



Sports and Entertainment Marketing
Operations Research Event

Oakton DECA
Oakton High School
2900 Sutton Road, Vienna, Virginia 22181

Sambriddi Pandey and Shazmeena Khattak
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Executive Summary	1
II.	Introduction.....	4
	a. Description of the Business or Organization	4
	b. Description of the Community.....	5
	c. Overview of the Business or Organization’s Current Promotional Strategies and Practices	7
III.	Research Methods Used in the Study	8
	a. Description and Rationale of Research Methodologies Selected to Conduct the Research Study.....	8
	b. Process Used to Conduct the Selected Research Methods	9
IV.	Findings and Conclusion of Study	11
	a. Findings of the Research Study	11
	b. Conclusions Based on the Findings	19
V.	Proposed Strategic Plan	20
	a. Objectives and Rationale of the Proposed Plan	20
	b. Proposed Activities and Timelines	21
	c. Proposed Metrics or Key Performance Indicators to Measure Plan Effectiveness	27
VI.	Proposed Budget.....	28
VII.	Bibliography	29
VIII.	Appendix	30

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following paper is a marketing plan created for Fairfax Racquet Club & Fitness Center (FRC) to improve their current promotional strategies. Our proposed marketing plan utilizes social local mobile (SoLoMo) tools to effectively reach the target market. The plan integrates FRC's existing marketing efforts with new and innovative forms of advertising and promotional methodologies to better engage prospective customers. We have recommended judicious use of both the social and local aspects of various web-marketing channels that integrate geolocation technology.

Fairfax Racquet Club and Fitness Center

FRC, founded in 1972, is in the heart of Fairfax, Virginia on the famous Fairfax Boulevard. The facility is a short distance from I66 and the Capital Beltway, as well as the Vienna Metro Station, all of which makes FRC conveniently accessible to members. The facility provides its members with quality tennis instruction and fitness training under one roof. This combination gives FRC a competitive advantage over many other tennis facilities in the area. The tennis instructions offered focus on the development and progression of a tennis player, while the fitness regimes transform the players into well rounded athletes. There is also a physical therapy institute co-located within FRC, which assists athletes in case of sports injuries.

Current Promotional Strategies

Fairfax Racquet Club & Fitness Center currently has minimal budget allocated to marketing, but would be willing to increase it if provided a creative marketing plan with tangible benefits. The current marketing methods employed by FRC comprise just word of mouth exposure, relying on coaches, athletes and members to spread the word.

FRC's website is outdated and poorly maintained. It is not mobile friendly and does not offer its members the convenience to reserve courts or make payments online. FRC does utilize snail mail to reach out to its current members, but has no go-to-market strategy or advertising campaigns to tag and acquire new customers. FRC has now decided to modernize their marketing department and employ a full suite of smart e-marketing tools to expand their customer base and maximize shareholders value.

Research Process

Through intensive primary and secondary research, we were able to create an effective marketing plan utilizing SoLoMo tools in order to reach out to new potential members. We made extensive use of secondary research material, such as **Brand Muscle 2016 "The State of Local Marketing Report."** This report helped us understand which tactics work in terms of local events, social media and digital media.



Management Interview	FRC Members Survey	Potential Members Survey	Adult Focus Group	High School Tennis Players Focus Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Tennis: Mr. Riley King • Allowed us to discover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current marketing strategies • Established goals for the future of FRC's marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered to 106 current FRC members • Allowed us to discover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which amenities are most valued by the current members • How members were originally drawn to the club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered to 166 tennis players in the Washington Metropolitan area • Allowed us to discover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which amenities are most valued by tennis players in the area • How they find out about businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six adult tennis players in the Washington Metropolitan area • Four out of the six adults had children who play tennis • Allowed us to discover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desirable promotions • Features wanted in a mobile site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine high school tennis players in the Washington Metropolitan area • Allowed us to discover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope of influence teens have over their parents for tennis related decisions

The findings of our research can be summarized as follows:

<p>Survey 1: FRC Member Survey 106 Respondents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75.5% of members utilize Junior Programs • Fitness Center partially utilized • 83% of member prefer a Mobile Site • 69.8% of member acquired through Word of Mouth • 76.5% of respondents use Facebook daily • 45.3% of respondents use Twitter daily • 52% of respondents use Groupon daily 	<p>Survey 2: Potential FRC Customers 166 Respondents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66.2% of respondents value a Fitness Center • 50% of respondents have children but have not enrolled them into junior tennis programs • 84.5% use their smartphones to sign up for services, events, etc. • 73.5% of respondents use Facebook daily • 32.5% if respondents use Twitter daily • 42%of respondents use Groupon daily
<p>Focus Group 1: Six Adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FRC's mobile site is hard to view and outdated • Majority demanded an online payment facility • Prefer Groupon for private lessons and for fitness centers • All participants use Facebook daily • One participants used Twitter daily • Four participants use Groupon 	<p>Focus Group 2: Nine High School Tennis Players</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in dual memberships for tennis and fitness because of convenience • Have heavy influence over parents decisions • Prefer SoLoMo engagement • Two respondents use Facebook daily • All respondents use Twitter daily • None of the respondents use Groupon



The data obtained was used to further refine our business plan by performing SWOT Analysis of FRC whose results are summarized below:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 1972, well respected • Strong Financials • Tennis & Fitness under one roof • Experienced Tennis and Fitness coaching <p>Convenient location in a prosperous community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdated and poorly maintained website • No social media presence • No promotional events • Limited advertising expenditure <p>Employee turnover</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook ○ Twitter • Groupon • Mobile Optimized Website and SEO <p>Community Sports Nights/ School Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established competition in the area with better marketing strategies • A new aggressive entrant in the market

Proposed Strategic Marketing Plan

Our research and business case analysis has led to a robust SoLoMo marketing plan which we are confident will best appeal to the wider market and help convert/ retain FRC new business. The salient features of our SoLoMo plan are as follows:

1. Develop a mobile friendly website with online court reservations, class registrations and payment gateway integration
2. Engage a dedicated SEO consultant
3. Develop a Facebook Business Page that utilizes the check in feature, host giveaways, advertise through Facebook Events
4. Active Twitter account and host contests
5. Utilize a location based promotional app like Groupon
6. Participate in community sports nights and school events including Elementary Family Fitness Gala and “Fit Fairfax” at Fairfax Racquet Club

Measure of Effectiveness

Voice of the Customer survey shall be initiated through Facebook and Twitter to measure effectiveness of the new marketing plan. Surveys will be administered six months after the full implementation of the new marketing plan, and will continue to be administered biannually. If customer acquisition is up 20% from the corresponding year, we will consider the plan effective. If there is a lack of response online surveys will be distributed in person to new members FRC.

Budget

The budget required to implement the new marketing plan is \$11,982. The highest values of the budget are associated with the development of a mobile optimized website as well as the costs associated with Groupon due to importance of these platforms in the execution of this new plan.

