



SPORTS BUSINESS PROGRAM STUDENT ACTIVITY GUIDE: BRANDING



STUDENT ACTIVITIES GUIDE: SBP BRAND BUILDING

ACTIVITIES GUIDE

BRANDING TEAM

ACTIVITY #1 – BRANDING OVERVIEW	.....	2
ACTIVITY #2 – BRAND IDENTITY	.....	7
ACTIVITY #3 – BRAND POSITION	.....	12
ACTIVITY #4 – STREAMLINING THE BRAND	.....	16
ACTIVITY #5 – DEVELOP/STRENGTHEN THE BRAND	.....	20
ACTIVITY #6 – REPRESENT THE BRAND!	.....	25





BRAND BUILDING

Branding Activity #1



DEFINE YOUR BRAND

Building a brand takes time. It is a process, and it is important not to rush this step. Take your time and do it right, as mistakes can be costly and difficult to reverse.

What is a brand?

In sport, a brand could be represented in a variety of forms. Examples could include (but certainly not limited to):

- Athletes (Kevin Durant, Canelo Alvarez etc.)
- Sports teams (MiLB's St. Paul Saints, MLB's Atlanta Braves etc.)
- Apparel companies (Under Armour, Puma etc.)
- Sports leagues (NFL, UFC etc.)
- Mascots (Phoenix Suns' Gorilla, Philadelphia Flyers' "Gritty" etc.)
- Broadcast companies (ESPN, DAZN etc.)
- Sporting Events (Kentucky Derby, Indianapolis 500 etc.)

What is branding?

Branding is the use of a name, design, symbol, or a combination of those elements that a sport organization uses to help differentiate its products from the competition. This is the process that describes that organization's efforts to develop a personality and easy for consumers to recognize or identify.

In this activity, your branding team will gain a better understanding of the branding concept.

**Step 1: List the first fourteen brands that come to mind (any industry).
Then ask yourselves, why were these the first brand names that came to
mind? Why do you think these might all represent strong brands?**

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____

9) _____

10) _____

11) _____

12) _____

13) _____

14) _____

Step 2: List the first ten SPORTS TEAM brands that come to mind (high school, college or professional). Then ask yourselves, why were these the first sports teams that came to mind? What do they have in common?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____


9) _____

10) _____


Step 3: This is a word association exercise. In the space below, write down the first thing that comes to mind when you see the brand name and/or logo on the left. Then, discuss with your branding team members why that was the first thing that you thought of when you saw the brand name or logo. What might that have to do with the branding process and how might that apply to how you brand your program?


1) Google _____

2) Twitter _____


3)  _____

4) Uber _____


5)  _____


6)  _____

7) LA Lakers _____

8)  _____

9) Puma _____

10)  _____

11)  _____

12) Amazon _____

Step 4: As a team, discuss the value of a strong brand. Then, discuss the concepts of brand image, brand positioning and brand perception. Consider the word association exercise and see if there are similarities in responses from each member of your team for each of the brand names/logos.

Then, as a team, answer the following questions:

- 1) Is your high school a brand?

- 2) Is your high school athletics program a brand?

- 3) Is the high school football team a brand?

- 4) Is your Sports Business Program and the event (or events) you will promote a brand?

- 5) If these are brands, do they carry value? Why or why not?



BRAND BUILDING

Branding Activity #2



BRAND IDENTITY

Building a brand takes time. It is a process, and it is important not to rush this step. Take your time and do it right, as mistakes can be costly and difficult to reverse.

In order to get where you need to go, you need to first recognize

where you are at. Every school is unique. While it doesn't hurt to see how schools are positioning their brand and implementing strategies that have been effective elsewhere, be careful not to compare your school or your program to other schools. Nobody can provide a more accurate analysis of your current brand position than you and your students, and that will be the first step in the brand building process. It is up to your branding group to identify what makes your school and your program unique, and what characteristics will provide the foundation for building a brand your community can be proud of.

Steps in the brand-building process for your program:

- 1. Define and identify your brand*
- 2. Evaluate your brand position*
- 3. Streamline your brand*
- 4. Develop and strengthen your brand position*
- 5. Represent your brand!*

As you begin to work through the branding process, it is important to recognize that your brand is a reflection of your staff and students, your school, and the surrounding community. How your students represent the brand will be paramount in building brand equity and the development of long-term community support. Be sure to communicate the importance of this accordingly, as each member of your Sports Business Program represents an extension of your brand.

Step 1: Begin the brand building process by defining your brand. Answer the questions below to help establish your program's brand identity.

What makes your school unique?

What makes your community unique? What is it known for?

What makes your Sports Business Program unique? What are some unique characteristics or qualities about your program?

Describe your high school athletics program. Does it have a history of success in certain sports? Is there a sport that is growing in popularity and finding recent success?

Describe your current high school branding. What are your school colors? What does the logo look like? Does the school have more than one logo (such as one with a school crest and another for athletics)? Do different sports teams feature different logo variations?

Describe your current athletics logo. Is it fierce or intimidating? Family-friendly? Is it new and fresh or does it seem dated? Do students like the logo?

If you could change the logo or introduce a secondary or alternate logo, what might it look like? Why?

Does your Sports Business Program currently feature a logo? If so, describe the logo in the space below. If not, do you think your program *should* have a logo? Why or why not? What might it look like?



BRAND BUILDING

Branding Activity #3



EVALUATE YOUR BRAND POSITION

After defining your brand, it is necessary to evaluate your current brand position. Is the brand already well-developed? Do you have high levels of brand awareness in the community?

If your brand is not already established, you have an amazing opportunity to build it from the ground up. Even if awareness levels are high, you are in a great position to help the brand grow. In either case, be sure to put your program in a position to succeed by creating branding strategies based on long-term goals. Build your brand with integrity by creating something you know your stakeholders would be proud to wear on a t-shirt.

In this exercise, the branding team will evaluate current brand position and determine the best strategy for mapping out the future of the brand. The branding team may need to work through this process more than once, depending on whether your program will be promoting school sports and entertainment or an event you are creating on your own.

It might also be a good idea to build your Sports Business Program brand. For example, if your classroom has been transformed into something like the “North High School Falcons Sports Business Club”, you may want to consider establishing the program as its own identifiable brand. If this is the case, the branding team will need to conduct a brand position evaluation accordingly.

Step 1: Answer the following questions in the space below.

Do you think most parents and students have heard of your school nickname and associate that nickname with your school?

Do you think most members of your community have heard of your school nickname and associate that nickname with your school?

What do you think parents and students think of when they hear the nickname?

What do you members of the community, not including parents and students, think of when hear the nickname?

Do you think most parents and students recognize your school athletics logo?

Do you think most members of your community, not including parents and students, recognize your school athletics logo?

What do you think parents and students think of when they see the logo?

What do you members of the community, not including parents and students, think of when they see the logo?

How often do you see the school nickname and logo around the community? Are signs up at local businesses supporting the program? Do people around the community wear school-branded gear?

On a scale of one to ten, how supportive do you think students are of your high school athletics program?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of one to ten, how supportive do you think parents are of your high school athletics program?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of one to ten, how supportive do you think the community is of your high school athletics program?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How might you be able to strengthen the brand in a way to build more support with students, parents, and the community (your fans)?



BRAND BUILDING

Branding Activity #4



STREAMLINING YOUR BRAND

Effective branding means managing the message in a way that provides consistent positioning of the brand in the manner for which you want it to be perceived. One of the biggest mistakes made by high school

athletics programs is to introduce multiple logos for multiple sports.

For example, does the volleyball uniform feature the same logo or emblem as the football helmets? If you truly want to convey a message of community, the brand positioning must be unified. Take the steps necessary to streamline your brand to help maintain brand consistency.

However, that does not mean your program wouldn't benefit from a secondary or alternative logo. If your branding team feels like the existing school mark could use a refresh, perhaps that would be worth evaluating.

Most importantly, consider your program or school level of brand loyalty. How will streamlining your brand help to boost brand loyalty, and what can you do to build a more passionate following with your fan base. As you work through this exercise, consider everything you worked on in the first three brand building activities.

Step 1: Identify all brands associated with your school. For example, the lacrosse team might refer to the program as “Falcons Lacrosse” while the football program has an identity as “North High Football”, each with their own logo. Perhaps your school has its own logo not associated with any sport. The school theatre program might have yet another brand association or identity. List every possible variation of the brand in the space below, along with a brief description of that brand.

Brand: _____

Brand: _____

Brand: _____

Brand: _____

Brand: _____

Brand: _____

Brand: _____

[illegible]



BRAND BUILDING

Branding Activity #5



DEVELOPING & STRENGTHENING YOUR BRAND

Only after gaining a firm understanding of your current brand position will you be able to take action to strengthen the brand. If you are not comfortable with your

current brand position, an overhaul might be necessary to build the foundation for your program by engaging in a re-branding effort. Re-branding often includes the development of a new logo or the alteration of an existing logo. The introduction of a secondary mark might be worth your consideration. In the long-term, strengthening the brand will increase the likelihood that students will want to stay involved with your school after graduation. Creating strong relationships with alumni can be an incredibly powerful tool for your program. Alumni support can be the difference between a mediocre program and a great program.

The key to any effective branding strategy is to focus on communicating your message in a way that evokes emotion. Emotion is one of the most your program's most valuable assets. It provides a bond between your brand and your stakeholders. As you develop a plan for strengthening your brand, approach it from a storyteller's perspective. Your brand is your story. It is your narrative and should reflect your program's personality. It must be authentic and organic. Every aspect of your marketing should tell your brand story. Good storytelling will keep your community interested and engaged with your brand year after year.

Branding Mechanisms:

There are a lot of mechanisms that an organization might consider when developing, establishing, or repositioning its brands. Examples include:

- *Brand mark*
- *Logo*
- *Trademark*
- *Graphics*
- *Slogans and taglines*
- *Phrases*
- *Mascots*

Step 1: Using the list above as a guide, list the current branding mechanisms in use by your program.

Step 2: In the space below, describe how additional branding mechanisms not currently in use by your program could help to strengthen the brand. For example, if you do not have a mascot, should you? Could you introduce a slogan or tagline? What might that look like? Be sure to be very detailed in your description.

Step 3: As a team, discuss your ideas for developing and strengthening your brand. Then, pitch those ideas to the other teams in your program and gather some feedback before finalizing your strategy. In the space below, describe how your branding team will develop and strengthen your program's brand.

[illegible]



BRAND BUILDING

Branding Activity #6



REPRESENT YOUR BRAND!

With all the effort required to build a strong brand, you and your students should be proud to represent the brand. Represent the brand often and represent it well.

Representing your brand goes beyond wearing a logo on a baseball cap or a sweatshirt. Each member of your program is an extension of the brand. Students have a responsibility to engage in the type of behavior that is consistent with your brand, not only at the events you host but in the classroom and in the community.

In this activity, the branding team will be responsible for identifying every outlet imaginable for representing the brand. As you work through this process, be mindful of the brand building process with the goal of strengthening your brand for the long-term.

SPORTS BUSINESS PROGRAM *Building Your Brand*

As you build your brand, the stronger it will become. As you strengthen your brand, the more valuable it becomes.



BRAND EQUITY

How passionate is your fan base and how loyal are your stakeholders to the brand? How can you streamline your brand and build loyalty?



BRAND LOYALTY

Does your brand generate positive associations throughout the community?



BRAND POSITION

How many people in your community are familiar with your brand?



BRAND AWARENESS

How does your brand represent your program?



BRAND IDENTITY

Step 1: In the space below, list all the places throughout the community where you can gain exposure for your brand. Be sure to work with your sponsorship team on this exercise to ensure proper communication with local businesses. For example, only those businesses who sponsor your program should have signs with a designation that says “Proud Sponsor of Falcons Football” etc.

Step 2: In the space below, describe how you will get your brand out into the community and maximize your program's efforts to rep the brand. Be sure to complete this exercise for each of the areas of the community you listed in step one.
