



UNIT 5 – CASE STUDY

University of Portland Strategic Marketing Plan



Name _____

Class Period _____

**** Marketing Plans in Sports & Entertainment: A Case Study ****

In an effort to increase revenue generated by University of Portland athletics, the marketing team revamped marketing strategies by re-writing an outdated marketing plan for the 2004-2005 athletic season. The plan helped to expand the breadth of sales opportunities available to the athletic department marketing team. Tricia Miller, Director of Marketing for Pilot Athletics summarized the effort by saying "The marketing plan elucidates our goals and provides the framework to reach these goals. It often becomes a fluid marketing plan as we make adjustments throughout the season relative to market conditions."

The plan outlined the key factors that would help them to brand and promote University athletics. The goal was to increase the number of tickets sold to University sporting events, particularly men's basketball and women's soccer, which they identified in the S.W.O.T. analysis as the most popular spectator sports at the University among both the student population, alumni and fans throughout the Portland area. Also included in the plan were identification of a target market, positioning and branding strategies, promotion/events planning, communication goals and a defined approach to advertising.

Upon completion of the S.W.O.T. analysis, they opted to shift the focus of their marketing efforts to students, creating programs to encourage student attendance at athletic events. The rationale was simple, as Tricia explained, "These are our future alumni, future season ticket holders, and future donors. Perhaps the most important factor contributing to our evolution in strategy is the electric atmosphere our fans can create – a real home court advantage if you will – enhancing the experience for everyone involved."

Was the plan effective? The Pilot Athletic Department reached all of their goals for the season in both men's basketball and women's soccer, with women's soccer ticket sales seeing an overall increase of 59.7% (including a 134.2% increase in student attendance) and men's basketball witnessing a 26.9% boost in overall ticket sales (including a 36.7% increase in student attendance).

After the successful implementation of the 2004-05 marketing plan, the Pilots have already begun adjusting the plan to further improve ticket sales efforts for the 2005-06 season.

**** Case Study Questions ****

- 1.) *What was the University of Portland athletic department working to achieve with the marketing plan? What was the goal?*
- 2.) *What role did the S.W.O.T. analysis play in the creation of an effective marketing plan for Pilot athletics?*
- 3.) *Why do you think the University of Portland has decided to spend the time developing another marketing plan for the next season?*