

# **Developing a Marketing Plan for Legends Sports Leagues**

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## **Abstract**

This project created an evidence-based marketing plan for Legends Sports Leagues in Northern Virginia. We evaluated the current state and growth opportunities available to Legends by conducting surveys, interviews, and game observations to create recommendations concerning the league's opportunities for growing membership and attracting corporate sponsors. Together with recommendations, we provided a set of deliverables: survey results, promotional videos, a redesigned website, and a marketing brochure.

# **Executive Summary**

## **Introduction**

Legends Sports Leagues (LSL) is a recreational sports league started by Ron J. Cortese that emphasizes camaraderie and sportsmanship for its adult and youth participants in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Today, over 2,000 people are taking advantage of the opportunities that LSL offers. Due to the league's current success, LSL is looking to continue to grow its membership. In addition, LSL wants to attract more corporate sponsors which would allow them to support the increase in members. A broader marketing plan would enable further growth of the league.

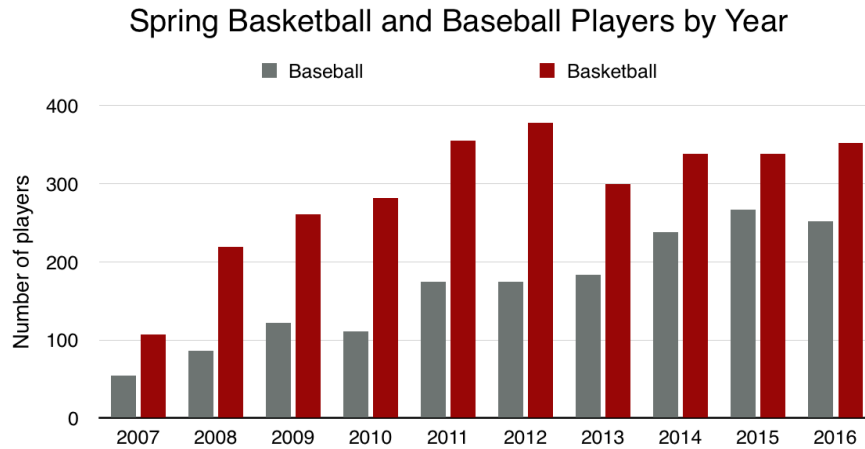
The main goal of the project was to create an evidence based marketing plan. We have created five main objectives to work towards the goal of increasing members and corporate sponsors. Our team's objectives were to evaluate and assess all the leagues LSL offers, evaluate the current sponsors, and then design an evidence based marketing plan.

## **History of Legends Sports Leagues**

For more than 20 seasons, Legends Sports League has been one of the leading recreational sports organizations in Fairfax County, located in the DC metropolitan area. This league was started by Ronald J. Cortese who developed an affinity for creating a league when he formed a racquetball league in his company. LSL focuses on pride and camaraderie across its teams and skill levels (Cortese, 2016).

Legends started in 2006 with three adult (19 or older) baseball teams. Over the next several years, LSL grew to 20 baseball teams and began an adult basketball league allowing year-round play, even for the winter season. Starting from six adult teams, the basketball league has expanded to over 40 in recent years (the growth of these adult leagues is illustrated in Figure 1).





*Figure 1: Total number of LSL players in adult baseball and basketball by year*

Cortese also decided to start a youth basketball program that consists of multiple skill levels with children ranging from third grade to high school levels. In August 2016, LSL expanded to golf starting with 24 participants in 12 teams. Legends would like to continue to grow its membership and attract more corporate sponsors.

## **Project Approach**

The goal of this project was to increase the number of people who participate in LSL events by creating a marketing plan that will help Legends attract new players and sponsors. In order to accomplish this, the project was broken into three phases: data collection, data analysis, and marketing plan and deliverables.

### **Phase One: Data Collection**

In order to collect the data necessary for a marketing plan, we conducted interviews with key officials, distributed surveys to players in each league, and attended games. Some of the collected information included the satisfaction of participants, league's advantages and drawbacks, marketing presence, and improvement potential.

We interviewed 11 key stakeholders that either worked or played for Legends. Then, we distributed the survey to determine players' opinions about Legends. This survey was emailed to all players who have participated in the last five years. For the youth players, the survey was sent to their parent or guardian. In order to understand the game experience and organization, we attended eight different Legends games and collected observations about each.

### **Phase Two: Data Analysis**

Since the data was collected in three different forms, it was analyzed accordingly. We conducted interview, survey, and game observation analysis. The interviews from key stakeholders were analyzed by looking for common themes between interviews. The topics involved improvements and obstacles the league experiences, marketing techniques, and league's advantages. The survey data was analyzed by using Qualtrics. Graphs and tables were created to represent the range of answers players gave. While analyzing the survey data, reoccurring and prominent common answers (more than 50% of participants) were taken as important aspects to address in the recommendations. Game observations were analyzed by reviewing notes taken at each game. The analysis involved looking for common practices or instances that Legends performed.

### **Phase Three: Designing a Marketing Plan**

The marketing plan was created using the analyzed data. The recommendations constructed from the analyzed data were compiled into a separate document. The project also included a few deliverables including two promotional videos, website changes, a new logo, marketing brochure, and a full report of survey data.

### **Research Findings**

The first common theme found was Legends' expansion through word of mouth. Many interviewees explained the importance of word of mouth in starting and growing the league. Most survey participants also indicated that they had learned about Legends through word of mouth showing the importance of this strategy when growing the league and therefore were considered while designing the marketing plan.

Another common theme discovered was the importance of friendly competition and camaraderie found in the league. When asked about what players enjoy most about the league, common responses mentioned how the league has a friendly environment but still is competitive. Nelson Taveras, the former Prince William County (PWC) basketball commissioner, also talked about how people enjoy the competition and that teams continue to sign up in future seasons with the same teams and people. This common theme shows a message that can be highlighted in a marketing message to possible new members.

The last common theme found was the importance of promoting Legends brand awareness. Nelson Taveras, the former Prince William County Baseball Commissioner, explained how he initially advertised Legends to the people of Prince William County by distributing flyers and pamphlets. Taveras said this technique was effective in getting people to join. In an interview with volunteers in the youth basketball league, the interviewees expressed their belief that Legends may not have reached the full potential of players. When it comes to the basketball league, the volunteers stated that more people would likely join if they knew about it.

### **The Marketing Plan for Legends Sports Leagues**

There are four high priority recommendations that were determined to be advantageous for the league to implement. We advise that high priority recommendations be completed as soon as possible.

The first recommendation involves increasing the marketing presence at and around LSL games and the venues. Seven out of the eight games attended did not have any such presence. A marketing presence will also allow spectators and other passers-by to know that a Legends game is going occurring. Signage and banners that can be put up in gyms, dugouts, courses, or possibly even on school property during game hours would be effective.

The second high priority recommendation involves increasing marketing presence as well but with more of a focus on the local level. In order to increase LSL brand awareness in the Fairfax area, the distribution of flyers and pamphlets detailing the league and how to join are important. Keeping social media up to date would increase overall interest in the league and may even increase its value in the eyes of the members. Posts should be made at least every week on all platforms to maintain interest. Promotional videos regarding the baseball and Little Legends leagues are good material to post on social media.

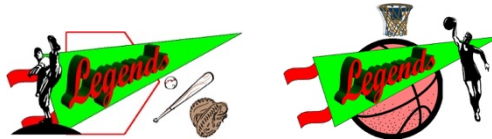
Another high priority recommendation is the implementation of a referral program. When a current Legends member refers a new person to the league both will receive a 10% discount for that season. This will encourage members to reach out to new players and multiply the word of mouth effect.

The last high priority recommendation involves starting an internship program. Due to the number of tasks and hours required to run the day to day operations of a league, an intern is needed. The intern would have the responsibilities of fulfilling the above recommendations and should have a sports marketing background.

**Deliverables**

To assist Legends in carrying out the marketing plan, we created a marketing brochure, two promotional videos, a marketing "manual" that concisely describes the recommendations from this document, and an updated website that is easier to navigate and more visually appealing. In addition, to these deliverables we made effort to redesign the logo of Legends into a simpler design as seen below.

Previous Design



Updated Design



# Chapter 1: Introduction

Recreational sport leagues are popular in the United States with over 35 million children five to 18 years old and over 15 million adults participating in organized recreational sports in 2008 (Humphreys 2008). In addition, 16 percent of the United States population is engaged in recreational sports. Playing recreational sports provides much needed physical exercise that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends for both youth and adults. Leagues also provide a social setting for people to communicate and get to know one another. These social activities allow for more tightly-knit and healthier communities (CDC, 2016).

There are over 75 organizations that host over 375 different leagues in Washington, D.C., that compete across a wide range of skill levels (Shaw, 2014). With a population of about 670,000 in the Washington, D.C. area, just over ten percent are between five and seventeen years old (U.S. Census, 2015). Attracting adults and children to the opportunities in the D.C., area will provide a path to help make communities healthier and more active (Batty, 2004).

Legends Sports Leagues (LSL) is a recreational sports league that emphasizes camaraderie and sportsmanship for its adult and youth participants in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Started by Ron J. Cortese, the league has grown from three baseball and six basketball teams to over 20 and 80 teams respectively. In August, 2016, LSL started a golf league with 24 participants in 12 teams. Today, over 2,000 people are taking advantage annually of the opportunities that LSL offers.

Due to the league's current success, LSL is looking to continue to grow its membership. To this point, Legends has done little marketing and is looking for a plan that will provide specific methods for its desired growth. Currently, LSL is using Facebook and Google advertisements which have been the bulk of their online advertising. In addition, LSL wants to attract more corporate sponsors which would allow them to more easily support the increase in members. A broader marketing plan would enable further growth of the league.

The main goal of the project was to create such a marketing plan. We have spelled out five main objectives to work towards the goal of increasing members and corporate sponsors. Our team's objectives were to evaluate and assess all the leagues LSL has to offer, evaluate the current sponsors, and then to design a strategic marketing plan that will allow the league to obtain new members and corporate sponsors by analyzing the current leagues, LSL's marketing strategies, and LSL's sponsorship appeal. For this project, the deliverable was an updated marketing plan that LSL can implement.

# Chapter 2: Background

## 2.1 Community Benefits of Recreational Sports

In 2008, 15 million adults participated in recreational sports leagues throughout the United States (Humphrey, 2008). Not only is playing a sport a positive outlet for one's competitiveness, but it also provides a social atmosphere and an opportunity for an active, healthy lifestyle.

Physical activity is important to an individual's health. The CDC recommends that children get at least 60 minutes of aerobic activity every day (2015), which they define as moderate-intensity activity such as brisk walking (CDC, 2008). For adults, the CDC recommends at least 150 minutes of aerobic physical activity each week, but states that doubling that amount to five hours would lead to even greater health benefits (2008). Regularly participating in sports is an easy and largely enjoyable way to meet these CDC recommendations to lead a healthier lifestyle.

In addition to the health benefits, several studies have pointed out the social atmosphere that recreational sports provide. Scott D. Pierce (2012) explained the importance of social benefits saying, "The social part is key. A lot of people sign up to play on a team with their friends, but 15 to 20 percent are just interested in meeting new people" This social aspect extends from the lowest levels all the way up to professionals. In an interview with a National Basketball Association (NBA) player from the New York Knicks, Rob Baker credited his community and the friends he grew up with for helping him achieve his sports goals. (Schaeperkoetter, 2015). He said, "I love those guys back home. It's just remarkable where I came from and where I'm at right now. I wouldn't probably be here without the friends and community I grew up in (Schaeperkoetter, 2015)." Some of the other social benefits of sports include enhanced confidence and self-esteem, empowering disadvantaged groups, reduction in crime and vandalism, increased social integration and co-operation, and encouraging pride (Grafton, 2001).

In addition to health and social benefits, recreational sports can also help the community. Many playing fields that are used by the League are publicly owned, and

when recreational sports teams rent these facilities, it provides additional income to the local economy. The money can then be reinvested into local infrastructure, schools and so on. Additionally, increasing fields or play areas can increase physical activity in the community, which in turn leads to an increased number of members. A study entitled *Parental Perceived Built Environment Measures and Active Play in Washington DC*, looked at the relationship between the number of “play areas” and fields in the DC area and the extent to which people living in those areas exercise. It was found that the more fields and play areas that were available, the more active the children were. (Roberts, 2016). This was because those living in locations with more “play areas” described these areas as conducive to more physical activity.

## **2.2 Legends Sports Leagues**

For more than 20 seasons, Legends Sports League has been one of the leading recreational sports organizations in Fairfax County, located in the DC metropolitan area. This league was started by Ronald J. Cortese who developed an affinity for creating a league when he formed a racquetball league in his company. LSL focuses on pride and camaraderie across its teams and skill levels (Cortese, 2016).

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## Spring Basketball and Baseball Players by Year

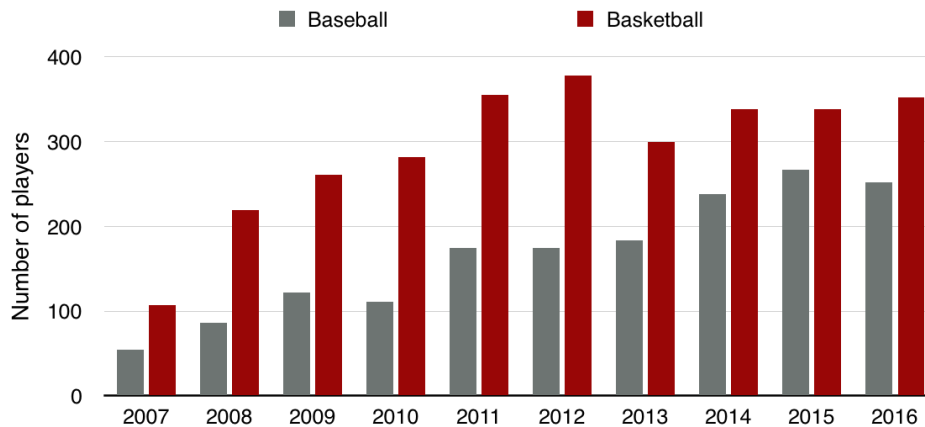


Figure 1: Total number of LSL players in adult baseball and basketball by year

These adult leagues have participants ranging from 19 to 70 years old across eight different divisions (Cortese, 2016). Seeing the success of the adult basketball league, Mr. Cortese decided to start a youth program that became equally successful. LSL youth programs consist of multiple skill levels with children ranging from third grade to high school levels. In August 2016, LSL expanded to golf starting with 24 participants in 12 teams. Legends would like to continue to grow its youth basketball league and adult golf program while maintaining its current membership size for adult basketball and baseball.

### 2.3 Marketing a Recreational Sports League

There are three important aspects to effectively grow the Legends Sports League. Legends needs to concentrate on maintaining current members, employing social media marketing, and improving websites.

In order to maintain strong membership in a league, the league and its programs must be continually marketed. One of the most effective ways to accomplish this is to designate time spent by League leadership each month or week toward building the marketing platform (Polin, n.d.).

With digital devices becoming more popular, the marketing world has undergone dramatic changes. These devices have changed the marketing world to combine old

fundamentals with innovative new ideas. Current marketing trends show that consumers research a product more carefully in depth once they know it exists, and if it is something that provides utility for an individual consumer. This means marketers need to hold a consumer's attention to market effectively (Polin, n.d.). Online marketing includes both social media marketing and website redesign. In the case of Legends, social media marketing will concentrate on community-league interactions through social media networks.

### **2.3.1 Maintaining current members**

Today, marketers need to create features that would retain their customers even after a sale or sign-up. For example, the Nike+ program helps consumers track their training programs and results (Satell, April 2013). Participants in the program are constantly rewarded by seeing the progress of their training throughout the program. This model is similar to subscription services, such as Netflix, which gives the user a lot of utility as long as they keep paying for the product. This type of service needs continuous improvement to keep the user engaged and encourage them to return to the product. Even though this is a commercial sales technique, it still applicable to a non-profit such as LSL by highlighting the importance of keeping customers and members interested.

The Chicago Sport and Social Club is the biggest recreational league in the United States. As of 2013, Jason Erkes was the owner and ran the day-to-day operations of the league. Erkes was able to build and grow his league by using social media and other techniques to nearly double the number of sports and leagues than what was available 12 years ago prior to his ownership (Ecker, 2013).

One of the keys to Chicago's Sport and Social Club's success is due to its venues. "Sport and Social has a lock on some prime district locations. It is the largest user of Chicago Park facilities with a contract that runs through 2017" (Ecker, 2013). The convenience and popularity of these areas promote membership retention. Sport and Social also demonstrates how sponsors have a big part in the growing process. The league even staged tournaments and other team-building events for companies including BMO Harris Bank, Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises Inc. and accounting firm

BDO USA (Ecker 2013). This league utilizes one example of the techniques necessary to effectively grow and expand.

### **2.3.2 Social media marketing**

Social media allows users to more directly connect with a company. This gives a larger voice to individuals and allows a company to get better feedback. Some ways social media allows users to connect with a company are accomplished through personal communication, corporate promotion, and location-based content.

The Recreation Center and Intramural League at Georgia Southern University went through a dramatic change in 2008 when it decided to move away from printed documents and flyers and move towards the more streamlined and readily available forms of social media. Chris Butler, a recreational marketing professional, talks about how sending tweets and staying up to date with your members and players is always beneficial, “The only way for social media to work is if you are responding all the time” (Nipe, 2015). Butler talks about how social media has created something similar to a fan and following base for the recreation and intramural community. Social media also helps with the business and scheduling aspect of the intramural leagues where, “a popular social media dashboard that allows for preprogramming tweets and other posts so that no one is manually sending them to coincide with study breaks at, say, 10:30 p.m. It's also a handy way to schedule repeat reminders — pertaining to a team registration deadline, for example” (Steinbach, 2014). Georgia Southern University has increased participation and its intramural events are more easily scheduled using social media. These aspects can be implemented in other leagues as well such as Legends Sports Leagues.

When using social media marketing techniques, there are some general guidelines that often lead to more success. It is important to update information on social media often, usually once or more per day. This ensures that users will have current information about the company; and if posts are being made often, there is an increased chance that users will see those changes since they will line up with users' varying usage times. This is another important decision to make when using social

media. If a company focuses all of its efforts on Snapchat but its users are on Twitter or Facebook, then the tool will not be as effective as it could be. This also applies with emerging markets (San Diego Business Journal, 2016). For example, a company may have a strong presence on Facebook as do most of its users; however, if the company wants to move on to a new market, then it might be valuable to start marketing on Twitter in order to serve a different demographic.

DC Social Sports Club is located in Washington, D.C., and is one of the largest sports leagues in the area. They have grown their league in several ways. First, the league has grown by offering a variety of sports. DC Social Sports Club has a total of 14 sports and games including basketball, corn hole, flag football, and floor hockey. This number of sports provides a broad variety of options for anyone who wants to join and play. A social media presence is also vital when it comes to growing a league. DC Social Sports Club has a huge presence on popular social media sites and apps including Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram. These mediums allow prospective members to learn about the league through the social media platform of their choice. Another way the DC Social Sports Club has grown is through creating a user-friendly site, which allows for including quick registration for the league and mailing lists. New members are able to quickly and easily sign up and pay fees for the league on their website.

The four marketing ideas that drive modern digital marketing, according to Satell (2013), are clarifying business objectives, finding emerging opportunities, decoupling strategy and innovation, and building open assets in the marketplace. Clarifying business objectives means having a unique approach to a business plan. Then, the plan needs to be simplified so that it can be easily understood and implemented. At the same time, opportunities are constantly being created and reevaluated. Being at the front end of some of these opportunities can drastically change the success of the business. For example, LSL discovered that there were few options for golfers to find a league so LSL attempted to address that demand. Innovation can be a dangerous strategy because experimental designs may not work, or may even leave a worse public image of the business. It is much safer to use tried and tested strategies that are more

reliable. Finally, our product will need an open access marketplace (Satell, April 2013). For LSL, this means that all the members have free access to schedules and events so that they can stay updated.

One specific use of social media marketing is using Snapchat as a tool for “location marketing” (Kapko, 2016). The app uses filters and geotags that are location specific, making it effective within the area of the tags, and allows a more personalized approach to marketing in different locations. This method also allows people to play a more personal role in furthering the product because they are directly responsible for using these filters by sending snaps to their friends (Kapko, 2016). For instance, Dunkin Donuts created a geo filter on Snapchat for Valentine’s Day.

### **2.3.3 Importance of a league web platform**

Part of promoting a good product is making it more marketable. One way this can be done is through utilizing web development techniques to create a better website for the consumer. This means using the product would be easier and it would encourage more repeat traffic: users returning to your product (Muchmore, 2016).

There are several metrics of a successful website. Most websites consider using number of page views per day. Another metric is number of returning visitors. In addition, it is important to consider how easy it is to find the website using search engines (Lukito, 2015).

The most important process in a successful business is the consumer coming back to buy another product (Van Noort, 2015). In LSL, the product is a sports league experience. This means that the more fun the end result is and the less work necessary to get there, the higher the chance the consumer will come back.

One way we can do this is by understanding what makes a user interface better in order to increase the number of users. In the book *User Interface Design and Evaluation* (2005), there is an important description pertaining to web development and the acronym “HOME-RUN.” This acronym is for:

- High quality content: the website looks professional
- Often updated: users are always receiving up to date information
- Minimal download: the website should be fast

- Ease of use: users can get aggravated if the site is difficult to use
- Relevant to user's need: the webpage should be as relevant as possible to the user
- Unique to the online medium: there isn't a better non-electronic medium that would be more efficient than using a website
- Net-centric corporate culture: the corporation that is behind the site is based around the site (Stone, 2005).

In addition, there is an importance of consistency among the web pages so there is a unified design and users don't feel overwhelmed or alienated when they go to a new area of the site.

One Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) group looked at merging two Red Cross websites together. As part of this project, the team had to merge similar pages and combine duplicate features under a single page. They joined the websites together to merge features such as donations. They also updated the sites to use modern web technologies (Goloski, 2010). These techniques led to a much more user friendly and better overall site for the Red Cross.

## **2.4 Corporate Sponsorships**

An important part of marketing is attracting corporate sponsors that can provide needed funds or equipment that membership fees alone cannot cover. This allows the league to expand and have a more reliable source of income. There are a couple of key steps to consider when approaching a potential corporate sponsor.

The first step is to identify who the potential sponsors are. Local and family owned businesses are the most prominent when it comes to providing support to local leagues (Milano, 2015). These include local and family owned restaurants, dealerships, and landscaping businesses. "Look in magazines and newspapers to see which businesses advertise the most and approach them" (Milano, 2015). Milano also says, "approach potential sponsors with the mentality of 'I can help you' instead of 'Can you help me?'" (Milano, 2015). The idea behind this is to sell yourself to the sponsor by making it clear that you can benefit the sponsor.

The second step is to show sponsors that they can benefit from partnerships with recreational sports leagues. Most businesses prefer to advertise to adults between the ages of 25 and 45 years old (Milano, 2015). Adult sports leagues fall directly into this demographic category. Benefits can include logos on uniforms, advertisements, and even social media shout outs from the league for the business. All of these benefits can increase the popularity and public awareness of a business (Milano, 2015). Legends sports leagues has multiple levels for both general sponsorship/advertising as well as multiple levels for corporate and team sponsorships (See Appendix E).

A non-profit organization in Portage La Prairie, Canada, named KidSport, is devoted to helping children become more active by covering registration and equipment costs for children who cannot afford it otherwise. The Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) Foundation sponsored KidSport and provided them with \$4,000 worth of funding. Due to this funding, KidSport was able to increase the number of children they could help. Leanne Traynor of KidSport commented, “those kids wouldn’t have been able to participate without this (RBC’s funding) assistance”. Corporate sponsorships are a vital part of these organizations (Kalis, 2013).

Legends Sports Leagues currently has two sponsors with the biggest being Glory Days Bar & Grill. While these current sponsors do provide funding and equipment, more is needed if the league aims to grow its membership base without raising fees. These new sponsors will provide the funding for Legends Sports League to hire referees and lower the cost of membership.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The goal of this project was to increase the number of people who participate in LSL events by creating a marketing plan that will help Legends attract new players and sponsors to increase revenue. In order to accomplish this, we completed the following objectives:

- (1) Evaluate Legends adult basketball and baseball leagues
- (2) Evaluate the new Legends golf league
- (3) Evaluate Little Legends youth basketball league
- (4) Evaluate current/former corporate sponsorships
- (5) Design a marketing plan

To successfully complete these objectives, we divided the project structure into three phases. This kind of approach will help us to develop certain time frames and operate according to the schedule. Phase one involved collecting relevant data. This phase focuses on learning about each league in terms of what it needs and how it's run. The data collection entails a survey, game observations, and interviews with long-term players, commissioners, corporate sponsors, and a marketing director. Phase two consisted of analyzing and using the data from phase one. During this phase, we were looking for common patterns and distinctions between commissioners and players' opinions. Phase three focused on creating the marketing plan together with recommendations and deliverables.

### **3.1 Phase One: Data Collection**

In order to collect the data necessary for a marketing plan, we conducted interviews with key officials and distributed surveys to players in each league. We collected data on each of the Legends' leagues. Some of the information we looked for included the satisfaction of participants, things the league does well, things the league could improve on, and whether the league is being marketed as effectively as it could be. By knowing these details, we created a marketing message that truly promotes what LSL is about and what the players like about it.



### 3.1.1 Legends adult basketball and baseball leagues interviews

The first part of data collection involved interviewing Legends officials, professionals, and longtime players who have been involved in the operations of and/or participated in the adult basketball and baseball leagues. We interviewed the following members:

Name:	Job(s):	Main topic of interview:
Wayne Stevens	Prince William County (PWC) deputy commissioner, helps run PWC baseball league	Current state of baseball league, ideas to retain baseball league membership
Nelson Taveras	Long time Legends baseball player and Hall of Famer, former PWC Basketball Commissioner	What the commissioner's role is, how to grow or retain basketball leagues
Fred Rucker	Long time Legends basketball player	Understand the Legends /his experience and his opinion on the league
Troy Patrick	Legends Baseball player, 19+ Division Representative and Rules Committee Member	Understand the 19+ baseball league, and role of rules committee member and division representative
Bob Korn	Legends Redlegs manager, Blog Editor for LSL	Experience with LSL and understanding the LSL blog

*Figure 2: Table of interviewees for adult baseball and basketball leagues*

These interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews at the Legends office with a focus on learning about the Legends baseball and basketball leagues. During the interviews, audio was recorded with the permission of the interviewees and was used during the analysis. Notes were also taken in bulleted form and were used in conjunction with the audio.

### 3.1.2 Legends golf league interview

To understand the current state of the golf league, we interviewed Joyce Eaby, vice-president of Legends. Eaby played a vital role in starting and growing the newly established golf league. The interview was conducted in a semi-structured format at the Legends office. Audio was recorded with the interviewee's permission and notes were taken in bulleted form that were later used for analysis (See Appendix G).

### 3.1.3 Little Legends youth basketball league interviews

Evaluating the Little Legends basketball league consisted of collecting data about the league. There were two main steps that were taken in order to collect a variety of data surrounding the Little Legends league and to get information from different sources. One of the first steps taken to collect data about Little Legends was a three-person interview that was conducted in the Legends Sports Leagues office. The three people we interviewed are all involved in the Little Legends program of LSL:

Name:	Job(s):	Main topic of interview:
Amy Farabow	Youth activities with current focus on youth tournament in April 2017	Info on tournament/ general league info
Stephanie Best	Little Legends Basketball Commissioner	Current state of Little Legends, general league info and possible growth
Michelle Schmader	Working on tournament in April 2017	Info on tournament

*Figure 3: Table of interviewees for Little Legends youth basketball league*

As noted in Figure 3, the interviewees were Amy Farabow, Stephanie Best, and Michelle Schmader and they were interviewed to understand their position in Legends and knowledge about topics relevant to this project. This interview was done with all three participants at the same time. The main purpose of this interview was to get an idea of how well the Little Legends league is running and to see if there was any marketing plan currently in place. Audio from the interview was recorded and two sets of notes were taken. The interviewees took turns answering each question but also built off of what each other was saying. This interview was a semi-structured interview with about seven questions that lasted close to an hour. The interview questions started off assessing the expertise of the interviewees, but then led to more specific topics on Little Legends (See Appendix F).

### **3.1.4 Survey data collection**

The second part of data collection was sending out a survey to determine players' opinions about Legends (Appendix C). This survey was emailed to all players who have participated in the last five years in any league. In the case of youth players, the survey was sent to the parents or guardians that were connected to the player's account. These email lists included all former players who wished to continue to receive messages as well as current players. The survey asked general questions to get an idea of the following:

1. Demographics of players (Which sports, how long they've been playing, etc.)
2. Satisfaction of the players
3. Why they joined the league
4. How they receive up-to-date information on LSL
5. Their favorite parts of Legends and things that could be improved

We considered both the response rate and the privacy of participants when using this research method. Since surveys often receive less than a 50% response rate, we distributed as many as possible without being obtrusive to the experience of the players and coaches. We distributed around 4,000 surveys and received over 230 responses. While this response rate seems low, it is important to note that there are often two email addresses associated with each child. All surveys were anonymous and participants were not asked to identify themselves.

### **3.1.5 Game observations**

Understanding the experience and the way the games are run was a vital aspect to understanding the league's main focus, the sports. In order to experience Legends, we attended eight different games. These games consisted of two from the Little Legends league (youth basketball), one from the adult basketball league, and five from the adult baseball league. Notes were taken on four main criteria while at each game. The criteria were the divisions the players were in, number of players per team, the number of spectators, and marketing presence at the games. These criteria were supplemented with other observations that were noticed while at the games.

### **3.1.6 Corporate sponsor interviews**

One of the factors in the success of LSL is how much support it can get from sponsorships that allow the league to expand and provide more services to the community. In order to understand how to attract more sponsors, we interviewed Christopher Young. Young is a liaison for INOVA Medical Group and specifically focuses on sponsorship opportunities the company can invest in.

This interview was a semi-structured interview that lasted about 10-15 minutes in length. This interview was designed to collect information regarding the desires of the sponsoring company along with what they want to see out of a successful sponsor relationship. Notes were taken in bulleted form and were used for analysis (See Appendix M).

In order to supplement the information gathered from these vendors and current/former sponsors from LSL, we also interviewed Brian Smith. Smith was the former marketing director for the Vienna Little League. This interview was conducted in order to get a better understanding of what sponsors are looking for in return as well as attracting new sponsors to the league. This was a semi-structured interview with notes taken in bulleted form. The notes were used in the analysis of the interview.

## **3.2 Phase Two: Data Analysis**

The data was collected in three main forms and was analyzed in three parts. The parts were interview analysis, survey analysis, and game observations analysis.

The interviews from key stakeholders were analyzed by looking for common themes between interviewees. The main topics of interest that were looked for as common themes involved improvements and obstacles the league experiences, marketing techniques, and aspects of the league that work well. The common themes that were found were then made into conclusions about the league and eventual recommendations to address the topics and themes brought up.

The survey data was analyzed by using Qualtrics software. Qualtrics allowed the data to be categorized by question and answer. Graphs and tables were also created to

visually show the range of answers players gave to each question. While analyzing the survey data, reoccurring and prominent common answers to questions (more than 50% of participants) were taken as important aspects to address in the recommendations.

Game observations were analyzed by reviewing bulleted notes taken at each game. Focus was put on marketing observational categories such as marketing presence at games. The analysis involved looking for common practices or instances that Legends tended to do and that can be improved. The aspects that were identified from the observations that were common and could be improved were applied to recommendations for the league.

### **3.3 Phase Three: Designing a Marketing Plan**

The marketing plan was designed using the analyzed data. The conclusions about the league and ways it can improve from a sport standpoint and from a corporate sponsorship aspect were put into recommendations for the LSL executives. The marketing plan is a separate document that lays out step-by-step ways that would increase membership and corporate sponsors. It also includes a few deliverables including two promotional videos, website changes, new logo, marketing brochure, and a full data report for the LSL executives.

The promotional videos were filmed using multiple cameras and at separate sporting events. The footage was edited using Final Cut Pro software and reviewed by LSL executives. Website changes were made by obtaining full access of the Legends' site and more specifically changing content with a focus on modern visuals and textual improvements. The full data report was created by compiling all the information gathered from the interviews, game observations, and the survey into a single document.

## **Chapter 4: Findings and Results**

The data we collected was divided into four main sections including Legends structure, interview result, survey results, and game observations.

### **4.1 Legends Structure**

Consulting with our sponsor, Mr. Cortese, and finding information on the website, we were able to analyze some of the important aspects of Legends including its hierarchy and the costs for each sport. This information gives more context for interviews and survey responses in our analysis.

#### **4.1.1 Hierarchy of Legends**

The structure of Legends revolves around a three-member board of directors who run the league. Each league (Adult/youth basketball, baseball, and golf) have their own volunteers and employees who work within their respective leagues; however, golf is the only league that is run solely by the board of directors. The following figure depicts the hierarchy of the league:



Figure 4: The hierarchy of Legends Sports Leagues with respect to each sport

#### 4.1.2 Cost to play

When players register, they pay a fee that will cover them for a ten-week season. As shown in Figure 5, the registration and uniform fees are different for each sport. The registration fee is paid by each player at the beginning of every season. However, the uniform fee is paid once as the uniform can be reused. The total cost listed in the table shows the cost of the first season to a player. A player has to register three weeks prior to the opening of the season, otherwise they will have to pay an additional 35 dollars.

League:	Registration Fee:	Uniform Fee:	Total Cost:
Adult Basketball	\$179	\$70	\$249
Adult Baseball (19+ Division)	\$199	\$135	\$334
Adult Baseball (30+ & 40+)	\$222	\$135	\$357
Little Legends (Youth Basketball)	\$149	\$35	\$184
Golf	\$99	N/A	\$99

Figure 5: Table of registration fees, uniform fees, and total cost for the first season for an individual registering for Legends with respect to each sport.

One important part of the adult baseball pricing is that the fees for the 19+ league is less since many of these players are coming out of college and have less expendable income.

## **4.2 Interview Results**

The interviews that were conducted were split up and categorized into their respective sports based on the interviewee's association and responsibilities within the league. The interviews that pertained to corporate LSL sponsors were also categorized together.

### **4.2.1 Legends adult basketball and baseball league interview results**

Wayne Stevens has been the Prince William County Deputy Commissioner for baseball since the start of Legends. He has the responsibility of reserving stadiums and fields for the games. Stevens is also in charge of managing the hats and t-shirts that players are required to buy. Wayne has pursued ways to help grow the baseball league in the past. He has set up games at the Potomac National Stadium to increase interest in current players and visibility for people outside the league. Stevens has also put up posters at that Stadium. Wayne states that the best way to increase brand awareness is by word of mouth.

Wayne stated that the most difficult division to grow is the 19+ due to the price of registration. "Young kids just out of school do not have the disposable income that older guys do" said Stevens when asked about the registration fee. The fee has been reduced from \$223 to \$199 for the younger division to allow more 19+ young adults to afford it. Stevens talked about how the price cut has worked a little but not as much as hoped for. Younger players can also umpire games to help cover their cost of registration. Additionally, he talked about how Facebook and team blogs are used as social media mediums. Stevens says that the Legends baseball league is competitive with other baseball leagues in the area such as Ponce de Leon, Blue Grey League, and others (See Appendix H).

Troy Patrick is a representative of 19+ baseball league who has been playing in LSL for six seasons. Troy enjoys LSL for the moderate competitiveness and the attitude



inside the league. He said that the biggest challenge for the 19+ league is that many of the players cannot afford the price of registration.

Troy has given ideas for league promotion. According to him, 80-85% of players come from referrals of current LSL members. He suggested that it might be a good idea to address a message to people who love group activities.

Nelson Taveras has been with LSL since its conception. He is a long-time baseball player and former basketball commissioner in Prince William County. Taveras was in charge of starting the basketball league in PWC. To get interest and members, Taveras put flyers in car windshields, handed pamphlets out to passersby, and put flyers in stores that would permit him to. The PWC basketball league started with three teams. Nelson's role as the commissioner was also to organize these teams and develop the game schedules. Taveras' biggest job was to obtain facilities for the teams. This is what eventually ended the league. The gym space Legends was using increased their fees, to such an extent, that Legends shut down the league and move the remaining teams to Fairfax. By the end, the number of teams increased from three to ten. Taveras credits this growth to just word of mouth. He never used social media as a marketing technique.

Additionally, Taveras is an advocate for promoting the Legends name to the public. He believes the best way to do so is with flyers and pamphlets, similar to how the PWC basketball league was started. He also talked about reaching more people through mall stores or via advertising placements in movie theatres (See Appendix K).

Fred Rucker is a long-time basketball player with eight years of experience in LSL. He enjoys playing because the league is competitive and well organized. He rates the overall basketball league state to be satisfactory. He believes that Legends is successful in team matching, ease of registration, quality of uniforms, and active communication within the league. According to Rucker, LSL could improve on facilities' and venues' conditions, referee quality, and website design.

From a player's perspective, Rucker sees opportunities for expansion in offering bonuses to players. Rucker suggested free cups, T-shirts, or discounts connected to corporate sponsorships such as Nike, Under Armor, or Adidas. He also believes that

increasing LSL presence in the community will allow the Legends name to spread through word of mouth more effectively (See Appendix I).

Bob Korn is the manager for the Legend's Redlegs baseball team and the editor of the Legend's baseball blog. He stated that he chose to be a manager for the team so that he could continue to remain active in the sport despite the fact that he had retired as a player. Two of the major parts of his job include keeping track of scores and batting lineups at games.

As blog editor, Korn gets games summaries and pictures from managers and posts them on the blog. He stated that it is often difficult to coordinate with the managers of other teams because game summaries are only required for finals. Korn suggests having people assigned to take photos and write articles for the blog at each game so that the jobs can be split up, reducing the burden on one person. Korn said that the current blog platform used is Blogger, and that he posts articles immediately after writing or receiving them instead of using the schedule autoposter.

Korn also had some recommendations regarding the use of social media. He said that Legends has a Twitter, but it is not often used. He was also open to using Facebook more as it may be a more effective way to communicate.

On growing the league, Korn said that it is tough to bring in players who have never played in LSL. He also said that his team, the Redlegs, does not do any formal team-based marketing, but that it might be a good idea. The one difficulty, however, is getting team managers to be active enough to carry out this marketing. One solution Korn offered was having someone whose specific job it was to market the team. Finally, he believes that word-of-mouth is the best way to market Legends (See Appendix L).

#### **4.2.2 Legends golf league interviews**

Joyce Eaby has been with Legends for 10 years. She serves as Vice President and assists Ron with managing LSL. One example of this is when she helped to start the golf league at Ron's request.

Legends is looking to bring in people from outside the league whenever possible. Some of the ideas that Eaby recommended were parent/child golf events to make

golfing a family activity. She also recommended dividing groups by skill levels and creating a women's golf league. Another idea discussed in the interview was social events such as lunch and drinks with other players.

The interview also included discussion about some considerations that need to be taken into account when managing the golf league. The main consideration was the locations and times of golf matches. In the fall, it is difficult to do evening matches, because the sun sets early. There is also difficulty with traffic since matches are held after work hours, when rush hour traffic is at its peak (see Appendix G). Eaby hopes to double the golf league's current membership to 48 members by targeting current legends players in the adult baseball and basketball programs as well as older, retired players who could use the golf league as a way to continue to be involved in the Legends community.

#### **4.2.3 Little Legends youth basketball league interviews**

Amy Farabow has been a longtime volunteer for Legends and most recently has been involved in the development of a youth basketball tournament that is taking place in the spring. For five years with LSL, she has helped with any aspects that need assistance.

In the interview, she informed us of some of the things that make Little Legends unique and some problems with registration. For example, Little Legends is unique because it allows a group of children to sign up as their own basketball team. However, Farabow said that there are often sign up issues despite the clear online instructions.

One growth goal that Farabow stated was that the league should have enough children to separate them by grade level instead of combining grade levels as they do now. During the discussion on the youth basketball tournament, Farabow said that word had not gotten out about the tournament, leading to low participation. Finally, she said that the growth of the league should come from children in the area the Little Legends currently serves rather than expanding to new locations.

Stephanie Best is the current Little Legends Commissioner and runs the league for Mr. Cortese. She began in 2013, working with registration, uniform distribution, and scheduling. She mentioned she had some issues with the current scheduling process

because she has to do it by hand. This is because she tries to accommodate every player with their own different scheduling conditions.

Michelle Schmader is a volunteer at LSL and was brought in to organize and promote the spring youth basketball tournament. Schmader is assisting Amy Farabow with this event. She also discussed how the tournament is meant to promote Legends brand awareness and how promotion for this tournament is important for attendance (See Appendix F).

#### **4.2.4 Corporate sponsor interviews**

Brian Smith has been the former marketing director for the Vienna Little League for five years. Smith, who was able to increase the marketing presence for the Vienna Little League by over 50 percent, gave a lot of insight about the process of marketing a league with a focus on obtaining corporate sponsors.

Smith had a few points about how to market and grow a league. These included reducing the registration fee, putting articles in newsletters, and possibly buying banners to hang over main streets. These are all in an attempt to increase the Legends brand awareness. When it comes to reducing the registration fee, Smith discussed how corporate sponsors provided increased revenue that allowed for a reduction to occur. Smith also gave an idea of what a sponsorship package would look like. He described possibly having team banners that contain the team and sponsor names that the teams would display in a gym or in the dugouts. Another aspect of sponsorship that he talked about was a sponsor plaque that contains a photo of the sponsored team. Smith also emphasized the importance of promising and following through with fundraisers and other events that benefit the sponsor.

Smith also focused on what companies need to know when approaching them about a possible sponsorship. He said that sponsors want to know what the money is for and how the money is specifically helping the league. Smith also mentioned that sponsors want to know how the sponsorship benefits their company. Specifically, how the sponsor's name will get out to members as well as others outside the league. Lastly, Smith mentioned that the biggest potential sponsors in the LSL area will be family run and small businesses competing for local attention (See Appendix J).

Christopher Young is a liaison at INOVA Medical Group who focuses on companies who are looking to have INOVA sponsor them. Young talks about a few things that he looks for when considering to sponsor a company. He likes to see a lot of active people within the company or organization as well as people with a focus on health.

### **4.3 Survey Results**

The survey (Appendix C) was distributed to 4,574 players and parents from the last five years (618 baseball players, 3,925 basketball players and parents of Little Legends, 31 golf players and interested parties). About 240 responses were collected over a week. Notable findings include LSL player's opinions about costs, ways to improve, and amount of time members have been in the league

It was shown that 91 players thought that the service was too expensive and 113 thought that it was fair given the service. In addition, ten responses mentioned that there should be more games, four responses asked for better officials, and four responses wanted discounts for long time players.

Out of the responses, 80% were either somewhat satisfied or extremely satisfied. And most players said they started playing because they wanted to play with their friends (45.19%), to stay in shape (41.84%), and to compete with others (48.54%). The Distribution of this can be seen in Figure 6.

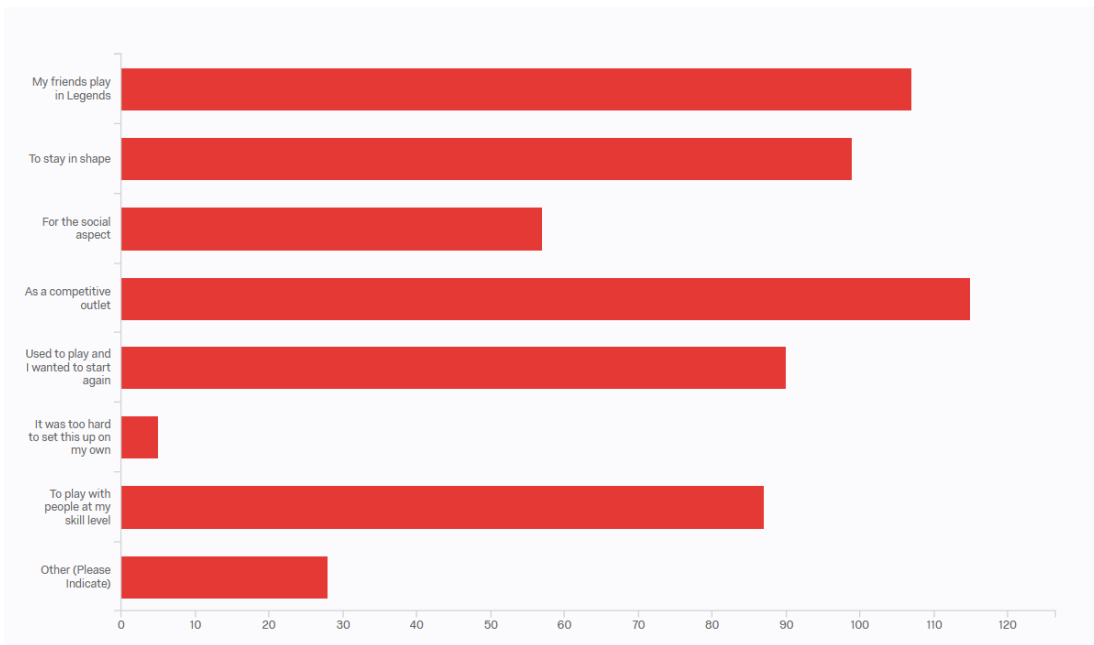
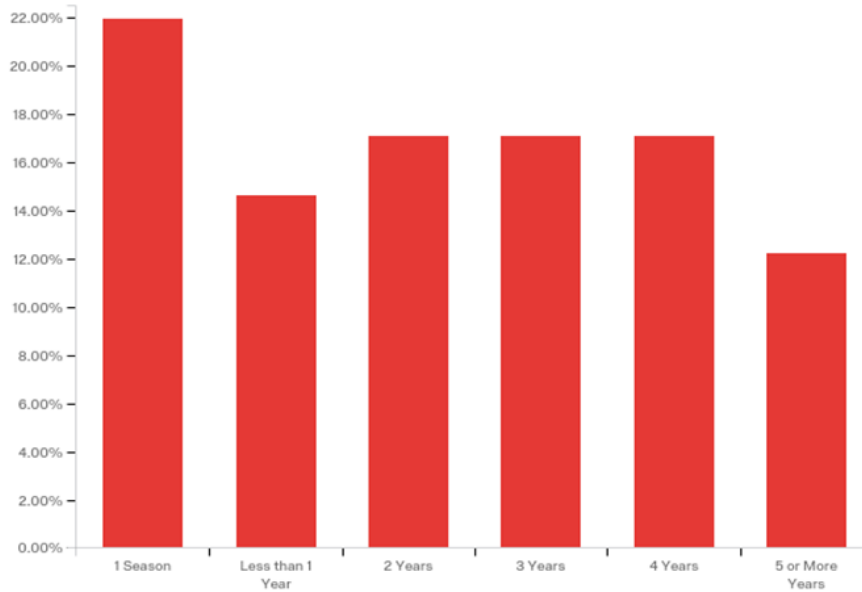


Figure 6: Distribution of reasons players started to play in Legends

Because the survey was sent to every player from the past five years, some of the responses were from players who are no longer a part of Legends. There are 56 people who responded with why they left. Four said that they left because they were too far away and three left because they had moved. Other reasons included having scheduling conflicts, the league being too expensive, and the competition not being strong. Of the former players, 63.41% had stayed with LSL for two or more years as seen in Figure 7.

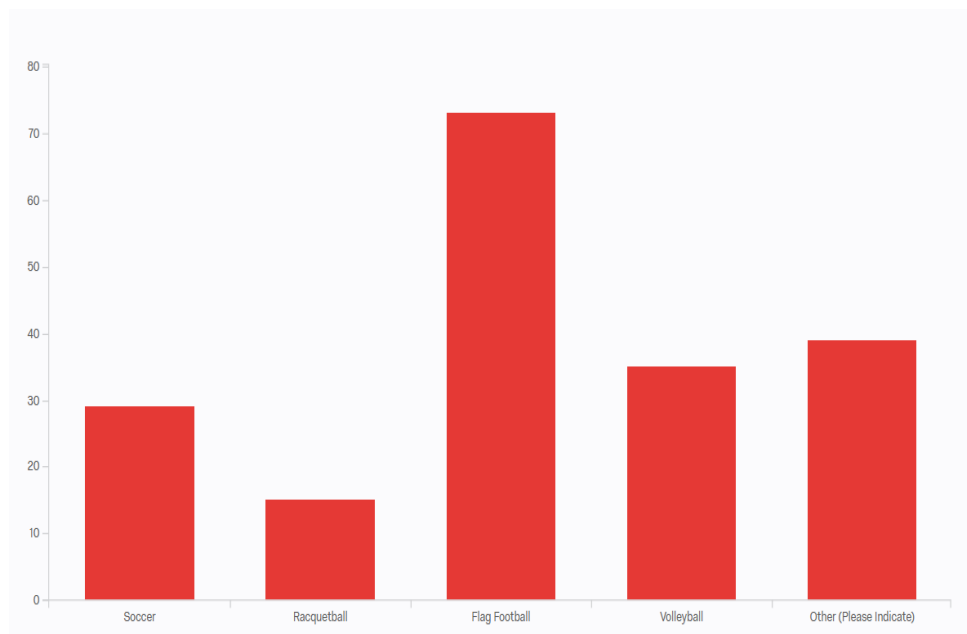


*Figure 7: Time Players Stayed Before Leaving*

There were many aspects the league could improve upon, such as having even competitions (15), having better referees and umpires (14), and having more or better locations (15).

A question asking about how members heard about the league showed 61% of respondents said word of mouth while others said they found out from the website (31%).

Other questions included ideas about expanding into the future. Figure 8 shows what players reported when they were asked what sports Legends should consider expanding into. Popular choices included flag football (73) and volleyball (35).



*Figure 8: Players' opinion on expansion*

#### **4.4 Game observations**

Figure 9 shows all the games we attended in LSL and the notes taken about them. We have observed games with attention to four criteria: number of players, number of spectators, LSL marketing presence, and other notable details. The other notable details consisted of specific observations such as clock management and types of games (regular season, playoff, and final games).

In Legends Sports Leagues the number of people per team is slightly higher than the required number of players. These games showed average number of six to seven players for basketball and nine to ten players for baseball. Every team member has participated in the game evenly. The decision to make a shift was made by a coach in younger leagues and by the players themselves in older leagues.

Legends basketball had slightly higher number of spectators than Legends baseball. The differences were also noticeable within the age groups: younger leagues grabbed more attention. Notable exceptions included a championship baseball game.

Our group's main purpose of game attendance was to familiarize ourselves with LSL presence. Unfortunately, among all the games we have attended, only one game



had the LSL presence banner (poster). In most of the games, the only sign of LSL were the players' T-shirts with Legends logo.

There were also some observations which did not fall under specific category. For instance, we noticed that in some games there were problems with scoring. Other interesting details to mention were the speed of the game between age groups: younger baseball players were much faster than older ones.

League (Sport)	Division	Number of players per team	Number of spectators	Marketing presence	Other Observations
Little Legends (Youth Basketball)	Boys: Grades 3-4 Vs Girls: Grades 5-6	Boys: 7 Girls: 6	15, parents and children	No visible marketing at game	N/A
Little Legends (Youth Basketball)	Boys: Grades 9-10	Team 1: 7 Team 2: 6	Less than 10, mostly parents	No visible marketing at game	Parent had trouble with scoreboard
Adult Basketball	30+ (Elite A and Elite B/C)	Elite A: 5 Elite B/C: 7	2 (woman and a child)	No visible marketing at game	Two paid employees (book keeper & scoreboard)
Adult Baseball	30+	Team 1: 9 Team 2: 9	3 total (2 women and a child)	No visible marketing at game	N/A
Adult Baseball	19+	Team 1: 9 Team 2: 9	14 total (Men, women and children)	No visible marketing at game	Much faster game than older divisions
Adult Baseball	40+/30+B	Team 1: 10 Team 2: 10	5 total	Poster on left field fence facing out towards street	N/A
Adult Baseball	40+/30+B	Redlegs: 12 Brewers: 12	24 total (Families, men, women and children)	No visible marketing at game	Championship game
Adult Baseball	19+	Outlaws: 12 Hurricanes: 12	27 total (Families, men, women, and children)	No visible marketing at game	Championship game

Figure 9: Observations taken from eight Legends games

# Chapter 5: Analysis

## 5.1 Interview Analysis

Interview analysis is one of the three major points we consider. In the interviews, we were looking for common themes between several commissioners, long-term players, and team managers. Evaluated data was assigned according to four categories: adult baseball/basketball, golf, little legends, and corporate sponsors.

### 5.1.1 Adult basketball interview analysis

The interviews with Nelson Taveras, the former Prince William county basketball commissioner, and Fred Rucker, longtime legends basketball player, offered information regarding the basketball league. There were a few common themes between these two interviews. The themes that both of these interviewees talked about were the aspect of league growth through word of mouth, the competition, and camaraderie that accompanies LSL, and the importance of proper marketing to get the LSL name out to the community.

The first common theme found was Legends' expansion through word of mouth. Many interviewees explained the importance of word of mouth in starting and growing the league. Most survey participants also indicated that they had learned about Legends through word of mouth showing the importance of this strategy when growing the league and therefore were considered while designing the marketing plan.

Another common theme discovered was the importance of friendly competition and camaraderie found in the league. When asked about what players enjoy most about the league, common responses mentioned how the league has a friendly environment but still is competitive. Nelson Taveras, the former Prince William County (PWC) basketball commissioner, also talked about how people enjoy the competition and that teams continue to sign up in future seasons with the same teams and people. This common theme shows a message that can be highlighted in a marketing message to possible new members.

The last common theme found was the importance of promoting Legends brand awareness. Nelson Taveras, the former Prince William County Baseball Commissioner, explained how he initially advertised Legends to the people of Prince William County by distributing flyers and pamphlets. Taveras said this technique was effective in getting people to join. In an interview with volunteers in the youth basketball league, the interviewees expressed their belief that Legends may not have reached the full potential of players. When it comes to the basketball league, the volunteers stated that more people would likely join if they knew about it.

### **5.1.2 Baseball interview analysis**

Wayne Stevens, Prince William Deputy Commissioner, and Troy Patrick, 19+ division representative and rules committee member, were interviewed regarding the baseball league. There was a prominent common theme found in these interviews regarding the price, especially with the 19+ division.

The baseball league is the most expensive league in Legends with two main payments: registration and uniform fees. Wayne and Troy both talked in depth about the difficulty of younger players to pay the registration and uniform fees. Due to the younger age and limited funds, the 19+ league is not growing at the desired rate. Both of the interviewees were concerned with the affordability of the 19+ league for the younger players. This issue is prominent in the baseball league and needs to be addressed.

### **5.1.3 Golf interview analysis**

The interview with Joyce Eaby revealed information on the Golf league. Legends Golf has just completed its first season with 24 members and needs future expansion. J

Currently, Joyce Eaby promotes the golf league to LSL members. Her plan is to keep injured and older members involved in Legends by moving them from demanding sports to golf. In addition, the golf league is a way to involve LSL members to play several sports simultaneously, because it does not require a lot of energy.

Joyce Eaby suggests the golf league to be populated from the community outside of Legends. Because the golf is a slower game, she believes that the target

group would be families. To attract people from outside of LSL, Joyce Eaby wants to run classes and social events in order to advertise the new golf league.

#### **5.1.4 Little Legends interview analysis**

The interview with Amy Farabow, Stephanie Best, and Michelle Schmader have uncovered the current state and plans concerning Little Legends basketball league. LSL was successful in addressing their message to the main customer base located in Vienna. However, Legends needs to consider more ways to get the word out.

Some of the common themes these interviewees mentioned while talking during this interview consisted of a possible marketing message and other ways they wish to increase interest in the league. Legends are targeting Vienna as their main customer base. The promotional message LSL delivers is "We cater to the players' needs." This slogan implies flexible schedules for children that allows them to play even with busy home schedules. This was a prominent message that the three interviewees saw as their most important message to market.

Stephany Best, Little Legends Commissioner, along with the other interviewees wanted to consider other ways to amplify LSL presence. They wanted to target elementary school aged children because these ages would join at the lowest age group Little Legends has to offer and then would stick with the league through high school. All three interviewees expressed the importance of targeting these younger children to ensure a constant inflow of new and young players. The prominence of these themes showed how important it was to include them in the marketing plan.

#### **5.1.5 Corporate sponsors interview analysis**

The interviews completed with Brian Smith, former marketing director of Vienna Little League, and Christopher Young, liaison for INOVA Medical Group, contained many common themes when discussing the topic of Legends and corporate sponsorships. Their responses mostly included their points of view on the organization-sponsor relationships.

The interview with Brian Smith revealed benefits sponsors like to get out of sponsorship relations. According to Brian, any sponsorship is volunteer and based on

the desire to invest money with a good intention. Therefore, it is important to assure the sponsor knows how its finances help the league. Another important suggestion Brian made was the community awareness about the sponsors. When investing resources, a sponsor expects a certain return in terms of loyal customer base. Customer base is the main demand for companies like INOVA Medical Group. According to Christopher Young, liaison for INOVA, they are looking for sponsoring communities following active, healthy lifestyle.

Overall, both the interviewees stressed that the sponsor wants to know a couple main things when deciding to join an organization. The potential sponsor wants to know where their money is going and how the organization is going to promote them.

## **5.2 Survey Analysis**

The analysis of the survey involved looking at three main questions that were asked. These questions all had prominent answers from the players and therefore had cause for further investigation. These questions were about the price and value of the league, the satisfaction of the members, and how the members heard about Legends. For each of these questions, responses were looked at with the focus of seeing the number of members who chose each option.

The first question that was analyzed asked the players whether or not they thought the league had a fair price for the value. This answer showed that 63 of the 137 players (46%) who answered this question thought the league was too expensive. Almost half of the responses thought the league was too expensive which shows that people may not want to stick around or recommend the league if it is too costly. This is an important aspect that was kept in mind when making recommendations to Legends and while designing the marketing plan.

The next question analyzed asked the players how satisfied they were with the overall Legends' experience. 75% of the responses reported either satisfied or extremely satisfied. This is an important data point to have because it shows evidence about how the league is good quality and that people enjoy playing with Legends. Due

to this finding, it was important to include the idea of a quality league and one people enjoy into the recommendations and marketing plan.

The last question analyzed asked how members heard about Legends. This question provided insight into the root of marketing, how people primarily hear about and/or find the league. 31% of people said they heard about it from the website while 8% found it through internet searches and other social media. The data point that stood out was the 61% of responses that said they heard about the league through word of mouth. Knowing that the majority of people hear through word of mouth, the recommendations and marketing plan had to emulate and encourage the idea of members talking to people who may potentially join.

### **5.3 Game Observation Analysis**

While attending games for Legends, there a few key observations that were taken from the written observations. The most prominent was the marketing presence at the games. As can be seen in the games observation table (Refer to Figure 8 on page...), out of the eight games attended, only one had signage present with the purpose of marketing the league. This shows that marketing presence at games could be greatly increased among all sports in Legends. Due to this, marketing at games was an important aspect to keep in mind while creating the recommendations.

Another observation that stood out involved youth male players, in grades three and four, playing youth female players in grades five and six. The older girls were much taller than the younger boys causing an inequality in the skills of the teams. More members in the youth league can deter these problems by allowing closer aged girls and boys play together or allowing for a new all girls league. Not only this, but for all sports, teams only just had enough to field teams. These two observations show the need for membership growth in the league to retain equality among players.

## **Chapter 6: Recommendations for a Marketing Plan**

Recommendations for the league and LSL executives were created using the information gathered from the interviews and surveys. The important aspects highlighted in the analysis of this data was the primary focus of the recommendations. The chapter will be broken up into multiple sections including: "League Recommendations", "Sport Specific Recommendations", "Long-Term Recommendations", and "Redefined Sponsor Plan". Along with these sections, our team also highlighted each recommendation by priority. This will allow Cortese and the LSL executives to quickly and easily determine what they would like to implement and in what timeframe. These recommendations will also be compiled into a separate marketing plan document.

### **6.1 League Recommendations**

#### **6.1.1 High priority recommendations**

There are four high priority recommendations that were determined to be advantageous for the league to implement. We advise that high priority recommendations be completed as soon as possible.

The first recommendation involves increasing the marketing presence at and around LSL games and the venues. Seven out of the eight games attended did not have any such presence. A marketing presence will also allow spectators and other passers-by to know that a Legends game is going occurring. Signage and banners that can be put up in gyms, dugouts, courses, or possibly even on school property during game hours would be effective.

The second high priority recommendation involves increasing marketing presence as well but with more of a focus on the local level. In order to increase LSL brand awareness in the Fairfax area, the distribution of flyers and pamphlets detailing the league and how to join are important. Keeping social media up to date would increase overall interest in the league and may even increase its value in the eyes of the members. Posts should be made at least every week on all platforms to maintain

interest. Promotional videos regarding the baseball and Little Legends leagues are good material to post on social media.

Another high priority recommendation is the implementation of a referral program. When a current Legends member refers a new person to the league both will receive a 10% discount for that season. This will encourage members to reach out to new players and multiply the word of mouth effect.

The last high priority recommendation involves starting an internship program. Due to the number of tasks and hours required to run the day to day operations of a league, an intern is needed. The intern would have the responsibilities of fulfilling the above recommendations and should have a sports marketing background.

### **6.1.2 Medium priority recommendations**

There were two medium priority recommendations that are important to the league and should be implemented after high priority items.

The first medium priority recommendation is creating a discount program for returning players based on the number of years played. From the survey, many veterans who have been in the league wish to see discounts for their loyalty of staying in the league. These discounts will give members incentive to continue returning to the league. The discounts are as follows:

- 3+ Years: 10%- 15% discount
- 5+ Years: 15%- 20% discount
- 7+ Years: 20%- 25% discount

The last medium priority involves creating a standard set of rules for Hall of Fame Candidates. Many members in the survey discussed how they did not understand how candidates were selected for the Hall of Fame for Legends. A candidate must fit the following criteria:

1. Players must be active in the league for at least 5 years;
2. Players must show outstanding effort and embody the values of Legends;
3. Players should be from different teams.



In order to decide on candidates, Legends will ask for nominations from each team. These nominated individuals will be eligible to become Hall of Famers.

### **6.1.3 Low priority recommendations**

There is only one low priority recommendation that may be advantageous. This involves referee and umpire accountability. There were complaints about the referees and umpires when members were asked on the survey some aspect of LSL that they would want to see improved. Our recommendation is to create a feedback system where members can voice their opinions about referees and umpires. If the same referees/umpires are being brought up, LSL executives should act as neutral observers and should attend games. Actions can be taken at the discretion of the LSL executives. This is designed to allow members' opinions to be heard and to also keep referees/umpires accountable at all times.

## **6.2 Sport Specific Recommendations**

### **6.2.1 Adult basketball**

This recommendation for the adult basketball league also falls within the category of recommendations over the next five years. This recommendation is to expand the basketball league back into Prince William County. The PWC Parks and Rec Department recently decided to work with schools and other venues to help recreational leagues obtain gyms to play in. Expanding back into this area would be a growth area for the adult basketball league.

### **6.2.2 Golf**

There is one main recommendation for the golf league that involves scheduling and tee times. When asked about the new golf league, members enjoyed it but found it difficult to travel for the 5-6 pm tee times during rush hour and after a long day at work. This recommendation is to obtain weekend tee times, more specifically Saturday mornings and afternoons. This would make it not only more comfortable for current players to play but also attract new members who simply cannot make it during the week.

### **6.2.3 Little Legends youth basketball**

There are two main recommendations for the Little Legends youth basketball league. The first recommendation involves targeting new members while the second has to do with the divisions within the league. The first recommendation for the Little Legends league is to target the younger aged children in the league, grades three and four. Stephanie Best, Little Legends Commissioner, explained how important receiving the younger age groups was to the league. She said that the earlier the children join, the longer they stay and in return tell their friends and their friends' friends about Legends. Placing flyers and pamphlets on windshields during the winter county league games will target the age groups. A possibility to create a cycle is to also encourage Little Legends players to play in the county league in the Legends' 'off-season'. The next recommendation for Little Legends is to shift the divisions slightly when it comes to the all-girls teams. Currently, the grades three and four boys are playing grades five and six girls. The physical difference is too great with to year age difference. The divisions should be as follows:

- Boys league Divisions: grades 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, etc.
- Girls league Divisions: grades 4-5, 6-7, 8-8, etc.
- Matching:
  - 3-4 boys vs. 4-5 girls
  - 5-6 boys vs. 6-7 girls etc.

These new divisions will allow for closer physical sizes of girls to boys and, in turn, will make the games more equal.

### **6.2.4 Baseball**

There are two main recommendations that are suggested for the baseball league specifically. The first recommendation involves time of games in certain divisions while the second recommendation involves creating a free agent pool of players.

From the observations that were taken while attending the games, the 30+ B and 40+ divisions for baseball consistently ran over three hours in length and were therefore cut short. The first recommendation is to make the 30+ B/ 40+ division only seven innings.

This way every team would play the same number of innings and games wouldn't be cut short as often. The next recommendation for the baseball league is to create a free agent pool of players. Wayne Stevens, deputy baseball commissioner, and Troy Patrick, 19+ representative and rules committee member, both highlighted the struggles of younger guys paying the registration and uniform fees. By creating a free agent pool, players can join Legends who don't want to commit to the full time or cost of a full season. These free agents would pay a smaller administrative cost to sign up than if a team knows they are going to be short a player, they can pick up this player to play for a game. The free agent would then pay only for the games they play in.

### **6.3 Long Term Recommendations**

LSL is a growing league and there are some ways it can grow now but there are also techniques that can be implemented in a couple years to further help the league expand. Multiple interviews including deputy commissioner of the baseball league, Wayne Stevens, talked about how the league has good potential to grow but there simply isn't the workforce in the league to complete the tasks necessary.

A recommendation that will help, especially with a growing league, is for the league to focus more effort on obtaining volunteers and more manpower. A growing league requires more people to handle and manage the increased workload. It also works in the opposite way where a league will not be able to grow without the additional manpower. Without enough people, players will feel like they aren't being heard, events and games will become harder to organize, and the league will not grow.

There needs to be a commissioner or at least a deputy commissioner for each of the four leagues legends has to offer. These commissioners will be able to run the day to day and scheduling of the leagues while the executives can deal with discounts and other problems that may come up. LSL also should obtain a marketing director to focus their energy on making the Legends name visible and communicate with corporate sponsors.

## 6.4 Redefined Sponsor Plan

As part of the recommendations for LSL, a new redefined sponsor plan was created using information from the corporate sponsor interviews. The new sponsor plan consists of new perks that the sponsor will receive for their funds. The advertising plan for the sponsors consists of:

1. Team Banners;
2. Website Advertising;
3. Shout-out in the Legends Blog, Commish Corner;
4. Sponsor plaque.

The team banners are banners/signs that each team brings to every game. These banners will depict the sponsor's name, year, and season. These will allow the sponsor to get their name out in a more direct way. Sponsors will also be put on the Legends website and will have a shout-out in the blog, Commish Corner. At the end of the season, the sponsor will also receive a sponsor plaque from Legends that will contain the year and a picture of the team that was sponsored.

The entire sponsor package will cost \$300. The price was determined by researching the prices of the plaques and banners. The plaque will cost Legends around \$40-\$50 and the banner is another \$100. Due to the costs to Legends, the total price for the sponsor is double the expenses.

## **Chapter 7: Deliverables**

To promote positive change, we created a set of deliverables that will help fulfill the project goals and help LSL in the future. These deliverables include a marketing plan, promotional videos, a marketing brochure, a redesigned website, and the survey data that Ron Cortese and a possible intern can use for future reference.

### **7.1 Marketing Plan**

The ultimate goal of this project was to create an evidence-based marketing plan that Legends can follow. While this project report includes the information found in the marketing plan, a separate document was created that lays out the recommendations in a step-by-step fashion for each sport. This marketing plan also includes recommendations for how to attract corporate sponsors using a new package and pricing model.

The purpose of having a separate marketing deliverable is to create a "manual" that references key data findings to make claims and suggestions. The marketing plan is easy to understand by those familiar with LSL operations (See Appendix O).

### **7.2 Promotional Videos and Brochures**

To help with online advertising, we created two promotional videos, one for adult baseball and one for Little Legends. We visited several of the games to capture photos and videos which was then use to create these videos. The video files have been given to Ron Cortese to use as he sees fit. Brochures were also created to market the league. They detail what the league is, what you get out of it, features of the league, and how one can join. The brochures can be used in conjunction with the videos as promotional material (See Appendix N).

### **7.3 Redesigned Website and Logo**

One significant area that we saw we could improve was the website. The site has been tweaked to be more visually appealing by updating the layout and adding images in relevant areas (See Appendix P). The structure of the site has also been updated so that things are organized more coherently and are easier to find. In addition, the meta tags associated with search engines were improved, increasing the number of page visits. These are users who connect through a different website, for example, Google (See Appendix Q). Along with the updates made to the website, the logo for Legends was also redesigned. The new logo was redesigned with the mindset of making it look clean and more professional (See Appendix R).

### **7.4 Data Report and Intern**

In addition to the findings presented in this report and the marketing plan deliverable, the data from all surveys have been given to Ron Cortese. We have also found an intern, David Parry, who will be attending the University of Maryland to focus on sports marketing. The data will be helpful to Cortese and Parry as they work to carry out the marketing plan.

## Chapter 8: Conclusion

The recommendations and deliverables of the project, in conjunction with one another, come together to form the marketing plan that will be given to LSL executives. The recommendations were created and designed from data collected on Legends. The deliverables were created as supplementary material to the recommendations and marketing plan. They can be used to complete some of the recommendations laid forth such as using the brochure to advertise the league at a local level and posting the promotional videos on social media to increase membership.

The outcomes of our work fulfill the broadest goals of our project in multiple ways. First of all, the broadest goal of our project was to create a marketing plan that LSL executives could follow and that could produce results based on the research. Our biggest outcome from working is in fact the marketing plan deliverable. The deliverables are also one of the most significant outcomes of the work completed. The promotional videos, redesigned websites, brochure, and final survey data report supplement the goal of the project in a way that allows for LSL to complete the recommendations.

Upon implementation of these deliverables, we have seen some evidence of increased activity of the website. This indicates that our project has yielded some positive results. This activity change is indicated below in Figure 10 and in Appendix Q.

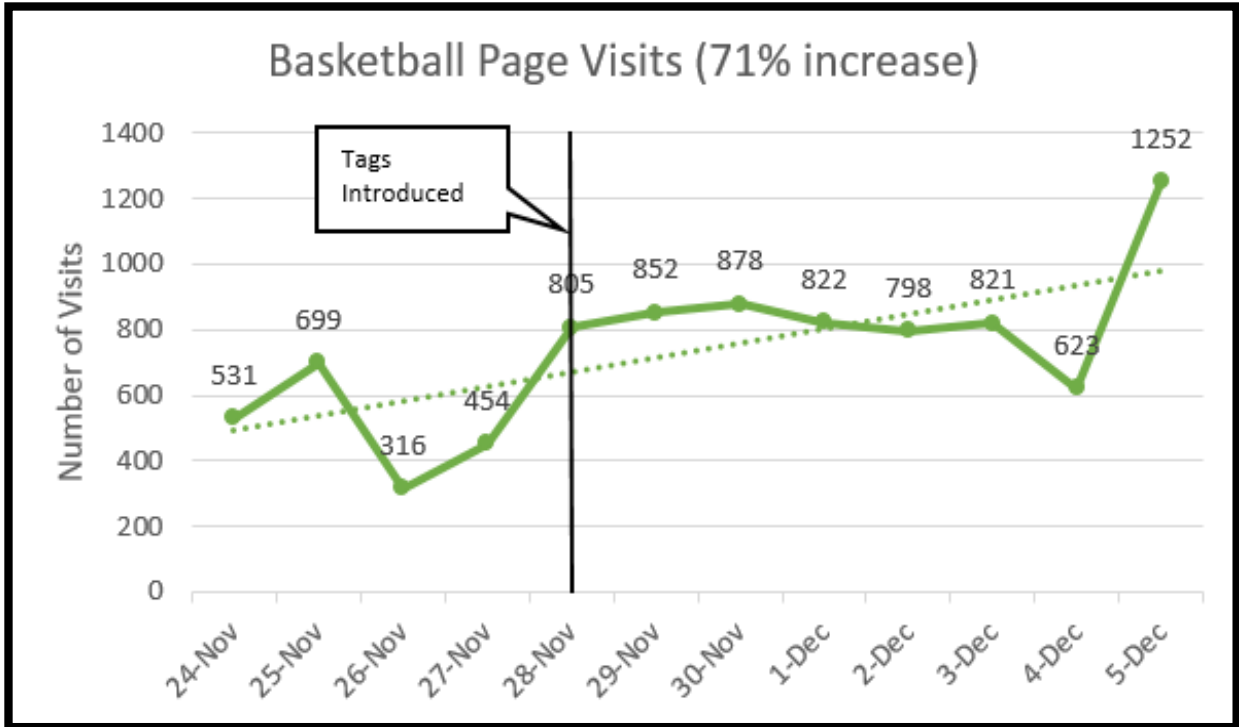


Figure 10: Increase in page visits before and after meta tags were introduced

There are some prominent implications of this project. The biggest implication of this project revolves around the marketing plan. The marketing plan consists of recommendations that focus on increasing Legends brand awareness. Due to this fact, the marketing plan set forth can be used for any kind of business marketing. This means the plan can be used beyond Legends and sports leagues. The ideas about increasing social media use, marketing at venues/events, and the possibility of discounts can be applied to all marketing projects in similar situations.



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## **Appendix A: Oral Consent Script**

Hello we are (our names) and we are Worcester Polytechnic Institute students doing research on behalf of Legends Sports Leagues. The goal of our research is to increase marketing presence. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you can choose not to answer any questions. We expect this interview to take (number) minutes. Do we have your permission to record this interview via (recording device)? Do we have your permission to use your name and organization or would you like to remain anonymous?

## **Appendix B: Current Corporate Sponsor Interview**

### **Script**

- 1) What is your business and what is your role in it?
- 2) How did you learn about Legends Sports Leagues?
- 3) Why did you decide to become a sponsor?
- 4) How long have you been a sponsor of LSL?
- 5) What do you think is the most valuable part of the relationship you have with LSL?
- 6) Do you feel like you could be more involved in the organization?
- 7) [With Mr. Cortese's Permission] Would you consider sponsoring an LSL event?

## Appendix C: Current Players Survey

Email Prompt Given with link to survey-

Hello Legends,

We are a team of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute(WPI) working on behalf of Legends Sports Leagues. We will be trying to improve Legends' current marketing practices in order to get more recognition for the league and get more players. You are receiving this email because we would like your feedback as Legends players. We expect the survey to only take 10 minutes to complete and your responses will allow Legends to improve as company. If you are interested you can follow this link: [Link to survey]. Thank you for your participation.

The WPI Team

### LSL Player Survey

Q1 Legends. We are a team from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) working on behalf of Legends Sports League to improve their market presence. We created this survey to get feedback and improve the services provided by Legends. This survey will require about 10 minutes to complete. Participation is completely voluntary and your responses will be kept completely anonymous. You can choose to opt out of this survey at any time. If you have any questions or wish to receive a copy of the results you can contact the Survey Head, Tyler Jaskoviak, at [tjaskoviak2@wpi.edu](mailto:tjaskoviak2@wpi.edu). By continuing you give us consent to use the data created by this survey in our final report. Thanks, The WPI Team

Q2 How many years have you been a part of Legends?

- Less than 1 year (1)
- 1-3 years (2)
- 4-6 years (3)
- 7+ years (4)

Q3 Which leagues do you participate in? (Please check all that apply)

- Golf (2)
- Baseball (1)
- Adult Basketball (3)
- Youth Basketball (4)



Q4 Why did you choose to play in Legends? (Please check all that apply)

- My friends play in Legends (1)
- To stay in shape (2)
- For the social aspect (3)
- As a competitive outlet (13)
- Used to play and I wanted to start again (14)
- It was too hard to set this up on my own (15)
- To play with people at my skill level (16)
- Other (Please Indicate) (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Q5 How did you first learn about Legends?

- Website (1)
- Facebook (2)
- Word of Mouth (3)
- Other Social Media (4)
- Other (Please indicate) (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Q6 How often do you use the following to stay informed with league activities?

	Never (38)	Not very often (39)	About half the time (40)	Very often (41)	Always (42)
Website (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blog (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facebook (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (Please Indicate) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Golf Is Selected

Q7 Golf- Which division of golf did you play in?

- A Division (1)
- B Division (2)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Golf Is Selected

Q8 Golf- Would you like to include some matches at Top Golf in addition to the other venues?

- Yes, we should have some matches at Top Golf (1)
- No, we should stay at the other golf courses (2)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Golf Is Selected

Q9 Golf- What would you improve from the inaugural fall golf season?

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Golf Is Selected

Q10 Golf- What is your likelihood that you will play in the spring golf league?

- Extremely unlikely (1)
- Somewhat unlikely (2)
- Neither likely nor unlikely (3)
- Somewhat likely (4)
- Extremely likely (5)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Baseball Is Selected

Q11 Baseball- Which division of baseball do you play in currently?

- 19+ Division (1)
- 30+A Division (2)
- 40+/30+B Division (3)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Baseball Is Selected

Q12 Baseball- Which baseball seasons do you usually play in?

- Spring (1)
- Summer (2)
- Autumn (3)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Baseball Is Selected

Q13 Baseball- What ideas do you have to expand the baseball league?

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Adult Basketball Is Selected

Q14 Adult Basketball- Which division of basketball are you currently in?

- 30+ Elite/A Division (1)
- 30+ B/C Division (2)
- 40+ A/B Division (3)
- 40+ C Division (4)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Adult Basketball Is Selected

Q15 Adult Basketball- Which seasons do you usually play basketball?

- Spring (1)
- Summer (2)
- Autumn (3)
- Winter (4)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Adult Basketball Is Selected

Q16 Adult Basketball- What ideas do you have to expand the basketball league?

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Adult Basketball Is Selected  
Q17 Adult Basketball- How interested would you be in a Legends 3 vs. 3 basketball tournament?

- Not interested at all (1)
- Slightly interested (2)
- Moderately interested (3)
- Very interested (4)
- Extremely interested (5)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Youth Basketball Is Selected  
Q18 Youth Basketball- Which division of youth basketball is your child currently in?

- Grades 3-4 (1)
- Grades 5-6 (2)
- Grades 7-8 (3)
- Grades 9-10 (4)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Youth Basketball Is Selected  
Q19 Youth Basketball- Which seasons does your child usually play basketball?

- Spring (1)
- Summer (2)
- Autumn (3)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Youth Basketball Is Selected  
Q20 Legends is interested in the idea of a developmental league. This is a league focused on teaching the sport as well as the rules in order to better help young athletes. For example, if a player does something wrong, the referee would help the athlete understand what they did wrong instead of just making a call. This is meant to be a more involved way of teaching the game.

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Youth Basketball Is Selected  
Q21 Youth Basketball- Would you consider entering your child in such a league?

- Definitely not (1)
- Probably not (2)
- Might or might not (3)
- Probably yes (4)
- Definitely yes (5)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Youth Basketball Is Selected  
Q22 Youth Basketball- Do you think this is a valuable idea for Legends to pursue?

- Definitely not (1)
- Probably not (2)
- Might or might not (3)
- Probably yes (4)

Definitely yes (5)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Youth Basketball Is Selected

Q23 Youth Basketball- Should Legends offer a more competitive league than the county in the winter?

- Definitely not (1)
- Probably not (2)
- Might or might not (3)
- Probably yes (4)
- Definitely yes (5)

Answer If Please check all leagues that you participate in? Youth Basketball Is Selected

Q24 Youth Basketball- What are the chances that your child will choose Legends over county leagues?

- Extremely unlikely (1)
- Somewhat unlikely (2)
- Neither likely nor unlikely (3)
- Somewhat likely (4)
- Extremely likely (5)

Q25 Pricing- The philosophy here is 'do it right' with great venues, certified referees, quality uniforms, etc. What do you think about the value of the league for the price?

Answer If How many years have you been a part of Legends? Less than 1 year Is Not Selected

Q26 Blog- What do you think of the new blog vs. the old Commish Corner format?

- I really like the new blog, it's a big improvement from the Commish Corner (1)
- The new blog is a small improvement over the Commish Corner (2)
- I don't prefer one over the other (3)
- I thought the Commish Corner was a little better (4)
- I really liked the Commish Corner and I think they should go back to that format (5)

Q27 Blog- Is there anything you want to suggest to improve the Legends blog?

Q28 If Legends were to expand into more sports, which ones would you like to see/are interested in playing?

- Soccer (1)
- Racquetball (2)
- Flag Football (3)
- Volleyball (4)
- Other (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Q29 How would you rate your overall experience with Legends?

- Extremely dissatisfied (1)
- Somewhat dissatisfied (2)
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- Somewhat satisfied (4)
- Extremely satisfied (5)

Q30 What are your favorite parts of the Legends experience?

Q31 Are there any improvements you can suggest to Legends?

Q32 Is there anything else you would like Legends to know?

## **Appendix D: Other Recreational Sports Leagues**

### **Marketing Interview**

- 1) What does the organization do?/ What do you do here?
- 2) What has your growth been like in the past year? 2 years/5 years/10 years?
- 3) How have you been able to achieve this growth?
- 4) Who is your target audience? Demographic?
- 5) What is the general message you are trying to portray to potential players?

# **Appendix E: Sponsorship Levels/options for Legends**

## **Sports Leagues**

### **General Sponsorship/Advertising Options**

Level 1: Run of Site (ROS) advertisement. Location would be right sidebar of either baseball or basketball home pages with direct link to your website.  
\$50/season or \$150/calendar year.

Level 2: ROS advertisement on right sidebars for both baseball and basketball home pages, with direct link to your website.  
\$75/season or \$250/calendar year.

Level 3\*: Banner advertisement for either basketball or baseball website, with direct link to your website. Location of advertisement would be at the top of every page the user clicks on (rotating with other banner sponsors).  
\$500/season or \$1,500/calendar year.

Level 4\*: Banner advertisement for both basketball and baseball websites, with direct link to your website. Location of advertisement would be at the top of every page the user clicks on (rotating with other banner sponsors).  
\$750/season or \$2,500/calendar year.

### **Corporate and Team Sponsorship Options**

Basic Level: With a corporate sponsorship of just \$100/season, your company information and link will be listed on right sidebar of either the basketball or baseball home page.

Bronze Level: With a corporate sponsorship of \$500/season, up to 10 of your employees can join the league, receiving a 25% discount off registration. Also your company information and link will be listed on the right sidebar of either the basketball or baseball home page for the entire calendar year.

Silver Level\*: With a corporate sponsorship of \$1,000/season, up to 10 of your employees can join the league, receiving a 50% discount off registration. Also your company information and link will be listed on the right sidebar of both the baseball and basketball home pages for the entire calendar year.

Gold Level\*: You can sponsor an entire team up to 10 players for \$2,000 for one season. Additional players beyond eight can be sponsored for \$200 per person. Your players can register, receive uniforms and play the entire season for free. In addition, your company information and link will be listed on the right sidebar of both the basketball and baseball home pages.

\*For Level 3, 4, Silver, or Gold Level options, you can also send a customized message within our newsletter that will reach 4,000 Legends participants.



# Appendix F: Amy Farabow, Stephanie Best, Michelle

## Schmader Interview Script & Notes

1. How long have you been with LSL?
2. Can you describe your job...
3. What is the current state of the youth basketball league?
  - a. Things its doing well
  - b. Things it can improve on
  - c. What are the kids' opinions about the league?
  - d. Anything that stands out to you about the last season
4. More details on youth tournament (Describe the tournament)
  - a. Ways they are promoting the tournament currently
  - b. Ways they would like to promote in the future
  - c. Anything that is going on in the league other than the tournament? Other events?
5. Talk for a couple minutes about marketing the league
  - a. Maintaining/ increasing membership
  - b. Banquets, prizes, parties???
  - c. Compete or interact with other leagues?
6. How do you specifically market to youth/families who are currently not a part of Legends?
7. Anything else you think we should know about the youth basketball league?

### Interview Notes

1. **How long have you been with LSL?**
  - Amy- Help out as need ( 5 years)
  - Stephanie- since summer 2013
  - Michelle- helping with the tournament (part time, 3 on 3 and the youth tournament)
2. **Can you describe your job?**
  - Amy- Help out as needed
  - Stephanie- Commissioner of little legends (run 3 seasons a year)
  - Michelle- helping out with tournament and other events
  - Don't do the winter season because they do not want to compete with the other leagues
3. **What is the current state of the youth basketball league?**
  - Register online
  - Things the try to promote with little legends
  - Bring a team in as friends

- o Register as a team or individual
- o Most leagues register individually but legends allows for full teams to come in
- o Coach registers and then sends a link to the players
  - Spring is a bigger season usually than the fall and summer
  - 2 grade levels per division
  - Vienna is the main customer base
    - o Difficult to find more people in the same location
    - o This leads to finding more court space in other counties
- a. **Things it's doing well**
  - Been able to put closer aged kids together
  - Very clear instructions when registering
  - Coaches and players get used to the system after coming back
  - Email notifications and text notifications about games
- b. **Things it can improve on**
  - Teams may sometimes be uneven (Teams put together by the coaches)
  - Coaches have a problem registering the kids (Coach is responsible)
    - Send the wrong link
    - Not getting the liability on time
    - Needing a lot of reminders
    - Registering online and sending emails sometimes do not line up
      - Kids are put on the wrong team
    - Software for registering
    - Sometimes confusing to set up gym/play times
    - Uniform Distribution
    - Want to be able to get enough kids so they can play within the same grade
      - Keeps from uneven physical matchups
  - Coach is most important when it comes to satisfying a kid
  - The key is to give the child a good experience
- 4. **More details on youth tournament (Describe the tournament)**
  - 3 vs 3 is in winter (Adult)
    - Primarily from Legends but can get players from other areas/ teams
  - Spring youth tournament- (grades 3-8)
    - Depending on who shows up they may
    - Teams from little Legends and other leagues (AAU & Travel)
    - There was a tourney in 2014 and there were 8 teams
      - Legends and some other teams
        - More of a trial tournament
        - Did not do a lot to market/promote that tournament
    - o Tournament in Florida Legends Teams attend
  - a. Ways they are promoting the tournament currently
    - Email Blast to all the players
    - ACA Hoops- advertises all tournaments all over the country

- \$10-25 to advertise
  - Recently put Legends Leagues on that website
  - Beginning to promote
- 1. Ways they would like to promote in the future
- Trying to find a way to get the word out
- May need to host more than one tournament/ events
  1. Anything that is going on in the league other than the tournament? Other events?
- Youth Clinic once a week
  - Internal to registration for legends players
  - Set up tables at 'parades' and possibly put up banners and signs
  - Attempt to get the name out there more as well
- 5. **Talk for a couple minutes about marketing the league**
  - Want to market for the elementary school age kid
  - Don't have a current plan
  - Message "We cater to the players and kids"
    - Allow their schedules to be flexible for kids
    - Give the child a good experience
  - a. Maintaining/ increasing membership
    - Must appeal to the younger kids again
    - Not really have a marketing plan
    - Want to focus on 4<sup>th</sup> graders and the youngest group to keep them in the league
      1. Compete or interact with other leagues?
        1. Teams from other leagues/ AAU participate in Legends Tournaments
        2. Leagues and teams get preferential treatment for courts and play space
          1. Back to school nights and bands etc at schools
          2. Schools cancel gym time randomly
        3. AAU has priorities over gyms in the spring
- 6. **How do you specifically market to youth/families who are currently not a part of Legends?**
  - Don't have a plan to market
- 7. **Anything else you think we should know about the youth basketball league?**
  - Set up tables and banners
    - o Flyers
    - o pamphlets
  - Talk to kids and others about coming together and keeping their teams together
  - VYI leagues- Other youth leagues
    - o Possibly do a joint promotion event
    - o Talk to kids/parents about joining legends
- 8. **Parties or banquets for teams?**
  - Nothing set up for the league
  - o Most people do not want to socialize with teams
  - o "Team moms" usually set up 'parties' if they have one
  - Non-participation fee

- o Pay \$25 to not do any clocks, water bottles etc.
- o Not sure how to enforce

# Appendix G: Joyce Eaby Interview Script & Notes

## Joyce Eaby– VP, Legends. Working specifically on the kick-off of the Legends Golf League:

1. How long have you been with LSL?
  2. What do you do for LSL?
  3. How did you start the golf league?
  4. Do you currently/plan on using social media to promote the golf league?
  5. Ideas for growing golf league?
    - a. What techniques have been used in the past?
    - b. What is the best way to market in her opinion?
  6. What kind of growth do you hope to see with the golf league?
  7. Is there anything else you think is pertinent for us to know about the golf league?
- **How long have you been with LSL?**
    - 10 years (lightly involved)
  - **What do you do for LSL?**
    - Vice President, Help Ron with tasks
  - **How did you start the golf league?**
    - Ron asked to start the league
    - Surveyed and did research to find courses in county
      - Gave Ron info on the courses
      - Picked courses based on proximity of current legends players
        - And people being able to get to courses after work
      - Asked venues and courses if they wanted marketing from Legends
      - Pick times and dates that worked for the courses
  - **Ideas for growing golf league?**
    - Target people who could play
      - Outside of Legends
  - **What are some ideas to grow?**
    - Target audience was to get current legends players
    - Email blast the 6,000 people
    - Couples golfing or Father/son, parent/child
    - Keep the current members who grow too old for basketball
    - Good opportunity for families to participate as well
    - Divide the groups by level and skill
      - Women league as well (within the golf league but with women)
    - Clinics and a league for beginners
    - Social aspect of events
      - Lunch and drinks with players

- Reach back to older, past players or injured ones
  - Give them another way to continue to be involved
- What kind of growth do you hope to see with the golf league?
  - Double current membership (24 current members)
- Is there anything else you think is pertinent for us to know about the golf league?
  - **Main issue-**
    - Traffic and timing of trying to get to the golf matches
    - Especially in the fall with limited lighting
      - Able to start later in the evening in the spring
- **Extra Thoughts:**
  - Atmosphere-
    - Relaxed and supportive of other teams
    - Still competitive but collegial
  - Relationships with golf courses allows for possible tee times on the weekends
  - Parent-child relationships can be found in all the leagues
    - Promote family time etc
      - Using events
  - Legends Brand-
    - Promote family and family time
    - “Easier to market to people you know”
    - Woman and Parent/child, family
    - Parents begin to join sports leagues due to their children playing in Little Legends

# Appendix H: Wayne Stevens Interview Script & Notes

**Wayne Stevens- Prince William County Deputy Commissioner. Principally helps run the baseball league in PWC with specific responsibility of managing county communications**

1. How long have you been with LSL?
2. What can you briefly tell us about your job
3. How is the baseball league run?
4. How has the league grown?
  - a. What methods have they used?
  - b. How successful have these methods been?
  - c. Does social media play a role?/ Do you ever use it to promote the league?
5. What is the best way to retain membership in the baseball leagues?
6. What were the challenges you faced as a commissioner and manager of county communication?
  - a. What caused them?
  - b. How did you overcome them?
7. Why are county communications important?
  - a. What benefits does LSL get from it?

## **Wayne Stevens Interview:**

1. **How long have you been with LSL?**
  - Since they started, 10 years
2. **What can you briefly tell us about your job**
  - Get the stadiums and fields from Prince William county
  - Paid, deputy commissioner for baseball
  - Managed two teams at one point
  - Manages hats and t shirts
3. **How is the baseball league run?**
  - Games are catered and walk up songs are provided etc
  - 20<sup>th</sup> season, spring and fall (summer league only runs a couple weeks)
    - Summer is for new guys who want to give it a try first
  - \$223 per season to play
  - \$75 for home plate empire, \$70 for in the field umpire
  - Get alerts an hour before your game and info on delays / rain cancellations
4. **How has the league grown?**
  - a. **What methods have they used?**
    - a. Play at the Potomac national stadium
      1. Use it to show other players the league
    - b. Put up posters at the stadium
    - c. Biggest thing is “word of mouth”

- 2. each team has a Facebook page
  - d. have players umpire games to cover cost of registration
  - e. **did not expand into softball because it would take away from baseball not get as many people because of the number of softball leagues already out there**
  - f. social events
  - b. **How successful have these methods been?**
    - a. Some people are hesitant to try and play hardball and move away from softball
    - b. Discounts not as effective
    - c. Lot of people who simply can't afford the registration fee
    - d. "social events are a bust"
      - l. Did not get the turn out want
      - 1. For multiple social events
  - c. Does social media play a role? / Do you ever use it to promote the league?
    - a. Blogs
    - b. Teams have Facebook pages
5. **What were the challenges you faced as a commissioner and manager of county communication?**
- PWC does not have the parks and rec tied in with Legends
    - l. Venue and gyms complications for basketball
6. **Why are county communications important?**
- Figure out the venues and stadiums
    - a. What benefits does LSL get from it?

**Extra Thoughts:**

- **Don't have the number of volunteers to grow yet**
- Legends baseball is very competitive with other leagues
- Ponce, Blue Grey League etc
- Open mind to new student groups and to do more work after us
- Outside mind sometimes works better
- Ideas for more volunteers:
- Difficult because people feel forced to do things
- Really only 3 people who run the leagues
- Baseball finals: 19+, 30+, and 40+
- Figure out songs
- Stadiums
- Cater
- "As a league, I think we are doing well"



# Appendix I: Fred Rucker Interview Script & Notes

## Interview with Hall of Famers:

1. How long have you been with LSL?
2. What sports have you participated in?
3. What has been your experience with LSL?
  - a. Things you like
  - b. Things that can be improved
  - c. In one word describe LSL
4. Are there any memorable moments that made a good impression on you?
5. Why did you decide to join?
6. What would you say to your friends to convince them to join Legends
7. Is there anything in particular that you would like LSL to know about?

## Interview with Fred Rucker (Hall of Famer):

1. **How long have you been with LSL?**
  - Fred Rucker- at least 8 years
2. **What sports have you participated in?**
  - Fred- **BASKETBALL plays 3 seasons** (Plays pick up outside of legends Tues & Thurs)
3. **What has been your experience with LSL?**
  - Likes it and is loyal to the legends program
  - Loves to play the game and likes to win and play competitive
  - Legends allows for playoffs and competition
  - **Things you like**
    - i. Well organized
    - ii. Don't have to worry about whether there are teams/ venues
    - iii. Stayed on the same team with same group of people  
(Camaraderie)
    - iv. Fun and friendliness of playing against the same guys
    - v. Easy to register
    - vi. Good job with communication (emails)
    - vii. Uniforms are good
    - viii. Fun exercise
  - **Things that can be improved**
    - i. Facilities and venues aren't the best all the time
      1. Elementary and middle school gyms are small for adults
      - ii. Inconsistency in the referees
        2. Varies ref to ref (strong refs and weak refs in the system)
        3. 30-40% of games, refs did not make consistently good calls

- iii. Website is a little dated (but still functions the way it should)

**4. Why did you decide to join?**

- Friend of Fred's was playing with legends and asked to join
- "Word of mouth"
- Wasn't looking for the league but stumbled upon it

**5. What would you say to your friends to convince them to join Legends**

- Competitive bball league with divisions and age groupings
  - Very organized, not pick-up
  - Good job of matching skill level
- "Looking for exercise and a fun bball league, join legends"
- Don't have to know people/ have a team (can join as a solo)

**6. Is there anything in particular that you would like LSL to know about?**

- Curious as to whether legends has gotten the full potential for adult basketball players (What is the limit on legends?)
  - i. Just knowing from pick-up basketball
    - 1. Only a quarter are involved in legends
    - ii. Can be done with more promoting
  - 2. Word of mouth
- I. Opportunity for Ron and the league to maybe get players to try and recruit
  - iii. Maybe talked about more in the community

**7. Incentive for bringing in new members?**

- Would be effective- good motivation to refer players
  - i. Something other than money
  - ii. Cap or t-shirt (cool tshirt)
  - iii. Discounts on nike, under armor, adidas purchases possibly

**Extra thoughts:**

- Used to do write ups
  - o Funny or trash talk
  - o Get it in the emails
  - o Fun to read about your game and other players games
  - o "I'm not going to Facebook to look at my bball activity"
  - o Good for reviews, feedback on social media that might prompt growth in the league
    - ☞ May not be using social media as much as he can
  - o Organized Legends track & Field event?? (once or twice a year)

## Appendix J: Brian Smith Interview Script & Notes

### Brian Smith- Potential Marketing Director

1. How long have you known Ron?
2. What leagues have you worked for?
3. What have you done for those leagues?
4. What is your experience marketing sports leagues?
5. What techniques do you use when marketing leagues?
  - a. Is Social media something you have experience with?
6. What success did you have with these techniques?
7. What are some tips you'd give to someone wanting to market a league?
8. Do you have any ideas to attract corporate sponsors?
  - a. What are some you've had in the past?
9. Would you be interested in working for Legends with commission?

### **Brian Smith Interview Questions and Notes**

1. How long have you known Ron?  
N/A
2. What leagues have you worked for?
  - Vienna little league
    1. Youth baseball
3. What have you done for those leagues?
  - marketing / corporate sponsors
4. What is your experience marketing sports leagues?
  - 5 years for Vienna little league
5. What techniques do you use when marketing leagues?
  - Reduce the registration fee
    1. Put article in newsletters
  - Vienna Patch Registration/newsletters (free to use)
  - Town of Vienna (get a banner across maple Avenue \$1000)
6. What are some tips you'd give to someone wanting to market a league?
  - Get the message out more
7. Do you have any ideas to attract corporate sponsors?
  - Uniforms need to have sponsors name on them
  - Restaurant sponsors
  - Sports Store (Dick's Sporting Goods)
    1. Provide equipment
    2. Support event
      1. 20% off at Dicks (Bring in a Legends Coupon)

- Competing Pizza & burger places in Vienna
  1. Team parties

### **Extra Thoughts:**

- Re-used uniforms
- Sponsors like to have names on the uniforms
- “High-quality” uniforms make it difficult to put sponsor’s name on the uniform
- Glory Days- sponsor a team
- **Problems-**
- 350 people in leagues
  - No one is interested in getting their company to sponsor
  - Have to change uniform concept, to put sponsor's name on them
- Vienna little league
- Sponsorship covers the cost of uniforms each year and also some other expenses
- Adults in the league do not see the incentive of sponsoring the league with their companies
- **Things to put sponsor name on-**
- **Team banner (up to \$100)**
  - Put Season, year, team, sponsor etc
  - To ensure teams buy new banners every year
  - Bring banners to the field (Put them up at the beginning of games and take them down when they leave)
  - Hang in gyms and dugouts
  - More than one season, get a discount
- **Team sponsorship**
- Team banner
- Sponsor plaque
- Support with fundraisers etc
- \$100 for banner, \$20 for plaque (picture of their team with name)
- Website presence
- Double the amount of costs to make their sponsor items for package (\$300 package for a season)
- Website
- Uniforms (not as doable)
- Reason for sponsors:
  - Operational expenses increase
  - Uniform and registration costs
  - What sponsors need to know?
    - What is the money for?
      - How does it help the league
    - What is in it for the sponsor?
      - How will their name get out there (Team banners)
- Team parties

- Automatically receive Website privileges
- Really push the teams and members to have team parties at sponsors
- Website isn't doing anything
- Not getting any bites
- Can put promotions for companies on website

## Appendix K: Nelson Taveras Script & Notes

### **Nelson Taveras - Long time Legends baseball player and Hall of Famer, and former PWC Basketball Commissioner**

- 1. How long have you been with LSL?**
  - a. 10 years, since the beginning
- 2. What are your favorite things about playing for Legends?**
  - a. Ease of signing up and just showing up to play
  - b. Loves the game
- 3. What was your role as basketball commissioner?**
  - a. Started the league by giving flyers for stores to display
    - i. Flyers in windshields
    - ii. Handing them out to people
  - b. Organize the teams and schedules
  - c. Obtain the gyms from Prince Williams County
- 4. What kind of growth did you see while commissioner?**
  - a. After the initial start of the league, grew steadily from 3 teams to about 8-10
    - i. Word of mouth
  - b. Have you ever used/considered using social media to promote the league?**
    - i. Never used it
      1. Stopped marketing the PWC league after initial launch

#### **Other Thoughts/ Ideas:**

- o Need to get the name of Legends out there more
  - Flyers and pamphlets in stores and windshields of cars
  - Movie Theatre idea (posters/banners at a public place that is going to get a lot of views)

# Appendix L: Bob Korn Script & Notes

## **Bob Korn – Legends Blog editor and manager of Legends Baseball's Redlegs**

### **1. What is your role as manager of Legends Baseball's Redlegs?**

He is a manager but not a player, choosing managing over participation. Role is to make sure all the players get the equipment for players, and checks the quality of the equipment. Main responsibility- give every player an opportunity to play and make time of play equal for everyone. Supplies coaching. The scorekeeper. The organization of the game is to. Score keeping responsibilities can be different throughout the team. Bob took the responsibility to do it himself.

### **2. Ideas for website**

#### **a. Ideas for blog in particular**

The blog is better than the previous system, because Bob can do postings easily. Often game managers submit game summaries, and Bob reviews and post them. The problem is that a lot of people do not use pictures, or the pictures are bad. Every team needs a manager with good photographing skills, and items. More people contributing or volunteering to take pictures. Maybe it is a way to assign responsibilities. Make game summaries shorter. Some people don't submit articles about their teams. Articles are mandatory during finals. Come up with a different article type.

### **3. Do you edit any other social media groups/ blogs? If so, which ones?**

Twitter- already started for baseball but never kept going; Facebook. Social media might be the best way to communicate, but people have to sign in before participating. Blogger software- works pretty well, but could switch to another one.

### **4. Do you use the schedule autoposter?**

### **5. Does Redlegs do any team marketing/promoting? Explain**

It is difficult to bring players to a team if have not played before. Everybody is out of time. Legends is marketing right now. The good idea might be in marketing in each team. Some teams have their own websites. Nevertheless it is very difficult to force managers to work for their team. Maybe take over their responsibilities or encourage to work more for the team. Yes, the best way is to promote through a word of mouth, or banners to attract people to games. Put promotional videos on YouTube.

# Appendix M: Christopher Young Interview Script and

## Notes

INOVA Interview Script and Notes

1. What does your company do and what do you do in your company?

Create priority access for sport organizations, especially youth ones. He acts as the go between for any company looking to have INOVA sponsor them, Community Outreach

1. Do you remember being a sponsor for Legends Sports Leagues?

- a. Positive aspects of the sponsorship/ things you'd change?

He reached LSL, but got response that LSL already had INOVA as sponsors. So, LSL did not renew the contract.

1. If not, what would you look for in a sponsorship?

Number 1. A lot of active people, active population.

Number 2. Interested people with the health priority.

1. Do you sponsor any local rec leagues? Often?

INOVA does sponsor other organizations, basically gives them priorities in healthcare.

They are looking for different groups interested to work with INOVA for 2017.



# Appendix N: Deliverables (Brochure, Poster, and Promotional Videos)

**Bring a friend.  
Get a discount.**

We have a new referral program! Bring a friend with you and we will give both of you a discount on your registration fees.

**Sign up is easy.**

Ready to join Legends? Go to [PlayLegends.com](http://PlayLegends.com) to register. We will provide you with a team, uniform, and anything else you may need.

**Kids play too.**

Does your child love basketball? We have a youth basketball league called Little Legends that is open to kids in grades 3-12.

**Follow us online.**

Instagram:  
[@legends\\_sports\\_leagues](https://www.instagram.com/legends_sports_leagues)  
  
Facebook:  
[facebook.com/LegendsSportsLeagues](https://www.facebook.com/LegendsSportsLeagues)

It's not too late to become a Legend!



**Introducing Legends Golf**

We just completed the inaugural season of our new golf league! We play at several courses in and around the Fairfax county area and are looking to add Top Golf to our list for 2017. The golf league is open to golfers 12 and over. Being a part of Legends Golf League provides a social golfing atmosphere and reduced greens fees.

Our survey of last golf season reported 100% satisfaction! You don't have to be an expert, just ready to have some fun!



**About Us**

For over 10 years, Legends Sports Leagues, Inc. has been a premier recreational sports league in the Fairfax County area, offering venues for both adults (basketball, baseball and golf) and youth (basketball). Our focus is to stress camaraderie and sportsmanship within and across our teams, as well as inclusion for all skill levels. Legends has been steadily growing and now includes over 2,000 participants. Adult participants range from 19-70 years old. We offer three distinct age groupings: "19+", "30+", and "40+" in as many as 8 different divisions. Youth participants range from grades 3 to 12, also with multiple skill divisions.



---

## Reasons to play

**A league for everybody- Adults and Youth** For adults, come be part of a league in a less competitive, more fun philosophy. For youth, play in a league more competitive than house leagues, but less than AAU (Amateur Athletics Union) leagues.

**Camaraderie and sportsmanship** We are looking for players who like to compete, but more importantly, be part of a team and positive atmosphere.

**No practice? No problem** Adult team practices can be held but never mandatory.

**Easy sign up** We do just about everything for you including placing you on a team. Just show up at the scheduled games with your supplied uniform and be ready to play!

## FAQs

I haven't played in a while. Will I be able to compete? Absolutely, as long as you are in reasonable shape! If you have not been active in a while, we recommend beginning an exercise program before joining the league! We also want average players whose top priority is not to win but to have fun and enjoy the game they love. We are also committed to balancing teams so it will be fun of everyone.

I cannot make all the games. Is it fair that I still sign up to play? Yes! We place more players on each team just for that reason. Everyone is busy, and we expect many players to miss 2 or 3 games in a season.

I have a group of new players that want to play together. Can we do this? Yes! You will be placed on the same team. We also offer group discounts for 3 or more new Legends players. Please contact us to set up the discount procedures.

---

## New Sponsorship Package

By joining the Legends community, your business can be part of a fantastic organization that provides recreational sports to youth and adults in Northern Virginia.

- Seasonal sponsor team banner
- Sponsor plaque
- A shout-out in the Commish Corner newsletter

**All at a new low price**

Contact [ron@playlegends.com](mailto:ron@playlegends.com) for details



# Legends Sports Leagues, Inc.





# Legends Sports Leagues

## Creating a Marketing Plan



Pavel Eroshenko (IE), Tyler Jaskoviak (CS)  
 Ajay King (ME), Nicholas Kulick (ECE)  
 Advisors: James Hanlan, Stephen McCauley  
 Liaison: Ron Cortese

### An Opportunity

Legends Sports Leagues provides recreational sports for youth and adults in the Northern Virginia area. After more than 10 years of operation, Legends is looking for a marketing plan that it can use to attract new members as well as corporate sponsors.



Improved Marketing Strategies

### Recommendations

#### Attract Corporate Sponsors

At the core of attracting more corporate sponsors is a new sponsorship package:

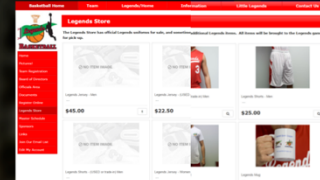
- Team Banner
- Sponsor plaque
- Fundraising events
- Website presence



### Project Goals

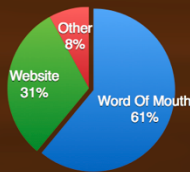
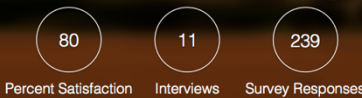
1. Evaluate each of the four leagues at Legends
2. Evaluate current corporate sponsorships
3. Design a marketing plan based on the information collected

### Market To New Members



As part of the project, our IQP team created materials for Legends to market to new members. These include two promotional videos and a redesigned website.

### Findings



To collect data, current members were surveyed and interviewed. One of the key findings was that word of mouth was how the majority of players learned about Legends.



Little Legends promo video: <https://youtu.be/wydlwhoclOw>  
 Adult Baseball promo video: <https://youtu.be/AhSqjcbAOp0>

# Appendix O: Marketing Plan

## Legends Sports Leagues IQP Recommendations

Presented to Ron Cortese



### **By WPI IQP Students**

Pavel Eroshenko

Tyler Jaskoviak

Nicholas Kulick

Ajay King

## **Summary**

This document was created by the WPI Legends Sports Leagues team as a supplementary deliverable to the final report regarding the Legends Sports Leagues Interactive Qualifying Project. This document is designed to lay out the recommendations put forth in the final paper in a more concise and easy to follow manner in an effort to make referring back to these recommendations more accessible for LSL executives. All of the recommendations put forth in this document are possible ways to increase the number of members in the Legends Sports Leagues as well as put forth a new sponsor plan. These recommendations were created using the data collected from interviews, surveys, and game observations. From the information collected, these are possible recommendations that will allow LSL to grow.

## **1. League Recommendations**

The following league recommendations were created with the scope of the entire league in mind.

## **1.1 High Priority Recommendations**

The first recommendation involves increasing the marketing presence at and around LSL games and the venues they are held at. Seven out of the eight games attended did not have any marketing presence visible. Marketing presence will allow spectators and other passersby to know what game is going on. By doing so, it not only allows for advertising but also may attract individuals who may be interested in joining a league such as Legends.

### **Steps to complete:**

1. Obtain signs and banners that can be put up in gyms, outside of dugouts, courses, or possibly even school property (permission may be required)

Referees could be responsible for bringing a single sign/banner with them to the games, placing them in the venue during game hours, and then taking them down after games are over.

### **Places to put signs:**

1. Inside gyms
2. Hanging on dugouts/outfield fences
3. Inside school hallways (catch attention of school aged children)
4. Outside on school lawns (Lawn signs will be visible to passing traffic)

In order to increase LSL brand awareness in the Fairfax area, the distribution of flyers and pamphlets detailing the league and how to join are important. These can be put into local stores, placed on car windshields, and even handed out to people in populated areas. LSL executives should also consider making this a regular practice for some future seasons. Brochures created by the WPI team can be used. Making the brochures and flyers visible in specific locations such as sports venues allows for more targeted visibility of Legends. Targeting a demographic that is interested in sports allows for a greater chance of interest from people in Legends

### **Places to put/give out flyers:**

1. Local stores/malls
2. Placed in the windshields of cars
3. Placed in sports venues/parks
4. Handed out in populated areas/sports venues

Another recommendation to increase the marketing presence at the local level is through local newspapers. Newspaper ads would be a good way to get the name out to people while also encouraging word of mouth. Advertisements in a newspaper do cost money, but another option would be to contact a local newspaper about the league and send them a story about Legends. Local newspapers would be willing to print stories about local news such as the league for free. The following is a list of local newspapers that may be interested in advertising and/or printing a story on Legends.

**Local Newspapers:**

1. Fairfax County Times
2. Local Media Connection LLC
3. Fairfax Connection

Increasing social media presence is another high priority recommendation. LSL has a lot of potential to grow using social media that includes pre-existing accounts with Facebook, Instagram, and a blog. Members who took the survey discussed how they would like to see updates on other games and updated statistics. Keeping social media up to date would increase overall interest in the league and may even increase its value in the eyes of the members. The recommendation involves posting more frequently on these social media platforms about the league. Posts should be made at least every week on all platforms to maintain interest. Promotional videos regarding the baseball and Little Legends leagues are good material to post on social media.

**Topics to post about:**

1. Championship Teams
2. "Team of the Week"
3. Summary of Playoff games
4. Pictures of Teams playing, shaking hands, camaraderie (Instagram)

Another high priority recommendation is the implementation of a referral program. Due to the discovery of word of mouth being the single highest way people hear about the league, this recommendation was created to encourage 'word of mouth' amongst players. This recommendation includes adding a referral option while a new member registers. The new member will be asked if they were referred by anyone to the league, if so, the member who referred the new person will receive a 10% discount for their next season. This will encourage members to reach out to new players and multiply the word of mouth effect.

The last high priority recommendation involves starting an internship program. Due to the number of tasks and hours required to run the day to day operations of a growing league, an intern is needed. The internship could be over the summer to help market for the upcoming season or be part time during the school year. The intern should be a sports marketing major or have the inclination to be one and can be found at local community colleges.

**Steps to complete:**

1. Contact local community college/ high school
2. Offer internship at Legends (Have a blurb/summary of intern's responsibilities)
3. Hold interviews with possible interns and select best candidates
  - a. Sports marketing major (or desire to be one)
    1. Website experience (preferred)

The following list are some responsibilities the intern can have:

**Intern Responsibilities:**

1. Maintain and update Legends' website
2. Updating social media (Facebook & Instagram)
3. Putting up flyers, handing out brochures and possibly bringing signage to games
4. Manage Discounts/ Referral Program
5. Write story about Legends

## **1.2 Medium Priority Recommendations**

The first medium priority recommendation involves creating a discount program for returning players based on the number of years played. From the survey, many league veterans wish to see rewards for their loyalty.

**The discounts recommended are as follows:**

- 3+ Years: 5%- 10% discount
- 5+ Years: 10%- 20% discount
- 7+ Years: 20%- 25% discount

These discounts will give members incentive to continue returning to the league. Discounts for service members such as police officers and firefighters are good community outreach and should be advertised.

Another medium priority involves creating social activities among the league. This involves the annual Hall of Fame event as well as going to bars and restaurants after playoff/final games. This will also be beneficial with the corporate sponsors that LSL has. By having social events at sponsor restaurants for example, it benefits the players with the social aspect as well as the sponsor who is being supported by the teams.

The last medium priority involves creating a standard set of rules for Hall of Fame candidates. Many members in the survey expressed their confusion about election for the Hall of Fame.

**Candidate should fit the following criteria:**

1. Player must be active in the league for at least 5 years
2. Player who shows outstanding effort and embodies the values of Legends
3. Players should be from different teams

In order to decide on candidates, ask for recommendations from each team. These recommendations should determine what candidates should be eligible or suggest candidates for a board that decides who should be eligible to be in the Hall of Fame.

### **1.3 Low Priority Recommendations**

This recommendation is an idea for a feature that members can utilize. This involves referee and umpire accountability. There were complaints about the referees and umpires when members were asked on the survey some aspect of LSL that they would want to see improved. Our recommendation is to create a feedback system where members can voice their opinions about referees and umpires. If the same referees/umpires are being brought up, LSL executives should act as neutral observers and should attend games. Actions can be taken at the discretion of the LSL executives. This is designed to allow members' opinions to be heard and to also keep referees/umpires accountable at all times.

## **2. Sport Specific Recommendations**

These recommendations are tailored for each league, not for the entirety of Legends.

### **2.1 Adult Basketball**

This recommendation for the adult basketball league also falls within the category of recommendations over the next five years. PWC recently decided to work with schools and other venues to help recreational leagues obtain gyms to play in. Expanding back into this area would be a growth area for the adult basketball league.

### **2.2 Golf**



There is one main recommendation for the golf league that involves scheduling and tee times. In responses about the new golf league, members, although enjoyed it, found it difficult to travel for the 5-6 pm tee times during rush hours and after a long day at work. The recommendation is to obtain weekend tee times, more specifically Saturday mornings and afternoons. This would make it not only more comfortable for current players to play, but also attract new members who have tight schedule during business days. One way to transition into this would be to split the games, some on the weekdays and some on the weekends. This will allow the courses to get used to the league and allow people to play more if they can't make it during the week.

## 2.3 Little Legends

The first recommendation for the Little Legends league is to target the younger aged children in the league, grades three and four. Placing flyers, pamphlets, or the brochure on windshields during the winter county league games will set the awareness in players looking for off-season leagues. A possibility to create a cycle is to encourage Little Legends players to play in the county league when the league does not operate.

The next recommendation for Little Legends is to shift the divisions slightly with the all-girls teams. Currently, the third and fourth grades boys are playing grades five and six girls. The physical difference is too great with two year age difference. The divisions could be as follows:

- **Boys league Divisions:** grades 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, etc.
- **Girls league Divisions:** grades 4-5, 6-7, 8-8, etc.
- **Matching:**
  - 3-4 boys vs. 4-5 girls
  - 5-6 boys vs. 6-7 girls etc.

These new divisions will eliminate the huge advantage of girls in physical size and make games more equal.

## 2.4 Baseball

There are two main recommendations that are suggested for the baseball league specifically. The first recommendation involves time of games in certain divisions while the second recommendation involves creating a free agent pool of players.

From the observations that were taken while attending the games, the 30+ B and 40+ divisions for baseball consistently ran over three hours in length and were therefore cut short. The first recommendation is to make the 30+ B/ 40+ division only seven innings. This way every team would play the same number of innings and games wouldn't be cut short as often.

The next recommendation for the baseball league is to create a free agent pool of players. Wayne Stevens, deputy baseball commissioner, and Troy Patrick, 19+ representative and rules committee member, both highlighted the struggles of younger guys paying the registration and uniform fees. By creating a free agent pool, players who don't want to commit to the full time or cost of a full season, can join Legends. These free agents would pay a smaller

administrative cost to sign up and would be able to replace a missing player in a team. The free agent would then pay only for the games he attended.

### **3. Long Term Recommendations**

Legends is growing and there are also techniques that can be implemented to expand the league in the long term prospective. Multiple interviewees including deputy commissioner of the baseball league, Wayne Stevens, said that league had good potential to grow, but there simply wasn't the workforce in the league to operate necessary tasks.

A recommendation that will help, especially with a growing league, is to focus more effort on obtaining volunteers and manpower. A growing league requires more people to handle and manage the increased workload. It also works in the opposite way where a league will not be able to grow without the additional manpower. Without enough people, players will feel like they aren't being heard, events and games will become harder to organize, and the growth will plateau.

#### **Positions that should be filled:**

- Separate Commissioners for all leagues (Not including Ron)
  - a. 4 commissioners in Legends (One for each sport)
- Marketing Director

These positions being filled will give the other LSL executives time and energy to handle other events, discounts, and problems that may be occurring in the league.

### **4. Redefined Sponsor Plan**

As part of the recommendations for LSL, a new redefined sponsor plan was created using information from the corporate sponsor interviews. The new sponsor plan consists of new perks that the sponsor will receive for their funds. The advertising plan for the sponsors consists of:

1. Seasonal Team Banners
2. Website Advertising
3. Shout-out in Legends Blog, Commish Corner
4. Sponsor plaque.

The team banners are banners/signs that each team brings to every game. These banners will depict the sponsor's name, year, and season. These will allow the sponsor to get their name out in a more direct way. Sponsors will also be put on the Legends website and will have a shout-out in the blog, Commish Corner. At the end of the season, the sponsor will also receive a sponsor plaque from Legends that will contain the year and a picture of the team that was sponsored.

The entire sponsor package will cost \$300. The price was determined by researching the prices of the plaques and banners. The plaque will cost Legends around \$40-\$50 and the

banner is another \$100. Due to the costs to Legends, the total price for the sponsor is double the expenses.

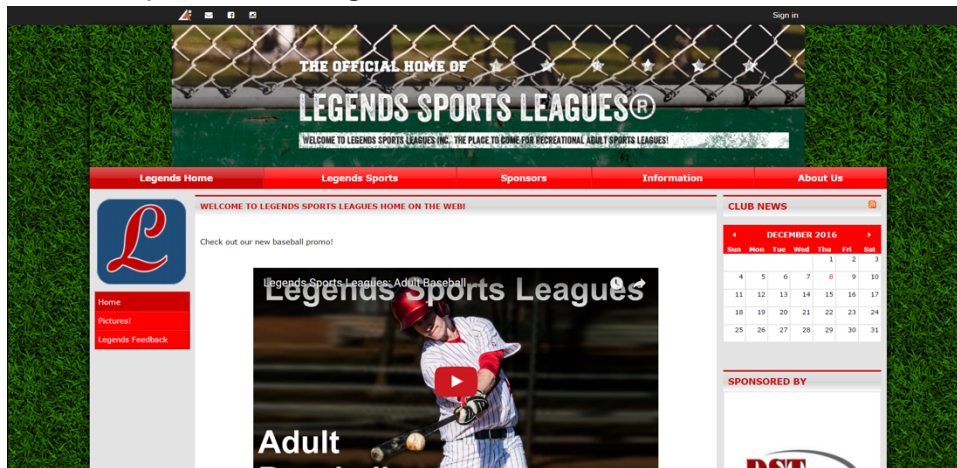
Sponsors would also have the option of covering some of the registrations cost for the team they sponsor. For this show them the prices to cover the different amounts (e.g. 5%, 10%, 25%, 50%, 100%) and then the sponsor can decide if they'd like to help.

# Appendix P: Improved Website Design

## Previous Design



## Improved Design




THE OFFICIAL HOME OF  
**LEGENDS SPORTS LEAGUES® - BASKETBALL**  
 FAIRFAX, VA


[Basketball Home](#)
[Team](#)
[Legends Home](#)
[Information](#)
[Little Legends](#)
[About Us](#)


**ADULT AND YOUTH BASKETBALL IN FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA!**  
*It's not too late to become a "Legend"!*  
**Adult Basketball, Youth Basketball in Fairfax, VA!**  
All pictures (except for Legends players) on this website courtesy of The National Basketball Hall of Fame.

[Home](#)  
[Pictures!](#)  
[Individual Registration](#)  
[Team Registration](#)  
[Officials Area](#)  
[Legends Store](#)






**Individual Registration**  
Click Here!

THE OFFICIAL HOME OF  
**LEGENDS SPORTS LEAGUES® - BASEBALL**  
 FAIRFAX & PRINCE WILLIAM, VA

[Baseball Home](#)
[Team](#)
[Legends Home](#)
[Information](#)
[About Us](#)

SUN, NOV 13 GASHOUSE GANG 12	SUN, NOV 13 RED ECLIP 18	SUN, NOV 13 LOLLYAGGERS 6	SUN, NOV 13 KNIGHTS 13	SUN, NOV 13 AMERICANS 1	SUN, NOV 13 ESOTOPES 7
BLU JAYS 5	BIKERS 7	NATIONALS 12	BENCHWARMERS 14	OUTLAWS 12	PAIDRES 5
WOODBRIDGE, VETERAN'S 14	WOODBRIDGE, PITZNER 11	WOODBRIDGE, VETERAN'S 19	WOODBRIDGE, VETERAN'S 14	WOODBRIDGE, PITZNER 17	WOODBRIDGE, VETERAN'S 14


**ADULT BASEBALL IN FAIRFAX AND PRINCE WILLIAM!**  
*It's not too late to become a "Legend"!*  
**Adult Baseball in Fairfax, Prince William, VA!**  
All pictures (except for Legends players) on this website courtesy of The National Baseball Hall of Fame.

[Home](#)  
[Pictures!](#)  
[Individual Registration](#)  
[Officials Area](#)  
[Legends Store](#)  
[Master Schedule](#)  
[Sponsors](#)







**Individual Registration**  
Click Here!

THE OFFICIAL HOME OF  
**LEGENDS SPORTS LEAGUES® - GOLF**  
 FAIRFAX, VA

[Golf Home](#)
[Team](#)
[Legends Home](#)
[Information](#)
[About Us](#)


**WELCOME TO LEGENDS GOLF'S WEBSITE!**  
**Legends Golf is Here!**  
 To see all the details, Click **HERE!**  
 Our Fall 2016 (Inaugural) season was a huge hit!  
 Stay tuned for the awesome Spring Season to start in April!  
 We also just added your FAQs **HERE!**

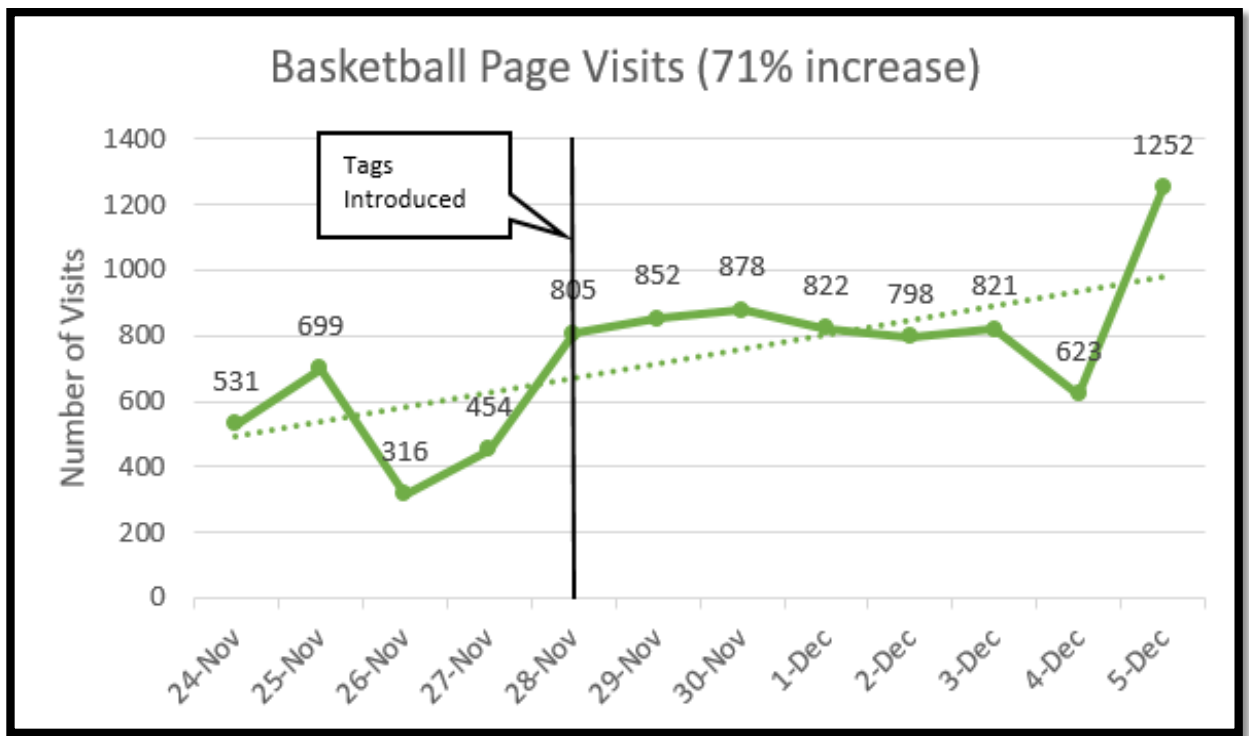
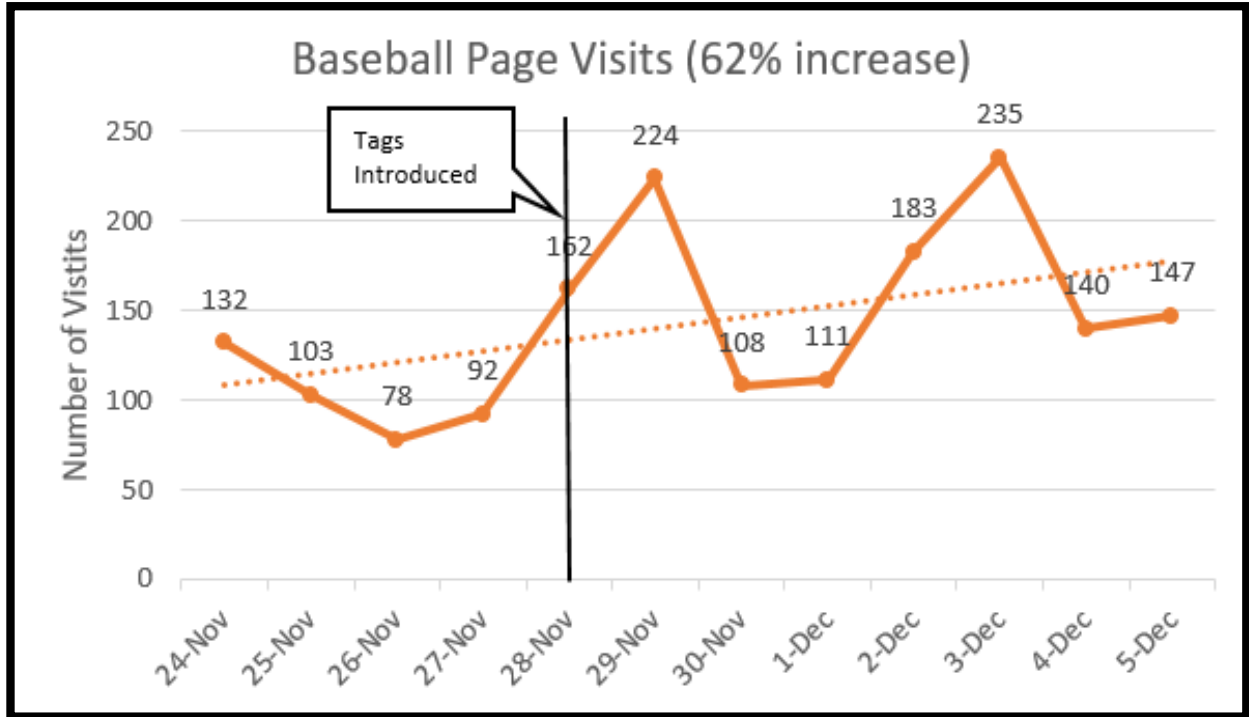
[Home](#)  
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[Master Schedule](#)  
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[Edit My Account](#)

**CLUB NEWS**  
 DECEMBER 2016  

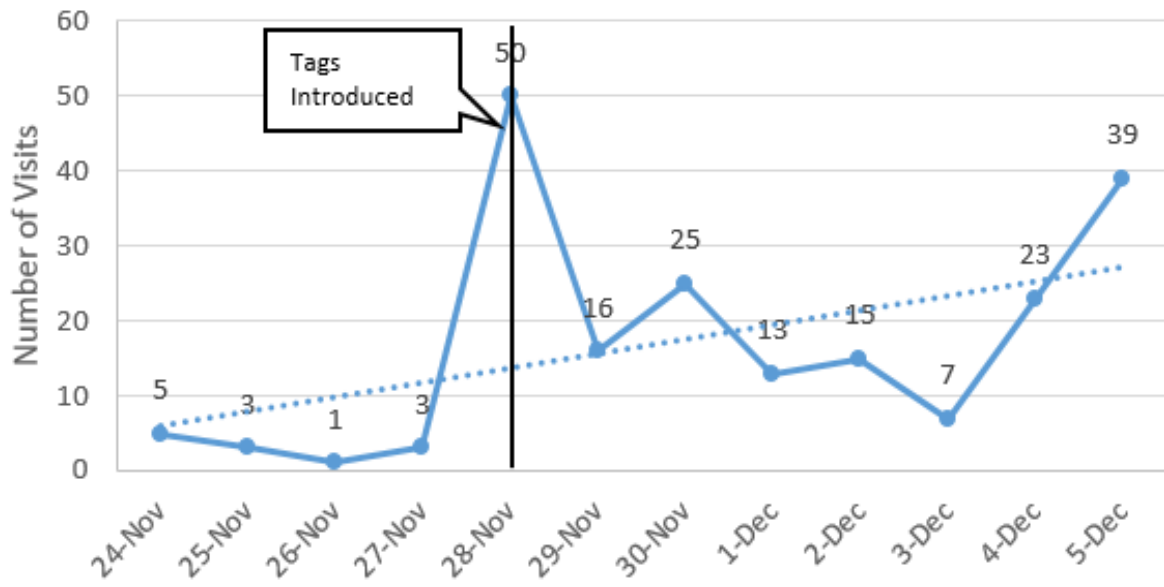
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**RECENT RESULTS**  
 none available

## Appendix Q: Website Page Views

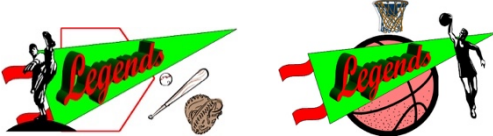


### Golf Page Visits (683% increase)



# Appendix R: Redesigned Logo

Previous Design



Updated Design

