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The Relative Effectiveness of Marketing Techniques on the Attendance of Minor
Professional Hockey Teams

by

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Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research,
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts in Sport Studies.

University of Ottawa

1993



Anne Vaughan, Ottawa, Canada, 1993



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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the relative effects of selected marketing techniques on the attendance of minor professional hockey teams during two stages of a playing season. Twenty-six marketing techniques comprised a questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale to describe the degree of relative importance each marketing technique had on attendance from the view of the population of 28 marketing directors in the American (AHL) and International (IHL) Hockey Leagues. It was hypothesized that no differences would exist in marketing techniques between high and low attendance teams during two stages of the playing season, and that no differences would exist in marketing techniques between winning and losing teams during two stages of the season. Descriptive statistics were used to determine general trends in the data and independent samples *t*-tests were used to test for significant differences. The response rate was 93% and significant differences resulted. Marketing techniques generating differences for high and low attendance teams were media relations, and ticket options and incentives during the first half of the season. Winning and losing teams differed significantly for media sponsorships during the first half of the season, and for ticket options and incentives, and signage during the second half. This study provided information regarding the marketing environment and the marketing activities of minor professional hockey teams and indicated a further need to study marketing techniques used in different sports.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Traditionally, winning has been the measure of success in sport (Templin & Washburn, 1986). This product orientation to sport has created what some sources call a sport "marketing myopia" (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Voss & Williams, 1982).

By viewing themselves as primarily producers of winning teams, sport organizations as a whole have defined too narrowly the nature of their product. Such myopia has prevented management from the advantage to be gained from broadening their concept of the product ... In the broad sense, the athletic contest plus all that surrounds it make up the total product offer. Yet, because of the wide-spread adherence to the myth of winning, little is known about which specific attributes of the entertainment experience elicit sports attendance or participation and which do not.

Certainly, winning is one element. (Voss & Williams, 1982, p.15)

In order to measure success, an organization must first conceptualize what it is and what it offers. Leonard II (1993) suggested "sport may be thought of as a special type of game requiring physical competition (against other players, the clock, or impersonal foes...)" (p.11). This conceptualization provides some fundamental criteria for the production of sport but does not take into account the fact that production must be managed. In the case of professional sport,

operational costs such as facility rental and player salaries must be offset. Subsequently, sport management becomes another criterion for success and means that some form of revenue is necessary if the production of sport is to remain viable.

According to Kotler (1982), revenue may be obtained from an audience and "organizations may measure their success in terms of the size of the audience attracted" (p.401). More recently, professional sport has sought larger audiences through the broadcast media, thus increasing income from the sale of broadcast rights and corporate sponsorships to guarantee the success of management (The Economist, 1992). It would, therefore, be logical to consider sport a business, and like all other businesses, it must engage in activities that persuade prospective customers to purchase the product it offers.

McCarthy and Shapiro (1983) described marketing as "the performance of activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to user to satisfy the customer and accomplish the organization's objectives" (p.7). According to Sutton (1991), an initial step in the implementation of the marketing process would be an assessment of the marketing environment, defined by Kotler (1986) as "the actors and forces that are external to the marketing management of the firm and that impinge on the marketing management's ability to develop and maintain successful transactions with its target customers" (p.124).

Previous studies have identified several factors present in the marketing environment of professional league sports that appear to affect attendance (Jones, 1969; Demmert, 1973; Noll, 1974, 1991; Fillingham, 1977; Sloane, 1980; Markham & Teplitz, 1981; Schofield, 1983; Marcum & Greenstein, 1985; Cairns,

Jennett and Sloane, 1986; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989, 1992). Schofield (1983) identified variables which he summarized as demographic, economic, game attractiveness and residual preferences. Hansen and Gauthier (1989) found that eleven factors seemed to affect game and season attendance. These were team as a contender, game locale attractiveness, appeal of attending a game, scheduled quarter of season, team quality, other sport in the area, ticket value, time of game, area demographics, facility size, and week end game.

Studies in a sport context which focus on marketing objectives have most recently been discussed by Hansen and Gauthier (1992). They found that North American "professional teams favoured 5 of 6 objectives over university teams: value of ticket price, entertainment value of the sport, image of the team, community-oriented nature of the team, and availability of athletes for community events" (p.27). In studies by Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) marketing techniques associated with selected objectives were evaluated. Respectively, American college athletic Men's Division 1 organizations and National Basketball Association teams considered season ticket purchase options and business sponsorships most important in increasing attendance. To date, limited research related to attendance factors and the marketing objectives of professional sport teams has been done. Further, a paucity of studies exists related to marketing techniques and their effect on the attendance of minor professional teams.

Since few empirical studies exist for marketing of professional team sport, especially at a minor professional level, the purpose of this study was to provide much needed information about the marketing techniques used by minor professional hockey teams. By examining the relative effect of marketing techniques on their attendance, these teams may be able to identify strengths or weaknesses in their marketing strategies and better evaluate their marketing programs.

Minor professional teams find themselves in quite a different marketing environment than do their major league counterparts (Johnson, 1993; Wulf, 1990; Berg, 1990; Rudolph, 1988; The Financial Post Magazine, 1983). For the most part, these teams are found in smaller markets and face competition from their parent leagues. Major professional events are televised any time, day or night where a higher quality product is perceived to be readily available (Watkins, 1991). In addition, because minor league teams exist to supply player talent to their parent clubs, they have no control over the quality of their product. "Minor league teams operate under a number of handicaps it's difficult for a team to establish an identity or for fans to develop loyalties" (Berg, 1990, p.24).

Unlike major professional teams who derive considerable income from broadcast rights and sponsorships, minor professional team sports primarily rely on attendance for their revenue (The Economist, 1992; Wulf, 1990). Consequently, these teams must engage in a variety of marketing techniques to fill their arenas with spectators (Berg, 1990). Rudolph (1988) claimed that promotion accounts for large attendance increases in minor league baseball and that an "estimated three-

quarters of all minor league clubs are running in the black, in contrast to one-quarter 15 years ago" (p.39).

Marcum & Greenstein (1985) and Branvold & Bowers (1992) have indicated that promotion may have some effect on baseball attendance, however, we know very little about how and when it is used. Although there appear to be differences between high and low attendance teams, the marketing techniques which have been measured have been vaguely described. For example, Marcum and Greenstein (1985) found that "major promotions" increased the attendance in major league professional baseball but they did not adequately define what a "major promotion" was. Similarly, Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) investigated the relative importance of marketing techniques used by men's college sport organizations and the National Basketball Association but provided only general descriptions for them, for example, "used promotional strategies".

This study attempted to derive specific marketing techniques and to determine their perceived relative effect on attendance. In as much as only a few studies have been concerned with the topic, this study has attempted to broaden our knowledge in this area. Knowledge in the area of marketing may assist sport organizations in increasing membership, sponsorship, and attendance at their events. It will serve to provide additional information and ideas to sport marketing practitioners in all professional sports. Investigating the relative importance of marketing techniques should also help American and International Hockey League personnel evaluate the effectiveness of their respective marketing programs.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the relative effect of selected marketing techniques on the attendance of minor professional hockey teams during two stages of the season. In particular, teams were grouped and compared as;

1) High or low attendance based on the average percent capacity attendance of each team facility over a period of three years. Those above the mean of the population were high attendance whereas those below the mean were low attendance.

2) Winning or losing based on the average points percentage of each team over a period of three years. Those above the mean of the population were winning and those below the mean were losing. (Refer to Appendices 2 and 3)

Hypotheses

1) That no difference existed in the relative importance of marketing techniques used between high or low attendance minor professional hockey teams during two stages of the playing season.

2) That no difference existed in the relative importance of marketing techniques used between winning or losing minor professional hockey teams during two stages of the playing season.

Definitions

Attendance - The number of paid attendees. Percent capacity attendance is the ratio of average season attendance and the seating capacity of each home arena.

Team - The organization that manages and administers the business of a minor professional hockey club.

American Hockey League - Comprised of 16 professional hockey teams, this is the formal organization that determines terms of membership; implements cooperative functions within the group such as rules and structure of competition; and guides the relationship between members and outside groups. This organization is known as the AHL.

International Hockey League - Comprised of 12 professional hockey teams, it is structured and functions similarly to the AHL. This organization is known as the IHL.

Marketing Techniques - Specific activities or tactics undertaken by an organization to execute its marketing strategy and achieve its marketing objectives (Kotler & Armstrong, 1991).

Assumptions and Limitations

- 1) The population was limited to the American and International minor professional hockey leagues whose 28 clubs represented the direct farm teams of all respective National Hockey League clubs.
- 2) Specific marketing techniques were derived from the literature and validated by a panel of judges but may not have been all inclusive.
- 3) It was assumed that marketing directors of all teams in the sample were knowledgeable of their respective marketing areas.
- 4) Data for a "play offs" stage of the season were not included in the final analysis due to insufficient responses.
- 5) For the purpose of obtaining a Cronbach Alpha coefficient only, the (N/A) response was considered to have no degree of importance on increasing attendance and, thus, was equivalent to a Likert score of (1) on a scale of 1 to 5.
- 6) In the six cases where teams had not been in a market for three years, point percentages and percent capacity attendance were averaged only for the time they had been in their respective market. (Refer to Appendix 1).

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

The thrust of this chapter will be a review of research and writing related to the marketing of sport. Specifically, sections will deal with factors in the marketing environment that affect sport attendance, the various components of sport marketing strategy and the techniques applied by marketers to positively affect attendance at sport events.

The Marketing Environment

The Marketing Concept

Definitions of the marketing concept are as varied as there are authors on the subject (McCarthy & Shapiro, 1983; Houston, 1986; Kotler & Armstrong, 1991). These views of the concept seem to have two common aspects. First, that the managerial philosophy of an organization's goals focus on determining the needs and wants of exchange partners, and second, that an organization then attempts to satisfy those needs and wants. For the purpose of this study, the marketing concept will be considered a managerial approach to achieving organizational goals by producing a product which focuses on satisfying the customer - at a profit. In particular,

The marketing concept states that an entity achieves its own exchange determined goals most efficiently through a thorough understanding of potential exchange partners and their needs and wants, through a thorough understanding of the costs associated with satisfying those needs and wants, and then designing, producing and offering products in light of this understanding. (Houston, 1986, p. 85)

Several authors have developed models suggesting how an organization might change toward a marketing concept philosophy by implementing a strategic marketing planning process (Zeigler, 1980; McCarthy & Shapiro, 1983; Kotler, 1986; Wilkinson, 1988; Yiannakis, 1989; Brooksbank, 1991; Lovelock, 1991; Sutton, 1991). These models have common stages of process including goals, environmental and needs assessment, strategies, tactics, and some form of evaluation. For a sport organization, the marketing concept could be implemented by means of Kotler's "Marketing Planning Process" framework (1986). He suggested that a marketing mission statement be articulated and that the marketing environment be assessed. From these, opportunities and threats can be identified in the market place and marketing objectives can be determined. Next, marketing strategies involving target markets, positioning and marketing mix are established and "action plans" or marketing techniques are implemented to achieve the marketing objectives. All activities are guided by revenue and expense budgets and progress is monitored through market research and review of the strategies implemented. (Refer to Table 1)

Table 1

The Strategic Marketing Planning Process**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****Goals****(Sales Targets & Expense Budgets)****SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS****Market Environment Assessment****(Internal & External - Review of product, organization & competition)****Threats & Opportunities****(Current & future problems and opportunities)****OBJECTIVES & ISSUES****Marketing Program Goals****(Market share, sales objectives, competitive standing)****MARKETING STRATEGIES****Target Markets and Positioning****(Target segments, competitive position & level of product quality)****Marketing Mix****(Logical plan to reach objectives in market place involving product, price, place and promotion)****MARKETING ACTION PLANS****Marketing Techniques****(Detailed activities and tactics used to implement marketing strategies primarily involving advertising, publicity, personal selling and sales promotions)****BUDGETS & CONTROLS****Budgets****(Approved revenue and budgets permitting implementation of action plans)****Controls****(Monitoring progress through market research & review of marketing strategies)**

Note. Adapted from Principles of Marketing by P. Kotler, 1986, Englewood

Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

In addition to this schema, an analytical model for marketing (Table 2) has been developed specifically for sport (Fiansen & Gauthier, 1990). This is similar to Kotler's Strategic Marketing Planning Process and places special characteristics of team sport at the situational analysis (factors affecting attendance), objectives and issues (team sport marketing objectives), marketing strategies (marketing mix strategies) and marketing action plans (sport marketing techniques) stages of the process. The focus of this study was on the implementation of the marketing techniques section of these models by minor professional hockey teams.

Sport Marketing

"Sport marketing" was a term first used in Advertising Age which referred to the use of sport as a promotional vehicle for marketers (Kesler, 1979). This, however, identified only one aspect of the sport marketing function which Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) more precisely described as,

all activities designed to meet the needs and wants of sport consumers through exchange processes. Sport marketing has developed two major thrusts: the marketing of sport products and services directly to consumers of sport, and marketing of other consumer and industrial products or services through the use of sport promotions. (p.6)

Table 2

Analytical Model for Sport Marketing (Hansen & Gauthier, 1990)

FACTORS AFFECTING ATTENDANCE

<u>Per Game Basis</u>	<u>Factors</u>	<u>Per Season Basis</u>
Team as a contender	1	Team as a contender
Game locale attractiveness	2	Game locale attractiveness
Athlete quality	3	Scheduled quarter of season
Scheduled quarter of season	4	Team quality
Area demographics	5	Athlete quality
Other sport in area	6	Other sport in area
Team quality	7	Ticket value
Time of game	8	Time of game
Rivalry of teams	9	Area demographics
Non-weekend and television effect	10	Facility size
Facility size	11	Weekend game

TEAM SPORT MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Factors

- 1 Athlete quality
- 2 Community Image of team
- 3 Entertainment value of sport
- 4 Team marketing
- 5 Team as a contender
- 6 Game location attractiveness

MARKETING MIX STRATEGIES

Product, price, place and promotion

SPORT MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Ticket sales, public relations, promotional incentives, game promotion, advertising, concessions, sponsorship, licensed products, logos, programs, etc.

SPORT MARKETING PLAN TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE / REVENUE

Per game Per stage of season Per season

From this description it would appear that sport marketing serves a variety of audiences and marketers alike. Firstly, it is marketing to promote sport participation. These sport consumers would include participants attracted to activities, athletes, officials, sports media personnel or possibly those gambling on events. Secondly, it is marketing to promote spectatorship. This audience would include persons in attendance at an event; watching, listening or reading through the media; or those who experience the product indirectly through word of mouth via spectators or participants. According to Mullin (1985), this form of marketing would include indirect association with a sport such as purchasing licensed merchandise. Guttman (1986), on the other hand, clearly delineated the sport spectator as "anyone who views a sports event, either in situ or through visual media such as film or television" (p.6). For the purposes of this study, spectators would be identified as strictly those who attend an event and could be considered sport consumers. Thirdly, marketing may promote consumption of consumer products via sport. This would be a form of indirect sport marketing through the use of sponsorship or promotional licensing. Voss and Williams(1982) referred to this as "marketing with sport" and explained that sponsors use sport to accomplish their own marketing objectives (p.11).

The type of marketing which promotes spectatorship, particularly attendance at a sport event is the marketing objective of concern in this study. Upon analysis of the market environment and its opportunities and threats, target markets are selected and a desired market position is determined (Kotler & Armstrong, 1991). Once market position has been established the "marketing mix" is developed and finally the marketing effort is managed.

Factors Affecting Attendance

According to Kotler (1986) "marketing success depends on developing a sound marketing mix (the controllable variables) adapted to trends and developments in the marketing environment (the uncontrollable variables)" (p.124). Understanding the consumer decision making process reduces some of the uncertainty of these two variables. Generally speaking, consumers pass through three stages of buyer readiness which are cognitive (awareness and knowledge), affective (liking, preference, and conviction) and behavioral (purchase) (Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 1991). The "Frequency Escalator for Sport Attendance and Participation" is a sport specific concept based on this buyer readiness approach which situates target customers on a continuum of awareness and consumption of the sport product. It is comprised of "Nonaware Nonconsumers, Aware Nonconsumers, Media Consumers, Light Users, Medium Users, and Heavy Users" (Mullin, 1985, p.163). Customers may be found at any one of these steps of buyer readiness and marketers must provide information or fulfill needs at all steps of the consumer decision making process if a marketing program is to be successful.

Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993), Exley Jr. (1992) and Yiannakis (1989) concur that a problem in the practice of sport marketing today is the lack of basic client information and data collection. Exley Jr. (1992) indicated that information from primary and secondary data sources is used to develop and monitor marketing strategies and techniques and that it is essential for sport marketing success. Primary data would include information about existing and prospective customers,

their attitudes, interests and opinions, their purchase and consumption behavior, as well as their media preferences. Secondary data includes market environment information such as population size, demographic composition, a profile of the competition and levels of consumption. Factors affecting attendance at sport events may be classed as essential primary data that sport marketers need to develop a full understanding of the marketing environment.

In a review of published empirical studies Cairns, Jennett and Sloane (1986) identified eleven studies in which environmental factors and the estimation of demand for attendance at sporting events was a central concern. These authors grouped the studies into three categories: 1) The effect of market size on demand. Investigations into the effect of market size on attendance at major league sport events include Jones (1969), Demmert (1973) Noll (1974), Sloane (1980), Markham and Teplitz (1981), Hay and Rao (1982), Fullerton and Merz (1982), Schofield (1983) and Cairns et al (1986). In all of the above, population was found to be the single most positively significant factor affecting attendance. 2) The effect of price and income on demand. Most of these researchers found the effect of price on attendance not to be significant, meanwhile, evidence regarding per capita income was mixed. Cairns et al (1986) cautioned that "all attempts at relating demand to price and income have been relatively crude and have not been entirely successful" (p. 17). 3) The effect of uncertainty of outcome on demand. This seems much more complex than the previous factors as uncertainty of outcome had different meanings to different investigators. As a result of these different interpretations and assumptions, findings relating to this idea have also been mixed. Other factors affecting attendance that have been studied but received

inconclusive results include the weather and television broadcast of home games (Cairns et al, 1986) and scheduling (Marcum & Greenstein, 1983; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989).

In 1989, Hansen and Gauthier undertook a review of studies which focused on demand for attendance based on forty factors derived from the literature. In a further study of professional sport leagues and college athletic organizations in North America, Hansen and Gauthier (1990) obtained data from a sample of marketing directors representing 72 professional teams, 62 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) teams and 28 Canadian Inter university Athletic Union (CIAU) teams. They identified eleven factors which seem to affect attendance on a per game or per season basis. These included the core product factors of the team as a contender, athlete and team quality, and product extension factors such as game locale attractiveness, scheduled quarter of season, ticket value, time of game, weekend game; and market environment factors such as area demographics, other sports in area, and facility size. (See Table 2).

This research indicated that although the core product factors of game quality were perceived to significantly affect attendance, other product extension factors were also seen to be significant. In a study of golf spectators and event organizers, Hansen and Gauthier (1993) identified five clusters of spectator views of professional golf events that seem to support their previous findings. In addition to the quality of play of golf and the entertainment provided by golfing action, other important factors concerning the event, atmosphere, and course setting were frequently cited by spectators. Given these findings it would be logical to conclude that items relating to convenience, such as game locale attractiveness and facility

atmosphere could be important in formulating the sport marketing plan. Furthermore, teams may benefit from assembling game schedules that accommodate marketing objectives.

Petto (1982), Marcum and Greenstein (1985), and Branvold and Bowers (1992) are among a few researchers who have attempted to measure the effect of marketing techniques on demand for attendance. Petto surveyed baseball spectators to determine if give away days influenced attendance. Results were inconclusive, but he found that the age group between 13 and 20 years seemed most responsive to such promotions. Marcum and Greenstein performed a within-season analysis between two Major League Baseball teams and found that "major" promotions were significant factors affecting attendance, while Branvold and Bowers (1992) found significantly higher attendance among NCAA Division 1 baseball teams who used promotions as compared to those who did not.

Two studies have focused on the promotion of sport, and more specifically, on the relative importance of marketing techniques used in a team sport setting. Hambleton (1987) studied marketing techniques used amongst National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1 institutions. She surveyed marketing directors of high attendance men's football and basketball teams for revenue and non-revenue events. Hambleton found that the top three priorities of marketing techniques used by all groups were "good public relations", "offered priority seating/parking to donors" and "the option of purchasing a season ticket" (p.144). Coan (1990) surveyed marketing directors in the National Basketball Association (NBA) using Hambleton's instrument. In this case, Coan compared techniques for high and low attendance teams and found "season ticket option" and "obtained

business sponsorships" were significant for both groups. He also determined that high attendance teams did not "implement a strategic planning process" and did not "use newspaper advertising" whereas the low attendance group gave these techniques high priority (p.119). Although the findings of these researchers were limited they do provide a basis from which to examine more specific marketing techniques used in the minor professional hockey setting.

Marketing Strategies

Target Marketing and Positioning

Given the research on factors affecting attendance, one would try to position the sport product so as to capture a target audience. Reis and Trout (1986) described positioning as "what you do to the mind of the prospect. That is, you position the product in the mind of the prospect" (p.2).

One important way that sport enhances its image and positions itself is through its involvement in the community. The community in which a professional sport organization is found and the relationship between the two can have major implications for the marketing program of a team. Johnson (1993) claimed that an existential relationship exists between a team and the community.

Even though large segments of the public do not attend games, they do follow the team. The team, in some sense, is theirs. This is even true of unpopular or losing teams. If citizens did not care about these teams, few would get angry or emotional over their performances or the antics of their owners and players, and the media would not provide as much coverage as they do. (p.65)

Johnson added that a cooperative and supportive relationship between minor league sports and the community is particularly important because of the competitive climate and secondary nature of the quality of the minor league product. He suggested that sport organizations become involved in their communities by supporting charities and by "formalizing the concept of partnership in a way that produces a long-term, collaborative relationship that recognizes the interests of the community" (p.69).

According to Branch (1992), traditional sport marketing positioning has depended on "brand" or team loyalty. He added that this positioning strategy inherently appeals to the declining market segment known as the sport "purist" and that sport can no longer resort to this positioning strategy for survival. "Instead, sport marketers must broaden their program concept and more clearly define their product and its position or 'niche' in order to appeal to a broader array of consumers" (p.22). In order to appeal to this larger audience, Sutton (1991) explained that sport marketers often position an event (the product) as more than "the game" or activity itself. He explained that the product is comprised of "a bundle of satisfaction that buyers perceive they will obtain if they enter into a transaction. The bundle includes everything, favorable and unfavorable, that a

buyer receives in the exchange" (p.156). Accordingly, he identified three basic product dimensions of attributes, benefits and what he called the "marketing support system". Attributes refer to characteristics associated with the game itself such as quality of play; benefits relate to the ability of the product to provide customer satisfaction in a functional, psychological and social sense, for example, the enjoyment and social interaction provided by attending a game. The marketing support system includes services provided in addition to the game itself, such as promotion and ticket services.

By adding value to the product with benefits and the marketing support system, it becomes positioned in the mind of consumer as something more than just a game. Wulf (1990) described minor league baseball, for example, as

good, relatively inexpensive fun and food for the whole family. They are giving towns a sense of civic pride ... they are giving fans an opportunity to spend time with their neighbors, to talk about the great season so - and - so had here on his way to the big leagues. (p.34)

It is logical that in addition to attendance factors, one needs to know the spectator, thus the sport spectators' views of the team or event is an important basis for developing a market position. "Spectators enjoy and are attracted to many different kinds of sport events for a variety of reasons ..." (Hansen & Gauthier, 1993, p.17).

To date very little sport specific research has been conducted on this topic. In a study of the Ladies Professional Golf Association Tour (LPGA), Hansen and Gauthier (1993) found that the top five reasons spectators attended events were seeing the "best" perform, seeing live action, seeing finesse of shot making, being

close to golfers, and feeling the excitement/drama of the event. However, fan reasons to attend may vary across sports. Research by Wann and Branscombe (1990,1991,1993) has specifically focused on team identification of fans by means of BIRGing (basking-in-reflected glory) and CORFing (cutting-off-reflected failure). They described this fan identification process as one in which fans associate themselves with successful, winning teams (BIRGing) but distance themselves from those teams that lose (CORFing). They found that for men's varsity basketball higher fan identification increased tendencies to BIRG and lower fan identification increased tendencies to CORF. These results appear to provide further considerations for the sport marketer when assessing the motives of spectators to attend events.

Several authors claim that identification of consumer groups or market segments is often based on the consumer's state of being (demographic information), the consumer's state of mind (psycho and sociographic information), product usage rates, and/or product benefits (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Gray, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 1991; Stotlar, 1989; Yiannakis, 1989). "The recognition of differences in consumers' background needs and purchase frequencies is a vital stage in the marketing process" (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993, p.33). Sport marketers must, therefore, determine exactly what their product is and which consumer group(s) they will target.

The Sport Marketing Mix

Mullin (1985) described sport as a distinct commodity with limitations and considerations that requires a customized rather than mainstream marketing approach. Thus, authors have cited a variety of ingredients that an organization can blend together to satisfy its target market. These might include people (Yiannakis, 1989), planning and control (Rushton & Carson, 1989), as well as packaging, positioning and perception (Sutton, 1991). Yet with so many ingredients available, all authors have consistently included the 4 p's of product, price, place and promotion as basic components of the marketing mix (McCarthy & Shapiro, 1983; Kotler, 1986).

Developed in the 1950's and 1960's, the 4 p's have become the most accepted approach to marketing strategies, however, according to van Waterschoot and Van den Bulte (1992), problems arise from the promotion category "itself being split into advertising, personal selling, publicity (in the sense of free advertising) and sales promotion" (p.84). They suggested that the sales promotion category be split up according to the aim of the promotional instrument in context to the other p's. For example, if a price discount coupon is used as a marketing technique it would be classified as a price promotion rather than simply a sales promotion. For the purposes of this study the marketing mix is considered to be the conventional 4 p's with particular attention given to promotion, "the marketing mix element that receives most attention from sport marketers" (Mullin, Hardy &

Sutton, 1993, p.38). The focus of this study was on selected marketing techniques generally associated with each of the 4 p's.

Product

Kotler & Armstrong (1991) recommended that when defining the product one think of it in terms of three different levels. The first level, representing the "core product", would be the core benefits of a purchase. Hansen and Gauthier (1992) described the sport product as "the game involving two teams made up of skilled athletes performing according to common rules and, at least in the case of professional sport, satisfying a demand for entertainment" (p.29). To continue, Staudohar and Mangan (1991) explained that "professional team sports as packaged events provide considerable entertainment and pleasure for spectators" (p.1). Several authors have identified a key benefit of the core product of professional team sport as "uncertainty of outcome" (Jones, 1969; Demmert, 1973; Noll, 1974; Cairns, Jennet & Sloane, 1986). The closer two teams are matched or the greater the uncertainty, the more appealing the contest is for the ticket buyer. In addition, Noll (1991) identified "absolute quality of play" which refers to overall team quality combined with the presence of star players, "competitive balance" and "integrity of play" as essential core product characteristics of a successful major professional league (p.30). Thus, the excitement and drama of competition, athlete skill and personality, and tradition of a team might all be considered part of the core product of sport.

The second level would be the "actual product" consisting of product features surrounding the core product such as quality level, brand name and packaging. In the case of sport this might include the league of play, the quality of the teams and players, the mascot and logo, and even the game ticket. Unlike consumer and industrial products which market their product quality, the sport marketer cannot control the performance of a team. This makes it very difficult for a team to rely on the actual product for its product strategy. Another characteristic that makes sport difficult to market is its intangibility. Although not widely accepted, Stotlar (1989) noted that some business managers believe "the product is the ticket, not the game" (p.94).

Some additional characteristics of the actual sport product were described by Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993). They indicated that consumers view and interpret sport subjectively, coming away from an event with only a memory. No two spectators perceive events the same way, thus making it difficult to ensure satisfaction. They also explained that sport often is a social facilitator because it is publicly consumed usually in the company of friends, relatives or in a group. In a 1989 study cited by Sutton (1991), "94% of those people attending professional sporting events attend with at least one other person, and their enjoyment of that activity depends on the enjoyment of others" (p.161). According to Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993), another characteristic of sport is that it is both a consumer product (consumed by an end-user) and an industrial product (used for production of another product). Through sponsorship or group purchasing sport is used by business to promote products as well as to entertain clients and employees (Crowley, 1991).

The third level or "augmented product " would be additional benefits and services surrounding or enhancing the core product that have been termed "product extensions" (Stotlar, 1989; Gray, 1991; Branch, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). These include factors which enhance the spectating experience, for example, the quality of seating and concessions, reasonable prices, facility atmosphere, scenery, convenient scheduling, parking and ease of accessibility, between play entertainment, and fitness benefits. Unlike factors in the marketing environment and uncertainty of outcome of the core product, these authors also consider product extensions to be within the control of the sport marketer. Several authors have stressed that marketing emphasis should be placed on product extensions rather than on the core product (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Hansen & Gauthier, 1993; Branch, 1992; Gray, 1991; Stotlar, 1989).

Characteristics from all three product levels are used in the product strategy. Once the product strategy has been developed the marketing mix components of price, place and promotion are then considered and respective strategies are designed keeping characteristics of all levels of the product in mind. Specifically, when designing the marketing plan an organization would relate the positive product characteristics from each level and implement marketing techniques to communicate these. A professional hockey team, for example, might implement a product strategy that communicates the excitement of live professional hockey action as viewed from a good seat in a crowded but comfortable, well lighted arena.

Price

McCarthy and Shapiro (1983) considered this element of the mix to be "the price the target market is willing to pay" (p.44). Morris and Calantone (1990) explained that pricing strategies are usually cost-based or market-based.

Cost-based strategies usually rely on a formula in which costs are fully allocated to units of production, and a mark-up or rate of return is added to this total. Market-based approaches tend to focus either on competition, customer demand, or both. (Morris & Calantone, 1990, p.323)

The concept of price elasticity is vital to the determination of ticket price (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Gray, 1991; Stotlar, 1989; Cairns et al, 1986; Noll, 1974; Demmert, 1973; Jones, 1969). Elasticity or inelasticity refers to the relationship of price to the consumption of a product, in other words, proportional changes in demand as a result of a price increase or decrease. Ideally, price should be set at a point where consumers do not resist purchasing a ticket because the price is too high. On the other hand, a team would not want to risk lost revenue because the consumer would still have paid more to attend an event. In the case of team sport, the level of profit maximization derived from attendance is determined, in part, by the seating capacity of a club's playing facility. Noll (1991) explained that initial sales growth is derived from increasing attendance, but as a sell out position is reached profit maximization is achieved through increased ticket prices.

Various pricing strategies exist. For example, skim pricing refers to a strategy of high end pricing and could be used when a team has reached a sell out position or when introducing a new product "particularly if the demand is inelastic -

that is, does not change significantly regardless of price - and there is little competition" (Gray, 1991, p. 323). Conversely, penetration pricing or a strategy of low end pricing might be used at a different stage of the product life cycle when increasing market share, discouraging competition, or attracting a mass market is an objective; for example, attracting fans to a new team in a town where competition from other professional sport and entertainment is high.

Once a pricing strategy has been selected it is implemented by means of pricing structures and tactical plans (Morris & Calantone, 1990). The simplest pricing structure, that of a single price for all, allows for zero flexibility especially if target marketing or positioning is an objective, if market conditions change, or even if new profit opportunities arise. Discount pricing such as "Two for One" deals, group or volume discounts and differentiated pricing such as "Gold, Red or Blue" seating or student and senior tickets would also be considered pricing structures.

Pricing structures, which are considered price promotions, may be introduced on a temporary or limited time basis. For example, special "multi - game ticket packages", tickets accompanied by premiums and incentives, or specially priced events such as "Ladies Night" may be used as tactics or techniques that temporarily vary price to stimulate demand. A variety of other pricing tactics exist in sport, for example, "trading-out" is a common pricing tactic whereby tickets are often exchanged or bartered for advertising or prizes of equivalent value (Gray, 1991).

Price promotion may also involve various techniques of incentive to attract customers and often takes the form of volume discounts, rebates, two for one deals, coupons, or favorable terms of payment and credit (van Waterschoot & Van

den Bulte, 1992; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Morris & Calantone, 1990). Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) suggested that price promotions should be used with caution and that marketers should be selective with the events for which they are used. Further, they described the phenomenon of the "cherry picker" who is "one who attends games only when there is a promotion" (p. 187). Similarly, Gray (1991) indicated that discount pricing of sport events should only be used in a way that "solves the dilemma of the sport marketer who wants to attract customers but not at the expense of reducing the perceived value of the event" (p.324).

Sutton (1991) reported that sport spectators do not seem to give price the same importance as consumers of other more conventional products. Citing Rudman and Sutton (1989) he indicated that fans ranked cost of tickets after such considerations as "opponent, team record, presence of superstars and effect of the game on league standings" (p.161). In addition, Stotlar (1989) suggested that customers seem to equate price with value and that "there is a general sense that you get what you pay for" (p.106). Sutton (1991) claimed that pricing alone does not affect demand. Rather, "promotional strategies and product positioning may alter perceived value, and in some cases, actual price (for a time). Such strategies combined with pricing usually increase consumer demand for the product" (p.162). According to these authors, quality of the ticket can be defined by the team and is considered controllable, thus, pricing tactics are often promotional in nature.

Place

McCarthy and Shapiro (1983) described place as the "right product reaching the target market where and when it is needed" (p.43). As a marketing mix component, place not only refers to where a product is produced and consumed, but also how it gets from producer to consumer. In addition, place relates to whether the product can be consumed at the time the customer wants it. In reference to this question authors who have examined scheduling of events determined that time of day, time of week, and time of season may influence attendance (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Marcum & Greenstein, 1985).

Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) explained that "place" or distribution function of sport differs from other products but is similar to that of the "service" sector. Like a service, sport is intangible and is not physically distributed. Instead, it is produced and consumed simultaneously at the site of an event, hence facility location is important.

The location of the premises at which a service is performed is a vital ingredient in the overall marketing mix ... Facilities location decisions are, therefore, marketing rather than operational decisions. (Rushton & Carson, 1989, p.36)

Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) explained that for large major sport events "90 percent of fans typically travel less than one hour to the stadium" (p.229). They identified key dimensions of facility location to be ease of accessibility,

geographical location with respect to its drawing radius and drive time.

Attractiveness of a facility or qualities of a site are also important considerations for location and customer convenience. Age of a facility, design and layout, maintenance, cleanliness, atmosphere, quality of seating, quality of concessions and amenities all impact the consumer's perception of attractiveness (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Russo, 1985).

It should also be noted that games are broadcast and tickets must be distributed to potential customers. Sport organizations have a variety of ticket distribution channels available to them. They may choose to handle sales "in-house" making tickets available only at their facility box office or they may attempt to facilitate purchases through a number of off-site outlets (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Gray, 1991; Wilkinson, 1988; Moore, 1985). These might include cooperative selling arrangements with local retailers or may involve a contract with professional ticket sales agencies such as Ticketron or Bass/Ticketmaster. The latter usually charge customers a convenience surcharge, however, ease of access and availability of tickets may garner a substantial amount of impulse purchasing. Other ticket distribution techniques include extended box office hours, special toll-free telephone reservation service, group ticket sales, telemarketing ticket sales programs and creative ticket sales promotions such as mascot appearances at community events (Moore, 1985; Wilkinson, 1988; Gray, 1991; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993).

All of these variables have traditionally been considered uncontrollable factors in the marketing environment because decisions about such things as playing facilities and scheduling have usually been made from an operational perspective.

However, there appears to be justification that decisions involving "place" should be controlled and included in the marketing planning process.

Promotion

Once a firm has determined the product and pricing strategies and how the product will be made available, it must communicate these to its target customers. It is generally accepted that the promotion category of the marketing mix has its own components known as the "promotion mix" which include personal selling, public relations, advertising, and a catch-all category of sales promotion (Mullin, Hardy, Sutton, 1993; van Waterschoot & Van den Bulte, 1992; Kotler & Armstrong, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Dommermuth, 1984). Sport marketing authors have stressed that promotion is a key component of a sport organization's marketing program and they have described it as specific activities designed to increase awareness, acceptance and sales of a product by targeted consumer group(s) (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 1993; Stier, Jr., 1992; Helitzer, 1992; Yiannakis, 1989; Wilkinson, 1988). In addition to stimulating demand for sport, when implemented in a unique, innovative manner it can "motivate specific changes in behavior concerning not only the sports program itself but also those individuals associated with the program" (Stier, Jr., 1992, p.44).

The promotion function may be implicit because "persuasive communication is inherent in the product itself, its price or the places through which it is sold" (Dommermuth, 1984, p. 5) or promotion may be explicit by means of various components of the promotion mix. Similarly, Engel, Warshaw

and Kinnear (1991) and Kotler and Armstrong (1991) explained that all elements of the marketing mix communicate to the customer. Thus, promotion is not mutually exclusive of product, price or place and each is of major concern in the promotional strategy.

In sport, most promotional strategies are comprised of sales promotions (Sutton, 1991). Branvold and Bowers (1992) identified six promotion categories for men's varsity baseball teams, of which sales promotions were the most common. These included give aways, drawings and contests, special target groups, activities, special themes and food/concessions. Branvold and Bowers (1992) and Sutton (1991) also noted that sales promotions include the other elements of the promotion mix. Van Waterschoot and Van den Bulte (1992), for example, recommended that if a price discount coupon is used as a marketing technique it should be classified as a price promotion rather than simply a sales promotion. As a result, sales promotion has more recently been presented in the literature in combination with the other marketing strategies, such as price promotion, distribution promotion, and product promotion (Mullin Hardy & Sutton, 1993; van Waterschoot & Van den Bulte, 1992; Morris & Calantone, 1990; Wilkinson, 1988). The focus of this section is on product promotion.

Product Promotion

The intent of product promotion may be to add value to a product. In this context the sport product is no longer simply "the game" but becomes part of the sport "package" (Sutton, 1991). According to several authors, minor leagues must

rely heavily on promotion to maintain or increase attendance at their events. Because the best players move up through the professional system on an ongoing basis, minor teams have virtually no control over the quality of their product. Therefore, the game and its players are not always a reliable way to attract people to an event. As a result, minor league professional sports have had to aggressively promote the benefits of their product in order to maintain and increase attendance (Berg, 1990; Branvold & Bowers, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993).

Premiums are added value product promotion techniques which offer another product or service for free or at a bargain price (Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991). This is often used as a purchase inducement or as advertising by means of logo imprinted merchandise. Premiums are used extensively in sport because they are relatively inexpensive, especially when sponsors pay for the privilege to provide a premium to spectators. According to Kotler and Armstrong (1991), one of the most successful premium promotions of all time was "diet Coke's 3-D glasses give-away" for the 1988 Superbowl half-time show (p.112). MacKay (1990) also outlined a preferred premium promotion known as a "triangle" promotion (p.92). He described how teams select a premium for an event and then seek both media and corporate sponsors to cover all costs related to the promotion.

In addition to selling licensed merchandise at concessions and retail outlets, sport organizations can generate considerable profit from the sale of these items to premium sponsors (Palmisano, 1990). The sale of logoed products is an effective marketing technique that generates considerable interest and awareness but is relatively cost - free (Irwin & Stotlar, 1993; Stier Jr., 1992). In a study of promotions used at American college baseball games, Branvold and Bowers (1992)

reported that the majority of most successful promotions involved premium sales promotions such as batting helmets, T-shirts, baseball cards, posters and seat cushions (p.23).

Other ways sport adds value to its product is by offering additional incentives to special target groups. For example, samples, coupons, lotteries, contests, pre - game sport clinics, entertainment, and designated group days, are techniques that fall into this category (Lamphear and Frankel ,1990; Bernabe, 1990). In addition, contests and sweepstakes add value to sport events by involving the spectator in the event (Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991). These can be implemented at little or no cost because prizes can usually be obtained from sponsors through "trading out" agreements. The sponsor receives event exposure such as PA announcements and event visibility that would otherwise be sold to advertisers (Testa, 1992; Blackwell, 1990; Eisen, 1989). Authors have repeatedly equated these promotions to the enjoyment, family atmosphere and social benefits of live sport (Helitzer, 1992; Stier, 1992; Sutton, 1991; Wulf, 1990; Berg, 1990; Lamphear & Frankel, 1990; Mullin, 1983). Stier Jr. (1992) claimed,

An athletic program that offers (promotes) a special family night experience to the community, complete with special activities for all family members, is attempting to 'sell' the concept that the sport event itself can be a family affair ... other reasons for conducting such a promotion might be to generate additional paying fans in the future as well as to create a positive image and wholesome reputation on behalf of the athletic event. (p.44)

Berg (1990) explained that special events entertainment is used extensively in minor professional baseball. Authors have suggested ways that sport marketers can combine the entertainment of a game with other forms of entertainment (Wilkinson, 1988; Eisen, 1989; Blackwell, 1990; Testa, 1992; Branvold & Bowers, 1992). These include pre and post game parties, concerts, and the use of celebrities for half-time entertainment to name just a few. Added benefits also appear in the form of mascot entertainment which most likely appeals to younger spectators and may contribute to the "family" or "fun" image that several authors have related (Wilkinson, 1988; Berg, 1990; Helitzer, 1990; Stier Jr., 1992).

There are many ways sport marketers package events so that added value is achieved for the spectator. Sport product promotion may also involve price promotion through the design of special ticket packages. Selected events are combined into affordable multi-game packages. These may be effective in inducing purchase of weaker draw events and may encourage medium frequency customers to escalate to season tickets (Severn, 1989; Sutton, 1991). The "sport package" includes all elements of the marketing mix, but most especially sales promotion activities such as mascots, contests, half-time shows, and incentives (Sutton, 1991). All provide a rather large bundle of benefits for the 'core' product or the game itself, and play an important role in the consumer decision making process.

Personal Selling

According to Engel, Warshaw and Kinnear (1991), the marketing and promotion mix of a product often determine the extent to which personal selling is

employed as a marketing technique. Personal selling is the most expensive form of promotion but when used appropriately it can be very cost effective (Kotler & Armstrong, 1991). Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) indicated that it is important for sales people to be effective in their endeavors because "personal selling is the most direct link between the organization, its products, and its consumers" (p.181). They suggested that all marketing personnel should engage in it regularly.

In a sport setting, personal sales usually includes the sale of tickets for the purpose of increasing direct revenue through spectatorship or sales for the purpose of increasing indirect revenue through sponsorship. There is a paucity of information available regarding the management of personal selling in the sport context.

Ticket sales strategies can be grouped in the three major functions of season ticket sales, group ticket sales, and occasional ticket sales. Season ticket sales represents a function of utmost importance. These subscribers represent heavy users at the conviction stage of consumer decision making, should be regularly contacted through the mail, and provided additional conveniences such as toll-free information lines as well as a variety of season ticket plans and options. (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 1993; White, 1991; Lamphear & Frankel, 1990; Wilkinson, 1988; Moore, 1985).

Group ticket sales is a volume selling technique involving corporate and community groups. These groups may wish to promote their products and services or entertain clients and personnel at sport events. Corporate sales are usually essential to a team (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993), while community group sales

can be maximized by means of a variety of techniques such as fundraising, special community nights, and direct mail follow up (Billoni, 1990).

Occasional ticket sales would require efforts be directed to nonaware and infrequent users. These target markets may need to primarily be informed or may need some kind of price incentive to induce an exchange. Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) indicated that these types of consumers do not account for the majority of increase in attendance at sport events. Instead of directing a personal selling campaign to this target group (which can be very expensive), advertising, public relations and sales promotions may be a more effective means of persuading these people to attend an event. Telemarketing is another technique that may be useful in communicating to occasional purchasers (Sutton, 1991; Case, 1988; Smith, 1982).

The promotional mix component of personal selling can be effective in the sales transactions of large numbers of seats. Without personal sales strategies in place a sport organization not only loses opportunity for increased attendance but also additional revenue from corporate sponsorships.

Public Relations

Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) suggested public relations is a management function reflecting policies and programs of top management which attempts to "earn public understanding and acceptance" (p. 249) for an organization. In so doing, an organization must communicate inwardly with its employees as well as outwardly with the public (Watkins, 1991 and Helitzer, 1992).

In much of the literature, this category of promotion is synonymous with publicity and includes promotional activities involving target groups within the community (community and corporate relations) or within one's own organization (employee relations), in addition to the mass media (media relations) (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Helitzer, 1992; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 1991; Watkins, 1991).

In the case of media relations, Mullin (1983) claimed that sport and the mass media share a unique relationship because sport represents its own news category, thus receiving considerable publicity that is not available to other industries. He suggested, however, that sport marketers must become more adept at stimulating public interest if continued gate support is expected. Likewise, Watkins (1991) indicated that public information "helps build loyal followers and spectators" (p.278). Media relations activities involve production of information about a sport organization such as media guides, schedules, statistics, feature stories, press releases and conferences, interviews, as well as entertainment of the media (Helitzer, 1992; Watkins, 1991; Hodges, 1989; Wilkinson, 1988). An important feature of media relations is that it is a cost - free means of promoting an organization. This is also true of the community relations program.

Through liaison with community groups a team can not only enhance its image, but can also increase attendance through the no - cost advertising and promotion which results from organizing events with these groups (Baggot, 1990). Community relations activities provide a direct line to an organization's target customers, thus serving to inform it about their needs and desires. Some public service activities which comprise a community relations program include:

involvement in youth sport development programs, provision of community fund raising opportunities, and involvement in cause - related or educational programs such as anti drug abuse and literacy campaigns (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Helitzer, 1992; Hardekopf, 1991; Bernabe, 1990; Canham, 1985).

in addition, special member or Booster clubs are "officially" associated with a team to provide publicity and fundraising opportunities as well as to build fan loyalty by providing special team events and incentives for its members (Schwartz, 1991). In most sport, especially professional organizations, athletes and coaches are frequently in demand for public and community appearances. This is another way an organization can effectively promote itself and enhance its community image.(Sutton, 1990; Brunt, 1990; Wilkinson, 1988; Mitchener, 1983).

In summary, several authors have stressed that public relations should be guided by an organization's overall marketing strategy (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Stier Jr., 1992; Hardekopf, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991). When implemented in this way, Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) claimed that "the power of positive public relations to amplify a good marketing communications plan should never be underestimated" (p. 248).

Advertising

The American Marketing Association (1960) has defined advertising as "any paid form of non - personal presentation and promotion of ideas goods or services by an identified sponsor" (p.20). This paid presentation reaches the

consumer in a variety of ways. McCarthy and Shapiro (1983) explained there is no simple answer to the question "What is the best medium?"

Effectiveness depends on how well it fits with the rest of the marketing strategy - that is, it depends on 1) your promotion objectives, 2) what target market you want to reach, 3) the funds available for advertising, and 4) the nature of the media - including who they reach, with what frequency, with what impact, and at what cost. (p.563)

Given the wide variety of media choices, the distinct characteristics of each, and the impact mass media may have on an audience, it is important that marketers develop an advertising campaign with utmost care. Such a campaign usually consists of at least the following techniques; direct mail, print media, signs, television and radio.

Direct Mail

This marketing technique is sometimes considered sales promotion when an incentive offer is its purpose. On the other hand, it is frequently considered advertising when used to communicate to or inform the prospective customer. Kotler & Armstrong (1991) described direct mail as "mailings that include letters, ads, samples, foldouts, and other 'salespeople on wings' sent to prospects on mailing lists" (p.398). On a cost - per - contact basis, direct mail can be an expensive medium (Dommermuth, 1984). However, it is highly flexible because the

advertiser can choose circulation, format (anything that can be mailed), and timing. This flexibility, therefore, increases the effectiveness of the direct mail medium.

Direct mail is most often used for what Mullin (1985) described as the "internal marketing" system in sport (p.160). Because existing ticket holders are known by name and address, the most effective means of paid communication is mail. Communicating to fans already "sold" on the product enables the team to promote an increase in frequency of usage and can be designed to "get them to bring their friends" (p.160). According to Mullin, internal marketing may stimulate consumption upwards along the "Frequency Escalator for Sport Attendance and Participation".

Print

The print media category is comprised of newspapers and magazines. Advantages of the daily newspaper as an advertising medium include its local news value and "credibility as a source" (McCarthy and Shapiro, 1983, p.565). In addition, newspapers are organized in sections, i.e., pertaining to sport, and advertising can be booked with short advanced notice. Newspaper advertising is relatively inexpensive and can provide the reader with a reference for such things as scheduling, pricing and location (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). Drawbacks to newspaper advertising are its poor reproduction quality, its short life and small "pass along" readership (Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991).

Magazines are specialized publications that allow the marketer to reach specific target markets. Specialized magazine reader profiles are "based not only

on demographics, but on lifestyle information as well (leisure activities, interests, or social attitudes)" (Watkins, 1991, p.122). Examples of some sport specific publications would be Sports Illustrated, Runner's World, and Golf Digest. Important factors to consider when developing a print media campaign include the size of advertisements, timing and scheduling, and position placement of an ad. These will influence the reach, frequency and impact that the advertising will achieve.

A vehicle that is commonplace in sport and included in this category is the game day program. Several authors have described how programs have become a valuable marketing and public relations tool, as well as an indirect source of revenue for sports organizations (Irwin & Fleger, 1992; Boeh, 1989; Wilkinson, 1988). Advertising space in a program is a valuable medium and is often incorporated into a team's sponsorship offering (Boeh, 1989). Traditionally, programs have been sold at events to provide spectators with sport related information. Their sales can be enhanced by having purchase incentives such as contest ballots, coupons, trading cards, and "lucky" player autographed advertisements which entitle winners to prizes provided by sponsors (Irwin & Fleger, 1992; Wilkinson, 1988). Similarly, Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) recommended

posters and programs may also be part of a point of purchase (POP) promotion - a promotional activity that takes place at the moment of purchase teams and clubs can benefit from similar strategies ... notices in programs or posters identifying future attractions, events, or tournaments can complement announcements or scoreboard displays. (p.178)

Thus, the use of print media and especially game programs provides a sport organization with additional revenue sources as well as being an effective marketing technique.

Signs

Posters and scoreboards are included in "the oldest of all the media" (Engel, Warshaw and Kinnear, 1991, p.444), outdoor signs. When placed in high traffic locations, outdoor advertising can provide high visibility. Outdoor billboards, transit advertising, and signs at the sports venue itself would comprise this medium (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). As is the case with game day programs, minor sport organizations obtain indirect revenue through the sale of stadium sign advertising to sponsors (Branvold, 1992). Hockey teams, for example, provide advertising from rinkboard signs, ice advertising, as well as ice cleaning machines. In a study of NCAA Division 1 football and basketball venues Stotlar and Johnson (1989) found that stadium advertising effectiveness and recognition rates were "comparable to that of other outdoor media" (p.101). Strictly speaking, hockey arena signs are not outdoor advertising because they are situated inside a facility. They are, however, comparable to basketball venues and it would be fair to conclude that when hockey teams consider signs as an advertising medium, they should look to their own sign facilities in addition to other off - site locations.

Advantages of sign advertising would be its relatively low cost, the relative absence of competitive advertising clutter, and the opportunity for repeat exposure (frequency) of well situated signs (Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991). Their main disadvantage is that they limit the advertiser to one graphic image and allow for

very little copy. According to Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) sign advertising is most effective when it complements other advertising techniques.

Television and Radio

Radio and television, or the electronic media, are the final component of the advertising category. In recent history, radio and television have been a major source of information about sport. In particular, television and satellite technology have created a "sport explosion" as sport events can be seen live around the globe at any time, day or night (Sport: The Way Ahead, 1992; The Economist, 1992; Watkins, 1991).

The sale of broadcast rights to television networks provides a major source of revenue for major sport organizations and accounts for the astronomical salaries of many professional athletes (The Economist, 1992). Specialized networks such as The Sports Network and The Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) have substantially increased the number of viewing outlets for major sports but provide little advertising opportunity for community or minor sport organizations (Sport: The Way Ahead, 1992; Watkins, 1991). Because television can deliver such a mass audience it is seen by many as the medium of choice. Pay - per - view services are also seen by major professional sport organizations as a new income opportunity through increased television spectatorship (McKenzie, 1993; Watkins, 1991). According to Watkins (1991), "because of the multiple outlets for sports programs in both broadcast and premium channels, there are few major sporting events left to air on pay - per - view" (p.285). Further, some argue

that these offerings are so numerous that few viewers will choose to pay for an event when something very similar can be seen for free (McKenzie, 1993). Therefore, the advertising opportunities and return on investment that this medium provides still remains to be seen.

Unlike television, radio has evolved into a local medium and offers many advantages to advertisers (Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Watkins, 1991). Radio stations are generally very receptive to promotions. Several authors have cited radio as a prime vehicle for "triangle" promotions and "trading out". An example would be a contest in which a corporate sponsor provides prizes, a radio station provides free advertising, while a community organization benefits from a fundraising opportunity at a sport event. Often the only cost incurred by the sport organization is tickets "traded out" or given to the other participants. (Helitzer, 1992; Hart, 1990; McKay, 1990; Lamphear & Frankel, 1990; Wilkinson, 1988; Russo, 1985). Authors also claim that differentiated program formats permit selection of stations with audience profiles best suited to the advertiser's target markets and that radio provides considerable reach within those target audiences (Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Watkins, 1991; McCarthy & Shapiro, 1983). Radio is relatively inexpensive and can be afforded by smaller businesses such as minor professional teams.

Watkins (1991) described how local radio stations often contract to broadcast events for minor professional team sports, thus making it a popular medium for these organizations.

In most cases the stations have purchased the broadcast rights to the games. The station will be responsible for producing and airing the game and for selling advertising spots during games. In a few cases the teams retain the rights, produce their own games, broker their own advertising, and buy air time from radio stations. (p.281)

As is the case with all other components of the promotion mix, selection of advertising media is driven by factors in the marketing environment, marketing objectives and strategies. Factors to be considered when selecting media should be the reach, frequency and impact that each can provide within the advertising budget.

It appears that direct mail, newspapers, game day programs, outdoor and arena signs, radio and television advertising and broadcasts are used extensively in sport. (Refer to Table 3). The blend of these media in the promotion mix and the strategies derived from the marketing planning process can be a team's most effective means of communicating its product.

Summary

The Strategic Marketing Planning Process and an Analytical Model for Sport Marketing provide the framework to examine the various strategies and marketing techniques that can be implemented to achieve a sport organization's goals. The marketing planning process is initiated by performing an assessment of the factors present in the marketing environment and by identifying opportunities

and threats in the market place. Through the use of market research the marketer can assess the marketing environment and monitor the effectiveness of marketing strategies.

Research indicates that factors affecting attendance such as area demographics, other sports in an area, facility size, as well as quality of play and attractiveness of a game (uncertainty of outcome) seem to be present in the sport marketing environment. Previous studies of major league sports have obtained mixed results in establishing a relationship between team performance and attendance, however, this continues to be perceived by marketing personnel as a major factor affecting attendance (Hansen & Gauthier, 1989). Several items relating to quality of performance were perceived by professional team marketing directors in Hansen and Gauthier's sample to be important factors affecting attendance at professional sport events. These included factors relating to team quality, teams being a contender in their division, conference or league, as well as scheduling of weekend games. These researchers, however, did not find significant differences between winning, moderately winning and losing teams for factors which were primarily related to performance. Thus, product extension factors relating to convenience and scheduling were viewed similarly important by these teams.

Product extension variables such as game locale attractiveness, stage of season, and scheduling have been identified as factors which should be considered when determining sport marketing objectives. The objectives generated from professional team sport focus on ticket value, entertainment value of sport, image

and community-orientation of the team and availability of athletes for community events (Hansen & Gauthier, 1992).

The next step in the process involves developing strategies through selection of target markets and positioning. Target markets are selected based on information regarding demographics, psychographics, product usage rates and product benefits. Positioning is developed by identifying competitive advantages and at this point the distinct characteristics of a product or service become apparent. Some characteristics of professional team sport, for example, might be the number of years a team has been in a community, or whether other professional sports are present in the community. These characteristics guide the marketing mix elements of product, price, place and promotion which combine to determine how marketing techniques will be implemented.

Marketing techniques primarily comprise the promotion category which is the persuasive communication function of marketing. For this reason, it is essential that marketers have an understanding of buyer behavior and the consumer decision making process. Advertising, personal selling, public relations and sales promotion are all ways in which an organization communicates with its target customers who are situated at various steps on Mullin's "Escalator for Sport Participation and Attendance" (1985).

The use of marketing techniques such as discount pricing, direct mail, group sales, and media relations is part of an overall marketing strategy implemented to achieve the marketing objectives of an organization. Research to date has dealt with a limited number of marketing techniques in relatively few sport settings (Hambleton, 1987 & Coan, 1990). This study has derived a number of

techniques from the sport marketing literature which have been identified and categorized according to their function in the sport marketing mix, and more specifically, according to their function in the promotion mix. (Table 3).

The techniques of this study were more extensive than those of Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) who measured twenty-two techniques. Ten of their techniques were replicated while sixteen more specific items were derived from the literature. Hambleton and Coan used general statements such as "used promotional strategies" which this study more specifically described and measured as "sponsored premium give away nights", "special events at games" and "contests". In addition, Hambleton and Coan's techniques of "implemented a strategic planning process, selected a target market, conducted market research and offered season ticket option" were not measured for their attendance effect. Instead, they were included in a general information section of the questionnaire. Further, this study included categories of techniques from the literature related to the promotion mix so as to measure their effect on attendance. (See Table 3).

The previous studies of Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) indicated that season ticket purchase options and business sponsorships were high priority marketing techniques used by Men's Division 1 NCAA organizations and National Basketball Association teams. It was accepted that business sponsorships influence the implementation of marketing techniques which are incorporated into a team's sponsorship offering. Specifically, these would include group ticket sales, media sponsorships, print, radio and television advertising, signage, sponsored premium give away nights, and contests. For the purposes of this study it was viewed that business sponsorships was not a technique used primarily to increase attendance,

but rather as a source of indirect income. As such, specific information regarding the proportion of attendance comprised of corporate/ business spectators was contained in the general information section of the questionnaire.

Other marketing techniques identified in Hambleton and Coan's studies included good public relations, radio advertising and priority seating / parking. Both researchers found significant differences in the use of "implemented a strategic planning process" between the groups they studied. These studies, however, involved the NCAA and the NBA, both of which may have different marketing objectives than sport organizations at a minor professional level (Hansen and Gauthier, 1992). This study incorporated Hambleton and Coan's inventory of marketing techniques into a more relevant instrument for a minor professional hockey sample and attempted to determine if results were comparable to the NCAA and NBA.

Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) dealt with marketing techniques used by the NCAA and NBA for an entire season. As a result, we have no knowledge of the relative effectiveness of specific techniques at different stages of the season. Is it possible for some to be more effective in increasing attendance during the first half of the season as compared to the second half? This study also attempted to obtain evidence regarding the attendance effect of these techniques by partitioning the season into stages.

A review of the literature has provided a number of marketing technique items. (Refer to Table 3). The literature has also indicated that we are beginning to understand the factors influencing attendance in the sport marketing environment but that a paucity of research exists regarding the relative effect of marketing

techniques on the attendance of selected team sport events. Further, very little information exists at the minor professional league level, hence, there appears to be a basis for investigating the relative effect of marketing techniques on the attendance of minor professional sport teams.

Table 3

Summary of Marketing Techniques

<u>Marketing Techniques Affecting Attendance</u>	<u>Marketing Mix Component</u>	<u>Promotion Mix Component</u>
<p>1. <u>Multiple Game Ticket Packages</u> Packages of 5, 10 or 20 games such as "Game Pick" or "Within Division" game packages. (Hambleton, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988; Severn, 1989; Coan, 1990; Morris & Calantone, 1990; Sutton, 1991; Stier Jr., 1992)</p>	Product, Price & Promotion	Sales Promotion (Ticket Sales)
<p>2. <u>Group Ticket Sales</u> Groups or blocks of tickets for sponsors, community groups or select market segments, e.g., university students (Hambleton, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988; Coan, 1990; Morris & Calantone, 1990; Billoni, 1990; Gray, 1991)</p>	Product, Price & Promotion	Personal Selling (Ticket Sales)
<p>4. <u>Tier Pricing</u> Different pricing for select target markets, e.g., box, "Red" or "Blue" seats; children's, family or senior's pricing. (Hambleton, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988; McGrath, 1989; Coan, 1990; Morris & Calantone, 1990; Gray, 1991)</p>	Product, Price & Promotion	Sales Promotion (Ticket Sales)
<p>5. <u>Promotional Pricing</u> Special pricing for special events such as "Ladies Night" or "Fan Appreciation Night". (Wilkinson, 1988; Morris & Calantone, 1990; Gray, 1991)</p>	Product, Price & Promotion	Sales Promotion (Ticket Sales)
<p>6. <u>Discount Pricing</u> Reduced prices, e.g., season ticket discounts. May also be "Buy 5 Get 1 Free" or limited time offers, e.g., purchase of tickets before a deadline date. (Hambleton, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988; McGrath, 1989; Morris & Calantone, 1990; Coan, 1990; van Waterschoot & Van den Bulte, 1992)</p>	Product, Price & Promotion	Sales Promotion (Ticket Sales)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>7. <u>Ticket Distribution</u>
 Number of off-site ticket outlets, use of ticket distributors, e.g., "Ticket Master" or toll free reservation lines for credit card holders.
 (Moore, 1985; Wilkinson, 1988; Gray, 1991; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993)</p> | <p>Place &
 Promotion</p> | <p>Personal Selling
 (Ticket Sales)</p> |
| <p>8. <u>Telemarketing Ticket Sales</u>
 Contracted or on-staff telephone solicitors.
 (Smith, 1982; Mullin, 1985; Case, 1988; Coan, 1990; Gray, 1991; Sutton, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991)</p> | <p>Place &
 Promotion</p> | <p>Personal Selling
 (Ticket Sales)</p> |
| <p>9. <u>Community Public Relations</u>
 Appearances of team representatives at community events. Appearances at local institutions, e.g., schools and hospitals and club involvement ongoing community programs such as "Say No to Drugs".
 (Mitchener, 1983; Hambleton, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988; Brunt, 1988; Coan, 1990; Sutton, 1990; Helitzer, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Rabin, 1993)</p> | <p>Promotion</p> | <p>Public Relations</p> |
| <p>10. <u>Community Fund Raising Program</u>
 Club involvement in community fund raising events. Games that raise money for local non-profit groups.
 (Canham, 1985; Lamphear & Frankel, 1990; Baggot, 1990; Hardekopf, 1991; Stier Jr., 1992; Helitzer, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993)</p> | <p>Promotion</p> | <p>Public Relations</p> |
| <p>11. <u>Booster Club & Special Member Clubs</u>
 For the purpose of promoting fan enthusiasm within the community. These clubs may circulate newsletters and hold special membership, fund raising and media events.
 (Hay & Rao, 1982; Brunt, 1990; Bernabe, 1990; Schwartz, 1991)</p> | <p>Promotion</p> | <p>Public Relations</p> |

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| <p>12. <u>Media Relations Program</u>
 To strengthen relationship with the media through media guides, news releases, feature stories, press conferences, on-site media facilities, interview and photo opportunities as well as media entertainment.
 (Mullin, 1983; Williams, 1985; Wilkinson, 1988; Hodges, 1989; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 1991; Watkins, 1991; Helitzer, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993)</p> | Promotion | Public Relations |
| <p>13. <u>Media Sponsorships</u>
 Involvement of media sponsors in various promotional activities.
 (Russo, 1985, Wilkinson, 1988; MacKay, 1990; Helitzer, 1992)</p> | Promotion | Public Relations & Sales Promotion |
| <p>14. <u>Direct Mail</u>
 Newsletters, tabloids, pamphlets, premiums, coupons and any other forms of advertising sent through the mail. Would also include mail order ticket and merchandise sales.
 (Dommermuth, 1984; Mullin, 1985; Hambleton, 1987; Coan, 1990; Gray, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 1991; White, 1991; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993)</p> | Promotion | Advertising & Sales Promotion |
| <p>15. <u>Print</u>
 Includes free standing newspaper and magazine inserts, run of press ads or supplements, your program, as well as print sponsored "tie-in" promotions.
 (Mitchener, 1983; McCarthy & Shapiro, 1983; Hambleton, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988; Boeh, 1989; Coan, 1990; Watkins, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Yow, 1991; Irwin & Fleger, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993)</p> | Promotion | Advertising |

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|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| <p>16. <u>Radio</u>
 Selected run of schedule ads, as well as radio sponsored "tie-in" promotions.
 (McCarthy & Shapiro, 1983; Dommermuth, 1984; Hambleton, 1987; Boeh, 1989; Coan, 1990; Hart, 1990; Yow, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Watkins, 1991)</p> | Promotion | Advertising |
| <p>17. <u>Radio</u>
 Radio broadcast of your games.
 (Watkins, 1991; Helitzer, 1992)</p> | Promotion | Advertising |
| <p>18. <u>Television</u>
 Selected and run of schedule ads, as well as television "tie-in" promotions.
 (Dommermuth, 1984; Kotler, 1986; Hambleton, 1987; Coan, 1990; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Watkins, 1991)</p> | Promotion | Advertising |
| <p>19. <u>Television</u>
 Television broadcast of your games.
 (Hambleton, 1987; Coan, 1990; Watkins, 1991 Sport: The Way Ahead, 1992; The Economist, 1992; Helitzer, 1992; McKenzie, 1993)</p> | Promotion | Advertising |
| <p>20. <u>Signs</u>
 Billboards, transit advertising and on-site signs.
 (Dommermuth, 1984; Stotlar & Johnson, 1989; Yow, 1991; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993)</p> | Promotion | Advertising |
| <p>21. <u>Licensed Products</u>
 Products bearing your team logo, available at public retail and on-site outlets.
 (Palmisano, 1990; Stier Jr., 1992; Irwin & Stotlar, 1993)</p> | Product & Promotion | Advertising & Sales Promotion |

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|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <p>22. <u>Sponsored Premium Give Away Nights</u>
 Games at which spectators receive premiums or samples bearing the team's and a sponsor's logo.
 (Petto, 1982; Marcum & Greenstein, 1985; Hambleton, 1987; Wilkinson, 1988; Bowman, 1989; Severn, 1989; MacKay, 1990; Coan, 1990; Palmisano, 1990; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Helitzer, 1992; Branvold & Bowers, 1992).</p> | <p>Product &
Promotion</p> | <p>Sales Promotion
(Promotion)</p> |
| <p>23. <u>Special Events at Games</u>
 May include between period appearances of popular personalities, entertainment, special awards presentations or some other display that might entertain spectators.
 (Wilkinson, 1988; Eisen, 1989; Berg, 1990; Blackwell, 1990; Sutton, 1991; Branvold & Bowers, 1992; Testa, 1992)</p> | <p>Product &
Promotion</p> | <p>Sales Promotion
(Promotion)</p> |
| <p>24. <u>Contests</u>
 Usually tied in with sponsors from the corporate, media or non-profit sectors. These often occur on the ice between periods.
 (Eisen, 1989; Blackwell, 1990; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1992; Testa, 1992; van Waterschoot & Van den Bulte, 1992)</p> | <p>Product &
Promotion</p> | <p>Sales Promotion
(Promotion)</p> |
| <p>25. <u>Promotion of "Star" Players</u>
 Promotion (through public relations or advertising) of outstanding players. May be athletes from your opponent's team or perhaps an athlete who is very popular in your community.
 (Mitchener, 1983; Berg, 1990; Helitzer, 1992)</p> | <p>Product &
Promotion</p> | <p>Public Relations,
Advertising &
Sales Promotion
(Promotion)</p> |
| <p>26. <u>Mascots</u>
 May appear at games for between period entertainment, may participate in community events or appear in your advertising.
 (Wilkinson, 1988; Berg, 1990; Hoppel, 1990; Sutton)</p> | <p>Product &
Promotion</p> | <p>Public Relations,
Advertising &
Sales Promotion
(Promotion)</p> |

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine the relative effect of selected marketing techniques on the attendance of minor professional hockey teams during two stages of a season. It was hypothesized that no differences would exist in the relative importance of marketing techniques used between high and low attendance teams during two stages of the playing season, nor between winning and losing teams during two stages of the playing season.

The Instrument

Development and Content

A questionnaire consisting of three sections was developed from information reviewed in the literature. Data regarding demographics, target markets, number of years in a market, competition, scheduling, and general marketing activities were obtained from the first section of the questionnaire. In accordance with Kotler (1986), this section provided a situational analysis and contributed to understanding the factors affecting the attendance of minor professional sport. (See Tables 1 and 2).

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of twenty-six marketing techniques relevant to minor professional sport organizations. Twenty-two of the

marketing techniques were derived from Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990). A panel of seven judges reviewed the twenty-six items and eliminated those they considered too general or ambiguous. They also recommended more specific items that were not included in previous studies. Some items that were judged too ambiguous, such as strategic planning process, were incorporated into the introductory section of the questionnaire so that more specific information such as number of front office staff employed and time devoted to specific marketing activities could be obtained.

General items, such as public relations, were included in the second section of the questionnaire but were categorized in a sport context according to their function within the promotion mix. Accordingly, four categories were generated consisting of ticket sales (personal selling and sales promotions), public relations, advertising, and promotion (sales promotions). Public relations, for example, was comprised of more specific techniques such as media relations, media sponsorships, community public relations, community fund raising and booster and special member clubs.

A Likert scale was developed to measure the relative importance of each marketing technique related to its attendance effect during different stages of the season which were designated as the first half, second half, and play offs. Designated stages of the season were based on previous research (Hansen and Gauthier, 1990) and the recommendations of the panel of judges. Marketing directors were asked to indicate their view of the importance that a marketing technique had on increasing attendance at home games during each stage of the season. Tabulation of these data was conducted on a per item (marketing

technique) basis for each subject and five point Likert scale responses were coded on the questionnaire (Cox III, 1980). Degree of importance was indicated by placing no, slight and strong above Likert scale numbers 1, 2 to 3, and 4 to 5, respectively. Thus, Likert scale scores of less than two were considered to have no importance on increasing attendance. Scores of two and three were considered to have slight importance while scores greater than four had strong importance. Marketing directors could also respond "Not Applicable" if they did not use a particular technique. (See Appendix 4).

A final section of the questionnaire was also developed to obtain additional information about marketing techniques that was not included in the list of items presented for measurement. Subjects had an opportunity to report their most successful combinations of marketing techniques on an individual game and stage of the season basis. Results of these most successful combinations could then be compared to the Likert scale results in the second section of the questionnaire.

Validation Process

The instrument was reviewed by a panel of seven judges comprised of faculty from the University of Ottawa and sport marketers from the Ottawa area. Judges designed, modified and finalized the questionnaire by means of a reject-revise-accept process. This was performed twice after which a consensus was reached regarding the format, general information, instructions and items of the questionnaire. Content validity was established by the judges who were asked to rate each item in the second section of the questionnaire for its clarity of content

and relevance to sport marketing. On a five point Likert scale, a rating of one represented no clarity and relevance whereas a score of five represented strong clarity and relevance. Each marketing technique item received at least a four rating on the Likert scale from eighty per cent of the judges.

Internal consistency was established for the instrument by means of the Cronbach alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951).

Sample

A sample of minor professional sport was selected because previous sport marketing technique research has focused on the NBA or NCAA (Hambleton, 1987 and Coan, 1990). In addition, the review of literature indicated that minor professional sports, in particular, must market their product aggressively in order to maintain and increase attendance (Berg, 1990; Branvold & Bowers, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). Therefore, the sample of this study consisted of 28 marketing directors representing teams in the American and International Hockey Leagues during the 1992 - 93 hockey season. These were the minor professional farm teams directly affiliated with National Hockey League teams. Authorization to conduct the study was sought from the corporate marketing directors of the American Hockey League (AHL), the International Hockey League (IHL) and from the University of Ottawa Human Research Ethics Committee. (See Appendix 5).

An introductory letter was prepared for all the subjects outlining; the purpose of the study, AHL and IHL approval, confidentiality, how the collected

information would be used, as well as instructions for returning the completed questionnaire. (See Appendix 6). Letters and questionnaires were mailed to the 28 AHL and IHL team marketing directors early in March of 1993. This time frame was chosen to avoid conflict with team operations during the 1992 - 93 play off season. Reminder letters and questionnaires were sent to non respondents one month after the initial mailing. Another two weeks followed before the remaining marketing directors were telephoned to encourage their participation in the study.

Design

Previous research has indicated that marketing techniques such as promotion may have some effect on sport event attendance (Marcum & Greenstein, 1985; Branvold & Bowers, 1992), however, we know very little about how and when these marketing techniques are used. It was the purpose of this study, therefore, to identify the relative effect of selected marketing techniques on the home attendance of minor professional hockey teams during the first and second halves of their playing season.

Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) found that some differences existed in the priority of marketing techniques used by high and low attendance teams in the NCAA and NBA. Therefore, marketing techniques used by marketing directors of high and low attendance teams were also compared in this study. These groups were determined by averaging the per cent capacity attendance of each team over a three year period. All attendance figures were obtained from the American and

International Hockey League offices. Those teams above the mean of the total group were considered high attendance whereas those below the mean were low attendance teams. Coan (1990) determined high and low attendance NBA teams using average per cent capacity attendance but calculated this for a one year period only. By averaging these figures over three years it was felt that attendance trends would more clearly be established for this study.

Hansen and Gauthier (1990) examined the views of marketing directors for professional and university sport events and compared factors affecting attendance between winning, moderately winning and losing teams. Similarly, in this study the marketing techniques used by marketing directors of winning teams were compared to those of losing teams. The winning and losing groups were determined by averaging the points percentage of all the teams over a three year period. Those above the mean were considered winning teams and those below the mean were losing teams. Although .500 is accepted as a standard winning designation, information obtained from league offices indicated that seventeen of the twenty-eight teams in the sample had a winning designation greater than .500. By averaging the points percentage of all teams over three years, a more balanced comparison was obtained.

Where teams had not been in a market for three years their per cent capacity attendance and point percentages were averaged only for the period where they were situated at the time of the study.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics were generated from the 26 marketing techniques related to high and low attendance teams at two stages of the playing season. Similarly, data related to team performance were generated for winning and losing teams for the stage of the season categories.

The independent samples *t*-test was used to test for significant differences of the relative importance of marketing techniques between the high and low attendance teams, as well as to test for significant differences of the relative importance of marketing techniques between the winning and losing teams.

Significant levels for the study were accepted at the .05 level of probability.

CHAPTER 4

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relative effect of marketing techniques on the attendance of minor professional hockey teams during two stages of the playing season. Marketing techniques are the activities implemented by these teams to achieve their marketing objectives and strategies. Descriptive statistics generated from 26 marketing technique items provided information about their relative importance in increasing attendance and revealed some general trends in the data. To assess differences, teams were grouped and compared as high or low attendance, as well as winning or losing teams.

Twenty-six marketing directors from a population of twenty-eight responded to the questionnaire and a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .95 was found for the instrument.

General Trends

Marketing techniques were categorized by their respective mean values. Those with $M > 4.00$ were considered to have a strong positive effect on attendance; those with $M < 4.00 > 2.00$ were considered to have a slight positive effect on attendance; and those with $M < 2.00$ were considered to have no effect on attendance. (See Table 4).

Table 4

Relative Importance of Marketing Techniques for All Teams per Stage of Season

Marketing Technique	1st Half of Season			2nd Half of Season		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Media Relations Program (PR)	26	4.12	1.14	26	4.04	1.08
Group Ticket Sales (T)	24	4.08	1.25	25	4.32	.80
Radio Advertising (A)	26	3.96	.92	26	3.92	.89
Television Advertising (A)	20	3.85	1.09	19	3.84	1.26
Ticket Options & Incentives (T)	19	3.84	1.26	19	3.26	1.41
Community Relations Program (PR)	26	3.77	1.07	26	3.62	1.17
Radio Broadcast of Games (A)	22	3.73	1.35	22	3.73	1.32
Signs (A)	17	3.65	1.22	18	3.33	1.28
Media Sponsorships (PR)	25	3.64	1.25	25	4.00	1.19
Promotional Pricing (T)	19	3.58	1.39	19	3.53	1.39
Television Broadcast of Games (A)	14	3.50	1.45	12	3.92	1.44
Print Advertising (A)	26	3.50	1.14	26	3.54	.99

Note. (PR) = Public Relations category, (A) = Advertising category

(T) = Ticket Sales category, (P) = Promotion category

Table 4 Continued

Marketing Techniques	1st Half of Season			2nd Half of Season		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Contests (P)	25	3.32	1.25	25	3.28	1.17
Tier Pricing (T)	20	3.30	1.17	20	3.20	1.20
Multiple Game Ticket Packages (T)	22	3.18	1.33	21	2.43	.87
Discount Pricing (T)	22	3.14	1.25	19	2.95	1.35
Ticket Distribution (T)	25	3.12	1.27	25	3.08	1.32
Sponsored "Give-Away" Nights (P)	26	3.12	1.07	24	3.19	1.10
Direct Mail (A)	22	3.05	1.17	21	3.05	1.12
Promotion of "Star" Players (P)	24	3.04	1.23	24	3.04	1.16
Community Fund Raising						
Program (PR)	25	3.04	1.17	24	3.08	1.10
Licensed Products (A)	25	2.96	1.31	25	2.88	1.30
Booster & Special Member						
Clubs (PR)	24	2.88	1.51	24	2.79	1.44
Mascots (P)	17	2.71	1.49	18	2.78	1.52
Telemarketing Ticket Sales (T)	13	2.62	1.26	15	3.00	1.51

Of all the marketing techniques presented, group ticket sales and media relations program were perceived to have a strong positive effect while the remainder were perceived to have a slight positive effect on attendance for the first half of the season. In addition to group ticket sales and media relations program, media sponsorships were seen to have a strong positive effect for the second half of the season.

Group ticket sales, ticket options and incentives, and promotional pricing were three techniques considered relatively important in the ticket sales category. Group ticket sales, or selling tickets by volume, is an efficient form of sales and occasionally may determine the economic survival of a team (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). As well, Coan (1990) found that NBA marketing directors gave the marketing technique "obtained business sponsorships" high priority for its effect on attendance. Potential buyers such as corporate groups can provide teams with additional revenue opportunity through sponsorship (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993), while special community group nights can generate additional positive public relations for teams (Billoni, 1990). These two benefits combined with the efficiency of group sales may explain why minor professional hockey teams consistently perceived this to have a strong positive effect on attendance.

Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) found "offered season ticket options" to be the most important marketing technique for the teams in their studies. Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) also indicated that occasional ticket buyers do not account for the majority of increased attendance at events and that directing personal sales efforts towards large groups such as season ticket and group buyers is a more effective means of persuading people to attend sport events. This suggests that

ticket sales, particularly season and group ticket sales, should be the major focus of a team's marketing efforts. This emphasis seems to have been borne out by teams reporting in the general information section of the questionnaire that they devoted 40 per cent of their time to this function.

Media relations program, community relations program, and media sponsorships were three items from the public relations category of the questionnaire that were included in the top ten most important marketing techniques. These techniques are activities that attempt to enhance the image of a team in its respective community while generating publicity to increase attendance (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Johnson, 1993; Helitzer, 1992; Watkins, 1991). Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) also found that public relations was a highly effective marketing technique for Men's Division 1 NCAA and National Basketball Association teams, respectively. The key benefit of these techniques is that they are relatively cost-free and help to build loyal followers and spectators (Watkins, 1991). Johnson (1993) suggested that a good team-city relationship is key for the continued support and existence of minor professional teams. It is by means of a strong public relations program that such a relationship is created and the results of this study seem to indicate that minor professional hockey teams place considerable importance on their relationship with their respective communities.

From the advertising category of the questionnaire, radio and television advertising, radio broadcast of games, and signage were among the ten most important marketing techniques. Radio advertising, is characterized by its relatively low cost, ability to reach select target audiences, and cost - free promotion opportunities (Helitzer, 1992; Engel, Warshaw & Kinnear, 1991; Hart, 1990).

Twenty-two (85%) of the teams in this study used radio for game broadcasts and found them to be relatively important. Broadcasts generate additional revenue for minor professional teams in rights or advertising and audiences are increased through broadcast listeners (Watkins, 1991). Likewise, arena signage generates additional revenue for these teams and can be just as effective as other forms of outdoor signs (Branvold, 1992; Stotlar & Johnson, 1989). It is likely the low cost of radio advertising, its promotional orientation, and the additional revenue generated from game broadcasts explain why teams rated these techniques so highly. Television advertising was also considered relatively important and although it was not used as extensively as radio (46 per cent or 12 of the teams used television advertising), it was seen to be almost as effective. It is possible that teams who were attempting to reach more target markets, such as low attendance teams, may have found television's mass audience appeal to be an important influence on attendance.

Authors have indicated that promotions (sales promotions) are essential to the commercial viability of minor professional sport (Branvold & Bowers, 1992; Berg, 1990; Rudolph, 1988). Because "the game" is not always an effective way to attract spectators teams "package " their product and add value to it by means of such promotions (Berg, 1990; Branvold & Bowers, 1992; Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). Branvold and Bowers (1992) found that varsity baseball teams who used promotions experienced significantly higher attendance than those who did not. Marcum and Greenstein (1985) also found that "major promotions" significantly increased attendance for two major league baseball teams.

In this study, however, items from the promotion (sales promotions) category of the questionnaire were noticeably absent from the ten most important marketing techniques for both stages of the season. An explanation for this could be that the effectiveness of sales promotion techniques were difficult to assess, or as van Waterschoot and Van den Bulte (1992) suggest, they may complement or pervade other components in the product package. In other words, sales promotions are usually tied into other components of the marketing and promotion mix such as print, radio and television advertising. For example, if sales promotions such as contests or sponsored "give away" nights were tied into a radio advertising campaign then it would have been difficult to determine if the advertising or the sales promotion induced ticket purchases. Sales promotions are also closely associated with the product, for example, a sponsored "give away" night becomes a slightly different product than a regular game because added value and increased buyer benefits result.

Additional evidence that sales promotions such as ticket options and incentives seemed most effective when they were supplemented by other components of the sport package was shown when marketing directors reported their most successful combinations of marketing techniques for stages of the season and individual games. Combinations most frequently included items from the promotion and ticket sales categories. Techniques in the promotion category were cited 31 times, ticket sales techniques 26 times, whereas advertising and public relations techniques were cited 16 and 8 times, respectively. Examples of successful combinations were "sponsored give away nights & special events at games", "group ticket sales & promotional pricing & sponsored give away nights"

and "promotional pricing & radio advertising & sponsored give away nights & special events at games".

These results seem to suggest that although the individual promotion techniques were perceived to have only a slight effect on attendance, when combined with other techniques to create a comprehensive sport package, they were considered to be among the most successful. This would support van Waterschoot's and Van den Bulte's claim about the complementary and pervasive nature of sales promotions, and may also partially explain why 24 of the 26 marketing techniques were perceived as having a only a slight effect on attendance.

With the exception of media sponsorships, group ticket sales and television broadcast of games, most items were seen to have the same or slightly more relative importance during the first half of the season. It is possible that the strategic implementation of these techniques had a time effect, for example, the results of a team's group ticket sales program may not have been fully realized until the second half of the season. Salespeople usually sell season tickets in the pre season followed by multiple game ticket packages at the beginning of the playing season. It is likely that as the season progressed and teams had fewer ticket selling techniques such as season ticket sales and multiple game ticket packages available to them, group ticket sales became a more important technique for increasing attendance. As is the case with many products, sales may have occurred as a result of a salesperson's persistence over time. Further, given that salespeople seek spectators and sponsors year round, team performance and popularity may have influenced the spectators' decision to support a team. Wann and Branscombe's (1990, 1993) research on the process of team identification by fans (basking-in-

reflected glory and cutting-off-reflected failure) would seem to support this idea. For media sponsorships and television broadcast of games, the development of a team's relationship with the media over time may have produced a similar effect. It is also possible that the status of a team's performance and its popularity as the season progressed influenced the media's involvement with a team.

A total of 22 teams conducted market research at least once during the season. Fifteen reported that they regularly surveyed spectators, five also surveyed the general public, while two relied on secondary data for their market information. Mullin, Hardy and Sutton's (1993) claim that sport marketers do not collect enough primary data and that their marketing information systems are poorly developed did not seem to be the case for minor professional hockey teams.

Previous studies of major league professional sport indicate that a positive relationship exists between population (size of market) and attendance (Jones, 1969; Demmert, 1973; Noll, 1974; Sloane, 1980; Marcum & Teplitz, 1981; Hay & Rao, 1982; & Schofield, 1983). The results of this study, however, did not reflect this relationship for minor professional hockey. Generally, teams located in small markets played in smaller arenas and had a higher percent capacity attendance than those located in larger markets. It appears that minor professional hockey thrives in smaller markets (58% of all teams were in markets less than one million) and in smaller arenas (mean arena size for the sample was 9123). An explanation for this trend could be that teams in larger markets were in more competitive, professional sport and entertainment environments. Subsequently, the ticket value and the perception of the quality of the minor professional hockey product compared to other forms of entertainment may not have been high for consumers

in these large, competitive sport markets. Examples of such markets would include Hamilton, Baltimore, Cleveland, Kansas City and San Diego. Teams in smaller markets and which were the only live professional sport in town generally experienced the highest capacity attendance. Examples of such teams included the Cape Breton Oilers, Fredericton Canadiens, St. John's Maple Leafs, and Kalamazoo Wings.

High Versus Low Attendance Teams

Results

High and low attendance teams were determined by averaging respective percent capacity attendance over a three year period. The mean percent capacity attendance for the entire group was 64.14 percent. Fourteen (14) were above the mean and considered high attendance teams while twelve (12) were below the mean. Tables 5 and 6 show the mean scores of each marketing technique for high and low attendance teams per stage of season. Independent samples *t* - tests were used to detect significant differences between high and low attendance teams for the two stages. Results indicate that high attendance teams placed significantly more importance on their media relations program and ticket options and incentives during the first half as compared to low attendance teams. No significant differences were found for any techniques in the second half of the season.

Table 5

Relative Importance of Marketing Techniques for High and Low Attendance TeamsDuring the First Half of the Season

Marketing Technique	High Attendance Teams			LowAttendance Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Media Relations Program (PR)	14	4.57	.94 *	12	3.58	1.16 *
Ticket Options & Incentives (T)	9	4.44	.88 *	10	3.30	1.34 *
Radio Advertising (A)	14	4.21	.89	12	3.67	.89
Community Relations Program (PR)	14	4.14	.95	12	3.33	1.07
Group Ticket Sales (T)	12	4.08	1.31	12	4.08	1.24
Radio Broadcast of Games (A)	14	4.00	1.18	8	3.25	1.58
Television Advertising (A)	10	3.90	.88	10	3.80	1.32
Signage (A)	9	3.78	1.20	8	3.50	1.31
Media Sponsorships (PR)	13	3.69	1.18	12	3.58	1.39
Multiple Game Ticket Packages (T)	12	3.67	1.23	10	2.60	1.26
Promotional Pricing (T)	8	3.63	1.69	11	3.55	1.21
Tier Pricing (T)	10	3.60	.84	10	3.00	1.41

Note. * $p < 0.05$

Note. (PR) = Public Relations category, (A) = Advertising category,

(T) = Ticket Sales category, (P) = Promotion category

Table 5 Continued

Marketing Technique	High Attendance Teams			Low Attendance Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Print Advertising (A)	14	3.57	1.09	12	3.42	1.24
Contests (P)	13	3.46	1.39	12	3.17	1.11
Promotion of "Star" Players (P)	13	3.46	1.13	11	2.55	1.21
Special Events at Games (P)	14	3.36	1.22	12	3.33	1.37
Booster & Special Member						
Clubs (PR)	12	3.33	1.56	12	2.42	1.38
Discount Pricing (T)	10	3.30	1.25	12	3.00	1.28
Licensed Products (A)	14	3.29	1.20	11	2.55	1.37
Direct Mail (A)	11	3.27	1.27	11	2.82	1.08
Ticket Distribution (T)	14	3.21	1.25	11	3.00	1.34
Sponsored "Give Away" Nights (P)	14	3.14	1.10	12	3.08	1.08
Television Broadcast of Games (A)	9	3.11	1.62	5	4.20	.84
Community Fund Raising						
Program (PR)	13	2.92	.95	12	3.17	1.40
Mascots (P)	9	2.78	1.79	8	2.63	1.19
Telemarketing Ticket Sales (T)	5	2.40	1.14	8	2.75	1.39

Table 6

Relative Importance of Marketing Techniques for High and Low Attendance Teams
During the Second Half of the Season

Marketing Technique	High Attendance Teams			Low Attendance Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Group Ticket Sales (T)	13	4.31	.85	12	4.33	.78
Media Relations Program (PR)	14	4.29	1.07	12	3.75	1.06
Radio Advertising (A)	14	4.07	.92	12	3.75	.87
Radio Broadcast of Games (A)	14	4.00	1.11	8	3.25	1.58
Media Sponsorships (PR)	13	3.92	1.19	12	4.08	1.24
Television Advertising (A)	10	3.90	.99	9	3.78	1.56
Television Broadcast of Games (A)	8	3.88	1.55	4	4.00	1.41
Community Relations Program (PR)	14	3.86	1.10	12	3.33	1.23
Tier Pricing (T)	9	3.67	.87	11	2.82	1.33
Signage (A)	10	3.60	1.17	8	3.00	1.41
Print Advertising (A)	14	3.57	1.02	12	3.50	1.00
Ticket Options & Incentives (T)	8	3.50	1.51	11	3.09	1.38

Note. * < 0.05

Note. (PR) = Public Relations category, (A) = Advertising category

(T) = Ticket Sales category, (P) = Promotion category

Table 6 Continued

Marketing Technique	High Attendance Teams			Low Attendance Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Promotional Pricing (T)	8	3.50	1.69	11	3.55	1.21
Contests (P)	13	3.38	1.39	12	3.17	.94
Special Events at Games (P)	14	3.29	1.20	12	3.58	1.31
Promotion of "Star" Players (P)	13	3.23	1.01	11	2.82	1.33
Sponsored "Give Away" Nights (P)	14	3.21	1.12	12	3.17	1.11
Ticket Distribution (T)	14	3.21	1.25	11	2.91	1.45
Licensed Products (A)	14	3.14	1.23	11	2.55	1.37
Booster & Special Member						
Clubs (PR)	12	3.08	1.51	12	2.50	1.38
Community Fund Raising						
Program (PR)	12	3.00	.95	12	3.17	1.27
Direct Mail (A)	10	3.00	1.25	11	3.09	1.04
Telemarketing Ticket Sales (T)	6	2.83	1.60	9	3.11	1.54
Mascots (P)	10	2.80	1.75	8	2.75	1.28
Discount Pricing (T)	8	2.63	1.19	11	3.18	1.47
Multiple Game Ticket Packages (T)	11	2.45	.69	10	2.40	1.07

Discussion

All teams perceived media relations, media sponsorships and community relations to be among the top ten most important marketing techniques for both stages of the season, however, high attendance teams placed more importance on these techniques, especially media relations which resulted in a significant difference from low attendance teams. The rewards for becoming involved in various media and community activities seemed to be more valuable to high attendance teams. High attendance teams, for example, had on average been in their markets seven years longer than low attendance teams; spent more time on public relations ($M = 21\%$) as compared to low attendance teams ($M = 16\%$); and clearly placed more importance on most other techniques which could be packaged with public relations. It would appear that older, high attendance teams were perceived to have a long term commitment to their communities. In addition, high attendance teams considered advertising important (four of the top ten items were advertising techniques) and as such could have been perceived to contribute to the local economy (Johnson, 1993).

These techniques may enhance a team's image while providing exposure to increase attendance (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Johnson, 1993; Helitzer, 1992; Watkins, 1991) and may be key to the continued support and existence of minor professional teams. Furthermore, Coan (1990) and Hambleton (1987) found public relations to be significant for high attendance teams in the NCAA and NBA, thus, this study has verified previous research.

By creating a strong, healthy liaison with the mass media and the community a team can enhance its image and communicate with various target markets at practically no cost (Watkins, 1991). It is likely that high attendance teams viewed media relations highly effective because they may not have been able to obtain a reasonable return on investment with marketing techniques that were more expensive. Game announcements, for example, would have been an unnecessary expense if most seats were already sold. These results seem to indicate that low attendance teams would also benefit from increasing their efforts in the public relations area, and particularly by focusing on a more rigorous media relations program.

Ticket options and incentives were included in the ticket sales category of the questionnaire but they essentially are price promotions (sales promotions) that are incorporated into the sport "package" and may include premiums, coupons or a perk such as a post game party. Apart from the time effect, a possible explanation for why high attendance teams perceived ticket options and incentives to be significantly more important during the first half of the season may have had something to do with how successfully these teams "packaged" their product. Several authors explained that when packaging sport, price promotion in particular, must be used with caution so as not to reduce perceived value of an event (Stotlar, 1989; Gray, 1991; Sutton, 1991). Haphazard use of price promotions such as ticket options and incentives may also cause a "cherry picking" phenomenon whereby spectators only attend games that offer them (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993). It is possible that low attendance teams were less discriminating in the

implementation of ticket options and incentives, therefore, reducing their effect on attendance.

Further, a ticket incentive on its own may simply have not been enough to induce a purchase if it was not supplemented by other positive components of the sport package. High attendance teams may have been able to sell more tickets using options and incentives because they supplemented a more desirable product package; for example, one that was perceived as a competitive "home town" team providing exciting live professional sport at a convenient and comfortable location, offering a variety of additional entertainment activities at an affordable price. A ticket option or incentive could have been a final inducement or added bonus for those who positively perceived the product package or who were already inclined to purchase a ticket.

Both high and low attendance teams perceived group ticket sales to be very important, however, high attendance teams generally placed more importance on most other items in the ticket sales category. For example, high attendance teams perceived ticket options and incentives, multiple game ticket packages, and tier pricing to be more important in the first half of the season than low attendance teams. High attendance teams spent more time on ticket sales ($M = 43\%$), had a higher season ticket base ($M = 42\%$) and had a greater proportion of seating comprised of families ($M = 39\%$) as compared to low attendance teams.

Season ticket base and efforts to increase this component of the ticket sales strategy is considered by several authors to be a major objective of a team's marketing program (Mullin, Hardy & Sutton, 1993; Coan, 1990; Hambleton, 1987). These results suggest a difference in the marketing objectives and target

marketing strategies between high and low attendance teams. Therefore, low attendance teams should devote more time to season ticket sales. In addition, low attendance teams might re-evaluate their marketing objectives for family spectators.

With the exception of television broadcast of games, low and high attendance teams placed similar importance on advertising as at least four items were included in the top ten most effective marketing techniques for both groups. Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990), however, found that television broadcast as an attendance incentive received low priority for both high and low attendance groups in their studies. It should be noted that only five of these teams televised their games but that along with group ticket sales and radio advertising it was considered the most important technique for them. The mass audience and increased target markets that these telecasts reached may have produced a noticeable attendance increase for these teams.

To obtain a better understanding of this marketing function and its importance within minor professional hockey organizations, marketing directors provided information indicating that low attendance teams spent 24 per cent of their time on advertising, 12 per cent on market research, and that they employed three more front office personnel than high attendance teams who spent 19 per cent of their time on advertising and 3 per cent on market research. In accordance with Mitchener (1983), this would seem to reflect a difference in the marketing orientation, needs and objectives of these groups. As low attendance teams have more seats to fill they are required to be more aggressive in their marketing approach and must search for, communicate with, and capture more target audiences than high attendance teams.

Neither high nor low attendance teams rated marketing techniques from the promotion category among the top ten most important, however, high attendance teams perceived promotion techniques to be slightly more effective during both stages of the season. It is possible that high attendance teams experienced slightly more success with promotions because they augmented and complemented an already positively perceived product package. Some low attendance teams may not have been strategic in their implementation of these techniques, for example, they may not have selected the appropriate events for sales promotions or they may not have developed successful combinations of sales promotions with techniques from other categories in the marketing mix. Low attendance teams would appear to benefit from experimenting with the sales promotion techniques they use. This should help to develop combinations that seem to work for the losing team product package.

Of the 26 teams surveyed, 78 per cent of the high attendance teams were in markets less than one million, whereas only 36 per cent of the low attendance teams were found in these smaller markets. High attendance teams, on average, had smaller arenas ($M = 6523$), higher average per cent capacity attendance ($M = 82\%$), and fewer professional sport competitors ($M = 2.2$) as compared to low attendance teams who had an average arena size ($M = 12,308$), average per cent capacity attendance ($M = 43\%$) and average number of professional sport competitors ($M = 3.1$). Lastly, high attendance teams had more Saturday evening games and fewer weekend afternoon games than low attendance teams. This seems to further support the idea that minor professional hockey teams are more successful in smaller markets with smaller arenas and fewer professional sports, and

suggests that Saturday evenings may be the preferred playing time for maximum weekend attendance (Hansen & Gauthier, 1989).

Winning Versus Losing Teams

Results

Winning and losing teams were determined by averaging the points percentages of the teams over a three year period. Specifically, a team playing 80 games in a season could obtain 160 points and a 100% point percentage by winning all games. The mean points percentage for the sample was 52.68 percent. Fourteen (14) were above the mean and considered winning teams, whereas, twelve (12) were below the mean and considered losing teams. Tables 7 and 8 show the mean scores of each marketing technique for winning and losing teams per stage of season. Independent *t* - tests were also used to detect significant differences between these groups for the two stages. Results indicated that winning teams, as compared to losing teams, placed significantly more importance on media sponsorships during the first half of the season and on ticket options and incentives as well as signage during the second half of the season.

Table 7

Relative Importance of Marketing Techniques for Winning and Losing Teams During the First Half of the Season

Marketing Technique	Winning Teams			Losing Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Media Relations Program (PR)	14	4.36	.93	12	3.83	1.34
Signage (A)	8	4.25	1.04	9	3.11	1.17
Media Sponsorships (PR)	13	4.23	.73 *	12	3.00	1.41 *
Television Advertising (A)	11	4.18	.87	9	3.44	1.24
Group Ticket Sales (T)	13	4.15	1.28	11	4.00	1.26
Radio Advertising (A)	14	4.07	1.07	12	3.83	.72
Ticket Options & Incentives (T)	11	4.00	.89	8	3.63	1.69
Community Relations Program (PR)	14	4.00	.96	12	3.50	1.17
Print Advertising (A)	14	3.79	1.12	12	3.17	1.11
Radio Broadcast of Games (A)	14	3.71	1.33	8	3.75	1.49
Contests (P)	13	3.46	1.13	12	3.17	1.40
Tier Pricing (T)	11	3.45	1.13	9	3.11	1.27

Note. * $p < 0.05$

Note. (PR) = Public Relations category, (A) = Advertising category,

(T) = Ticket Sales category, (P) = Promotion category

Table 7 Continued

Marketing Technique	Winning Teams			Losing Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Special Events at Games (P)	14	3.43	1.02	12	3.25	1.54
Discount Pricing (T)	10	3.40	1.43	12	2.92	1.08
Community Fund Raising						
Program (PR)	13	3.38	1.26	12	2.67	.98
Promotional Pricing (T)	8	3.38	1.77	11	3.73	1.10
Ticket Distribution (T)	14	3.36	1.22	11	2.82	1.33
Licensed Products (A)	14	3.36	1.34	11	2.45	1.13
Television Broadcast of Games (A)	10	3.30	1.49	4	4.00	1.41
Multiple Game Ticket Packages (T)	12	3.25	1.60	10	3.10	.99
Promotion of "Star" Players (P)	13	3.23	1.36	11	2.82	1.08
Sponsored "Give Away" Nights (P)	14	3.21	1.25	12	3.00	.85
Direct Mail (A)	13	3.00	1.22	9	3.11	1.17
Mascots (P)	9	3.00	1.66	8	2.38	1.30
Booster & Special Member						
Clubs (PR)	12	2.83	1.59	12	2.92	1.51
Telemarketing Ticket Sales (T)	8	2.50	1.31	5	2.80	1.30

Table 8

Relative Importance of Marketing Techniques for Winning and Losing Teams During the Second Half of the Season

Marketing Technique	Winning Teams			Losing Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Media Sponsorships (PR)	13	4.38	.87	12	3.58	1.38
Group Ticket Sales (T)	13	4.31	.95	12	4.33	.65
Television Advertising (A)	10	4.10	1.10	9	3.56	1.42
Media Relations Program (PR)	14	4.00	.96	12	4.08	1.24
Signage (A)	9	4.00	1.22 *	9	2.67	1.00 *
Radio Advertising (A)	14	3.93	1.07	12	3.92	.67
Community Relations Program (PR)	14	3.93	1.14	12	3.25	1.14
Ticket Options & Incentives (T)	11	3.82	1.25 *	8	2.50	1.31 *
Print Advertising (A)	14	3.79	1.05	12	3.25	.87
Radio Broadcast of Games (A)	14	3.71	1.27	8	3.75	1.49
Television Broadcast of Games (A)	9	3.67	1.58	3	4.67	.58
Tier Pricing (T)	11	3.45	.93	9	2.89	1.45

Note. * $p < 0.05$

Note. (PR) = Public Relations category, (A) = Advertising category

(T) = Ticket Sales category, (P) = Promotion category

Table 8 Continued

Marketing Technique	Winning Teams			Losing Teams		
	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Special Events at Games (P)	14	3.43	1.02	12	3.42	1.51
Contests (P)	13	3.38	1.12	12	3.17	1.27
Community Fund Raising						
Program (PR)	13	3.38	1.12	11	2.73	1.01
Ticket Distribution (T)	14	3.36	1.22	11	2.73	1.42
Sponsored "Give Away" Nights (P)	14	3.29	1.27	12	3.08	.90
Licensed Products (A)	14	3.29	1.38	11	2.36	1.03
Promotional Pricing (T)	8	3.25	1.75	11	3.73	1.10
Promotion of "Star" Players (P)	13	3.15	1.34	11	2.91	.94
Direct Mail (A)	13	3.15	1.34	8	2.88	.64
Telemarketing Ticket Sales (T)	8	3.13	1.55	7	2.86	1.57
Discount Pricing (T)	10	3.00	1.49	9	2.89	1.27
Mascots (P)	9	2.89	1.69	9	2.67	1.41
Booster & Special Member						
Clubs (PR)	12	2.83	1.59	12	2.75	1.36
Multiple Game Ticket Packages (T)	12	2.33	.98	9	2.56	.73

Discussion

Media sponsorships are team events and promotions that are co-sponsored by the media. They may, for example, be contests or "triangle promotions" (Russo, 1985; Wilkinson, 1988; MacKay, 1990; Helitzer, 1992). Media and corporate sponsors may pay to be associated with a team event, advertise it and often provide prizes and premiums. Sometimes non-profit community sponsors become involved and are given the opportunity to raise funds in conjunction with the event. These media sponsorships can provide teams with considerable advertising, promotion and public relations at practically no cost.

Winning teams may have perceived this technique to be more effective than losing teams because they probably experienced more success with it. It would be logical to conclude that the media was more receptive to co-sponsoring promotions with a team at the beginning of the season if it had a tradition of winning. A team's performance and popularity becomes apparent as the season progresses, hence, the importance of the media sponsorship technique seemed to become more important. Losing teams may have had to work harder at obtaining media co-sponsors and consequently may not have enjoyed the advantage of such promotions early in the season. According to Wann and Branscombe (1990, 1993), fans identify with winners (basking-in-reflected glory), or more precisely, distance themselves from losers (cutting-off-reflected failure). It is likely that the media somehow acknowledge this process of fan identification and the potential for increased audiences that it may produce. As a result, the media may have been more willing

to invest in media sponsorships with winning teams rather than those who were losing.

As indicated by generally higher means, winning teams perceived marketing techniques to be more effective than did losing teams for both stages of the season. They considered media relations, signs, media sponsorships, community relations, television and radio advertising, ticket options and incentives, and group ticket sales to have a strong positive effect on attendance during the first half. Meanwhile, losing teams only considered group ticket sales and television broadcasts to have a strong effect on attendance. This suggests that the attractiveness of winning teams may somehow make it easier for them to implement and experience success with selected marketing techniques in the public relations, advertising, and ticket sales categories.

Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (1993) indicated that the power of positive public relations amplifies the effect of the overall marketing program and that it should not be underestimated. Winning teams seemed to have the advantage of positive public relations by virtue of their positive news. These results suggest that winning teams and losing teams had a somewhat different orientation to the media and to their communities and that losing teams might benefit from being more creative with their public relations strategies (Johnson, 1993; Branch, 1992; Helitzer, 1992; Stier Jr., 1992). For example, although losing teams cannot control the variable of performance they may be able to create or heighten the interest of the media and their community by implementing more community initiatives such as fund raising, appearances at local events, and involvement in cause-related programs. This

would imply that losing teams should devote more time to the public relations function.

Winning teams reported that they spent less time on public relations, advertising and promotion than did losing teams. Winning teams had larger capacity arenas ($M = 10,282$), a higher average per cent capacity attendance (67%), a greater season ticket base ($M = 39\%$) and a greater family ticket base ($M = 38\%$) as compared to losing teams who had an average season ticket base of 24 per cent and average family ticket base of 28 per cent.

It would appear that winning teams, although devoting less time to ticket sales and advertising, had greater results to show for their efforts as indicated by significant differences for ticket options and incentives and signage. Winning teams also placed more importance on ticket and advertising techniques during both stages of the season as indicated by the means in the top ten.

As previously discussed, a large season ticket base should be a major marketing objective for all teams (Mullin, Hardy and Sutton, 1993; Coan, 1990; Hambleton, 1987; Mullin, 1985). Winning teams had a higher average season ticket base (39%) when compared to losing teams (24%). This strongly suggests that losing teams should also re-evaluate their season ticket sales strategies as efforts in this area represent the greatest potential for attendance increases (Mullin, Hardy and Sutton, 1993).

Signage was the only marketing technique in the advertising category for which a significant difference was found. This is a relatively inexpensive medium, provides a good opportunity for repeat exposure (frequency), is relatively clutter free from competitive advertising but limits the advertiser to one graphic image

(Engel, Warshaw and Kinnear, 1991). Signs also generate additional revenue as they are usually included in the sponsorship offering of minor professional teams (Branvold, 1992, Stotlar and Johnson, 1989). As compared to losing teams, winning teams may have perceived this marketing technique to be relatively more effective during the second half of the season because they may have experienced more success when selling their arena advertising to sponsors. Although not significant, a large difference between these groups was also indicated for signage in the first half of the season. Similar to the effect for media sponsorships, the effect of sponsor identification with a winning team by means of arena advertising could have resulted in the perception by winning team marketing directors that signs were relatively effective for increasing attendance.

The fact that signs allow for only one graphic image may not have been a disadvantage for winning teams, either. If teams had a tradition of winning and were, for example a divisional or league champion at sometime in the past, they would have displayed championship banners around their facilities. In accordance with Wann and Branscombe (1990, 1993), these constant reminders of a team's past glory could quite possibly produce an attendance effect for winning teams.

With the exception of television broadcasts which were perceived by losing teams to have a strong positive effect on attendance for both stages of the season, winning teams generally considered other advertising techniques to be somewhat more effective. Similar to low attendance teams, losing teams who had their games telecast may have noticed immediate attendance increases as a result of the mass audience and increased target markets this medium can reach. Although losing teams did not consider most advertising techniques to be as effective as winning

teams did, losing teams reported somewhat more of their time was devoted to advertising (M = 27%) than winning teams (M = 17%). This seems to suggest that losing teams had to advertise more than winning teams in order to obtain the same results. The reason losing teams spent more time on advertising may have had something to do with positioning strategy. Losing teams, for example, had a 24 per cent season ticket base and capacity attendance of 60 per cent. If their spectator base was shrinking because of their poor performance then these teams may have attempted to reach more target markets through advertising (Branch, Jr., 1993). This would seem to indicate that the marketing orientation and needs of losing teams were different than winning teams. For example, if the product quality of losing teams was perceived to be less than that of the winners then losing teams may have had to enhance their product's image and entertainment value through increased promotion and advertising, as was indicated by 26 per cent of their time being spent on these activities.

As was the case for high and low attendance teams, promotion techniques were absent from the top ten most important marketing techniques. These results may best be explained by the difficulty in assessing the true effects of sales promotions because of their complementary and pervasive nature (van Waterschoot and Van den Bulte, 1992). In addition, evidence from all groups in this study suggested that when sales promotions were individually considered for their effect on attendance they were relatively ineffective, but when they were combined with other sales promotions and selected marketing techniques they became highly effective. It is likely that losing teams need to implement their promotions more

strategically. By developing combinations of marketing techniques that are powerful, by carefully selecting events, and by taking care to not reduce the perceived value of their product it may be possible for them to experience more success with sales promotion techniques.

Previous studies of major league sports have obtained mixed results in establishing a relationship between team performance and attendance, however, this continues to be perceived by marketing personnel as a major factor affecting attendance (Hansen & Gauthier, 1990).

Three significant differences, however, did exist in this study related to the relative importance of the marketing techniques that winning and losing teams used. In addition, winning teams had higher means for virtually all items during both stages of the season, thus, indicating that their marketing directors perceived most techniques to have a positive effect on attendance.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

This study was designed to derive specific marketing techniques used in sport and to determine their perceived relative effect on the attendance of minor professional hockey teams during different stages of a playing season. Previous studies involving sport marketing techniques have involved a limited number of techniques in relatively few sport settings (Marcum & Greenstein, 1985; Hambleton, 1987; Coan, 1990; Branvold & Bowers, 1992). We also know very little about how and when these marketing techniques have been used, particularly at a minor professional sport level. Minor professional sports are often found in small, competitive markets and because they have little control over the quality of their product they have had to engage in a variety of marketing techniques to increase their attendance (Rudolph, 1988; Berg, 1990; Wulf, 1990).

The Strategic Marketing Planning Process (Kotler, 1986) and an Analytical Model for Sport Marketing (Hansen & Gauthier, 1990) provided a framework to examine the various strategies and marketing techniques that can be implemented to achieve a sport organization's marketing goals. By means of a situational analysis sport marketers can determine factors affecting attendance, set objectives, develop marketing strategies, and implement and evaluate marketing techniques to achieve the goals of their overall marketing program. Subsequently, this study derived

twenty-six marketing techniques from the sport marketing literature that were identified and categorized according to their function in the sport marketing mix, and specifically, according to their function in the promotion mix. These twenty-six techniques can now be added to the Sport Marketing Techniques section of Hansen and Gauthier's (1990) Analytical Model for Sport Marketing (See Table 2).

In addition, this research has provided more specificity of marketing techniques as compared to Hambleton (1987) and Coan's (1990) twenty-two techniques. By categorizing these techniques according to their function in the promotion mix we now have a better understanding of their relationship to each other and to the components of the marketing mix (van Waterschoot & Van den Bulte, 1992).

For this study, a questionnaire was mailed to a sample of 28 marketing directors in the American (AHL) and International (IHL) Hockey Leagues from which a 93% response rate was obtained. The questionnaire consisted of three parts; the first part provided a situational analysis and was comprised of data regarding demographics, seating capacity, sport competition, target markets scheduling, and marketing activities.

The second part of the questionnaire was comprised of the twenty-six marketing techniques derived from the literature. Subjects indicated their view of the effect that each marketing technique had on increasing attendance at home games during different stages of the season. Each technique could be rated on a 5-point Likert scale for each stage of the season ranging from 1 (having no effect on attendance) to 5 (having a strong effect on attendance). Subjects could also respond "Not applicable" if they did not use a particular technique. The third part

of the questionnaire was used to obtain additional data regarding successful combinations of marketing techniques that could be reported on an individual game and stage of the season basis.

Descriptive statistics were generated from parts one and two which indicated some general trends in the data and provided results regarding the relative importance each marketing technique had on increasing attendance during different stages of the season. From part three, successful technique combination frequencies were recorded and then categorized according to their function in the promotion mix.

The basic questions of this investigation stemmed from the work of Hambleton (1987) and Coan (1990) who analyzed the priority of marketing techniques used by high and low attendance men's NCAA teams and the NBA, respectively. In addition, Hansen and Gauthier's (1989) study of factors affecting attendance at professional sport events formed the basis for a comparison of winning and losing teams. Independent sample *t*-tests were used to test for significant differences in the relative importance of marketing techniques used between high and low attendance teams, as well as to test for significant differences between winning and losing teams. The hypothesis relating to differences between high and low attendance teams was rejected for media relations and ticket options and incentives during the first half of the season, while the hypothesis relating to differences between winning and losing teams was rejected for media sponsorships during the first half of the season and ticket options and incentives during the second half.

Conclusions

High versus Low Attendance Teams

In general, marketing techniques were seen to be more important for both high and low attendance teams in the first rather than the second half of the season. Significant differences were found in the first half of the season for the marketing techniques of media relations, and ticket options and incentives such that high attendance teams considered them relatively more important than did low attendance teams. In addition, high attendance teams considered most items to be more effective in increasing attendance for both stages of the season. High attendance teams also perceived more items to have a strong positive effect on attendance as compared to low attendance teams.

Both groups found group ticket sales to be strongly effective, however, low attendance teams spent less time on ticket sales activities and had a somewhat smaller season ticket base and family audience than high attendance teams. High attendance teams had been in their markets longer, perceived public relations and promotion techniques to be more effective than the low attendance teams did, and spent more time on public relations and promotion activities. With the exception of television broadcast of games, low attendance teams perceived advertising items to be relatively less important as compared to high attendance teams. On the other hand, losing teams spent more time on advertising, as well as market research, and they employed more front office staff.

It was suggested that low attendance teams re-evaluate their ticket sales strategies and devote more time to this function. It was also recommended that they focus on increasing the season ticket base and family audience segments of their markets. They should probably implement sales promotions such as ticket options and incentives in a more strategic fashion so as not to reduce the perceived value of their product. In addition, low attendance teams would probably benefit from spending more time and being more creative with public relations, particularly in the area of media and community relations.

High attendance teams were generally situated in smaller cities with smaller facilities and less professional sport competition. These appear to be the markets where minor professional hockey is most successful.

Winning Versus Losing Teams

A significant difference existed in the first half of the season for media sponsorships as winning teams placed relatively more importance on this marketing technique. Significant differences were also found in the second half of the season as winning teams considered ticket options and incentives and signage to be relatively more important than losing teams did. With the exception of television broadcast of games, winning teams perceived most marketing techniques to be more effective in increasing attendance for both stages of the season. As well, winning teams considered more items to have a strong effect on attendance as compared to losing teams. In addition, most items were seen to be more important for both groups in the first half rather than the second half of the season.

Winning and losing teams spent the same amount of time on public relations and placed strong importance on group ticket sales but losing teams had a smaller season ticket base and family audience than winning attendance teams. Winning and losing teams also spent a similar amount of time on public relations however, winning teams considered media relations, media sponsorships and community relations to be substantially more important than losing teams did. Losing teams perceived advertising and promotion relatively less important as compared to winning teams, however, they had to spend more time on these activities to obtain the same results as winning teams.

As was the case for low attendance teams, losing teams need to re-evaluate their ticket sales objectives by seeking more season ticket holder and family audience segments. In addition, losing teams would likely benefit from more aggressive and creative public relations strategies, particularly in the areas of media sponsorships and media and community relations. In the advertising category, losing teams appeared to have a specific weakness in their signage and they would likely benefit from improving their sign programs. As well, they should probably be more selective with their ticket options and incentives and also develop more positively strategic sales promotion combinations.

Winning and losing teams did not differ in the average size of their markets but winning teams had a slightly higher average per cent capacity attendance. In addition, there appeared to be no differences in the number of front office staff they employed, time spent on market research, number of years in their markets or scheduling of their games.

Recommendations for Further Study

There are four recommendations for further study. Firstly, because there is a paucity of studies involving marketing techniques used across sports, that a similar study using a sample from other sports and sport levels be conducted. This would provide a larger sample size and would allow for more in-depth analysis concerning the nature and relationship of specific marketing techniques used in sport.

Secondly, that a similar study using a sample of sport consumer's be conducted to determine the relative importance of marketing techniques on increasing attendance at sport events. It is possible that the results of such a study would be different than those from a sample of marketing personnel.

Thirdly, because results of this study regarding the relative importance of marketing techniques in the promotion category were mixed, that a study focusing on the use of sales promotion techniques in sport be conducted.

Finally, because it was suspected that the perception of the quality of minor professional sport varied according to the marketing environments of teams in this study, that a study of consumer perceptions of the minor professional sport product be conducted with a sample from both large and small markets.

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Appendix 1
Teams, Population of Markets and
NHL Affiliation

**1992 - 93 American Hockey
League Teams**

<u>Team</u>	<u>Population of Market</u>	<u>NHL Affiliation</u>
Adirondack Red Wings	800,000	Detroit Red Wings
Springfield Indians	160,000	Hartford Whalers
Baltimore Skipjacks	2,000,000	Washington Capitals
Utica Devils	100,000	New Jersey Devils
Binghamton Rangers	200,000	New York Rangers
Cape Breton Oilers	80,000	Edmonton Oilers
Capital District Islanders	275,000	New York Islanders
Fredericton Canadiens	60,000	Montreal Canadiens
Hershey Bears	1,000,000	Philadelphia Flyers
Halifax Citadels	300,000	Quebec Nordiques
New Haven Senators	500,000	Ottawa Senators
Hamilton Canucks*	2,200,000	Vancouver Canucks
Providence Bruins*	2,100,000	Boston Bruins
Moncton Hawks	100,000	Winnipeg Jets
Rochester Americans	1,000,000	Buffalo Sabres
St. John's Maple Leafs*	300,000	Toronto Maple Leafs

Note.* In market less than 3 years

**1992 - 93 International Hockey
League Teams**

<u>Team</u>	<u>Population of Market</u>	<u>NHL Affiliation</u>
Atlanta Knights*	2,500,000	Tampa Bay Lightning
Cleveland Lumberjacks*	1,800,000	Pittsburgh Penguins
Cincinnati Cyclones*	1,500,000	New Jersey Devils
Fort Wayne Komets	200,000	Winnipeg Jets / Detroit Red Wings
Indianapolis Ice	1,200,000	Chicago Black Hawks
Kalamazoo Wings	100,000	Minnesota North Stars
Milwaukee Admirals	800,000	Independent
Peoria Rivermen	300,000	St. Louis Blues
Kansas City Blades	1,300,000	San Jose Sharks
San Diego Gulls	1,800,000	New York Rangers
Salt Lake Golden Eagle	1,300,000	Calgary Flames
Phoenix Roadrunners	2,000,000	Los Angeles Kings

Note. * In market less than 3 years

Appendix 2

Attendance Breakdown of Teams

Attendance Breakdown

Average Per Cent Capacity Attendance for Regular Playing Seasons

1990 -'91 to 1992 -'93

High Attendance > 64.14%

High Attendance		Low Attendance	
Team	% Capacity	Team	% Capacity
A	100	O	64
B	92	P	53
C	92	Q	51
D	90	R	48
E	85	S	47
F	84	T	47
G	84	U	43
H	82	V	41
I	81	W	36
J	80	X	31
K	77	Y	30
L	72	Z	28
M	66		
N	65		

Appendix 3

Performance Breakdown of Teams

Performance Breakdown

Average Point Percentages for Regular Playing Seasons 1990 - '91 to 1992 - '93

* Winning Teams > 52.68%

AHL Team	%	IHL Team	%
Adirondack	50	Atlanta*	68
Baltimore	46	Cleveland*	53
Utica	47	Cincinnati	37
Binghamton*	64	Fort Wayne*	62
Cape Breton*	53	Indianapolis	51
Capital District	46	Kalamazoo	52
Fredericton*	55	Milwaukee*	54
Hershey	47	Peoria*	64
Halifax	46	Kansas City*	55
Hamilton	40	San Diego*	61
Providence*	59	Salt Lake*	53
Moncton	49	Phoenix	42
Rochester*	57		
St. John's*	58		

Appendix 4

Marketing Technique Questionnaire

MARKETING TECHNIQUE SURVEY

Developed by :

**Anne Vaughan
Hal Hansen
Roger Gauthier**

March 1993.

University of Ottawa

9. Please indicate the number of regular season home games you have at the following times.

Evenings
Monday ___ Tuesday ___ Wednesday ___ Thursday ___ Friday ___ Saturday ___ Sunday ___

Afternoons
Saturday ___ Sunday ___

10. Does your club conduct market research? Yes ___ No ___
if yes, what type and how often? (For example, weekly, monthly, twice or once per season).

Spectator Surveys _____
General Public Surveys _____
Other (Please explain) _____

11. How many "Front Office" staff do you have? _____
(For example, 2 full time and 4 part time. Functions would include ticket sales, public relations, advertising, promotion, and market research). As a group, what percentage of their time is devoted to:

Ticket Sales	_____ %	Promotion	_____ %
Public Relations	_____ %	Market Research	_____ %
Advertising	_____ %		

12. So that we can get an idea of the range of ticket prices and the type of promotions you schedule during the season, would you please enclose this season's ticket price schedule and your schedule of game promotions. Thank you very much.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please indicate your view of the effect that the following marketing techniques have on increasing attendance at your home games during different stages of the season.

Simply circle the number which best reflects the degree of importance each technique has on increasing attendance.

A rating of: 1 = No degree of importance on increasing attendance.

2 or 3 = Slight degree of importance on increasing attendance.

4 or 5 = Strong degree of importance on increasing attendance.

NA = You do not use the technique for that particular stage of the season.

EXAMPLE :

Degree of Importance on Increasing Attendance

Marketing Technique	Stage of Season																		
	During First Half of Regular Season			During Second Half of Regular Season					During Play offs										
NA	<u>No</u>	<u>Slight</u>	<u>Strong</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Slight</u>	<u>Strong</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Slight</u>	<u>Strong</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Slight</u>	<u>Strong</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Slight</u>	<u>Strong</u>				
6. Technique X	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Remember, a technique could have a different rating for different stages of the season.

Please Note: If you never use a marketing technique please indicate appropriately by checking the blank under the NA column.

Example: 6. Technique X NA ✓

Degree of Importance on Increasing Attendance

**Marketing
Technique**

Stage of Season

	NA	During First Half of Regular Season					During Second Half of Regular Season					During Play offs							
		No	Slight	Strong	No	Slight	Strong	No	Slight	Strong	No	Slight	Strong						
Ticket Sales																			
<u>Multiple Game Ticket Packages</u> Packages of 5, 10 or 20 games such as "Game Pick" or "Within Division" game packages.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<u>Group Ticket Sales</u> Groups or blocks of tickets for sponsors, community groups or select market segments, eg., university students.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<u>Ticket Options & Incentives</u> Premiums with purchase of tickets, eg., a free souvenir, coupon, or admittance to a post game party.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<u>Tier Pricing</u> Different pricing for select target markets, eg., box, "Red" or "Blue" seats, childrens', family, or seniors' pricing.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<u>Promotional Pricing</u> Special pricing for special events such as "Ladies Night" or "Fan Appreciation Night".	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<u>Discount Pricing</u> Reduced prices, eg., season ticket discounts. May also be "Buy 5 Get 1 Free" or limited time offers, eg., purchase of tickets before a deadline date.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<u>Ticket Distribution</u> Number of off-site ticket outlets, use of ticket distributors, eg., "Ticket Master" or toll free reservation lines for credit card holders.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<u>Telemarketing Ticket Sales</u> Contracted or on-staff telephone solicitors.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Degree of Importance on Increasing Attendance

Marketing Technique	Stage of Season																		
	NA	During First Half of Regular Season		During Second Half of Regular Season		During Play offs													
		No	Slight	Strong	No	Slight	Strong	No	Slight	Strong									
Public Relations																			
<u>Community Public Relations Program</u> Appearances of team representatives at community events. Appearances at local institutions, eg., schools and hospitals and Club involvement in ongoing community programs such as "Say No to Drugs".	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3. Community Fund Raising Program Club involvement in community fund raising events. Games that raise money for local non-profit groups.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
1. Booster Club & Special Member Clubs For the purpose of promoting fan enthusiasm within the community. These clubs may circulate newsletters and hold special membership, fund raising and media events.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
2. Media Relations Program To strengthen relationship with the media through media guides, news releases, feature stories, press conferences, on-site media facilities, interview and photo opportunities as well as media entertainment	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3. Media Sponsorships Involvement of media sponsors in various promotional activities.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Advertising																			
4. Direct Mail Newsletters, tabloids, pamphlets, premiums, coupons and any other forms of advertising sent through the mail. Would also include mail order ticket and merchandise sales.	—	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Degree of Importance on Increasing Attendance

Marketing Technique	Stage of Season												
	NA	During First Half of Regular Season			During Second Half of Regular Season								
		No	Slight	Strong	No	Slight	Strong						
15. <u>Print</u> Includes free standing newspaper and magazine inserts, run of press ads or supplements, your program, as well as print sponsored "tie in" promotions.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
16. <u>Radio</u> Selected and run of schedule ads, as well as radio sponsored "tie in" promotions.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
17. <u>Radio</u> Radio broadcast of your games.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
18. <u>Television</u> Selected and run of schedule ads, as well as television "tie in" promotions.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
19. <u>Television</u> Television broadcast of your games.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
20. <u>Signage</u> Billboards, transit advertising and on-site signage.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
21. <u>Licensed Products</u> Products bearing your team logo, available at public retail and on-site outlets.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Promotion													
22. <u>Sponsored Premium Give Away Nights</u> Games at which spectators receive premiums or samples bearing the team's and a sponsor's logo.	---	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Degree of Importance on Increasing Attendance

Marketing
Technique

Stage of Season

NA During First Half of Regular Season During Second Half of Regular Season During Play offs
No Slight Strong No Slight Strong No Slight Strong

1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA

Special Events at Games
 May include between period appearances of popular personalities, entertainment, special awards presentations or some other display that might entertain spectators.

1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA

Contests
 Usually tied in with sponsors from the corporate, media or non-profit sectors. These often occur on the ice between periods.

1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA

Promotion of "Star" Players
 Promotion (through public relations or advertising) of outstanding players. May be athletes from your own or an opponent's team or perhaps an athlete who is very popular in your community.

1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA

Mascots
 May appear at games for between period entertainment, may participate in community events or appear in your advertising.

her marketing techniques, not listed above, that your club has used. Please identify and indicate your view of the effect that such a technique has on increasing attendance at your home games during different stages of the season.

Degree of Importance on Increasing Attendance

Marketing
Technique

Stage of Season

NA During First Half of Regular Season During Second Half of Regular Season During Play offs
No Slight Strong No Slight Strong No Slight Strong

1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA 1 2 3 4 5 NA

As you know, combinations of various marketing techniques can be very effective for increasing attendance. In your view, which combinations of all of these techniques has proved most successful for your club? Please indicate names and/or numbers of the marketing techniques on the line under each stage of the season. If the same combinations are used for other stages of the season, simply check (✓) the appropriate stages.

**Combinations of Successful Marketing Techniques
(Names and/or numbers)**

During First Half
of Regular Season

During Second Half
of Regular Season

During
Play offs

Some marketing techniques are effective at different stages of the season whereas others are effective when used for specific or individual games. Please indicate the techniques you think are effective for increasing attendance when used on an individual game basis only.

Technique Name and/or Number

Technique Name and/or Number

Once again, many thanks for your cooperation.

Appendix 5
Certificate of Approval



FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES DE LA SANTÉ
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

**CERTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

This is to certify that the Institutional Human Research Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences has examined the research proposal by Anne Vaughan, a student from the School of Human Kinetics for the project entitled "The relative effectiveness of marketing techniques on the attendance of minor league professional hockey teams" and concludes that, in all respects, in the proposed research protocol meets the appropriate standards of ethical acceptability, at a Category 1A level.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

<u>Name (Optional)</u>	<u>Position held</u>	<u>Department of discipline</u>
Richard Bouchard	Student	Human Kinetics
Anne Carswell	Professor	Programme of Occupational Therapy
Jean Harvey	Vice-Dean	Faculty of Health Sciences
Marie Loyer	Chair	Human Research Ethics Committee & School of Nursing
Jacqueline Neatby	Member-at-Large	
Daniel Proulx	Professor	Faculty of Law
James Thoden	Professor	Human Kinetics

SIGNATURE

2 March 1992
Date


Committee Chairperson - Marie des Anges Loyer, Ph.D

Appendix 6

Letter of Introduction



FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES DE LA SANTÉ
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

March 15, 1993

Introductory Letter

Dear Director of Marketing/Communications:

As a graduate student in Sport Studies at the University of Ottawa, I am gathering information on techniques used in professional sport marketing. The enclosed questionnaire is designed to solicit your perceptions about the ways you attempt to increase attendance through your marketing program.

Various studies and information sources indicate that the items presented in this questionnaire are often used by sport marketers but little is known about the context in which they are applied or how effective they may be. I believe it is important that experts in the field, using their knowledge and experience, comment on the relative effect that each marketing technique has on increasing attendance during specific stages of the season.

Please take the time to complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope by March 31. Completion of the questionnaire should take approximately twenty minutes. I realize your time is valuable but your efforts are critical to the success of this research. Should you wish a copy of the results, please indicate on the questionnaire and enclose your address.

Cooperation and approval to conduct this survey has been given by Mr. Bob Ohrablo, Marketing Director of the American Hockey League, and Mr. Mike McCall, Marketing Director of the International Hockey League. I thank them for their assistance.

We assure you of the confidentiality of the process and the anonymity of the results. Specifically, we will not be discussing results related to individual teams but will be analysing data in general terms.

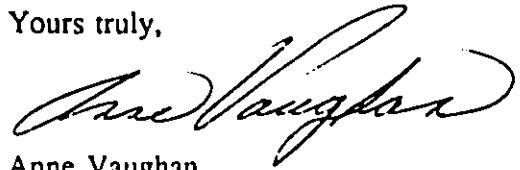
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Should you have any questions about the survey, feel free to contact me, Anne Vaughan, at (613)596-9143. Your input would be most appreciated.

Dr. Hal Hansen is the advising professor for this study and may be reached at (613)564-9125 or FAX: (613)564-9118. The Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee, Dr. Marie-des-Anges Loyer, may also be contacted at (613)564-6705.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anne Vaughan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Anne Vaughan
Candidate, M.A. Sport Studies