

# Packing the Stands

***101 Promotions Ideas  
for Filling Your Stadium***



# Promotions Ideas Guide

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# Current Events

1. The Dunedin Blue Jays of Minor League Baseball hosted a promotion at their June 10th game focused on karate, which was inspired by the new movie The Next Karate Kid. Plus, the team held a contest to find the “next Karate Kid.” Participants had to dodge tennis balls thrown by the team’s mascot, karate chop pencils, etc. Local karate students also showed off their skills between innings.
2. The Corpus Christi Hooks of Minor League Baseball hosted a special soccer match at their ballpark on June 10th, the night before the World Cup starts. The match featured the Houston Dynamo of MLS against the Laredo Heat of USL Premier Development League.
3. The Lakewood BlueClaws of Minor League Baseball reenacted this year’s Kentucky Derby (held May 1) at their May 4th game. The race reenactment unfolded throughout the game, between innings. Before the game, the “horses” (staffers dressed in costumes) paraded around the Kids Zone and eventually made their way onto the field for the race. A boxing match, NASCAR or Indy car racing, and an Olympic sport are all other ideas that could be used for this type of promotion.
4. Once New Year’s has past, used this as an opportunity to get out in the community. Approach houses that still have their Christmas lights up and off a service to remove them. Tell them how much it will cost and how the money is helping support the school’s program.
5. The New Jersey Nets partnered with Roni Deutch Tax Center to provide all fans 18-and-older with a coupon for free New Jersey state tax preparation at the team’s March 5th game. Plus, representatives from Roni Deutch Tax Center were on site to answer tax-related questions before and during the game.

# Current Events

6. The Twilight series of books and film adaptations is extremely popular. With the third installment of the movie series coming out this year, the Fresno Grizzlies are got set to host Twilight Night at their June 26 game. As part of the promotion, the team asked fans to vote online for either a special vampire- or werewolf-themed jersey that the players will wear at the game. The jersey with the most votes was worn by all players and they will then be auctioned off for charity. The proceeds will, fittingly, benefit the Central California Blood Center. Plus, the first 2,000 fans will receive t-shirt versions of the jersey.
7. The York Revolution professional baseball team held a Groundhog Day promotion on February 2nd in conjunction with their opening day for individual single-game ticket sales. The first 50 fans that placed in-person ticket orders at the team's box office were treated to either a free Revolution winter knit hat (if the famous groundhog Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow) or a free Revolution Under Armour t-shirt (if he didn't see his shadow).
8. For Valentine's Day, have the athletes of a team be runners for delivery of flowers or chocolates to students throughout the school. It only costs \$1 to have a player make a delivery to your friends. The money will go to support the program. This is also a great opportunity to work with a florist or grocery store for sponsorship opportunity using their flowers.
9. When the Grammy's and Oscar's roll around it is then time to bust out the red carpet. Host your own special at this time and engage the student body. Allow them to have their nominations. Then those nominated will have to attend the big game as use that stage to begin raising proceeds for their case. The nominee that raises the most funds will be crowd that years big winner with the really winner being the school and their new source of funds.



# Current Events

10. Using what's current is a great opportunity to intertwine trivia into your promotions. Pull a fan from the stands and ask multiple choice trivia. Have a hand held white board and allow them to write their answers down. The crowd can boo and cheer for the contestant to help them out. This is a great opportunity to incorporate a sponsor by giving a related prize.
11. The Batman series will continue and is wildly popular with the student body. Use this chance to have a pre-game movie night to pull people your venue or event. Have the concession open and have "ushers" to help out. The money made can go in support of the school.
12. Wimbledon is always an event going on that captures people's attention. Use this time to bring up awareness of your Tennis program. Run some competitions (a serving contest) involving your Tennis players. Really make a strong push for letting them know when and where the matches are held.

# Fan Engagement

13. The Minnesota Wild ran a goalie-mask design contest for fans 18 and younger. Submissions were due by a specific date. Five finalists were chosen and Wild goaltender chose the winning design. The winning artist met with the team's official mask designer. Consider offering a similar promotion in conjunction with your school's hockey team, or take it a step further and have a design contest for a new logo or football helmets.
14. The Jacksonville Suns of Minor League Baseball held Hurricane Preparedness Night at their June 4th game. In addition to providing information and tips on being prepared during a hurricane, the team gave out emergency lanterns to the first 3,000 fans in attendance.
15. WNBA teams held special WNBA Dads & Daughters games throughout the month of June. There are special ticket deals, promotions, in-arena contests, and other activities being offered by each team. In addition, the league will invite fans to submit inspiring stories about the special relationship between fathers and daughters by blogging on the WNBA website. Consider a similar promotion at your school by hosting family oriented specialty promotions, helping solidify your brand as a positive experience for the entire family.
16. Before a big basketball game, hold a pre-game open mic night with your band being the host. The band members will then play with a suggested tip jar up their on the stage. This is also an opportunity to reach out to a local coffee shop for a sponsorship opportunity. They could sell coffee and pastries at the event with a portion of the funds going towards the school or your program.
17. Have an designated pet night. Allow the fans to bring in their animals, run a couple of designed competitions like best trained dog. This is a great sponsorship opportunity to work with a pet store. While the competitions are going on, go into the stands and collect donations.

# Fan Engagement

18. The Potomac Nationals of Minor League Baseball show a family-friendly movie after every several Friday home games. The first movie showing was Angels in the Outfield. Consider a series of family oriented movie nights in your gym, at your field or in your parking lot with a late night tailgate after your games.
19. The Richmond Flying Squirrels of Minor League Baseball hosted Tattoo Night at a home game. While an actual tattoo night might not be well received by administration, consider a temporary tattoo promotion to attract a younger audience.
20. This “bike to the game” idea is one we have long thought would be great for teams to implement. Have a local bike shop or cycling group volunteer to act as “bike valets” and park the bikes in a designated secure area. The Somerset Patriots professional baseball team hosted Go Green Night at their May 23rd game. As part of the environmentally friendly promotion, the team encouraged fans to take public transportation or ride their bike to the game. All those that did received a voucher for a free ticket to a future home game.
21. Baby racing. It may sounds incredibly strange, but it is outrageously entertaining. Use this type of activity to be on the stage of one of your halftime shows. It is crowd pleaser and becomes a great opportunity for a team or group to collect donations in the stands from those that will take so much joy in this unique event.
22. The San Jose Giants of Minor League Baseball teamed up with the San Jose Water Company for Water Awareness Night on May 14th. The promotion served to highlight the benefits of water and the importance of water conservation.

# Fan Engagement

23. The Bowie Baysox of Minor League Baseball held “Beard-A-Palooza” at their May 10th game. The promotion celebrated all things related to beards. There were various beard contests (longest, most colorful, etc.) for fans to enter as well as many on-field beard-related activities.
24. The Atlantic League decided this year that each of the eight teams in the league will host their spring training camps in their respective home ballparks instead of in traditional southern locations.
25. When prizes like free t-shirts are tossed into the crowd from the playing field, it is usually only the fans in the lower seating sections that have a chance to catch something. The Utah Jazz have implemented a new feature to give the same prizes to the fans up in the fifth level of their arena. The upper section is called “Jazztown,” and the team makes sure these fans are not forgotten by offering such things as free temporary team tattoos and free fan photos. And now, beginning this season, whenever prizes are thrown to fans in the lower sections, those same prizes will be tossed to the Jazztown crowd by the new Cyprus Credit Union Interactive Squad.
26. Get a few of the more outgoing parents of athletes to get involved in a series of competitions between the parents. Set up a relay race, a shooting competition, etc. The one competition you will want to do is to see which one can collect the most donations. Have them go into the stands in the first quarter (important because it allows time to count money collected) and then announce the winner at the end, giving them a prize of school collateral, and the proceeds go to the program.
27. The Fresno Grizzlies of Minor League Baseball hosted a unique social media promotion in which they called “The Great Fresno Tweetup”. In a partnership with FresnoBeehive.com, special ticket packages will be offered via Twitter to fans that follow the team on Twitter. Promotions like this provide a great way for your program to jump into the social media game!



# Fan Engagement

28. Lots of teams have photo contests. This one is notable because it encourages fans to go outside, exercise, be active. The Hudson Valley Renegades of Minor League Baseball are running a photo contest hosted by their mascot, Rascal. Known as the Picture Perfect Health Photo Contest, fans were asked to submit a photo of “you, your children, or your family members being active!” Voting took place on Facebook.
29. The Stockton Ports of Minor League Baseball ran a scavenger hunt contest that involves fans finding the team mascot’s piggybank, which contains a voucher for four tickets to a Ports game and two tickets to an Oakland A’s game during the 2010 season, along with other prizes. The team is posting a clue about the piggybank’s location on its website as well as Facebook and Twitter. The fan that finds the piggybank first must go to the team’s offices to redeem the tickets.
30. The Buffalo Sabres launched a program called “Buffalo Sabres Road Crew.” The program connects Sabres fans wherever they are located, through interactive online methods and in-person at “Tour Stops” parties in various cities. The parties are held the night before a Sabres game in the city where the team is playing. Fans are able to meet select players as well as fellow fans, win prizes, and enjoy food and drink specials at the host restaurant. You can spin this to include fans all over your town (rather than various cities). This is a good way to connect your program to the community and help push consumers to local businesses (preferably sponsors)!
31. The Lowell Spinners once staged a whopper of a “duck, duck, goose” game. The game was certified as the Guinness world record holder for the “World’s Largest Game of Duck, Duck Goose.” A total of 432 fans played the children’s game, encircling outfield on Aug. 14, 2004. Consider implementing a similar “record setting” promotion that will encourage fan participation in large numbers!

# Fan Engagement

32. The Philadelphia Phillies have launched the new Fightin' Phils Fan Club in partnership with MLB. The new fan club is designed to give fans exclusive online access and in-park benefits. Fans who join the club will receive access to the following: MLB.com's Gameday application, exclusive Members Only section of Phillies.com, message board, member e-newsletter, desktop wallpaper library, online sweepstakes, discounted tickets for behind-the-scenes tour of the Phillies' ballpark, discounted tickets to the Fightin' Phils Fan Club Night on July 23rd, and discounts at a restaurant at the ballpark throughout the year. The annual membership rate is \$24.99.
33. The Iowa Cubs of Minor League Baseball offer a "Promotional Pass" to all season-ticket holders. The pass costs \$50 and guarantees that a season-ticket holder will receive every promotional giveaway item during the entire season. A season-ticket holder who has this pass can use it to receive the promotional item on the day it is being given out, or at any time later in the season. There is a limit of one Promotional Pass per season ticket.
34. The San Antonio Spurs and their advertising agency created a marketing campaign designed to enhance the special feeling of a game day. The campaign is called SpursDay and its goal is to "brand" game days through advertising signage and radio/TV spots and encouraging fans to always wear Spurs gear on game days. What can you do to create a more intimate connection with your fan base, particularly on game days?
35. The St. Paul Saints professional baseball team asked their fans the question, "What does it mean to be a fan?" The team invited fans to produce a 60-second video demonstrating their passion and dedication for the team as part of the "Be Your Own Fan" marketing campaign. All videos were sent as links to a Twitter account set up for the campaign. Select videos were shown at home games on the video board and online.

# Fan Engagement

36. The Florida Panthers hosted Yoga Day at a recent home game. A 90-minute yoga class was offered to all fans in attendance who wanted to participate. The class ran from 4:30-6:00pm. The cost was \$20 for the class and a game ticket or \$10 for the class if a fan already had a game ticket.
37. The Philadelphia Wings of the NLL invited fans to bring their unusable, broken snow shovels to a home game during a winter storm to redeem them for half-priced game tickets.
38. Gavin Maloof, co-owner of the Sacramento Kings, along with Kings players and front-office staff members, headed out to Sacramento neighborhoods to hand-deliver 2009-10 season ticket renewal packages to current season-ticket holders. Here is a related idea: coaches, ADs, teachers and players could deliver free individual game tickets to people in the community and simply state: "We'd like to invite you to check out a game—for free, on us." The people they deliver game tickets to could be past ticket buyers, contacts in the team's database, or just random citizens. You could also spin this as a kind of "pay it forward" type feel good promotion...
39. The idea of a community Gold Card is to bring in community business and for them to allow some sort of discount to be allowed because of the purchase of this card (ie. If a Sub Shop were a sponsor, they might have a free drink with purchase of sub be the discount on the card). The card can be sold for your desired amount; typically they are \$10.

# Fan Engagement

40. The River City Rascals professional baseball team and Midwest Agency, an insurance company that is a sponsor of the team, have created a “win insurance” program for the 2010 season that is designed to attract more fans, and more customers for the insurance company. Here is how the “Midwest Agency Winning Insurance” program works: fans can buy the insurance for \$2 before the start of the eighth inning of all home games. After the middle of the eighth inning, the insurance rate goes to \$5, regardless of the score. If the team loses, all fans that bought the insurance will receive box-seat tickets that are worth \$11 to a future game. Pitch this idea to a local insurance company as a potential sponsor.
41. The Sacramento Kings recently held a campaign called “We Want You Back.” The team invited former season-ticket holders to come out to a Kings game in late December. The former ticket holders received two free tickets and a free buffet dinner. “I was one of those disgruntled fans who turned in his tickets after last season,” said fan Tom Riddle in the source article. “But when I received the letter last week, I RSVP'd immediately.”
42. The Bakersfield Condors of the ECHL provide their fans with an official place to get autographs after all home games. The Bakersfield Marriott Autograph Booth features different players each night. The booth opens approximately 20 minutes after the conclusion of a game.
43. The Phoenix Coyotes have introduced the Coyotes Ambassadors Club, an incentive-based program for season-ticket holders that enables them to offer discounted tickets to their family, friends, and other contacts. Each season-ticket holder that becomes a member of the Coyotes Ambassadors Club will be given personalized business cards, which feature a unique website address, to hand out to people they know. The web link will allow friends, family members, colleagues, and acquaintances of the member to purchase tickets at a discounted rate. Members will be rewarded for each ticket “sale” they make. Can you launch a similar type of Ambassador program to help promote your program?



# Sponsorship & Third Party Promotions

44. The Detroit Tigers partnered with AAA Michigan for AAA and Detroit Tigers Safe Teen Driving Weekend at the Tigers'. Teens had the opportunity to test their driving skills at two AAA driving simulators, which were set up at the ballpark. Representatives for the AAA Driving School were on hand to assist teens and their families with the simulators and provide teen-driving safety literature. Teens could also enter to win game tickets and throw out the ceremonial first pitch.
45. The Boston Red Sox inked a deal with Minnesota-based GreenMark, a sponsorship agency that specializes in environmental sports marketing. The firm will manage aspects of "green sponsorship" at the Red Sox ballpark.

What can you do to make your program greener? Can you implement "green" promotions? Even raising awareness helps and will allow you to position your brand in the right light!

46. The Richmond Flying Squirrels of Minor League Baseball partnered with the Virginia Peanut Farmers Association, Inc. for Tribute to the Peanut Night at a home game. The promotion involved peanut trivia and activities—and fans were encouraged to bring a jar of peanut butter for donation to a local food bank. Plus, Peanuts characters Charlie Brown, Lucy, and Snoopy were at the game to entertain fans.
47. Work with a Big and Tall and incorporate them into your volleyball promotions. Allow them to sponsor, and provide an oversized pair of pants. For the competition, two teams of two can serve to each other trying to land volleyball in the pants of their partner while they have them on.

# Sponsorship & Third Party Promotions

48. In a recent off-season, Major League Baseball completed a sponsorship deal with Scotts allowing the lawn care brand to become the "Official Lawn Care Company of Major League Baseball." The deal includes sponsorship, licensing, national advertising, and local team partnerships. Perhaps most interesting, a number of teams have formed unique product partnerships with Scotts, which includes team-branded grass seed blends and fertilizer products that were formulated by Scotts in consultation with the head groundskeeper at the respective ballparks. While this may not apply directly at the high school level, think about any unique deals you can make that will provide a creative connection with your fan base.
49. Following a recent home game, the Rockford IceHogs of the AHL invited fans to toss paper airplanes onto the ice for a chance to win various prizes including airline vouchers from Allegiant Air. Fans had to hit a certain target to win the airline vouchers. A promotion like this could be implemented at almost any sport played indoors and can be offered pre-game, post-game or any other break in action during the game. These types of promotions typically generate a high level of fan involvement and often generate a very positive response!
50. The Fresno Grizzlies created a beach in Inyo Plaza at Grizzlies Stadium for their "Bikini Bash" promotion during the Grizzlies game against the Las Vegas 51s. All fans wearing a swimsuit received a \$5 Field Level Reserved ticket through the Grizzlies ticket office. Fans also had the opportunity to enjoy a beach setup at the stadium, complete with beach volleyball and kiddie pools.
51. Long Beach State University held a "Mini Coopers Rally" before a 49ers volleyball match where they helped a group of drivers and dealers exhibit their automobiles at a car rally. The Mini Cooper owners met for a lunch in Long Beach before driving to the university to participate in a variety of activities including an ice cream break and pit stop at the school's baseball field to run the bases. Consider piggy backing on a similar themed promotion that encourages fan participation.

# Sponsorship & Third Party Promotions

52. The Wilmington Blue Rocks of Minor League Baseball will give out team-branded gym bags at their July 15 game. Taking this idea a step further, you could tie this giveaway into a promotion focused on fitness and health. For example, your program could partner with local fitness centers to offer membership discounts to fans that present the giveaway gym bag when signing up for membership. Additionally, the bag could be stuffed with coupons for gyms, local health stores, sports drinks, etc.
53. The Louisville Bats Baseball Club vaulted themselves into the Guinness Book of World Records with over 2,900 participants in the "Largest Kazoo Ensemble" Tuesday night. The entire stadium, led by the West Louisville Boys Choir, played "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" on kazoos during the seventh inning stretch. The kazoos (bearing the name "National Jug Band Jubilee") were distributed by volunteers from the National Jug Band Jubilee. The previous record of most kazooists was 1,791. The kazoos' packages bear the slogan "It Ain't Music, But It's Close."
54. The Florida Panthers recently signed a sponsorship deal with The Learning Experience, a child-care and education organization, that includes the organization establishing a child-care center in the arena that is open on all game days. The center can hold approximately 80 children, ages 3-8 years old. These children do not need game tickets to enter the arena. The cost for season-ticket holders is \$25 for one child and \$40 for two. The cost for general fans is \$35 and \$50. These fees go directly to The Learning Experience.
55. The Indianapolis Colts and sponsor Sherwin-Williams have created the "Paint Your Face Cam." During games, fans that have their faces painted to support the Colts are shown on the stadium's video board. While most high schools do not have the luxury of a video board, a similar partnership could be created with a different twist. Have volunteers offer face painting for all fans at a game sponsored by a local paint company.

# Sponsorship & Third Party Promotions

56. Texas Stadium, the long-time home of the Dallas Cowboys, was imploded on April 11th of this year. It was announced that Kraft Macaroni & Cheese has signed on as the sponsor of the implosion. As part of the sponsorship, a national essay contest was created to give one young fan the opportunity to press the button that brings down the stadium. Kids 9-12 years old were asked to write an essay detailing a positive impact they have made in their community and submit it online. While it isn't likely you will be imploding your stadium anytime soon, the concept of asking kids to write essays discussing the impact of sports or your program as a whole has on the community might be any idea you can parlay into a successful promotion at your school.
57. Running-shoe company New Balance inked a sponsorship agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation to pay for snow removal along the Charles River running path in Boston, Mass., throughout the brutal Boston winter months. Perhaps your team or organization could develop a similar sponsorship of a running/biking path or other popular pedestrian areas in your town.
58. The Reading Royals of the ECHL have a sponsorship with Ehrlich Pest Control called the "Ehrlich Pest Control Pest of the Game." At each home game, one player from the opposing team is selected as the "pest" who causes the Royals the most trouble and hinders the team's chances to win.
59. The New Jersey Nets have started a program called "A Day in the Life" to give the team's partnership-marketing staff a better understanding of the companies that have partnerships with the team. Nets staffers visited the offices of partners including Aflac, Vonage, LG, Canon, Goya, and Anheuser-Busch. They spent a full day at each company to learn about their operations and perhaps came up with ways to enhance the marketing partnerships. To spin this in a manner that might tie in with your program, consider creating a job shadow type program with sponsor companies.



# Special Events

60. The Houston Astros hosted their first-ever Praise in the Park gospel event at their June 5th game. The event celebrated “faith, family, and heritage.” A portion of the Praise in the Park proceeds benefited the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). Fans enjoyed a special pre-game gospel concert featuring James Fortune, Vickie Winans, and Houston’s 100 Voices of Praise.
61. The Cincinnati Reds hosted a Civil Rights celebration during a recent homestand. The promotion celebrated baseball’s role in the movement. The team wore 1947 throwback jerseys at the Saturday game and there was a roundtable discussion about the subject at the Friday game.
62. The Hagerstown Suns of Minor League Baseball hosted History Night at their June 25th game. The team will be highlighting the history of baseball in the area. Local museums and other organizations provided historical items for display at the game. Plus, the team asked its fans to lend any baseball artifacts they have for use during the promotion.
63. Hold a special night in honor of your surrounding elementary schools. Invite a class, and their parents are sure to come. Make a few PA announcements acknowledging the children and their current on-goings. Incorporate them into the promotions if possible.

# Special Events

64. Minor League Baseball's Class AA Carolina Mudcats hosted a "Rib Fest" last season. The club teamed up with local entertainment and media groups to bring a community food festival to the team stadium.

The "ribbers" (professional rib cooks) participated from six different states and competed to be recognized as the Grand Champion of the festival. In addition, prizes were awarded for the "Best Sauce" and for the "People's Choice Award."

65. The Green Bay Packers host a free Halloween-themed event called 'Spooktacular Fun,' in the Lambeau Field Atrium every fall. The features interactive and entertaining activities, including sing-along music, magic, miming, clowns, stilt walkers and a juggler.
66. Attending a watch party for the local big league team, whether or not the two teams are affiliated or not. Three players from the Houston Aeros (a Veritix client) of the AHL joined fans at a local Houston sports bar on March 18th to watch the Dallas Stars play on TV. Fans got to enjoy wings with the players and talk hockey. While the Aeros' NHL affiliate is the Minnesota Wild, this is still a great way for a minor league team to bond with fans. Consider setting up a viewing party in your community, hosted by your team or program, to watch a local team as a fundraiser.
67. Invite a local dance team to come and be the performance for your halftime entertainment. If possible, get a group from a larger team (ie a College dance team or a dance team from a professional team). Advertise this around town and you will drive in new spectators for your games.
68. Stanford Baseball highlighted its 2005 fall practice schedule with an annual Alumni Game at Sunken Diamond. An Old-Timers Game featuring a pair of Alumni teams with former Stanford players from the 1950's, 60's and '70's kicks off the Alumni Game festivities at Noon. The 2006 Stanford Baseball team took on a group of Cardinal Alumni from the 1970's through 2005. Admission to the Alumni Game was free. The team used the event as an opportunity to promote baseball season ticket packages.

# Special Events

69. The NHL has been holding an outdoor hockey game for a few years, and now the AHL will be doing the same. The Syracuse Crunch hosted the Binghamton Senators at the New York State Fairgrounds on February 20th, 2010. Do you have the option for a change of venue to drive excitement and enthusiasm for one of your sporting events?
70. The Cincinnati Reds hosted a reception at the Cincinnati Art Museum on November 12th to unveil a piece called "Redsland Forever," which was created by Cincinnati native C.F. Payne. The artwork features 14 illustrated caricatures of famous Cincinnati Reds players. The reception included a lecture by the artist and a meet-and-greet with 2010 Reds Hall of Fame inductee Chris Sabo. In addition, a limited run of 1,500 copies of the print have been made available for purchase. The prints are only available at the museum. Proceeds from sales of the print benefit the Reds Community Fund's baseball-themed outreach programs and the Cincinnati Art Museum.
71. An event that can easily stay within the constructs of the high school is a Butler Auction. Seniors, and for a tie in for sports, the athletes involved, are auctioned off to the underclassmen. They are at their service for a day, carrying books, getting their lunch, holding doors open, etc. Set clear rules, such as no test taking, or making them wear inappropriate clothing, but allow the students to have fun. The more silly they can get the more they may be willing to give.
72. Host a 3 on 3 outdoor basketball tournament in your community. Allow all to play and collect on team registrations. Also a sponsorship opportunity for water or energy bars.

# Theme Nights & Niche Markets

73. The Peoria Chiefs of Minor League Baseball held the Salute to Road Construction promotion at their May 26th game. Leading up to the game, the team handed out game tickets to road workers as they were working at actual construction sites. At the game itself, the Chiefs staff wore fluorescent vests and hardhats, and traffic signs and cones were set up throughout the ballpark concourse.
74. The New Britain Rock Cats of Minor League Baseball hosted a Business Person's Special at a recent home game. With a start time of 12:05pm, fans can "Spend an afternoon away from the office with the Rock Cats!" for a special price of \$10, which includes a game ticket, soda, and choice of the following: personal pizza, cheesesteak sandwich, or buffalo chicken wrap.
75. The Nashville Sounds of Minor League Baseball held a "Non-Profit Night" ticket special at a regular season game. For the game, all local non-profit groups that submit a ticket request in writing on company letterhead were provided with free tickets. Last season, the team ran this promotion and 8,000 tickets were presented to non-profit groups. The Sounds' ballpark holds just over 10,000 fans.
76. Many teams offer special school discounts and education related programs. One team, however, took the concept to a new level. The Hershey (Penn.) Bears of the AHL hosted "Home school Night" at two home games. Special ticket discounts were offered to home schooled children and parents, and educational programs created specifically for home schooled children were presented. Is this a market that your program could tap into to expand your fan base?



# Theme Nights & Niche Markets

77. The Kannapolis Intimidators of Minor League Baseball, in partnership with Morningside Assisted Living & Alzheimer's Care, Crescent Heights Independent Retirement Living, Hometown Oxygen, and Horizon Bay Retirement Living, offer the Intimidators Senior Club for its fans aged 55 and older. Members of the club receive a ticket to every Tuesday home game (a total of nine for the 2010 season), discounts at the team's store, discount concession vouchers, a monthly newsletter, and entry into a special prize drawing. Plus, club members can participate in Baseball Bingo at every Tuesday game. Membership costs \$5.00 annually.
78. With Fantasy Football now hugely popular, the Lancaster (Penn.) Barnstormers baseball team came up with a good way to tap into the market: they invited Fantasy Football Leagues to hold their player drafts in the team's party suites. For \$300, leagues received the use of a suite for up to 20 people (and \$20 for each additional person) for three hours. A food spread was also included in the cost of the suite. The Barnstormers made the suites available August 26-September 7.
79. The Hagerstown Suns of Minor League Baseball hosted their first annual Business Person's Lunch at their ballpark from 11:30am-1:30pm, April 2nd. Anyone who brought their personal business card received a free lunch, was able to tour the ballpark, and learned about ticket options, group outings, etc., for the Suns' 2009 season.
80. The River City Rascals host a Hometown Heroes Night at their ballpark with the O'Fallon Firefighters and Police Department battling in a softball game prior to the contest. The club honors hometown heroes throughout the night.

# Theme Nights & Niche Markets

81. Host a Culture Heritage night. Have a committee made of the student athletes of different heritage and have them decide the activities that can take place. Have the primary activities take place after the game. Be sure to incorporate them into the game with PA announcements and involving them in the promotions. Pre-game can be less formal and engaging with perhaps a lot of tables set up for folks to come and enjoy.
82. Have a 1980's singing competition. Really push the 80's theme as it will reach out to the parents generation. Play 80's music through out the game and concentrate on making the atmosphere one that the parents will really enjoy. The competitors you choose should be parents of the athletes if possible; faculty is a great back up.
83. Not everyone in the community volunteers or does charity work. Have a night acknowledging those individuals and show appreciation. This is also a time to possibly bring in those that they have been helping or contributing to and creating a connection with them and the school.
84. Recognizing younger siblings is a great way to build an early fan base. The younger brother or sister of those in your high school is a great target to try and please. Most likely they will end up attending your high school, so catch them early and show them that coming and supporting your school is a fun and engaging thing to do.

# Community & Fan Outreach

85. The Tampa Bay Rays are incorporating drum line music in their 2010 TV and radio ad campaigns and they asked local high schools and select area drum lines to submit their recorded music ideas.
86. Boston College has a program called "Community Connection Ticket Program" that provides tickets that fans can't use to youths in the Boston College area. Fans that can't use particular tickets are invited to mail them to the school approximately one week prior to the corresponding event if possible. Last year, the school distributed more than 20,000 tickets through the program.
87. The Lancaster Barnstormers professional baseball team hosted "Taste of Lancaster" on May 26. Restaurants and other culinary outlets from the area were on hand to offer free food samples to fans at the game. This is an excellent way to promote local businesses and perhaps turn them into sponsors as well.
88. The Charlotte Bobcats sent out an email message on January 20 entitled "5 Things To Know About Your Bobcats." It listed five quick updates about the team to keep fans informed. Facts one and two were "The Bobcats are 8-2 over their last 10 games (best in the NBA) and own the NBA's longest current win streak at 5" and "With 8 straight wins at home, the Bobcats have more wins at home (17) than any other team in the Eastern Conference," respectively. An email like this is a quick read, hard-hitting, and keeps fans up-to-date on the team.

# Community & Fan Outreach

89. The Charlotte Checkers of the ECHL hosted “Go Mean and Green Night” on February 5th. The promotion focused on energy conservation and environmental awareness. The City of Charlotte Solid Waste was on hand to promote recycling and collect recyclables; 1-800-GOT-JUNK set up a display touting their services; fans were encouraged to wear green to the game; there was a special ticket deal for fans that took public transportation to the arena; and proceeds from the game benefited OurEarth.org, 1% For The Planet, and Global Green USA – Build It Back Green.
90. Encourage your athletes, teams, business/marketing students go out into the neighborhoods and collect cans and bottles for recycling. They are spreading the good word about protecting our environment. With the cans and bottles they collect they can keep for themselves to put back into the program. Implement a sound communications plan prior to the project to alert community members, local businesses and parents of the effort. Make sure to emphasize your program’s effort to launch a “green” initiative as well as the fundraising aspect. Load the recyclables into a U-Haul or other trucks decorated in team colors and logos with a slogan featuring your green campaign.
91. The day after Halloween can be a messy one that may have left those in your community with a home in need of a touch up. Take them members of your teams to do an “All Saints Day” clean up. Approach the member of the community and explain to them what you are offering and how much and what you are offering this service for. Use this opportunity to inform them on other upcoming events or games that you would wish them to attend.
92. If there are any local business that you know they have a mascot, then they need to be approached for the purpose of hosting a mascot dance off. For the halftime entertainment of one of the games, hold the contest. The mascots should have a 30 second to 1 minute routine ready for the contest. The crowd then becomes the barometer for who they feel did the best. Use this event to reach out to new potential sponsors.



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93. Allow a fan/parent/student to pick a song for warm-up. Introduce it incorporating a sponsor (ie the Ma and Pa warm up song of the day.) It brings in a personality from the stands connecting them to the event and giving them a stake in it. Plus it is not a major element of the night with a nice little plug for your possible sponsor.
94. Find out which of your student athletes volunteers anywhere. Hopefully the family is also involved in this as well. Then take a day/week and do that same volunteering, in support of your athlete, but in bigger support of making a difference in your community. Positive PR and selfless giving are two aspects that always need to be acknowledged.
95. Approach your neighboring middle schools that feed into your high school. Have a game dedicated to them, with a focus on the incoming freshman. Make them feel welcome and show them a good time. You are building the strength of your student fan base; this type of action is more of an investment for them attending more games in the future.
96. Hold a night in honor of your community leaders and the work they do for your town. These folks are typically viewed very well in the public eye as well as being very involved. Because of this involvement they typically have a large social network and will come in support of any honor they may receive from you; even simple recognition of their work and accomplishments will do well for this.

# Promotional Giveaways & Game Entertainment

98. The San Jose Sharks and Fry's Electronics teamed up to give away a rally towel to the first 18,000 Sharks fans into HP Pavilion at San Jose for the Sharks' 2010 Stanley Cup opener. This is a perfect example of how a relationship with a sponsor can provide additional value for your program by helping to fund promotional give away items while allowing them to tap into the energy and enthusiasm of your fan base for big, emotional games.
99. Coming to a minor league ballpark near you are the ZOOperstars! They're a traveling group of... well, I'm not sure how to describe them. They're giant plastic representations of popular athletes, if those athletes were animals. For example, Cow Ripken Jr. and Whale Gretzky. And, of course, Tiger Woodschuck.
100. Nearly every team under the sun offers a bobblehead night promotion. You can do the same. Consider teaming with a sponsor to help underwrite the cost of the promotional items. Create a bobblehead of a popular school administrator, teacher, coach or AD. Consider a bobblehead of a prominent local figure in the community or take things a step further by hosting a community wide poll or survey to see which member of the community should be the featured bobblehead.
101. Recognized as the top halftime act in the NBA features a married couple who put on a spectacle that's one part magic show, one part ballroom-dancing exhibition. Popularly known as "Quick Change," the performance features nearly a dozen costume changes in the span of a few minutes, as Dania sheds one dress for another quicker than the average human can remove a single sock. It's an astounding example of precision artistry, and one that the NBA's game-operations directors have voted the league's most requested halftime attraction.

# BONUS IDEAS!!!

- ★ **Cross Promotion:** The Johnstown Chiefs of the ECHL teamed up with the Johnstown Children's Museum for "Johnstown Chiefs Day" at the museum on February 27th. The event included a hockey-themed craft session, a workshop dedicated to the basics of ice hockey, and everyone who attended the event was able to purchase discounted hockey tickets for that night's game. Plus, the museum staff dressed in Chiefs apparel and there were hockey decorations throughout the museum.
- ★ The Lake Elsinore Storm of Minor League Baseball hosted "Nothing Night" at their July 6th game. Admission was free and there were no PA announcements, no music, no mascot antics, and no in-game promotions. The concession stands were not open and the video board was shut off. There was only the noise of the baseball game: the crack of the bat, the sound of a baseball striking a glove, the cheers after a hit.
- ★ The Philadelphia 76ers hosted "Jewish Heritage Night" at their January 13th game. A discounted ticket deal was available for the game that includes a 76ers t-shirt with Hebrew writing. In addition, kosher food was available and musician Matisyahu performed live after the game.
- ★ The Reno Aces distribute free game tickets to fans around the Reno area who sport Aces team gear on Fridays. Representatives from the club make rounds on Fridays throughout the community during the season, distributing tickets for various games. Fans are encouraged to wear Aces gear every Friday, since there is no telling when someone will show up and hand them free tickets. Could you implement a similar promotion in your area?
- ★ Team up with local youth organizations such as the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to encourage them to come out to a game. As incentive, consider offering a free clinic for anyone affiliated with that group who buys a ticket.

# BONUS IDEAS!!!

- ★ The Corpus Christi Hooks of Minor League Baseball sent out an email recently with news about the team. At the bottom of the email was an offer that stated: "Forward this email to a friend and enter to win a 5-Day Carnival Cruise..." The winner will be picked from the list of fans that forward the email or other emails throughout the season. The winner will be picked at the end of the season.
- ★ Many teams have All-You-Can-Eat ticket specials for certain games or days of the week or there are certain seating sections where fans have to sit to take advantage of the All-You-Can-Eat feature. The Lancaster Barnstormers professional baseball team has partnered with sponsor Turkey Hill to offer All-You-Can-Eat tickets for any game and any seating section. The tickets are only available at Turkey Hill convenience stores. Fans have to buy the ticket vouchers (they are \$15) at a store location and then go to the Barnstormers' box office and redeem them for game tickets of their choice and a special wristband. This is a great idea that drives traffic to the sponsor and gives fans unlimited flexibility for ticket choice.
- ★ The York Revolution professional baseball team introduced the Season-Ticket Holder Cup Program for its 2010 season. All season-ticker holders received a free souvenir 32-oz. cup that is good for endless \$1.50 refills of Pepsi products at all concession stands during all home games.
- ★ At every half-time throughout the football season, select one fan and provide the opportunity to kick a 40 yard field goal for a cash prize. Tie a sponsor in for the promotion and be sure to take out insurance on the big prize!
- ★ Team up with a local grocery chain for a "kit-kat" promotion at half-time of a basketball game. Each side of the gym competes to see who can sing the kit-kat jingle the loudest ("gimme a break, gimme a break, break me off a piece of that kit kat bar"). Whichever side is loudest will receive a free kit kat candy bar, distributed by the cheerleaders or dance team from grocery bags featuring your sponsor's name



# BONUS IDEAS!!!

## In-Game Entertainment



Sumo Suit Contest



T-Shirt Toss



Dizzy Bat Race



Human Hamster Races



Musical Chairs



Recliner Free Throw