

Sports Career Consulting
FANTASY FOOTBALL PROJECT
2020 Sports Marketing Challenges Guide



**Sports Career Consulting's
Fantasy Football Classroom
Challenge**

2020 CHALLENGES



SCC FFL COMPETITION PACKET: 2020

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CHALLENGE #1: MARKETING PLAN

1.1 - OBJECTIVE

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

1.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

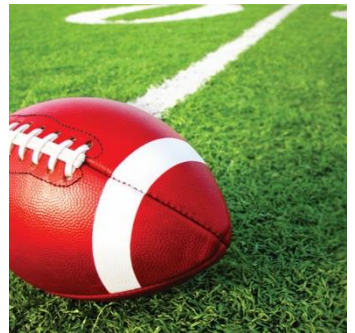
The first sports marketing challenge in our inaugural fantasy football competition requires students to gain a fundamental understanding of the economics behind professional sports. They will learn the concept of budgeting, revenue, forecasts and expenses, along with economic impact.

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

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

1.3 – ADVICE FROM LEAGUE OFFICE

QUESTION: When it comes to the city, should the students think about another NFL team being there or should they pretend that they are the only franchise?



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

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

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

That said, the NFL salary cap this year is \$198.2 million per team. Not all teams spend that much, however, and there are no guarantees that roster investment will translate to a winning season on the field. To get a general feel for other expenses a NFL franchise might typically incur, we would suggest reviewing the latest Green Bay Packers’ financial report, highlighted in lesson 3.2 of our textbook. We would also suggest paying careful attention to the team’s revenue streams.

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

ANSWER: Again, we just want to see that they grasp the concept. Specific figures are not all that important, just be sure students are “in the ballpark” with their ideas and estimates. Reference lesson 3.5 in our textbook, and Google is your friend. 😊

1.4 – INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit ALL of the following documentation to the league office via your Google Drive folder by September 24th. Please remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge.

Your response to sports marketing challenge #1 must include:

Marketing plan overview:

- Team name / location
- Mission statement
- Executive summary



- Budget / Revenue & Expense Projections
- Explanation of how the new franchise will impact the local economy
- Marketing goals / objectives
- Marketing strategies

Additional details to include in your report:

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

Once your marketing plan is complete, **be sure to upload the file**, along with any supporting documentation, to your team's shared folder on Google Drive.

Good luck!

KEYS TO THE GAME:

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

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



CHALLENGE #2: BRANDING

2.1 – BRANDING CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

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

2.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

2.3 - RESEARCH

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

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

A sports brand is more than just a logo:

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

Importance of a strong logo:

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

Philadelphia 76ers “rebranding” effort:

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



In-depth look at branding a new ECHL franchise:

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

Chicago Cubs' introduce inaugural mascot:

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

NASCAR and brandy loyalty:

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

Akron RubberDucks & Daytona Tortugas logo design / rebranding:

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

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

Washington Wizards "alternate" branding:

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

Creative branding on social media from the Baltimore Ravens:

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

2.4 – INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit your team's branding report to the league office via your team/school Google Drive folder (please DO NOT email them)

Due Date: October 8th by 5:00 PM PST.

IMPORTANT: Remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge. Be sure to include any supplemental documentation with your upload to your team/school folder on Google Drive.



CHALLENGE #2 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

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

- Demonstration of a clear understanding of branding, brand extension, licensing, and merchandising concepts.
- Effective communication of branding and merchandising strategies
- Include and describe **creative** and **unique** ideas

Answer the following questions:

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

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




- Team colors
- Logo
- Slogan for this season
- Uniform design
- Brand identity: Is your team aiming to project a family friendly image? Fierce and competitive? Socially aware and environmentally friendly? This is an important consideration when trying to establish your brand identity!
- Identification of competitors within the market and description of your franchise competitive advantages

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

- Will your team feature a mascot?
- Will your team feature a cheer team?
- How will the stadium provide an extension of the brand?
- Who will serve as brand ambassadors? Players? Front office? A “street” team to lead a grassroots marketing efforts?
- Does your franchise have a popular “game day tradition” that helps to extend the brand? For example, if your team nickname is the Broncos, do you have a horse that leads the team on to the field at home games? Do your fans have an identifiable activity that connects them with the brand like Pittsburgh’s “terrible towels” tradition?



Merchandising strategy to include (but not limited to):

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

Once your branding plan is complete, **be sure to upload your response to challenge #2**, along with any supporting documentation, to your team's shared folder on Google Drive.

CHALLENGE #2 DUE DATE: OCTOBER 8TH

GOOD LUCK!



CHALLENGE #3: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

3.1 – COMMUNICATIONS PLAN OVERVIEW

CHALLENGE # 3 OVERVIEW: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

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

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

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

3.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

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



3.3 – INSTRUCTIONS

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

- Demonstration of a clear understanding of sports communications concepts
- Effective development of a communications plan

Due Date: October 20th by 5:00 PM PST.

Please submit your team's communications plan summary to the league office via your school/team Google Drive folder.

IMPORTANT: Remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge. Be sure to include any supplemental documentation with your upload to your team/school folder on Google Drive.

CHALLENGE #3 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

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

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

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

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

CHALLENGE #3 DUE DATE: OCTOBER 20TH

GOOD LUCK!



CHALLENGE #4: FAN EXPERIENCE

4.1 – FAN EXPERIENCE CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

CHALLENGE # 4 OVERVIEW: THE FAN EXPERIENCE / STADIUM DESIGN

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

With this sports marketing challenge, teams will be required to design a stadium and provide an overview of how your franchise will develop and maintain a positive fan experience strategy, including a decision as to whether or not to even allow fans into the stadium, along with any safety precautions or stadium technology that will be implemented to create a safe environment for anyone in the facility. This should be a fun activity and the league office is anxious to see what you all come up with!

4.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

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



4.3 - RESEARCH

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

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

Ranking of the "Best Ballparks" in Minor League Baseball

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

Stadium Journey's "Top 100" stadium experiences

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

The 11 craziest concessions items at MLB Ballparks from Fortune Magazine

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

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

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

ESPN: Ranking NFL stadiums 1-28: From Lambeau Leap to D.C. disaster

https://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_/id/29372091/ranking-nfl-stadiums-1-28-lambeau-leap-dc-disaster

4.4 – INSTRUCTIONS

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

- Demonstration of a clear understanding of the concept of fan experience
- Creation of a stadium design

Due Date: November 3rd by 5:00 PM PST.




Please submit your team's fan experience summary to the league office via your school/team Google Drive folder.














IMPORTANT: Remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge. Be sure to include any supplemental documentation with your upload to your team/school folder on Google Drive.

CHALLENGE #4 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:








Answer the following questions:

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

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

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



-  Will fans be allowed in the stadium this season? If so, how will you keep players, fans and staff safe?
-  Where is the stadium located? Why?
-  Is it an indoor or outdoor facility?
-  What is the name of the stadium? How was the name chosen?
-  How will the stadium impact the overall fan experience?
-  If fans will be allowed in the stadium, how will the stadium design/features/amenities help to attract visitors?
-  How will the stadium help your franchise to generate revenue?

CHALLENGE #4 DUE DATE: NOV 3RD

GOOD LUCK!



CHALLENGE #5: TICKETS, PROMOTION & SPONSORSHIP

5.1 – TICKETS, PROMOTION & SPONSORSHIP CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

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

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

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

5.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

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



5.3 - RESEARCH

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

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

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

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

5.4 – INSTRUCTIONS

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

- Demonstration of a clear understanding of the importance of ticket sales, sponsorship and promotion
- Effective development of ticket sales and sponsorship strategies
- Creation of a promotions calendar

Due Date: November 18th by 5:00 PM PST.








Please submit your team's ticket sales, promotion and sponsorship summary to the league office via your school/team Google Drive folder.

IMPORTANT: Remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge. Be sure to include any supplemental documentation with your upload to your team/school folder on Google Drive.







CHALLENGE #5 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:

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

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

Answer the following questions:

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

CHALLENGE #5 DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 18TH

GOOD LUCK!



CHALLENGE #6: DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

6.1 – DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING OVERVIEW

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

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

6.2 – CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

6.3 – RESEARCH

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

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



6.4 – INSTRUCTIONS

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

- Demonstration of a clear understanding of the importance of digital and social media marketing as it relates to fan engagement
- Effective development of digital and social media marketing strategy




Due Date: November 30th by 5:00 PM PST.

Please submit your team's digital marketing summary to the league office via your school/team Google Drive folder.




IMPORTANT: Remember, each sports marketing challenge response is **limited to a maximum of four pages!** However, supplemental documentation will be allowed to support each challenge. Be sure to include any supplemental documentation with your upload to your team/school folder on Google Drive.

CHALLENGE #6 REPORT REQUIREMENTS:




Answer the following questions:

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

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

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



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

CHALLENGE #6 DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 30TH

GOOD LUCK!

