

# **Branding & Licensing**

## **Sports & Entertainment Marketing**

### **Unit Six Outline, 2020-21 School Year**

## **Unit 6: Branding & Licensing**

### **OVERVIEW**

*Unit six addresses the concepts of branding and licensing, two very important principles in the sports and entertainment marketing business. Branding, as a function of marketing, contributes to the overall perception consumers carry with respect to a particular company or its products. Successful branding strategies can be seen all over the sports and entertainment industry, with examples like ESPN, Sports Illustrated, MTV, Gatorade and the New York Yankees. Licensing has become a critical revenue producer for all properties in the sports and entertainment industry and continues to grow at an astounding pace. Unit six explores the factors contributing to that growth.*

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### **OBJECTIVES**

- 1) Define branding
  - 2) Define brand equity and brand extension
  - 3) Differentiate between corporate brand, product brand and store brand
  - 4) Determine the characteristics of an effective brand name
  - 5) Define licensing
  - 6) Discuss the licensing process
  - 7) Distinguish between licensor and licensee
  - 8) Explain the advantages and disadvantages to a licensee
  - 9) Identify the four key considerations of on-site merchandising
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### **LESSONS**

- Lesson 6.1** Branding  
**Lesson 6.2** Licensing  
**Lesson 6.3** Licensing Process  
**Lesson 6.4** Merchandising
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### **KEY TERMS**

**Brand Extension**  
**Licensee**  
**Product Brand**  
**Trademark**

**Branding**  
**Licensing**  
**Slogans**

**Corporate Brand**  
**Licensor**  
**Store Brand**

## Lesson 6.1

### Branding

#### A. Branding

1. **Branding** is the use of a name, design, symbol, or a combination of those elements that a sports or entertainment organization uses to help differentiate its products from the competition <sup>1</sup>
  - a. Describes a company's or event's efforts to develop a personality and make its products or services different from the competition <sup>2</sup>
  - b. Branding mechanisms
    - i. Brand mark
    - ii. Logo
    - iii. Trademark
    - iv. Graphics
    - v. Slogans and taglines
      - (a) **Slogans** are short, memorable catch phrases used in advertising campaigns designed to create product affiliations among consumers
      - (b) For example, Dick's Sporting Goods advertising often features the slogan "Every season starts at Dick's"
      - (c) NBA teams often feature slogans as part of their season-long marketing campaigns
        - (i) Examples of new slogans introduced by NBA teams for the 2019-20 season:
          1. Atlanta Hawks – "True to Atlanta"
          2. Brooklyn Nets – "Bet on Brooklyn"
          3. Charlotte Hornets – "All Fly"
          4. Indiana Pacers – "We Grow Basketball Here"
          5. New Orleans Pelicans – "Won't Bow Down"
          6. Orlando Magic – "Magic Above All"
          7. Philadelphia 76ers – "We The People"
          8. Washington Wizards – "Rep The District"



**\* ACTIVITY IDEA \***

*Encourage your students to get online and see if they identify a range of taglines or slogans for sports and entertainment properties. Ask them to find examples from different industry segments. For example, have them find something from the apparel industry, something from an upcoming film release, the tagline for a concert or music tour, the WNBA slogan and something from a niche or fringe sport.*

***Sports Business Program*** and combo members consider adapting a new slogan for your high school sports programs for this season, either collectively as an athletic program or individually for different sports.

- c. When a brand name or trade name is registered, it also becomes a trademark <sup>3</sup>
  - i. A **trademark** is a device that legally identifies ownership of a registered brand or trade name <sup>3</sup>
    - (a) In 2020, a group in [Nashville](#), in an effort to bring Major League Baseball to Nashville, filed a federal trademark application to register a trademark consisting of three red stars – a large one with two smaller ones on each side – as a logo
    - (b) [CBS Sports](#) reported that Tom Brady's company, TEB Capital Management, filed new trademarks for TOMPA BAY and TAMPA BRADY soon after the star quarterback signed as a free agent with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, with the goal of using the nicknames on clothing
    - (c) PGA professional Phil Mickelson and Mickelson, Inc. recently [filed](#) for a "Hit Bombs" trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, with the intent of expanding his brand to potentially sell a wide range of products, including golf shirts, shirts, golf caps and hats
    - (d) Trademark battles can become contentious in the court of law with companies spending millions in pursuit of intellectual property rights
      - (i) The NCAA paid \$17.2 million to secure the registered trademark for the phrase "March Madness" <sup>4</sup>
      - (ii) Organizations will protect their intellectual property, even in instances where the infringement doesn't use the exact phrase that has been trademarked
        - 1. For example, the NCAA pursued legal [action](#) to keep a car dealership from using the phrase "Markdown Madness" in their advertising during the 2018 NCAA men's basketball tournament, suggesting the dealership was wrongfully exploiting its March Madness mark
      - (iii) Because Texas A&M University trademarked the phrase "The Twelfth Man" in 1990, the school sued two NFL teams for using the popular phrase in their marketing, saying the lawsuit was "mean to protect its 12<sup>th</sup> Man trademark from infringement"
        - 1. In 2016, the Aggies reached an agreement with the Indianapolis Colts that requires the Colts to remove the "12<sup>th</sup> Man" phrase from the stadium's "Ring of Honor" and to stop all other uses of the trademarked phrase
        - 2. According to the [lawsuit](#), the Colts used the trademarked phrase to help sell tickets (one campaign urged fans to "Join the 12<sup>th</sup> Man") and merchandise
        - 3. Click [here](#) for more on the story from the Indy Star
      - (iv) According to an [ESPN](#) report, Texas A&M also reached an agreement with the Seattle Seahawks in 2016 which gives the NFL franchise limited rights to use the trademark in exchange for an annual licensing fee <sup>5</sup>
        - 1. The Seahawks will pay \$18,000 per year to use the phrase and \$10,000 to help Texas A&M continue fighting to protect the trademark
          - a. Despite the annual licensing fee, the Seahawks will not be allowed to use the "12 Man" phrase in their stadium's Ring of Honor or as its handle through any of their social media platforms
          - b. Click [here](#) for more on the story from espn.com.
      - (e) According to the [Sports Business Journal](#), the NHL expansion franchise in Las Vegas has struggled to finalize a name for the franchise, suggesting many of the possible team names have already been trademarked
      - (f) When asked by ESPN in a live interview immediately after being selected #1 overall by the New Orleans Pelicans in the 2019 NBA Draft if he had a message for New Orleans, Zion Williamson simply said, "Let's Dance"

- (i) Within 24 hours, both the Pelicans and Williamson had applied for a trademark to the phrase, with the Pelicans eventually withdrawing their application
  - (ii) The trademark request includes merchandising opportunities like bed linens, glassware, children's books, jewelry, non-alcoholic beverages, key chains toys, clothing and athletic wear, bags and luggage, computer games, mobile applications, and various other items according to [nola.com](http://nola.com).
- d. Protecting the brand
  - i. Organizations will go to great lengths to protect their brand from a legal perspective
    - (a) According to Michael Napolitano, Licensing Director for Major League Baseball in an interview, Major League Baseball spends millions of dollars per year on trademark protection <sup>6</sup>
    - (b) According to the *Oregonian*: "Adidas is well known for aggressively guarding the logo it's used for more than 55 years. It has pursued at least 325 infringement matters in the United States, including 35 lawsuits and 45 settlement agreements, according to court records." <sup>7</sup>
      - (i) In 2015, the brand aggressively pursued litigation against Skechers for trademark infringement, suggesting they copied the design of its iconic Sam Smith sneakers <sup>8</sup>
        - 1. Click [here](#) to read more about the claim against Skechers and to see pictures of the shoes under dispute
        - 2. In 2018, the two brands settled the lawsuit out of court
      - (ii) In 2017, adidas took Puma to court with another trademark infringement claim over a soccer cleat that had four stripes on the side
        - 1. Click [here](#) to see a picture of the Puma cleat in question
      - (iii) Adidas has a portion of their [website](#) dedicated to explaining the legal ramifications of attempts to sabotage their brand
    - (c) Since 1967, Chapman High School in Kansas had been referring to its sports teams as the "Fighting Irish" and featuring a mascot bearing a similar resemblance to the fighting leprechaun logo used by the University of Notre Dame. In 2012, the school received a cease and desist letter from Notre Dame, ordering them to discontinue using the logo. Unwilling to spend the money necessary to challenge the University in court, the school held an art contest to design a [new logo](#) for school athletics. <sup>9</sup>
    - (d) In 2019, Kawhi Leonard (formerly a Jordan Brand athlete, currently with New Balance) filed a lawsuit against Nike over the brand's trademark of a claw logo, accusing the company of copyright infringement and fraud
      - (i) Nike filed a [countersuit](#), alleging the logo they trademarked was developed by a team of "talented Nike designers", not Kawhi, and that the brand, not Leonard, had the rights to the mark
    - (e) Milwaukee Bucks star Giannis Antetokounmpo [sued](#) a Philadelphia man for selling T-shirts with his trademarked "Greek Freak" nickname on them
      - (i) Matt Powell, senior industry advisor, sports for the NPD Group, said merchandise can often be as big a part of a top player's income as their team salary, telling Wisconsin Public Radio in an [interview](#), *"Especially in the NBA, I think the league has really become a personality league now. We're seeing athletes moving from team to team. It's really critical that the athlete does not let their name, their logo, their nickname get co-opted by somebody else."*

- (f) Hollywood Weekly Magazine [sued](#) Netflix, CBS Studios, Paramount and Imagine Television in 2020 for a host of claims including trademark and copyright infringement (among other claims), stating they owned the rights to a "Tiger King" trademark and the unwanted association with the series is injured the publication's reputation.
- (g) Last year, Disney cracked down on sales of unauthorized Baby Yoda merchandise being sold online on websites like Etsy on the grounds of copyright infringement
- (i) Click [here](#) to read more from insidethemagic.com.

**\* DISCUSSION IDEA \***



*The NFL's efforts to protect its intellectual property are highlighted every February, when companies all over the world attempt to leverage the popularity of the Super Bowl in promotions to help them sell their products and services. It seems every year we hear stories of NFL threatening lawsuits over the use of terms like "Super Bowl Savings" as excitement for the game builds. Here is a [link](#) to an article that discusses what you can and cannot say in Super Bowl advertising. See if students can guess which phrases are allowable and which would prompt the scorn of the NFL league office.*

2. Characteristics of a successful brand <sup>10</sup>
  - a. Positive, distinctive and generates positive feelings and association
  - b. Easy to remember and pronounce
  - c. Logo is easily recognizable
  - d. Implies the benefits the sports or entertainment product delivers
  - e. Consistent with the image of the rest of the product lines and company/organization and/or city
  - f. Legally and ethically permissible
3. Brand building <sup>11</sup>
  - a. Brand awareness
    - i. The process of working toward maximizing recognition of a particular brand
      - (a) Many comic book fans associate comics with Marvel because of brand awareness. Because Marvel Entertainment has such a strong brand, the Walt Disney Company purchased the company for \$4 billion.
      - (b) Despite moderate expectations, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, the fifth installment of the film franchise, stunned *Guardians of the Galaxy* by dethroning the superhero squadron after just one week at No. 1, shattering sales forecasts by \$20 million
        - (i) In nearly 25 years, no Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles film has opened below No. 1
          1. In 2016, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows*, continued the streak of being #1 when it did \$35 million in ticket sales in its first weekend
  - b. Brand image
    - i. Consumer perceptions linked to a particular brand (health, excitement, fun, family etc.)

- ii. Example
  - (a) The Disney brand is associated with family fun and entertainment
  - (b) Brand image is not limited to just sports and entertainment properties but also to athletes and celebrities
  - (c) Billie Eilish has [ventured](#) into yet another fashion collaboration with fashion brand H&M for a collection aimed at promoting sustainability. The collection, made entirely from sustainable materials, is made up of items inspired by Eilish's signature style.
- c. Brand equity
  - i. The value placed on a brand by consumers
    - (a) Nike has strong brand equity because consumers have long associated the brand with top level athletes and quality products
      - (i) Thanks to its strong brand equity, Nike can charge \$300 for a pair of soccer shoes
        - 1. Compare that to soccer shoes made by Diadora, one of Nike's competitor that focuses on soccer shoes and apparel, that top out at \$120 for a pair
        - 2. Typically, a good pair of cleats from any brand can run \$150, but Nike's brand equity allows them to sell them at a higher price point
- d. Brand loyalty
  - i. Consumer preference for a particular brand as compared to competitor products or services
    - (a) In the recreational/sport fishing category, Plano brand tackle boxes have established a loyal customer base, maintaining a significant share of the market year in and year out. Plano tackle boxes were again the preferred brand among anglers, representing 55.8% of all tackle box purchases.<sup>12</sup>
    - (b) [NASCAR](#) fans are extremely brand loyal
      - (i) 63% of fans say they "always buy products from NASCAR sponsors" according to one study while 55% of millennial consumers indicate that they would switch brands because of a NASCAR sponsor
  - ii. Brand loyalty is a critical factor influencing the concept of fandom, the higher the level of brand loyalty, the greater likelihood of an increased level of intensity in fandom
    - (a) In 2019, the Brand Keys Sports Fan Loyalty Index [ranked](#) the most loyal sports fans based on league, the top four:
      - (i) National Football League
      - (ii) Major League Baseball
      - (iii) National Basketball Association
      - (iv) National Hockey League
    - (b) According to a study conducted by [Fanalytics](#), the Los Angeles Lakers have the most loyal and engaged fan base in the NBA
    - (c) Electronic Arts [shares jumped 15%](#) just after the video game publisher shared details on its deal with Disney to produce "Star Wars" games, pushing its stock to its highest level in more than a year, thanks to the incredible brand equity that the Star Wars brand has built over the years
    - (d) For a classic example of brand loyalty **and** fandom, click [here](#) to read the Reuters story about the Las Vegas resident who owns every single pair of Air Jordan sneakers ever made
- 4. Event branding opportunities<sup>14</sup>
  - a. Naming rights
    - i. TCS, a consulting firm, has the naming rights to the popular New York City Marathon
  - b. Promotions and co-promotions



- i. PowerBar, another sponsor of the TCS NYC Marathon, utilizes its partnership to provide a special promotional opportunity to race participants by offering 20% off all PowerBar products at the PowerBar store online
- c. Sponsorship opportunities and presenting rights
  - i. While TCS enjoys the naming rights to the annual NYC Marathon, several other sponsors enjoy “strategic partner” status, such as FitBit, Foot Locker and Gatorade
- d. Merchandising opportunities
  - i. Licensing opportunities are often available which would include the authorized use of a brand, brand name, brand mark, trademark, or logo
  - ii. ASICS was a “principal” (primary) sponsor of the NYC Marathon. Part of their sponsorship agreement provides them with merchandising opportunities in that much of the merchandise sold online or on-site is co-branded by ASICS (they are also the presenting sponsor of the official Marathon Store). <sup>15</sup>
    - (a) After 25 years of sponsoring the NYC, ASICS announced that 2016 would be their last as race sponsor (New Balance took over as official sponsor for the 2017 race)
- e. Hospitality
  - i. Companies may have the opportunity to entertain clients, prospective customers and employees with tickets to the event
  - ii. Most events offer hospitality packages, which typically include access to VIP areas and include food and beverages
    - (a) The 43<sup>rd</sup> Ryder Cup (golf’s competition involving the United States vs Europe) provides ample hospitality opportunities for brands throughout the event with corporate tents typically dotting the entire golf course.
      - (i) This year’s event, which was set to take at Whistling Straits in Wisconsin, was postponed due to COVID-19 and is now set to be played in September of 2021.

**\* INSTRUCTOR’S NOTE \***



*To see more examples of how the TCS New York City Marathon has created awareness for sponsors, review the official handbook from the TCS NYC Marathon in class. See if your students can find examples of event branding within the document. The handbook is a PDF in the Lesson 6.1 folder, marked “Lesson 6.1 - Student Handout - NYC Marathon Handbook.”*

5. Forms of branding <sup>16</sup>
  - a. A **corporate brand** represents an entire company or organization
    - i. Walt Disney Company
    - ii. National Football League
    - iii. Apple
  - b. A **product brand** represents a particular product of a company or organization

- i. World of Warcraft video games
  - ii. Harry Potter
  - iii. iPod, iPhone, iPad
- c. **Store brands** (also called private labels) are the products retailers sell as their own brands
  - i. Gander Mountain, an outdoor sports store, carries brand name merchandise from Columbia Sportswear and Wrangler, but also offers many products under the label of Gander Mountain
  - ii. Athleta activewear for women (apparel primarily targeting the niche yoga and pilates consumer) is actually a store brand under the Gap, Inc. umbrella
- 6. Branding in sports and entertainment business
  - a. Sports and entertainment organizations and companies work hard to develop strong brands as a means for differentiating themselves from one another <sup>17</sup>
  - b. Branding provides a unique means for product differentiation in that individuals (athletes, actors, musicians) can have a tremendous impact on sales
    - i. Fans of Dwayne Johnson will pay to watch nearly any movie for which he plays a role and will purchase DVDs, memorabilia and other licensed merchandise
    - ii. Beyond the Scene ([BTS](#)), a seven-member K-pop band, accounted for .3% of South Korea's entire GDP with ticket sales, music downloads and merchandise sales of a reported up \$4.65 billion (according to [story](#) that appeared in the Washington Post), a testament to the branding genius of the music group
      - (a) Click [here](#) to read more about the incredible popularity of BTS
  - c. **Brand extension** refers to the use of a successful brand name to launch a new or modified product or service in a new market <sup>18</sup>
    - i. Celebrities and athletes in today's marketing age are becoming managers of their own brands
      - (a) *Forbes* magazine Senior Editor Matthew Miller says "Celebrities are brands, and they are marketing to us and there's stuff we consume off of them, from movies to albums to concerts to books to speaking tours to everything in between, and we sort of all buy into it." <sup>19</sup>
      - (i) Musician Jimmy Buffett's list of brand extensions is expansive; from restaurants (Margaritaville cafes), casinos and footwear (Sole of the Tropics flip-flops) to his own radio station on Sirius and a complete line of Margaritaville-branded food and beverages.
      - (ii) Celebrities use their star power to launch product brands, like Boston Red Sox star David Ortiz (*Big Papi En Fuego Hot Sauce*) and Usain Bolt (*Bolt branded SOUL headphone line*), popular music stars Kanye West, Rihanna, Jay-Z, Taylor Swift, Justin Bieber, Tim McGraw (fragrance lines), Actress Emma Watson (teen clothing line), American Olympic gold winning gymnast Nastia Liukin (girls' clothing line for JC Penney)
      - (iii) In 2018, legendary tennis star Serena Williams, also known for her fashion sense, launched her own clothing line featuring motivational messages and "feel good" fashion <sup>20</sup>
      - (iv) Athletes and celebrities also leverage their popularity to open restaurants (according to an article in *ESPN the Magazine*, over 200 athletes are also restaurant owners), such as John Elway's "Elway's Colorado Steakhouse" in Colorado or Aerosmith's "Mount Blue" in Massachusetts <sup>21</sup>
      - (v) In 2019, DJ Khaled decided to get into the furniture business when he [launched](#) the 'We The Best Home' furniture line
      - (vi) Shaquille O'Neal's business empire includes brand extensions like Shaq-branded suits, sneakers, a Shaq jewelry line, and even his own children's books called 'Little Shaq.'



1. In 2020, Papa John's (a company for which Shaq is an investor and brand ambassador) [introduced](#) the larger than life Shaq-a-Roni pizza, a product conceived by the NBA hall-of-famer

**\* INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE \***



*Early in his career, legendary golfer Greg Norman understood the importance of building a brand. Armed with that foresight, and embracing a nickname like the “Shark”, Norman is among the highest-earning athletes in the history of sports. Norman sits down with Forbes for an interview to discuss his \$500 million empire. The podcast is about an hour long, so you might want to preview and finding which snippets you want to share in class rather than playing the entire sixty minutes of audio. You can listen to the podcast online or download the interview by clicking [here](#).*

- ii. Brand extension is not limited to individual athletes and celebrities
  - (a) The University of Notre Dame sold a [Notre Dame branded cologne](#), with 3.4-ounce bottles retailing for \$62
  - (b) The entire *Pirates of the Caribbean* film franchise is an extension of a Disney brand (originally a theme park ride) that has been around for years and the films have now made nearly \$3 billion at the box office (that is the booty from the films alone, not including licensed merchandise sales, which range from Halloween costumes to nail polish to lamps) <sup>22</sup>
  - (c) Stance introduced its first brand extension last season, expanding their product offering from niche socks to MLB-licensed underwear <sup>23</sup>
  - (d) Rovio, creator of the wildly popular Angry Birds video game app, announced a brand extension into education in which they will be marketing early childhood curriculum worldwide
  - (e) The popular *Warcraft* brand, known originally for its video games and novels, expanded into movie theatres and was the #2 film during its opening weekend
  - (f) ESPN has grown to include ESPN2, ESPN News, ESPN Classic, ESPNU, ESPN Deportes, ESPN Films, ESPN+, 47 international channels; the largest sports-radio network in America; a magazine (ESPN the Magazine), restaurants (ESPN Zone), and a website that clocks 52 million unique visitors a month; and its own \$100 million theme park in Florida <sup>25</sup>
  - (g) Disney announced a ‘Frozen’ themed cruise on the company’s cruise line would make a stop in Norway that would include on-board meet-and-greets with popular characters from the film and other activities based on the popular film
    - (i) Click [here](#) for more on the Disney Cruise line
  - (h) Reebok launched a unique brand extension in an effort to continue to connect with cross fit brand by introducing a [Reebok branded bacon](#) product

- (i) The Chicago Bears, Dallas Cowboys and San Francisco 49ers extended their brands with the [launch](#) of branded health/fitness clubs
- (i) Memberships at the 'Bears Fit' club in Vernon Hills, Illinois feature the names of legendary players — prospective members can buy the Brian Urlacher package, \$54 per month, or the Mike Ditka package, \$89 for couples

**\* DISCUSSION IDEA \***



*Now is a good time to prompt a class discussion to see if students can identify any additional examples of brand extension. You might also want to access the “brand extension” assignment in lesson 6.1 and alternatively use it as a classroom discussion topic or class activity. Try to target a list of 10-20 different examples.*

*Student answers will vary...it could be anything from a new product release from a Kardashian to a Han Solo spinoff film from the Star Wars film being released by Disney or anything in between.*

7. Importance of developing a strong brand <sup>26</sup>
  - a. There are many benefits associated with the development of a strong brand
    - i. Strong brands have the power to create business value and impact more than just corporate revenues and profit margins
    - ii. Strong brands also create competitive advantage, command price premiums and decrease cost of entry into new markets and/or categories
    - iii. Strong brands reduce business risk and attract and retain talented staff
    - iv. Strength of a brand can carry the brand in a tough economy
  - b. Examples of a strong brand
    - i. The Harry Potter brand has morphed into one of the strongest (and most valuable) brands in the entertainment industry with estimates placing the value of the Potter brand to be around \$25 billion <sup>27</sup>
      - (a) The [LA Times](#) reports that "The Wizarding World of Harry Potter" attractions at numerous U.S. Universal Studios are responsible for gains in attendance as much as 38%
        - (i) "Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey," the marquee attraction within "The Wizarding World of Harry Potter," reached one million riders faster than any other attraction in Universal history (according to [comcast.com](#))
      - (b) Click [here](#) to read a story from brandchannel.com about the many Harry Potter brand extensions
      - (c) In 2020, Vera Bradley, Inc. and Warner Bros. Consumer Products [introduced](#) a Harry Potter-inspired collection of products, including backpacks, handbags, travel duffels, accessories, cozy favorites, and more
    - ii. The Star Wars brand is so strong that fans have created a national holiday surrounding the franchise (May 4<sup>th</sup>)
      - (a) Despite unprecedented levels of unemployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Disney [created](#) a virtual “waiting room” for consumers

- hoping to purchase limited-edition “Star Wars Day” merchandise to keep its online store from crashing
- iii. Re-establishing brand position and strengthening the brand is a critical component for maintaining a strong brand
- (a) One strategy for re-establishing or strengthening a brand is the process of **rebranding**, which can be described as the updating or creation of a new name, term, symbol, design, or a combination thereof for an established brand with the intention of developing a differentiated (new) position in the mind of stakeholders and competitors
- (i) Gatorade determined it needed to see more growth within the teenage segment of its customer base
1. In a rebranding effort aimed at recapturing the attention of the high school athlete demographic, Gatorade launched a “G Series” of sports drinks
  2. The G Series campaign targets not only mainstream sports but also emerging sport athletes like skateboarders, surfers, and other non-traditional sports participants <sup>28</sup>
- (ii) In an effort to forge a better connection with the community, a Minor League Baseball franchise in Akron, Ohio changed their team name from the “Aeros” to the “RubberDucks”, a tribute to the city’s longstanding connection to the rubber industry (not to mention that the rubber duck was invented in Akron)
1. As a result, the team won “logo/branding of the year” honors from Ballpark Digest <sup>29</sup>
  2. Click [here](#) to read the full story and the backstory for the strategy behind the rebranding effort from ballparkdigest.com (along with coverage of several other minor league teams with honorable mentions for their rebranding efforts)
- (iii) Prior to the 2020 season (before many leagues were shut down because of the pandemic), several Minor League Baseball teams rebranded
1. According to [Ballpark Digest](#):
  2. The former Mobile BayBears became the Rocket City Trash Pandas
  3. A move to Wichita, Kansas prompted the New Orleans Baby Cakes to become the Wichita Wind Surge
  4. The Kannapolis Intimidators (Indiana) became the Kannapolis Cannon Ballers
  5. The Fort Myers Miracle did away with their long-time identity that dated back to the franchise’s time in Miami, becoming the Fort Myers Mighty Missals
  6. The Connecticut Tigers became the Norwich Sea Unicorns
  7. The Missoula Osprey became the Missoula PaddleHeads



**\* ACTIVITY IDEA \***

*Have students rebrand their favorite teams in a class activity. Encourage them to consider what you reviewed from this lesson and give them the flexibility to rebrand the franchise in any way they’d like. For example, will the rebrand be subtle and they’ll just introduce an alternative uniform for a few games? Or will they give the franchise a complete overhaul, changing the*

team nickname, logo and/or color scheme? When they present their rebrand ideas, be sure they explain why they made the decisions they did and how they think the brand updates will change the way fans view and/or perceive the franchise. For some inspiration, click [here](#) to see how one NHL fan re-imagined the brands for every team in the league.

If you would prefer to wait, a similar project opportunity is available in Unit 7 where students will be encouraged to come up with a unique food-branded promotion for a Minor League Baseball franchise. That project includes a student packet, teacher lesson planning guide, PPT and rubric and can be accessed in the Lesson 7.6 folder.



This would be a good time to introduce the “School Athletics Rebranding Project” located in the “Projects and Activities” folder. The project casts each group of students as a “branding agency” and encourages students to create a hypothetical rebranding strategy for your school by applying a number of the concepts covered in lesson 6.1.

**Sports Business Program** and combo members should take this a step further by developing an entire project on identifying the existing brand, then rebranding your school athletic program, complete with the introduction of a secondary mark.

- (b) Often times a re-branding effort includes the development a new logo or the alteration of an existing logo
  - (i) Because re-branding can be such a valuable marketing tool, many sports properties have recently included a logo update or, in some cases, a complete re-design
    - 1. Often, a re-brand will include new color schemes, logos and uniforms
      - a. Last season, the Los Angeles Rams [announced](#) that the team’s “throwback” color scheme would become the primary colors for the 2018 NFL season
        - i. The team also [hinted](#) that it began discussions with Nike for a complete rebrand that would be introduced when the franchise moves to its new stadium in 2020
      - b. In 2019, the New York Jets introduced the team’s first uniform change in 20 years along with an altered logo with a “Gotham Green” color scheme
        - i. Jet’s team president explained to the [Associated Press](#) in an interview: “We wanted to create something that we think today’s fans and traditional fans will like, and something that the players will like. And we also kind of were looking for that gritty, resilient New York City-area look. So, you’re trying to accomplish a lot of different things.”
      - c. In June of 2020, the Charlotte 49ers (UNC-Charlotte) [unveiled](#) their new logos around campus, in athletic facilities, on uniforms and merchandise.

- i. However, the 49ers athletic director wants the rebranding to go much deeper than logo design and uniform change as told to the Charlotte Observer: *"The whole concept, the whole design is to evoke an image of strength and boldness. "That we're embracing momentum. We really feel that the competitive rise we're experiencing coincides with the launching of this brand."*
  2. In some cases, the logo refresh can be ever-so-slight
    - a. Such is the case with Auburn University, who introduced a slight [tweak](#) to the team's "shield" logo just prior to the 2019 football season
    - b. Walt Disney World introduced a subtle rebrand to Epcot in 2020 when they [announced](#) "Epcot" would become "EPCOT," spelled in all capital letters
  3. Last season, several NBA teams adjusted their look, ranging from minor tweaks (Warriors and Rockets) to entire collections (Grizzlies)
    - a. As the team prepared to move from Oakland to San Francisco, the Golden State Warriors announced plans on [Twitter](#) to introduce a slightly different logo for the 2019-20 season, one that (according to the team) "depicts a more accurate portrayal of the Bay Bridge"
    - b. The Houston Rockets new uniforms for the 2019-20 season will feature a modernized design and new font, according to [Bleacher Report](#)
    - c. In Memphis, the Grizzlies will [celebrate](#) the franchise's 25<sup>th</sup> season with two new uniform designs and a refresh of the team's court design
      - i. Click [here](#) for a video from the team's website introducing the new look
    - d. Two years ago, the [Minnesota Timberwolves](#) updated their logo with new colors and an entirely different wolf
      - i. The re-branding effort paid off. According [bizjournals.com](#), the Minnesota Timberwolves saw a 69% increase in merchandise sales over the previous year.
- (c) Because rebranding entails some major overhauling for organizations, it can be time consuming and expensive for sports and entertainment properties
  - (i) The NBA's Charlotte franchise changing their name from the Bobcats to the Hornets (the franchise's original nickname) and the New Orleans Hornets changing their name to the Pelicans
    1. According to the [Charlotte Observer](#), Charlotte's rebranding effort cost the franchise nearly \$3 million but has resulted in an immediate uptick in sales, with an increase of 59% in new ticket sales and a significant boost in sponsorship and merchandise sales<sup>30</sup>
  - (ii) After a two year rebranding process that set The Big 12 Conference back roughly \$415,000 on logo design and implementation alone, it was [reported](#) by *Sports Business Journal* that, for the first time in league history, the logo would be required to appear on football uniforms
  - (iii) The rebranding of the Washington Football Team could cost, according to some [estimates](#) on the low end, \$10 to \$20 million, and potentially much more when you consider everything that will go in to changing the franchise name, a process the team's head coach [suggested](#) could take up to 18 months
  - (iv) It took nearly four years for the Los Angeles Rams to finalize the team's new look, including logos, colors and uniforms, so it could be unveiled in

time for the franchise's move into SoFi Stadium, its \$5 billion new home, in 2020

1. According to [ESPN](#), the Rams' rebranding effort began in 2016, when the team relocated from St. Louis to Los Angeles
- (d) Sometimes a sports or entertainment property will introduce a "secondary" or "alternative" mark as an extension of their brand
  - (i) Last season, nearly all NHL teams featured at least one secondary logo as part of their franchise marketing and branding strategy
    1. Click [here](#) to see all of them from puckmarks.net.
- (e) However, with some iconic franchises, a more traditional look without bold or flashy logo updates and jersey/uniform designs helps the team remain true to their brand
  - (i) Click [here](#) for a historic look at the evolution of the Green Bay Packers' jerseys (including a nifty infographic) from fanatics.com
- iv. Opportunities may exist for two strong brands to collaborate on a marketing initiative
  - (a) **Co-branding** is the practice of using multiple brand names to jointly promote or market a single product or service
    - (i) Texas Tech University's licensed retail store, Red Raider Outfitter, partnered with the Texas Rangers and Houston Astros in 2016 through a cross-licensing agreement to create co-branded apparel <sup>31</sup>
      1. Click [here](#) to see a sample of the t-shirts
    - (ii) A few years ago, five Australian rugby league teams suited up as Marvel Comics superheroes: Thor, Wolverine, Captain America, Iron Man and Hulk.
      1. The uniforms were licensed by Marvel Comics and replica jerseys were available to fans for a retail price of around \$150
    - (iii) Fashion brand Michael Kors created golf polos in conjunction with the U.S. Golf Association, allowing fans to purchase the co-branded merchandise on-site at the 118th U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in 2018
      1. According to a [release](#), the collection featured eight to ten shirts and two outerwear options. The shirts had an average price point of \$86 and the outerwear cost \$120.
    - (iv) This season, the Portland Timbers (MLS) and Portland Thorns (NWSL) teamed up for a giveaway featuring co-branded scarves in celebration of Pride Month (they would also make them available in the team's online [stores](#))
    - (v) With a visit to his hometown in 2019, rapper Wiz Khalifa partnered with the esports franchise Pittsburgh Knights to offer a co-branded t-shirt during his tour stop in Pittsburgh
    - (vi) A popular trend with Major League Baseball teams is to offer co-branded merchandise featuring collegiate athletic programs as part of college theme-night promotions
      1. The Miami Marlins offered co-branded University of Miami Hurricanes hats [exclusively](#) available at a Marlins game for the team's "UM Night" theme-night promotion in 2019
      2. The Atlanta Braves hosted several "[College Nights](#)" theme-night promotions that featured giveaways of co-branded gear in partnership with college athletic programs like the South Carolina Gamecocks, Auburn Tigers, Alabama Crimson Tide, Georgia Tech and Clemson Tigers



**\* INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE \***



*The section below identifies a number of recent rankings of “top brands” from various publications and research companies. Use this section to re-emphasize that a brand can be anything from Apple to an individual athlete or celebrity.*

- c. Top brands of 2020 <sup>32</sup>
  - i. A brand analyst and strategy company (Kantar Millward Brown) annually ranks the world's most powerful brands measured by their dollar value
    - (a) Top global brands of 2020
      1. Amazon
      2. Apple
      3. Microsoft
      4. Google
      5. Visa
      6. Alibaba
      7. Tencent
      8. Facebook
      9. McDonald's
      10. MasterCard
    - (ii) Click [here](#) to download the full report
    - (b) Top sports/entertainment industry related global brands of 2020 (overall rank listed in parenthesis) <sup>32</sup>
      1. Amazon (1)
      2. Apple (2)
      3. Microsoft (3)
      4. Google (4)
      5. Nike (21)
      6. Disney (22)
      7. Netflix (26)
      8. YouTube (37)
      9. Xbox (65)
      10. Adidas (92)
  - ii. The latest *Forbes* magazine ranking of the most valuable sports team brands (defined as “the portion of a team's overall value that is derived from its name”)<sup>33</sup>
    1. Dallas Cowboys (NFL) – brand value: \$1.03 billion
    2. New York Yankees (MLB) - brand value: \$815 million
    3. Real Madrid (UEFA Champions League) – brand value: \$725 million
    4. Los Angeles Lakers (NBA) – brand value: \$674 million
    5. Golden State Warriors (NBA) – brand value: \$606 million
    - a. Click [here](#) to see the top ten list of most valuable sports team brands according to Forbes.

- d. The latest *Forbes* magazine ranking of the most valuable sports business brands based on overall brand value <sup>34</sup>
1. Nike: \$36.8 billion
  2. ESPN: \$13.1 billion
  3. Adidas: \$11.2 billion
  4. Gatorade: \$6.7 billion
  5. Sky Sports: \$4.4 billion
    - a. Click [here](#) to see the top ten list of most valuable sports business brands according to Forbes.
- e. The latest *Forbes* ranking of the most valuable event brands based on overall brand value <sup>35</sup>
1. Super Bowl: \$780 million
  2. Summer Olympic Games: \$375 million
  3. NCAA Men's Final Four: \$300 million
  4. FIFA World Cup: \$282 million
  5. College Football Playoffs: \$255 million
    - a. Click [here](#) to see the top ten list of most valuable event brands according to Forbes.

## Lesson 6.2

### Licensing

#### A. Licensing

1. Licensing industry continues to enjoy tremendous growth
2. Sales of licensed products grew by 3.2% to \$280.3 billion in 2019, according to the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association's Annual Licensing Industry Survey.<sup>36</sup>
  - a. Sale of licensed goods at retail last year by category (based on Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association's Annual Licensing Industry Survey)<sup>36</sup>
    - i. Character-related merchandise: \$122.7 billion
    - ii. Corporate brands: \$58.8 billion
    - iii. Fashion: \$32.2 billion
    - iv. Sports: \$27.8 billion
3. **Licensing** refers to an agreement which gives a company the right to use another's brand name, patent, or other intellectual property for a royalty or fee<sup>37</sup>
  - a. The **licensor** is the company or individual granting the license
    - i. Licensor examples
      - (a) Cartoon Network
      - (b) National Football League
      - (c) NASCAR
      - (d) Walt Disney Company
      - (e) HIT Entertainment (home of Bob the Builder and Barney)
      - (f) WWE
      - (g) The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP)
      - (h) Coca-Cola or Starbucks
    - ii. The Top 5 Global Licensors, according to the 2019 Top 150 [Report](#), by sales volume at retail
      - (a) The Walt Disney Company - \$54.7B
      - (b) Meredith Corporation - \$25.1B
      - (c) PVH Corp. - \$18B (E)
      - (d) WarnerMedia - \$11B
      - (e) Authentic Brands Group - \$9B
  - b. The **licensee** is the company or individual paying for the rights to use the licensor's name or property
    - i. Licensee examples
      - (a) Mars, Inc. (Shrek Snickers bar with green filling)
      - (b) Mattel, Inc. (Harry Potter toys and consumer products)
      - (c) Reebok (NFL apparel)
      - (d) Hasbro (Marvel toys)
      - (e) EA Sports (rights to put NFL players, stadiums and teams in its games)
      - (f) Lincoln (for rights to use hip-hop artist Common's music in an ad campaign for the popular Navigator model of SUV)
    - ii. For example, last year Columbia Sportswear entered into a licensing agreement with Major League Soccer, providing them with an opportunity to sell team-branded outerwear products

**\* INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE \***



*In lesson 2.5, we discuss the role technology plays in the development of sports footwear in apparel. Click [here](#) to read how the deal will provide an opportunity for Columbia to sell MLS team-branded outerwear for all 23 teams in the league featuring some of the technology (omni-freeze and omni-shade) highlighted earlier in the textbook (lesson 2.5).*

4. The 3 P's of licensing<sup>38</sup>
  - a. Profit
    - i. Determine price points that will establish higher profit margins
  - b. Promotion
    - i. Merchandise does not sell itself
    - ii. Trained sales staff and effective promotion are the keys to higher sales volumes
  - c. Protection
    - i. It is important to copyright or trademark all names, logos, or slogans associated with the product
      - (a) Michael Jordan has owned the trademark on his name since May 1988<sup>39</sup>
- B. Licensing and merchandise<sup>40</sup>
  1. Licensed products and merchandise are not manufactured by leagues, teams, or schools, but rather by independent companies under an agreement with a sports entity<sup>41</sup>
  2. Licensed products are an extremely lucrative business
    - a. The NFL Players Association announced that licensees generated retail sales of over \$1.9 billion last season<sup>42</sup>
      - i. Patrick Mahomes moved past Tom Brady into the number one position on the official list of top-selling players last season. Brady finished the previous two seasons as the top player on the list, and finished last year at number two.
      - ii. Patrick Mahomes led in sales of ornaments from Kansas City-based Hallmark, with JuJu Smith-Schuster, Zach Ertz, Todd Gurley and Alvin Kamara rounding out the most popular stars adorning holiday trees around the world
      - iii. The players that sold the most product last season (based on total sales of **all** officially licensed NFL player merchandise, not just jerseys), according to an announcement from the NFLPLA were:
        1. Patrick Mahomes, QB, Kansas City
        2. Tom Brady, QB, New England\*
        3. Lamar Jackson, QB, Baltimore
        4. Ezekiel Elliott, RB, Dallas
        5. Baker Mayfield, QB, Cleveland
    - a. Click [here](#) to see the entire list from nflpa.com



**\* ACTIVITY IDEA \***

*To have some fun teaching the concept of licensing, along with a product development opportunity for those of you looking to add an element of entrepreneurship to the class, consider accessing the “Licensing – NFLPA Activity” lesson plan bundle, complete with student packet, teacher lesson plan guide, PPT and activity rubric. You can access this lesson plan bundle in the lesson 6.4 folder.*

- b. Over the span of Star Wars' lifetime, nearly \$24 billion and counting of licensed goods has been sold, this on top of the \$6.2 billion in tickets and \$5.7 billion in home entertainment products <sup>43</sup>
  - i. According to [fortune.com](https://www.fortune.com), Star Wars amassed over \$760 million in licensed merchandise sales in 2017 alone
    - (a) Here are the movies that have sold the most licensed merchandise all-time <sup>44</sup>
      1. Star Wars - \$32 billion
      2. Cars - \$10 billion
      3. Toy Story - \$9 billion
      4. Harry Potter - \$7 billion
      5. Frozen - \$5.3 billion
      6. Transformers - \$3 billion
      7. Spider-Man - \$1.3 billion
      8. Avengers - \$1 billion
      9. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles - \$900 million
      10. Batman - \$494 million
      11. Despicable Me/Minions - \$267 million
    - ii. When Disney launched its Disney+ service last year, its Star Wars brand spin-off series, 'The Mandalorian', helped the company to make a splash in the streaming market with 28 million subscribers in just three months
      - (a) However, one [report](#) suggests Disney lost out on a potential \$2.7 million in revenue because of a delay in the introduction of merchandise relating to the show's most popular character, Baby Yoda
      - (b) Fast forward six months and the character was on every product you could imagine, including a 'Mandalorian' cereal [from](#) General Mills that featured marshmallows with Baby Yoda's image
  - c. Last season, 160 teams combined to set a Minor League Baseball record by generating \$73.9 million in licensed merchandise sales, a 4% increase over the previous season <sup>46</sup>
    - i. Click [here](#) to see a list of the top 25 best-selling teams from MiLB.com
  - d. Fans spend about \$3.4 billion a year on National Football League merchandise, according to Ira Mayer of the *Licensing Letter*, a trade publication <sup>47</sup>
  - e. According to Transparency Market Research, the global licensed sports merchandise market, which was valued at \$27.63 billion in 2015, will reach \$48.17 billion by 2024 <sup>48</sup>
  - f. In 2018, Nike signed a 10-year \$58 million extension with Clemson University to be the main apparel provider for the school <sup>49</sup>

- i. According to an ESPN story, the new deal includes yearly payments of \$400,000, an increase from \$115,000 in the previous contract while Clemson's royalty rate for co-branded Clemson-Nike products increases from 11 percent to 14 percent
- g. In 2017, WrestleMania 33 generated \$3.7 million in merchandise for the [WWE](#) – an increase of 164% (\$2.3 million) since WrestleMania 24 in 2008
- h. [Business Insider](#) reported that Netflix is looking to follow in the footsteps of Disney and Time Warner by leveraging their hit shows and movies by creating unique merchandise lines
  - i. Experts project merchandise could generate over a billion dollars for Netflix
  - ii. Netflix executives believe the positives will be two-fold: not only will the merchandise directly drive revenue but having visible merchandise will also act as advertising and increase the popularity of their hit shows
  - iii. Bloomberg [suggests](#) that Netflix, with the success of its 'Stranger Things' franchise, is beginning to angle for a piece of the \$122 billion consumers spend on licensed entertainment merchandise
- 3. Licensed goods are available in retail department stores, chain stores, league-sponsored retail outlets, games/events and on the Internet
  - a. Licensed merchandise is made available through many channels of distribution
    - i. Consumers can purchase licensed products in a wide variety of outlets, ranging from team stores, online websites, retail outlets and specialty stores
  - b. Special promotional deals create partnerships between the licensor and the licensee to help boost store traffic
    - i. Sweepstakes and contests are run by the sponsor, with the prize being tickets to the sporting event
- 4. Because of high demand for licensed products and the wide distribution channels, both licensees and licensors face challenges from rampant counterfeiting
  - a. Soon after the announcement that the Atlanta Thrashers NHL franchise would relocate to Winnipeg, Jets merchandise began appearing all over the Internet, despite the fact the franchise had yet to begin manufacturing any licensed merchandise. In an article appearing in the *Winnipeg Sun*, the newspaper reported finding a sweater described by an online site as being authentic with a price of just \$28, however, officially licensed sweaters are expected to fetch closer to \$130.<sup>50</sup>
  - b. Major League Baseball uses a hologram sticker that makes a T-shirt or hat an official MLB product, making it easier for fans to identify counterfeit merchandise. MLB runs undercover investigations against merchandise counterfeiters year-round, but it ramps them up every year for All-Star week.<sup>51</sup>
  - c. The NFL has adopted policies to help decrease the number of counterfeit products being sold online
    - i. Anyone selling NFL licensed goods on Amazon now must list the licensee supplying the goods and the site includes a "turnoff switch" that can be employed if counterfeit products are detected<sup>52</sup>
  - d. According to the [Star Tribune](#), police screened more than 1,700 cars, seized 154 counterfeit tickets and confiscated 7,500 items of counterfeit merchandise at the 2018 Super Bowl in Minneapolis
  - e. Over \$2 million worth of fake World Cup merchandise was seized in 2018 as FIFA looked to take a more aggressive approach to combatting counterfeiters, according to [Promo Magazine](#)
  - f. According to [wnct.com](#), during the 2018 Stanley Cup Playoffs and Stanley Cup Final, the NHL removed more than 5,400 pieces of unauthorized merchandise from the market with an estimated retail value of approximately \$137,000
    - i. In addition, over 2,900 listings for counterfeit NHL products were removed from online marketplaces during the postseason, representing an estimated \$385,000 in products



5. Licensing has become a huge part of sports and entertainment business with players, teams, event names, entertainers and logos appearing on almost anything you can imagine
  - a. NCAA school logos find their way on to everything from pillows and bedding to waste paper baskets, wall clocks and bird houses
  - b. DeLea Sod Farms, the company that supplies the New York Yankees with sod for their field, signed a licensing deal with the Yankees franchise and Major League Baseball to sell the sod at \$7.50 for five square feet (and officially licensed Yankees grass seed) at New York City-area Home Depots <sup>53</sup>
  - c. Team Grill's licensing deal with the NFL's New England Patriots allows them to produce two team branded gas grills that retail for \$699 and \$1,499 <sup>54</sup>
  - d. When Universal Studios in Orlando, Fla., opened its Wizarding World of Harry Potter attraction, the park's revenue from licensed merchandise revenue doubled from the previous year (products included souvenir magic wands, Slytherin scarves, Dumbledore steins and Voldemort key chains, among other items based on the blockbuster movie series) <sup>55</sup>
  - e. In 2016, the NBA signed a five-year licensing deal with Shock Doctor, a mouth guard manufacturer, who will create league and team branded versions of their products available through retail channels <sup>56</sup>
  - f. Organizers of the 2016 Olympics in Rio created a revenue target of \$26 million in sales of licensed goods associated with the Summer Games by offering everything from flip-flops and toys to coins and clothing <sup>57</sup>
    - i. The most popular Team USA licensed product leading up to the Rio Games was a \$25 "bucket" hat, made by Outerstuff, who became an official Olympics licensee in 2010
      - (a) According to [bloomberg.com](http://bloomberg.com), the bucket hat continues a trend of unconventional apparel becoming popular in the lead-up to the Olympics after Team USA mittens were all the rage at the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi
      - (b) According to a CNBC [report](#), sales of Team USA merchandise were up 80% at the 2018 Games in PyeongChang as compared to the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi
        - (i) Among the items that quickly sold out were a \$300 Nike jacket and \$800 Burton jacket
    - ii. Organizers of the Tokyo Summer Games began to ramp up marketing of Olympics gear a year in advance to maximize sales of licensed merchandise for the 2020 Olympics
      - (a) A total of 30 shops across the country began selling Olympics-branded merchandise one full year before the Games begin
      - (b) According to the organization's [website](#), the Tokyo 2020 merchandise catalog already offered about 3,500 items six months prior to the event
  - g. When COVID-19 brought the sports and entertainment industry to a standstill, many teams created officially licensed face coverings to generate sales that could help support front-line health workers and support the fight against the virus outbreak
- C. Collectibles and memorabilia
  1. Collectibles and memorabilia have a major impact on the licensing industry
    - a. According to the *New York Times*, there are 5 million autographs collectors in the United States alone <sup>58</sup>
    - b. According to *Collector's Digest*, the sports autograph market is worth \$500 million <sup>59</sup>
    - c. A piece of music memorabilia is sold every 15 seconds on eBay <sup>60</sup>
    - d. Americans alone spend an incredible \$57 billion on sports memorabilia <sup>61</sup>
  2. Like licensed merchandise, collectibles and memorabilia can be extremely lucrative
    - a. Pete Rose, Major League Baseball's all-time hits leader who is banned from baseball, still makes a [reported](#) more than \$1 million a year signing autographs <sup>62</sup>

- b. Steph Curry's game-worn jersey from Game 3 of the 2017 NBA Finals [sold](#) at auction for \$135,060, breaking the previous record of \$100,040 for Kobe Bryant's final All-Star Game jersey
- c. After winning a fifth Super Bowl, [USA Today](#) reported that Tom Brady was selling his autographed memorabilia for a hefty premium at a 2017 signing event:
  - i. Licensed trading card (3.5" x 5") - \$499
  - ii. Flat Item up to and including 11x14 - \$799
  - iii. Flat Item larger than 11x14, mini helmet, or football - \$819
  - iv. Full size helmet, or NFL licensed jersey - \$849
  - v. Reproduced artwork, canvas, or multi-signed item with 5 or more signatures - \$1,399
  - vi. Original artwork, game used, or any other item not listed - \$1,999
- d. In 1992, McDonald's offered a McJordan Burger (a quarter-pounder with cheese, onion, pickles, barbecue sauce and bacon). The dish came in limited markets, making the secret sauce limited as well. In 2012, a gallon of that sauce showed up on eBay for \$10,000. <sup>63</sup>
- e. In 2018, a Mickey Mantle baseball card sold for nearly \$3 million <sup>64</sup>
- f. The uniform Don Larsen was wearing when he pitched the only perfect game in World Series history sold for \$756,000 in 2013 in an online auction, including a 20% buyer's fee above the final bid of \$630,000 <sup>65</sup>
- g. In 2012, a 1928 World Series home run ball hit by legendary Yankee Lou Gehrig was auctioned off, ultimately fetching \$62,617 (with the seller using the proceeds to help her son pay off his medical school debt) <sup>66</sup>
- h. Prior to the 2014 World Cup, 1,283 "collectible" gems were created using legendary Brazilian soccer star Pele's hair (1,283 represents the total number of goals scored throughout his playing career) with [estimates](#) placing the cost of the souvenir somewhere in excess of \$4,000
- i. The only ball from the 2015 AFC Championship Game (the infamous "deflategate" game) known to be available publicly sold for \$43,740 in a recent auction
  - i. Click [here](#) for a video clip covering the story from espn.com
- j. Shortly after his death in 2016, gloves worn by Muhammad Ali for his "Fight of the Century" vs. Joe Frazier sold for \$606,000 at an auction, more than \$218,000 more than what memorabilia collector Jeff Rosenberg paid for them just two years prior
  - i. According to [abcnews.com](#), a jock strap believed to have been worn by Joe Frazier in that fight was also sold in 2016 to an undisclosed buyer for \$10,200
- k. In 2017, a pair of Converse sneakers that Michael Jordan wore during the 1984 Olympic gold-medal game [sold](#) at auction for \$190,373, the highest price on record for a pair of game-worn shoes
- l. In 2019, the official scoresheet from Wilt Chamberlain's legendary 100-point game [sold](#) for \$214,000 at an auction while a game worn Babe Ruth jersey became the most expensive piece of memorabilia of all-time when it [sold](#) for a record \$5.64 million
  - i. Click [here](#) for an infographic that examines the market for autographed sports memorabilia industry from SCC's Pinterest page
- m. According to [Bleacher Report](#), over 50 pieces of Kobe Bryant's memorabilia were sold at auctions for astronomical prices after the iconic NBA legend tragically died in a helicopter crash in 2020
  - i. A Lakers championship ring Kobe gave to his mother was sold for \$193,000
  - ii. One of Bryant's rookie cards sold for \$110,400
  - iii. Shoes worn by Bryant in the clinching game of the 2001 Finals sold for \$67,200

- iv. A scorer's sheet from Kobe's career high of 81 points signed by Bryant sold for \$22,800
- 3. According to [Yahoo! Sports](#), sales of collectibles and memorabilia, trading cards in particular, skyrocketed during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - a. A 2003 LeBron James game-worn Cavaliers jersey sold for \$371,200 while an autographed Mike Trout rookie card sold at auction for \$922,500. The price tag set a record for a modern-day trading card.
  - b. Thanks in part to "The Last Dance" documentary that drew millions of viewers, Michael Jordan memorabilia saw an increase in interest
    - i. A pair of game-worn, signed Jordan shoes went for \$560,000
    - ii. A [ticket stub](#) from Michael Jordan's NBA debut sold for nearly \$25,000
    - iii. Two autographed Michael Jordan cards that each sold for more than \$150,000; a non-autographed Jordan rookie card that sold for \$99,630



**\* ACTIVITY IDEA \***

*Recognizing the widespread popularity of sports memorabilia, most leagues and teams now offer collectibles through their own websites, a practice that is poised for explosive growth.*

*As a class, see if you can identify five different examples of collectibles being sold through league or governing body operated websites (i.e. - nfl.com, mlb.com, NCAA affiliations etc.). What items are most commonly offered? Which items are the most unique? Which command the highest prices? How else can leagues, teams and individual players monetize the collectible market?*

## Lesson 6.3

### The Licensing Process

- A. Why do organizations engage in the licensing process? <sup>67</sup>
1. Many factors contribute to the mass appeal of licensed products
    - a. Intangibility of sports
    - b. Consumer affinity for their favorite teams, leagues, celebrities and/or brands
    - c. Brand awareness
  2. Licensee advantages
    - a. Positive association with the sports or entertainment property
    - b. Greater levels of brand awareness
    - c. Help to build brand equity
    - d. Receive initial distribution with retailers
    - e. Expanded and improved shelf space
    - f. May be able to charge higher prices
    - g. Potential to lower advertising and promotional costs
    - h. Increased possibility of success and profitability
    - i. Connection with an athlete, sports team, entertainer, or corporation
  3. Licensee disadvantages
    - a. Athlete, league, celebrity, organization or sport may fall into disfavor
    - b. Success depends on athlete/celebrity performance
    - c. Styles change quickly
    - d. Royalties and licensing fees can be expensive
    - e. Manufacturing costs and risks
    - f. Competition can drive up costs associated with licensing fees
    - g. Competition can have a negative impact on market share
  4. Licensor advantages
    - a. Expansion into new markets
    - b. Increase its brand equity
    - c. Minimized risk
    - d. Enhanced company image and publicity
    - e. Increased profit from fees and royalties
    - f. Increased brand awareness or recognition
  5. Licensor disadvantages
    - a. May lose some control over the elements of the marketing mix when an outside party sells products connected to licensor's brand
    - b. Potential for licensee's manufactured products to be of poor quality, potentially creating a negative perception of the licensor's brand
- B. How does licensing work?
1. Licensing process
    - a. Licensees pay a licensing fee
    - b. Fees include the ability to use specific logos, slogans or other trademarked images for use in the creation of company products
    - c. Licensees take on production issues and assume the risk by manufacturing product
    - d. Licensing in the music industry
      - i. When you hear a Missy Elliot or Busta Rhymes song while watching a Doritos/Mtn Dew [advertisement](#) during the 2018 Super Bowl, the brand likely invested a significant sum of money for the rights in a licensing fee for the rights to use the song in a commercial
      - ii. Examples of music licensing are all around us
        - (a) Listening to the radio
        - (b) Watching a movie and hearing music during a particular scene
        - (c) Listening to music on Spotify online

- (d) Hearing music in a restaurant or store
    - (e) Watching *American Idol* contestants perform hit songs from various recording artists
  - iii. The rights to use music through a license are bought and sold every day and can sometimes come at a significant cost
    - (a) According to Variety, the cost to advertisers for using licensed music in Super Bowl commercials ranges from \$100,000 to \$750,000 for more iconic songs with longer terms <sup>68</sup>
- 2. Licensor and licensee relationship <sup>69</sup>
  - a. Licensing provides greater profit, promotion, and legal protection for the licensor
  - b. The licensor approves the product and collects the licensing fees and royalties
    - i. Warner Brothers granting permission, for a hefty fee, to Electronic Arts to use the Harry Potter character for the development of a new video game
- 3. Character vs. corporate licensing <sup>69</sup>
  - a. A sports or entertainment entity permits a licensee to use specific characters for a fee
    - i. Marvel licenses a manufacturer to use the images of the characters from *The Avengers*
  - b. A corporation permits a licensee to use the corporate image or name for a fee
    - i. NASCAR licenses a manufacturer to use their corporate logo on a baseball cap
- C. Impact of licensing on consumers <sup>70</sup>
  - 1. Increased opportunity to associate with an athlete, sports team, entertainer, or corporation
  - 2. Increased supply of available products
    - a. Paris Saint-Germain and Fanatics [announced](#) a ten-year e-commerce, manufacturing and licensing deal in 2020, expanding the volume of branded products available to fans
  - 3. Competition can result in lower prices, new products and better quality

## Lesson 6.4

### Merchandising

- A. In-house merchandising <sup>71</sup>
  - 1. When the demand for licensed products is minimal, an organization may choose to handle their merchandising in-house
    - a. In-house merchandising refers to managing the merchandising process within the organization itself, rather than outsourcing or acquiring licenses
    - b. The key benefit of in-house merchandising is the probability of increased profits
  - 2. Steps in the in-house merchandising process
    - a. Design the logo and slogan or tagline (if it is not already available)
    - b. Determine merchandise type, quality and quantity
    - c. Interview local merchants (vendors) and select the company that can best fit the organization's needs (on the basis of quality, type, quantity, pricing etc.)
    - d. Determine distribution outlets
    - e. Train sales staff
    - f. Prepare on-site merchandising strategies
  - 3. If an organization feels an in-house merchandising approach is not be the most efficient strategy, they may choose to outsource the effort to a third party
    - a. For example, the Big 10 Conference signed an exclusive deal with sports retail vendor MainGate to sell merchandise for its football championship and the men's and women's basketball tournaments <sup>72</sup>
- B. On-site merchandising <sup>73</sup>
  - 1. Refers to the process of selling merchandise at the physical location of the event
  - 2. The primary purpose is to maximize income for a sports or entertainment event
    - a. Organizations maximize income through the sales of concessions and merchandise
  - 3. Four key considerations for a successful on-site merchandising plan
    - a. The location of where the merchandise is being sold
    - b. The physical layout and appeal of where the merchandise is being sold
    - c. How well the sales operation is performed
    - d. The appeal of the merchandise or product itself
  - 4. Best practices for selling on-site merchandise
    - a. The heaviest traffic for merchandising is upon arrival and departure
    - b. Test marketing is important to ensure the effectiveness of a good or service
    - c. Training of sales personnel varies with the event
- C. Online merchandising
  - 1. Refers to the process of selling merchandise on the Internet and through social media channels
    - a. Online sales now represent more than half of overall sales for the Green Bay Packers' Pro Shop <sup>74</sup>
  - 2. Making merchandise available online or through social media creates new sales channels for a sports or entertainment organization's fans to purchase related goods and services
    - a. Organizations maximize income by providing a customized shopping environment and allowing consumers access to a wider variety of products and services
    - b. Global e-commerce sales reached \$2.3 trillion last year, and are expected to nearly double to \$4.5 trillion by 2021 <sup>75</sup>
    - c. After Toronto won the NBA Championship in 2019, sales of Raptors merchandise shattered online records
      - i. According to [Blake Murphy](#) of *The Athletic*, the Raptors broke an NBA Store merchandise sales record in the days following the team's championship win



- ii. Sales of a "Board Man Gets Paid" t-shirt (\$39) worn by NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard at the team's victory parade sold out within two hours of its release on New Balance's website, according to [Sports Illustrated](#)
- d. According to [sportbusiness.com](#), the Kansas City Chiefs are the second-best-selling Super Bowl Champion of all-time. In the first hour following their 2020 Super Bowl win, 82% of merchandise sales were purchased on mobile devices, setting a Fanatics record
- 3. Distribution methods
  - a. Direct shipping to consumer
  - b. In-store pickup
- 4. Advantages
  - a. Easier to control inventory
  - b. Opportunity to offer exclusive merchandise
    - i. According to *USA Today*, sales at the NASCAR.com Superstore jumped 359% after Dale Earnhardt Jr. announced he'd be joining a new team — even though images of the new merchandise weren't yet available <sup>76</sup>
    - ii. An Albuquerque Isotopes promotion in which they changed the team name to the "Green Chile Cheeseburgers" for one night was so successful that the team had a hard time keeping merchandise in stock from the moment they put it on sale
      - (i) Said the team's General Manager in an interview with [KOB4 News](#): *"The sales for the Green Chile Cheeseburger merchandise has been unbelievable. The demand has been something that has blown us away. We've had a hard time keeping it on the shelves and we've had to place multiple re-orders and we've had orders from all around the country, all around the world in fact. It's been a really unbelievable experience. This green chile cheeseburger phenomenon has been something we thought was really going to be good, but it's been tremendous."*
- c. Opportunities to reach out-of-market consumers
  - i. Minor League Baseball credits the advantages afforded by online merchandising for its sales growth (of the top 25 teams, all 25 have online stores using the MiLBStore.com platform)
    - (a) According to Sandie Hebert, Minor League Baseball's Director of Licensing: *"Our clubs continue to record online sales from around the world in addition to strong sales at their ballparks. The increasing popularity of Minor League Baseball, combined with the ease of online ordering, has created a tremendous amount of growth for our merchandise."* <sup>77</sup>
  - ii. Based on jersey sales, one of the most popular teams at the 2018 FIFA World Cup was Nigeria
    - (a) According to [CNBC](#), the kits (uniforms), designed exclusively for the tournament in Russia, sold out online in minutes as Nike received more than 3 million pre-orders
    - (b) To put that into perspective, Manchester United (one of the most popular sports franchises in any sport in the world) sold the most soccer jerseys globally in 2016, with 2.85 million
- 5. Disadvantages
  - a. Security concerns in making transactions online
  - b. Potentially higher distribution (delivery) costs
  - c. Consumers inability to touch, feel or "test-drive" products before buying can be a deterrent and lead to higher return rates
- 6. That growth of e-commerce does not necessarily mean the end for brick and mortar retail however, as physical store fronts still provide organizations with a valuable opportunity to sell merchandise

- a. Both brick and mortar and online retailers have gone “omnichannel”, meaning customers can shop online from a desktop or mobile device, via phone, or in a brick-and-mortar store, and the experience would be seamless. Brands recognize that consumer habits have changed, and the way brands approach the shopping experience has evolved as a result.
- i. For example, following the team’s relocation and subsequent rebrand (the Mobile BayBears became the Rocket City Trash Pandas) upon their move to Huntsville, Alabama, the franchise set a sales record when they sold \$2 million in licensed merchandise
  - (i) According to [waff.com](http://waff.com), the team’s original retail location was too small to handle the number of visitors and they were forced to move to a new location
  - (ii) Nearly 76% of all Trash Pandas merchandise was sold at the team’s brick and mortar store

**\* INSTRUCTOR’S NOTE \***



*As a fun way to wrap up unit six, ask your students if they have ever wondered how teams that have just clinched a championship win can be wearing championship hats and t-shirts just minutes after the victory. Obviously that merchandise has been printed in advance, but what happens to all the gear that was printed for the other team? For an interesting look behind-the-scenes, read [this](#) story.*

## Unit 6 Key Terms Defined:

**Brand Extension:** The use of a successful brand name to launch a new or modified product or service in a new market

**Branding:** The use of a name, design, symbol, or a combination of those elements that a sports organization uses to help differentiate its products from the competition

**Corporate Brand:** Represents an entire company or organization

**Licensee:** A company or individual paying for the rights to use the licensor's name or property

**Licensing:** Refers to an agreement which gives a company the right to use another's brand name, patent, or other intellectual property for a royalty or fee

**Licensor:** A company or individual granting the license

**Product Brand:** Represents a particular product of a company or organization

**Store Brand:** Products retailers sell as their own brands

**Trademark:** A device that legally identifies ownership of a registered brand or trade name

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## TEACHER NOTES

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