check the box and fill in mailing information if you would like to be sent the final results of this study. The results will be available by May 15.

Name: ______________________________

University: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

____

Office Phone: ______________________________

Appendix B

Cover Letter

February 15, 1995

[First Name, Last Name]
[Address]
[City, State Zip Code]

Dear [First Name],

Hello, my name is Rachelle Manning and I am currently completing my master's degree in Sport Administration at The University of Tennessee. The title of my thesis is: "Marketing Intercollegiate Women's Softball: Important Considerations." The purpose of this study is to determine the different types of marketing objectives used by Division I softball programs. The results of this study will be available to any university interested in expanding the support for their softball program as well as their athletic department. The final analysis of this study will be to prepare a marketing plan for softball, but the results could be used by any women's sport program.

As a collegiate softball player, I was a four-year starter at Sacramento State under the helm of both Irene Shea and current head coach Kathy Strahan. My love for the game and the lack of support for women's athletics has inspired me to research this topic. I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation with this study. It is important for women's athletics to continue to grow, and you, as a current leader, can help contribute to its success.

Two envelopes are enclosed to ensure that confidentiality will be maintained. Please place the completed questionnaire in the legal-size envelope and any of the following items in the manila envelope: (a) a current media guide (1993's may be sent), (b) booster club brochure, (c) an advertising rate sheet, and (d) a game program. Upon your request, you will be sent a copy of the final results of this study. If possible, please complete and return the questionnaire before April 1, 1995.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to complete this valuable research for the advancement of women's athletics. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at the numbers below. Good luck this season!

Sincerely,

Rachelle Manning
(615) 524-5327 (home
(615) 974-5111 (office)

Enclosures

Appendix C
List of Targeted Institutions

1. Arizona State University
2. California State University, Fullerton
3. California State University, Northridge
4. California State University, Sacramento
5. Central Michigan University
6. DePaul University
7. Florida State University
8. Fresno State University
9. Indiana University
10. Iowa State University
11. Long Beach State University
12. Louisiana Tech University
13. Oklahoma State University
14. Ohio State University
15. Purdue University
16. San Diego State University
17. San Jose State University
18. Southwest Louisiana University
19. Southwest Missouri State University
20. Stanford University
21. Texas A & M
22. University of Arizona
23. University of California, Berkeley
24. University of California, Los Angeles
25. University of California, Santa Barbara
26. University of Connecticut
27. University of Hawaii
28. University of Iowa
29. University of Kansas
30. University of Massachusetts
31. University of Michigan
32. University of Missouri
33. University of Nevada, Las Vegas
34. University of Nebraska
35. University of Oklahoma
36. University of Oregon
37. University of the Pacific
38. University of Utah
39. University of Washington
40. University of Wisconsin
41. Yale University

Southeast Conference (SEC):

42. University of South Carolina (only SEC school with a current softball program)

Appendix D

Conference and Regional Representation

1. Pacific 10 (PAC 10)
2. Western Athletic Conference (WAC)
3. Big 10
4. Big 8
5. Southeastern Conference (SEC)
6. Sun Belt Conference
7. Missouri Valley Conference
8. Southwest Conference
9. Ivy League
10. Great Midwest
11. Atlantic 10
12. Big West
13. Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC)
14. Big East
15. Mid American Conference

Of the 24 total conferences in Division I Softball, the respondents of this study were from one of the 15 listed above.

Appendix E

NCAA Division I Women's Softball Poll

March 30, 1994:

Institution

1. Arizona (31-1)
2. Southwestern Louisiana (32-2)
3. Oklahoma State (23-7)
4. UCLA (21-3)
5. Fresno State (23-8)
6. Cal State Northridge (23-4)
7. California (25-12)
8. Hawaii (33-6)
9. Texas A&M (34-13)
10. Oklahoma (38-5)
11. Utah (23-5)
12 Washington (23-11)
13. Nevada - Las Vegas (21-11)
14. South Carolina (28-10)
15. Iowa (13-11)
16. DePaul (10-7)
17. Oregon (16-8)
18. Tie - Long Beach State (16-14)
    Northwestern (12-8)
20. Florida State (31-11)
21. Illinois State (16-10)
22. Ohio State (11-9)
23. Kansas (17-11)
24. Robert Morris (13-9)
25. Pacific (17-11)

Wednesday, April 13, 1994

	Institution	Previous ranking
1.	Arizona (40-2)	1
2.	Southwestern Louisiana (38-2)	2
3.	Oklahoma State (29-7)	3
4.	Cal State Northridge (33-6)	6
5.	Fresno State (28-9)	5
6.	UCLA (27-7)	4
7.	Oklahoma (48-7)	10
8.	Nevada - Las Vegas (25-13)	13
9.	Hawaii (35-6)	8
10.	California (30-15)	7
11.	Washington (27-15)	12
12.	Texas A&M (42-16)	9
13.	South Carolina (34-12)	14
14.	DePaul (22-7)	16
15.	Tie - Oregon (20-12)	17
	Utah (30-8)	11
17.	Indiana (25-9)	Not ranked
18.	Kansas (24-12)	23
19.	Long Beach State (22-16)	Tie - 18
20.	Iowa (21-13)	15
21.	Illinois State (21-13)	21
22.	Florida State (20-13)	20
23.	Robert Morris (17-11)	24
24.	Pacific (20-16)	25
25.	North Carolina (25-13)	Not ranked

Wednesday, May 11, 1994

	Institution	Previous ranking
1.	Arizona (54-2)	1
2.	Southwestern Louisiana (55-3)	2
3.	Cal State Northridge (42-7)	4
4.	Oklahoma State (40-10)	3
5.	UCLA (34-10)	5
6.	Fresno State (43-12)	6
7.	Nevada - Las Vegas (34-16)	7
8.	Hawaii (49-12)	8
9.	Utah (41-9)	12
10.	Washington (42-18)	13
11.	Texas A&M (54-18)	11
12.	Oklahoma (56-13)	18
13.	Indiana (43-13)	15
14.	Oregon (35-19)	10
15.	South Carolina (51-15)	9
16.	California (35-17)	14
17.	DePaul (40-13)	17
18.	Kansas (36-18)	16
19.	Illinois - Chicago (47-13)	Not ranked
20.	Tie - Cal State Fullerton (30-27)	22
	Hofstra (36-13)	Not ranked
22.	Florida State (45-16)	Tie - 23
23.	Southwest Missouri State (34-9)	Not ranked
24.	Iowa (33-21)	Not ranked
25.	Tie - Long Beach State (29-25)	20
	Virginia (33-18)	Not ranked

Sunday, May 15, 1994

1994 NCAA Division I Women's Softball Championship

Dates/Sites Pairings:
*Indicates host institution

May 20-22 at Tucson, Arizona
No. 1 seed Arizona (55-3)*
No. 2 seed Texas A&M (54-18)
No. 3 seed Rutgers (26-23)
No. 4 seed Canisius (35-6)

May 20-22 at Stillwater, Oklahoma
No. 1 seed Oklahoma State (40-10)*
No. 2 seed Oklahoma (56-13)
No. 3 seed Florida State (50-17)
No. 4 seed Providence (36-18)

May 20-22 at Fresno, California
No. 1 seed Fresno State (45-14)*
No. 2 seed Oregon (35-21)
No. 3 seed California (39-19)
No. 4 seed Central Michigan (32-22)

May 20-22 at Columbia, South Carolina
No. 1 seed UCLA (38-10)
No. 2 seed Nevada - Las Vegas (37-17)
No. 3 seed South Carolina (51-15)*
No. 4 seed Georgia State (46-26)

May 20-22 at Northridge, California
No. 1 seed Cal State Northridge (46-7)*
No. 2 seed Washington (43-19)
No. 3 seed Cal State Fullerton (32-27)
No. 4 seed Maine (32-15)

May 20-22 at Bloomington, Indiana
No. 1 seed Indiana (46-14)*
No. 2 seed DePaul (42-15)
No. 3 seed Illinois - Chicago (52-15-1)
No. 4 seed Notre Dame (40-18)

May 20-22 at Lafayette, Louisiana
No. 1 seed Southwestern Louisiana (55-3)*
No. 2 seed Utah (46-10)
No. 3 seed Princeton (41-14)
No. 4 seed McNeese State (35-20-2)

	May 20-22 at Lawrence, Kansas
	No. 1 seed Hawaii (49-12)
	No. 2 seed Kansas (36-18)*
	No. 3 seed Missouri (36-20)
	No. 4 seed Drake (32-22)
Conferences Receiving Automatic Qualification:	Atlantic 10 Conference - Rutgers
	Big East Conference - Providence
	Big Eight Conference - Oklahoma State
	Big Ten Conference - Indiana
	Big West Conference - Nevada - Las Vegas
	Mid-American Athletic Conference - Central Michigan
	Mid-Continent Conference - Illinois - Chicago
	Midwestern Collegiate Conference - Notre Dame
	Missouri Valley Conference - Drake
	Pacific-10 Conference - Arizona
	Southland Conference - McNeese State
	Trans America Athletic Conference - Georgia State
	Western Athletic Conference - Cal State Northridge

1994 NCAA Division I Women's Softball Polls Compilation

Institution	Poll #1	Poll #2	Poll #3	Poll #4
Arizona	1	1	1	1
Cal State Fullerton	NR	NR	22	T-20
Cal State Northridge	6	4	4	3
California	7	10	14	16
DePaul	16	14	17	17
Florida State	20	22	T-23	22
Fresno State	5	5	6	6
Hawaii	8	9	8	8
Hofstra	NR	NR	NR	T-20
Illinois - Chicago	NR	NR	NR	19
Illinois State	21	21	NR	NR
Indiana	NR	17	15	13
Iowa	15	20	NR	24
Kansas	23	18	16	18
Long Beach State	T-18	19	20	T-25
Michigan	NR	NR	T-25	NR
Missouri	NR	NR	19	NR
Nevada - Las Vegas	13	8	7	7
North Carolina	NR	25	NR	NR
Northwestern	T-18	NR	NR	NR
Ohio State	22	NR	21	NR
Oklahoma	10	7	18	12
Oklahoma State	3	3	3	4
Oregon	17	T-15	10	14
Pacific	25	24	T-25	NR
Robert Morris	24	23	T-23	NR
South Carolina	14	13	9	15
Southwest Missouri State	NR	NR	NR	23
Southwestern Louisiana	2	2	2	2
Texas A&M	9	12	11	11
UCLA	4	6	5	5
Utah	11	T-15	12	9
Virginia	NR	NR	NR	T-25
Washington	12	11	13	10

Vita

Rachelle M. Manning was born in Walnut Creek, California, on September 6, 1970. She attended high school in the East Bay, a suburb of San Francisco.

After graduating from high school in May of 1989, Rachelle attended California State University, Sacramento, on a softball scholarship. In May of 1994 she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Sport Management. In August of 1994 she entered The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and in August of 1995 received a Masters of Science degree in Sport Administration.