

## NACMA: Ideas That Work

### Kids in College Program Big South Conference

**Objective:** Too many of our youth do not have an understanding of what it takes to go to college and do not understand the numerous benefits of a college education. Many businesses in the private sector are seeking ways to build their image and level of awareness in their respective communities. The “Kids in College Program” is a unique, feel-good marketing program that is guaranteed to catch the eye of the prospective client and give back to the community at the same time. It can be instituted on a conference-wide basis (with a regional sponsor) or can be implemented at an individual institution (with a local sponsor).

**How it works:** A select area middle school is chosen to participate in the “Kids in College Program” (the client can select the particular school if it wishes). The school will award a number of students, typically about 100, with the opportunity to visit the campus for a day. The schools can select the students however they wish (for example, the top 100 grades in the class or the top 100 spellers). As a part of the agreement with the client, they will cover the school’s expenses, such as buses and lunches. A mutually agreed-upon day is selected on which the students will visit the campus.

Before the visit, a ceremonial check presentation is made at a school assembly with the client’s representative and representatives from your institution participating. The ceremonial check is given to the school principal with the understanding that, thanks to the client, the visit to the campus is a reality.

During the campus visit, the students will be given a tour of campus, sit in a “real” college classroom, visit the library, eat in the cafeteria and listen to a motivational speech by a head coach or student-athlete. Most importantly, the children will leave with a clear understanding of what it takes to be admitted to a college and of the many benefits of a college education.

**Promote, promote, promote:** This is a “feel-good” marketing program, but your community needs to know about it in order to get a prospective client excited enough to make the buy. Therefore, include in the sales package information that the local media will be invited to the ceremonial check presentation and to the on-campus event. Design a media plan in which the program is recognized during the game broadcasts, coaches shows, on the Web site, etc. Also include in the sales package a radio or television interview with the client during a select game broadcast talking about the program and how it is a “win-win” opportunity for all involved parties.

The program works. Exxon Company USA partnered with the Atlantic Coast Conference with this marketing program and had a great deal of success in many regards.

### **All-weekend-long promotion Georgia Institute of Technology**

This is a promotion that will encourage students to attend all sporting events in a weekend. It works well during transition periods between football/volleyball and basketball or the transition between basketball and baseball/softball.

At each event, you give something -- food, T-shirts or similar items -- to a specified number of students arriving at the game first. At the end of the Friday and Saturday game, students must pick up a raffle ticket. At the Sunday event, students with tickets from Friday and Saturday are eligible to enter a drawing for something of greater value (plane tickets, television, etc.).

This will increase attendance and student awareness for sports of which they are less aware. It can be developed into an annual event.

### **Greek Attendance Contest High Point University**

**How to win:** The fraternity and sorority with the highest percentage of its members attending men's and women's basketball games wins the grand prize.

**Rules:** Each organization member must present an ID card and sign in at the beginning of the game. To be eligible, the participant is required to arrive no later than 15 minutes after the listed start time of the game. At the end of the game, the participant must check out at the same location to get credit for attendance.

**Bonus points:** Bonus points are provided for place finishes for competitions conducted at the designated games. The competitions include the "Who's Got the Most Spirit Contest" (most spirit, most dressed in letters, most encouraging to the team), "Three-Point Shooting Contest" (make as many shots as possible from behind the three-point line in 30 seconds), "Dizzy Bat Contest" (spin around a baseball bat six times at one baseline and then run to the other end to make a layup), "Banner Contest" (fraternity or sorority banner, judged on spirit and creativity) and "Crab Crawl Contest" (participants crab crawl to the hoop from center court with a basketball in their lap and make a lay up).

**Point system:** After the game, each fraternity and sorority is ranked based on the percentage of its members who attended the game. First place receives 100 points, second place 75, third place 50 and fourth place 25. The winning fraternity or sorority receives 25 points.

**Winner:** The fraternity or sorority with the most points at the end of the season wins \$250.

### **Women's Athletics Student Nights University of Minnesota, Twin Cities**

The marketing and promotions unit at Minnesota implemented a promotion designed to attract the large student population on the Minnesota campus. The many forms of competing entertainment in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area pose a challenge for women's sports attempting to break through the "clutter" of available options.

The Women's Athletics Student Night is administered in all six of Minnesota's ticketed sports. Organizers established sponsorships focusing on student-oriented services and products (University Bookstores, Papa John's Pizza, Coca-Cola) to assist with student-oriented giveaways in women's volleyball, basketball and ice hockey (smaller nights were conducted for women's softball, gymnastics and soccer).

Here is how Student Night worked for women's volleyball:

- \* Student Night kits were sent to all residence-hall community advisors on campus. The kits consisted of volleyball posters, schedule cards and Student Night flyers that promoted all of the Student Night events.
- \* Organizers advertised in the Minnesota Daily, the student newspaper. The ad included a sign-up form and promoted all the giveaways and Student Night games.
- \* Student Night was promoted on all campus-area Papa John's pizza box tops two weeks before the event.
- \* All students with a Minnesota ID were admitted to the game for \$3.
- \* The first 100 students received free women's volleyball T-shirts.
- \* Students at the game entered to compete in the on-court promotion, "Who Wants to Win Free Books for a Semester?" -- a takeoff on the television quiz show "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?". University Bookstores provided a \$250 book scholarship for one semester. The name of one student was selected randomly, and that student was put in the "hot seat" at halfcourt between games. The announcer had a series of volleyball trivia questions. If the student answered the questions correctly, he or she won a prize. If the student answered all five questions correctly, he or she won the free books.

### **Interactive Sports Fair Princeton University**

**What:** An Interactive Sports Fair in conjunction with National Girls and Women in Sports Day to help fans learn more about women's sports.

**Who:** Families, especially women and girls.

**When:** Pregame (90 minutes before a women's basketball game or other women's varsity event).

**Where:** In the arena or in practice space adjacent to the arena.

**How:** Contact head coaches a month before the date of the event to find players to host interactive skill stations. Teams should inform the event representative about a week before the date of the event about what their station will require for spacing and equipment needs. Design space and event layout according to the needs of each team (for example, if a lacrosse team needs space or a tennis team needs a wall). Consider having a diagram at the event so each fan can find all stations easily.

On the day of the event, an athletics department representative should be present to direct teams to their specified location and assist with station set-up and identification. With the enthusiasm of the student-athletes, the event itself should run smoothly. Allow fans to mingle between the stations on their own. As game time approaches, event administrators should make an announcement that allows families to get to their seats before the start of the game.

**Results:** This type of activity allows youth in the community to learn something about each athletics program a school offers. It also give student-athletes an opportunity to be involved in community outreach and to build fan-athlete identification.

### **NCAA Men's Volleyball Championship Pennsylvania State University**

**Who:** The promotion was targeted toward Penn State students.

**What:** Two or three marketing representatives were assigned to sell sponsorships. A total of 175 all-session student tickets were given away at the semifinal and championship matches.

**How:** After acquiring approval from the NCAA, organizers presented four opportunities to local vendors so they could feel like a part of the championship. The Ace, Spike, Assist and Dig packages include the sponsorship of student tickets, along with tickets to the event and ads in the championship program. The arrangement was successful, resulting in a total of 175 sponsored student tickets. The first 175 students each night were to bring a receipt from one of the local businesses to get into the championship free.

**Results:** All sponsored tickets were given away both nights even though Penn State lost in the semifinals. The crowd exceeded the listed capacity of 5,400 both nights.

**Additional promotions:** In addition to the sponsored tickets, Penn State increased attendance at the Men's Volleyball Championship in the following ways.

- Organizers placed a magnetic NCAA volleyball logo with the telephone number for tickets on an attractive new car provided by a local auto dealer. The car was parked in visible areas, such as at baseball games and on College Avenue downtown.

- In November, organizers sent 700 letters to high-school boys' volleyball teams in Pennsylvania and neighboring states. The letters included a group ticket form.
- Fliers were distributed in the student union during finals week.
- Posters with ticket information were displayed at key sites.

### **Delta Fan of the Game**

#### **University of North Carolina, Wilmington**

During each home baseball game, organizers selected a "Fan of the Game" through random selection, winning a baseball bingo game, answering trivia questions or doing certain tricks. Those selected as "Fan of the Game" were recognized but didn't win anything. However, each fan automatically qualified for "Pack Your Bags Night." On "Pack Your Bags Night," each fan came to the ballpark with their bags packed for the weekend. Before the game, eligible contestants came on the field with their bags. A drawing then was conducted for the "Pack Your Bags Night" winner. A local representative from Delta Airlines drew the winning name. The winner left directly from the game to the airport and caught a Delta flight to Atlanta. The total package included round-trip airfare for two from Wilmington, North Carolina, to Atlanta; two nights accommodations at a Buckhead hotel; two tickets to a Braves baseball game; and \$50 in spending money. The promotion worked well and was very inexpensive. The airline tickets and baseball tickets were donated. The total cost was about \$200.

**Volleyball honorary captain  
Indiana University, Bloomington**

**Who:** This promotion was reserved for children under 12.

**What:** One child and an IU goody bag.

**When:** At each Big Ten Conference volleyball match.

**How:** During the nonconference portion of the home schedule, kids were invited to sign up to be an honorary captain at a future Big Ten match. The honorary captains were given free tickets for themselves and reserved courtside seats for their family. They also were given a goody bag upon arrival. The bag included an autographed team poster, schedule cards, stickers and an IU Credit Union seat cushion. Before the match, the honorary captain was introduced with the team on the court. Kids were selected randomly from the entries received and contacted by the IU sports marketing staff.

**Results:** Children loved this as they got a chance to be part of the team for a few minutes. Most kids loved the chance to run onto the court and be introduced. The families also enjoyed the event, and many photos were snapped by proud parents.

## **Junior reporter plan**

### **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

**Who:** Elementary and middle school sports enthusiasts with journalism aspirations.

**What:** An informational brochure for school teachers to pass out, press passes, media guides and roster sheets. Organizers can get those props from the sports information director. In this case, organizers printed copies of media guides from the Web site and prepared a set of game notes geared toward kids. They also checked with the head coach and the team's sports information director about holding postgame interviews and touring the press box. A soda and hot dog also were provided to each participating junior reporter.

**When:** Organizers had a pregame Q&A session with the coaches, provided in-game updates and then conducted postgame interviews.

**What sport:** Softball.

**How:** The Virginia Tech marketing office sent fliers/brochures (made in-house) to area English teachers inviting their kids to attend a select home softball game. Their students received a media guide, game-day notes, a game program, hot dog and soda, and a great seat to "cover" the game. Throughout the game, kids were taken to the press box to watch how the statistician/scoreboard operator worked, how the Internet live stats crew worked, how the PA worked and how the sports information director handled the flow of the game from a game-day standpoint. After the game, kids were invited to select a player to interview. The students then were encouraged to write a report and turn it in to their teachers. The best stories and students would be recognized at a future home game.

**Results:** It was the promotion's first year. Organizers say that in the future, they will provide students four or five dates from which to choose. They also will recruit English teachers, possibly through a coffee-and-doughnuts session. They also will try to tie the idea with a local newspaper so that kids can sign up through the newspaper to cover the game. The idea can be used for other sports, but the coaches and student-athletes must be receptive to the idea. Some sports may not be able to do this for a large number of kids.

## **B.U. Annual Chowderfest Boston University**

**Who:** This event targets students, faculty and staff, community, sponsors, alumni, kids and families.

**What:** (1) Promoters need restaurants to participate. Boston U. uses a clam-chowder theme because Boston is known for its great chowder. However, a school can use a signature food for its particular city or feature a variety of food samples and call it “Tastefest”; (2) tables and tablecloths; (3) electrical outlets for restaurants to keep food warm throughout the event; (4) a voting booth or table at which participants can select their favorite chowder (or other food); (5) a drink station; and (6) famous alumni or former athletes who are available to sign autographs.

**When:** Boston U.’s Chowderfest was a pregame event at men’s soccer games. At halftime, promoters announced the winning restaurant based on fans’ votes. This particular event was tied to a field dedication celebration and took place on homecoming weekend when parents and families were in town.

**How:** (1) Create a proposal for local restaurants to show how this promotion can benefit them. Permit them to hand out coupons, flyers, directions and other material to promote their business. Organizers either can pay the restaurants to participate or develop a trade-out agreement with them; (2) call area restaurants (especially those known for the specialty food involved) and present the proposal; (3) draw a site map of how the event is to be set up; (4) be prepared with extra helpers since the restaurants may be willing to provide the food but no servers; (5) follow up with restaurants on delivery time, how long to stay, the location of the event, etc., at least a week in advance so there is no misunderstanding; (6) be prepared with extra extension cords, plastic utensils, paper plates or bowls, plastic cups, napkins and trash bags; and (7) if a sound system is available, choose some “mood music” to play while people are sampling.

## **10-Millionth Fan University of New Mexico**

**Who:** All fans at any sport approaching a milestone attendance record. In this case, it was the 10-millionth fan for University of New Mexico men's basketball games.

**What's needed:** (1) One fan is chosen when walking through the door or gate; (2) prizes; (3) spirit squad and mascots; (4) media; (5) banner.

**When:** Pregame initially, then recognition at halftime.

**How:** New Mexico wanted to recognize the 10-millionth fan attending Lobo men's basketball games. Organizers sent a press release to all local media informing them that New Mexico would select the honorary 10-millionth fan during the final game of the 2002 season (when the university would reach the milestone) during pregame at a specific location and time. Once everybody was ready (media and marketing staff), organizers chose an honorary 10-millionth fan (since it would be too difficult to choose the exact fan -- in this case, the 13,453rd fan through the turnstiles). The fan was photographed, received balloons and was instructed to meet for recognition at halftime. During halftime, organizers brought the fan onto the court and gave him sweatshirts, T-shirts and hats while the spirit squad held up a banner that said "Thank you to all Lobo fans!" and "10-millionth Lobo men's basketball fan!" A short public address announcement recognized the fan and thanked all men's basketball fans through the years.

**Results:** The university received interest from local media, which greatly contributed to the success of the event. The local newspaper included a short story and photo of the honorary fan, and the event also was included on the local news that night.

## **Reading is Your Ticket** **Temple University**

**Who:** Kids and schools.

**What:** Any sport in which there is a need to build attendance and a relationship with the school system and the community.

**How:** Temple sends out a letter in the spring (football) and then in the fall (women's basketball) to Philadelphia school administrators letting them know that the "Reading is Your Ticket" program is available. Temple generally will provide tickets to any classroom that signs up, providing that the classroom puts together a reading program, either for the summer or the fall. The kids get the tickets if they complete the school-designed reading program.

**Results:** In its first year, the program was well-received by the participating schools. The challenge may be in developing continuity with a changing base of teachers and administrators from year to year.

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## **Blackbeards Family Fun Center Bulldog 500...Feet Fresno State**

The Bulldog 500 uses two go-carts provided by Blackbeards Family Fun Center. The event takes place between the foul poles at the Fresno State baseball stadium. Each car “represents” one-half of the fans, giving them a chance to win various prizes from Blackbeards Family Fun Center. Insurance requires that only employees of Fresno State can drive the cars, so different “marquee match-ups” among coaches, administrators, faculty and staff are used to generate excitement. Included are races between men’s and women’s head coaches, those involving the school mascot, and those between the athletics director and the university president.

The promotion provides the institution with the opportunity to promote all of its sports in a fan-friendly way that sparks the interest of the general population.

## **Student Slam-Dunk Contest Northwestern University**

**What:** A Student Slam-Dunk Contest, a halftime contest that allows the school to identify basketball fanatics among the student body. The fanatics can in turn create a buzz on campus among their friends and classmates.

**Who:** The primary target was Northwestern students; a secondary target was basketball fans in the Chicago area.

**When:** Halftime of a basketball game.

**How:** A few weeks before the contest, organizers held preliminary tryouts on campus to identify the five best dunkers. The names of those five then were used in advertisements (student newspaper, e-mail, flyers, public address announcements, game-day information sheets passed out to students) to increase the excitement among their friends and classmates. Celebrity judges -- in this case, a former Northwestern football player, the university president and a former Chicago Bears football player -- scored the dunks. A preliminary round narrowed the contestants to the top three for a final round.

**Results:** The fans enjoyed the Slam-Dunk Contest so much that few of them left their seats before the contest was finished. The contestants brought their own cheering sections, so the crowd was vocal as the students showed off their best dunks.

## **Future Irish University of Notre Dame**

Local elementary and middle schools (private and public) were contacted during August through letters and promotional flyers. All schools were presented with an opportunity to choose one home volleyball match to attend for free. Children and chaperones were asked to arrive one hour before the start of the match. Tickets were held for attendees at will-call, and a marketing representative met the group upon arrival. All children attending the Future Irish program received the following: a certificate of promotion (signed by the coach), a special pass to the concession stand, a greeting by two or three volleyball players before the match, a schedule poster and schedule magnet, the featured giveaway item of the match, and the opportunity to take part in a postgame autograph session with the team. The group leader also received a packet with 10 to 15 Notre Dame items (T-shirts, mini-volleyballs, etc.) for the purpose of raffling them off to students before the start of the match. Throughout the season, the number of Future Irish participants ranged from 30 to 200 a match, helping to enhance the atmosphere.

## **Dunkin' Donuts Munchkin Slamfest Monmouth University**

**Who:** Kids 5 years old and under.

**What:** Fisher Price youth basketball hoop and ball, kids' T-shirts with your mascot dunking a basketball on one side and a corporate logo on the back with promotion name and sponsor information.

**When:** During a media timeout of men's and women's basketball games. The promotion takes about 60 seconds.

**How:** Select a youngster to complete two dunks. Put the basket at halfcourt and have the contestant start from the top of the three-point arc. At Monmouth, two ball boys hold the sign displaying sponsor information and the promotion name, "Dunkin' Donuts Munchkin Slamfest." After the second dunk, the PA announcer says if the participant gets a standing ovation from the crowd, he or she wins a box of Dunkin' Donut munchkins.

**Results:** It has been a fan favorite. It gets people out of their seats to give a "standing O" to a little kid, which creates smiles for the kid and the nearby parents. It's also fun to see the kids try to top each other game-to-game with different dunks. If the target crowd is a young family market, the promotion is perfect.

## **Athletics and Traditions at Freshman Orientation Purdue University**

**Who:** Incoming freshman students.

**What:** Athletics and traditions during freshman orientation.

**When:** One hour during the five-day orientation before the start of classes.

**Where:** Any place that can comfortably hold 4,000 participants. It has been held at Rose Ade Stadium, Mackey Arena, in the Hall of Music and at Slayter Hill (an outdoor concert facility).

**How:** Organizers work with the directors of Boiler Gold Rush (freshman orientation) to arrange a time during the program for the staff to introduce the freshmen to athletics and the traditions of Purdue University. The band, mascots, cheerleaders, coaches and athletes all participate in the presentation. A trivia game show features six contestants. Each person is asked one question. If they get it right, they get a T-shirt. If they get it wrong, celebrity “judges” (coaches) squirt them with water guns. After each question, each answer is explained. Two coaches speak to the freshmen about the importance of fan participation. Coaches also throw out T-shirts to the students to get them fired up before and after their speeches. All coaches are asked to have at least one student-athlete from each sport give a 30-second synopsis about their sport. Each student-athlete is provided with something to give away or throw into the crowd.

**Results:** The event has become a huge success for Purdue athletics. Many student interns volunteer to help with Boiler Gold Rush and therefore are able to get students excited before they come to the event. Organizers receive e-mails and calls from incoming freshmen and Boiler Gold Rush volunteers about how much they enjoy seeing the coaches and student-athletes. With 4,000 participants, it is a great way to teach incoming freshmen about the athletics department and all of the sports that Purdue offers.

## **Stocking Stuffer Special George Mason University**

George Mason used an automated telemarketing company to send a message (in italics below) from its basketball coach on the Monday before Thanksgiving. The time of year was important because organizers thought people would have shopping and Christmas gift buying on their minds with the busiest shopping day of the year coming up.

Organizers also sent a direct mail piece to the same list that arrived on the Friday after Thanksgiving so they could read more details about the promotion. The target group was fans who did not hold season tickets.

The message from the coach:

*“Hi, this is head coach Jim Larranaga from the George Mason University men’s basketball team. Here is a special offer to catch exciting Patriots basketball: It’s three games for free! No, we’re not kidding. We just want to show you what a thrilling experience GMU basketball is. Look for the “Be a Patriot” season ticket flyer in your mail that explains how you can get a free Coleman water jug and a three-game season ticket by calling 703/993-3270. It’s a great deal. Here is how it works. Call and ask for the Coach L Stocking Stuffer Special and get a free three-game season ticket when you purchase one. It’s that easy. Some come out and “Be a Patriot” by calling 703/993-3270 and tell them Coach L sent you. Good for new orders only and while supplies last.”*

The rate for connected calls was 18 cents each.

**Fill Up and Pump Up**  
**Western Kentucky University**

**Who:** Local community.

**What:** Single-game tickets.

**When:** One game per season.

**What sports:** Football and men's basketball.

**How:** The promotion involved Junior Foods convenience stores, Western Kentucky athletics and the Big Red Radio Network. Junior Foods bought the promotion as a sponsorship and received 8,000 general admission tickets to one home football game and 2,000 general admission tickets to one men's home basketball game at the group-rate price. The Big Red Radio Network advertised the promotion throughout the region the week before the games. During the week, customers who bought eight or more gallons of gas at any Junior Foods location received a free game ticket.

**Results:** Organizers said it was a win-win situation. The promotion drove traffic to Junior Foods convenience stores and Western Kentucky athletics events. Junior Foods distributed all 8,000 tickets for the football games and all 2,000 tickets for the basketball game. The promotion also resulted in increased gate sales because fans received only one free ticket per gasoline fill-up.

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### **Big Foot, Big Shot Temple University**

**Who:** Kids about 5 to 8 years old.

**What you need:** An oversize basketball uniform (shirt and shorts), oversize shoes (about size 18) and a basketball.

**When:** During a media timeout or at halftime of basketball games.

**How:** The contestant is at one baseline. The uniform, shoes and basketball are at midcourt. With 45 to 60 seconds on the shot clock or scoreboard, the contestant must run to midcourt, get dressed in the oversized gear and dribble the ball to the other basket. If the contestant makes the basket, he or she wins a Temple/Sponsor Prize Pack.

**Results:** The promotion is not necessarily unique, but it consistently draws the biggest fan reaction. It generally comes down to the last second, and the crowd generally is pulling hard for the contestant.

## **Baseball direct marketing Wichita State University**

**Who:** Boosters, individual game-ticket purchasers, sponsors without baseball season tickets, faculty and staff.

**What:** Direct dial marketing.

**When:** Mid-February, at the start of college baseball season.

**How:** Wichita State coach Gene Stephenson recorded a scripted message that mentioned several of the season's selling points (for example, a high national ranking). The message then was given to NVS Interactive Media, along with a database of telephone numbers of fans, boosters, previous season ticket holders who had not renewed, season ticket holders in other sports, and so on. The idea is for the message to be left on the fan's voice mail or answering machine, so the calls were made at a time when most of the target group would not be at home or at the office. If a fan purchased season tickets and mentioned the message from Stephenson, he or she won a free pizza and a Shocker hat.

**Results:** The season ticket promotion was a new and unique strategy that worked well. However, timing and planning are important on a promotion such as this one. First, there were problems in coordinating schedules, so the calls were made just before the first home series; ideally, the calls would have been made somewhat earlier. Second, organizers had a problem with calls made to on-campus faculty and staff. The telemarketing service can call up to 20,000 numbers in an hour. Because all campus numbers were called at about the same time, it caused problems with the university's voice-mail system. The organizers learned from the problems and plan on using the approach for other campaigns.

## **Halloween Hoop-La Northwestern University**

**Who:** The primary target is Northwestern students.

**What:** Since Northwestern does not have a Midnight Madness event for its basketball teams, it decided to do a smaller preseason event during a practice on Halloween. The athletics department invited Northwestern students to attend a scrimmage, which was followed by an interactive session with players and coaches. Coach Bill Carmody selected five students and taught them to run his favorite offensive plays. Organizers also conducted a three-point contest that involved students teaming up with men's basketball players. The band and cheerleaders also performed, and the women's basketball team appeared to introduce itself to the men's fans that were on hand. All students attending received a free T-shirt, pizza, soda and schedule cups filled with Halloween candy and snacks.

**When:** Men's basketball practice on Halloween.

**How:** The event was conducted in an on-campus facility instead of the basketball arena, which is about a mile from campus. It was publicized in the student newspaper, flyers on campus, public address announcements at football games, flyers at football games and through e-mail.

**Results:** Organizers were pleased with the turnout. Students took the opportunity to get to know the players and coaches, which helped increase excitement for the men's basketball team for the next season.

## **A Night of Excellence**

### **University of California, Irvine**

**Who:** Middle school students from the surrounding area who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement were presented with certificates of academic achievement.

**When:** Students were presented with the certificates at a basketball game during halftime of basketball games and brought on to the court. An announcement was made to acknowledge their outstanding academic accomplishments. Evening weekend games seemed to work best for the families and faculties of the honorees.

**How:** The athletics staff contacted school district offices to inform them about the program and to let them know they would be invited as well. The staff then drafted a general information letter and promotion flyer and sent those to the participating schools. Since it was the first year, organizers started small and invited only three nearby school districts, which had a total of 10 middle schools. The top 10 students from each school then were invited, with each school selecting the honorees based on grades and school involvement.

UC Irvine then sent general congratulatory letters to the schools. The selected students were given three ticket vouchers, which could be used the night of the event for the basketball game. The students were asked to RSVP two weeks before the event so they could have their name printed on the certificates. General certificates also were made available for late or non-responders.

On the night of the event, students reported to a check-in table, where they were given more details about where to meet before halftime. At halftime, they walked on to the court to receive their certificate.

**Results:** Of the 100 students who were notified, 60 showed up and received their certificate. UC Irvine plans to repeat the promotion this year and include more school districts.

## **Women's Football Clinic University of New Mexico**

**Who:** The target group is women age 21 and over.

**Goals:** To increase opportunities for underprivileged youth, to get women more interested in football and to promote general education about football.

**What is needed:** Female participants, football coaching staff assistance, football field access, football information packets, football equipment, space for a reception and refreshments.

**When:** August, to promote the approaching season.

**Where:** The football stadium and a nearby pavilion for a reception.

**How:** The clinic is \$15 per woman, with all proceeds going directly to New Mexico's "Send-A-Kid Program," which purchases season tickets for underprivileged youth in the Albuquerque area.

The athletics staff finds participants and sends renewal or prospect letters. The prospect list consists of women in business from the Albuquerque Women in Business directory, Lobo Club members and corporate sponsors.

The marketing staff sets up the event, which begins with dinner, beverages and a short welcome speech from the director of marketing, who explains the Send-A-Kid Program. A guest speaker from one of the Send-A-Kid recipient agencies then thanks the women for contributing to the program.

After dinner and speakers, the women tour the facilities, including the athletic training room, the weight room and the locker room. The head football coach gives a speech in the locker room and answers questions for about 10 minutes. The women then divide into their respective clinic groups -- on-field or classroom, beginner or advanced.

The football staff runs the clinic. The on-field clinic allows women to get on the field and use practice equipment (tackling dummies, pads, shields, etc.). The classroom clinic is a Football 101 class, in which women hear about different plays and strategies.

**Results:** This was the eighth year of the clinic, but the first year of the "on-field" clinic. The women enjoyed the event and liked being able to get on the field with the coaches. The event has become well-known with callers now inquiring annually about when it will be conducted. The age range of the participants has been from 25 to 72.

## **'Maize Rage' Beach Day**

### **University of Michigan**

**Game:** Basketball.

**Objective:** Faced with an 11 a.m. start against a low-profile opponent, the athletics department wanted to create a party atmosphere for the student section to stimulate attendance and enthusiasm from the beginning of the game.

**Promotion:** The 12 "best-dressed" students were selected from the "Maize Rage" student section to participate in a halftime limbo contest. Students were judged on their creative beach attire, which was required to include the student section's official "Maize Rage" T-shirt. The winner of the limbo contest received two free airline tickets for spring break.

**Execution:** The athletics department sent an e-mail to student season ticket holders challenging them to be the best-dressed Beach Day fan and informing them of the contest. One thousand Hawaiian leis were distributed to fans before tip-off. Staff selected 12 competitors out of the crowd to participate in the halftime limbo contest, which was accompanied by beach theme music and inflatable palm trees.

**Evaluation:** The contest gave students a reason to come to the morning game early and prepared. The rest of the crowd was energized by the students' enthusiasm. Since the event, students have been independently submitting their ideas for follow-up theme games.

## **Great American Paper Airplane Toss Winthrop University**

**Who:** Everyone in attendance.

**What:** An automobile and paper airplanes.

**When:** Halftime of a basketball game.

**How:** Get a car dealership to put up a car as a prize and to cover the insurance of the contest. Display the car at some of the games before the target date. Give everyone who comes through the door piece of paper that can be made into an airplane. Drive the car under a goal and put a trash can on the floor so that people from all sides of the coliseum can participate. Give them a countdown and watch the paper airplanes fly. Fans put their names on the airplanes; if one goes in the trash can (or some other small target), the fan wins the car.

**Results:** Winthrop has conducted the contest for six years, and it has become a community and student favorite. A large advertisement in the local newspaper touts the contest; the car dealership also promotes it to customers the week of the contest.

## **Kids Bounce Challenge** **Oregon State University**

**Who:** The target audience is all fans attending a basketball game.

**When:** The Kids Bounce Challenge can be conducted during any timeout.

**What:** Two or three participants between the ages of 5 and 8 are needed, along with two or three fun hop balls (about \$11 each), different colored T-shirts that represent the different sides of the stadium and prizes to throw out to the fans (T-shirts, miniature basketballs).

**How:** The promotion is easy to set up.

- \* Select two or three kids.
- \* Each kid represents one side of the stadium. The T-shirts help distinguish them.
- \* The public address announcer lets the crowd know which kids represent which sides of the stadium.
- \* The kids race down the floor on the balls. The first one who makes it down the floor wins, and that side of the stadium gets the prizes thrown to them by the cheerleaders.

**Results:** The fans enjoy the contest, and the kids often are unpredictable, which makes the contest fun to watch.

## **T-4-3 T-Shirts**

### **Kansas State University**

**What:** T-shirts for three-pointers.

**When:** During a game.

**What sport:** Basketball.

**How:** Two seasons ago, the Kansas State athletics department started the “T-4-3” T-shirt concept. During each home game, three T-shirts were thrown into the crowd by the cheerleading squad after every Wildcats three-pointer. In the beginning, it was solely a women’s promotion, but over the past season, it was expanded to men. To pay for the T-shirts, the athletics department solicited local sponsors and placed their logos on the back of every shirt.

**Results:** The fan reaction was outstanding. After a few games, fans became accustomed to the T-shirt distribution and would automatically get on their feet, screaming for a shirt. Even the broadcasting radio station picked up on the atmosphere “jolt” and stated talking about T-shirts being tossed into the crowd. As a result, T-4-3 shirts can be seen throughout Manhattan. Sponsors already are calling with inquiries about next season.

**Charo Chicken Dance**  
**University of California, Irvine**

**Who:** UC Irvine baseball games and Charo Chicken Restaurant.

**What's needed:** A videotron board, Chicken Dance music and gift certificates.

**How:** Between the designated innings, the public address announcer says it is time for the Charo Chicken Dance. The Chicken Dance music then begins; the fan doing the best chicken dance wins a \$15 gift certificate from the restaurant. Some participants are shown on the videotron scoreboard. A marketing representative determined the winner.

**Results:** The promotion was the most interactive of all baseball promotions. Almost everybody likes to do the Chicken Dance, so many people participate and have a great laugh.

## **Ring it from Half Court The Citadel**

Before every Citadel home basketball game, a student ticket is drawn for a cadet to participate in the “Ring it from Half Court Shootout.” At the beginning of halftime, the lucky cadet gets a chance to hit a half-court shot to win his Citadel class ring. The promotion is a big hit with cadets because it saves them the cost of purchasing the class ring. If they already have purchased a ring, they are provided with a refund. What makes the promotion so popular is that The Citadel class ring is the crowning achievement of a cadet’s career.

## **Between-inning promotions**

### **Georgia Institute of Technology**

**Who:** Students and adults.

**Needs:** One contestant, one car tire, long measuring tape.

**How:** The contestant gets one chance to see how far he or she can roll a tire. The promotion is done at every game, and at the end of the season, the longest roll wins a new set of tires from Costco.

**Results:** The promotion has gained a good following. The crowd becomes excited on long rolls and boos the short ones. Players shout “rolling suggestions” from the dugout.

### **The Delta Derby**

**Who:** Any fans.

**Needs:** Four contestants, four corrugated “horses” on wooden poles, four runners.

**How:** Four contestants are seated on the field in front of the dugout, and each is assigned a horse. Four volunteers race the horses around the outfield wall. The contestant with the winning horse receives two round-trip tickets on Delta Airlines.

**Results:** The event is a longtime fan favorite. The horses always “jockey” for position up to the end of the race, which keeps the crowd involved. One or two horses always hit a light pole or start running backward to make it interesting.

### **Friday Night ‘80s**

**Who:** Any fans.

**Needs:** Entry sheets, 1980s music.

**How:** Fans are given Friday Night ‘80s entry sheets upon entering the park. After the bottom of the seventh inning, an ‘80s song is played. Fans fill out the song title and artist on their sheets and turn them in after seven songs are played. A winner is drawn from the correct entries. With the addition of a video board this year, promoters also added clips from ‘80s movies.

## **Big Hawk/Little Hawk Quincy University**

The Quincy Big Hawk/Little Hawk program pairs football players with youngsters in Quincy-area schools. The program involves football players in the community as they help in elementary schools. "There's always something for them to do," said Kelle Bunch, principal of St. Boniface Elementary School. "Even the custodians take advantage of their visits, asking the young men to set up tables for bingo or move heavy equipment. They spend time with the teachers in the classroom to help with whatever they need."

Offensive lineman Ivan Taylor said he talks with the pupils about staying in school and reaching their dreams. "I have a little brother at home in the sixth grade," he said. "I happen to be with the sixth-grade class this year, so it is kind of touching for me. It reminds me of home."

The children are enthusiastic about the extra attention. "I like them," said fifth-grader Scott Sass. "They are really cool and they hang out with us. I love it when these guys come."

**Crunch Time**  
**Western Carolina University**

**When:** Timeouts.

**Events:** Football, men's and women's basketball games.

**How:** At a timeout in the second half of the game, cheerleaders run around the stands with a 10-pound Nestle Crunch Bar, trying to get the fans to stand up and make noise. The loudest and rowdiest fan wins the 10 pounds of chocolate. Mini Nestle Crunch Bars and T-shirts also are thrown into the crowd during Crunch Time.

**Results:** This promotion has been one of the most popular at Western Carolina football and basketball games. The fans even know when Crunch Time is coming and have made signs to attract the cheerleaders attention. The promotion also gets fans up and making noise, which pumps the team up.

## **Beaver Fun Run**

### **Oregon State University**

**Race information:** The spring football game starts with a “Countdown to Kickoff” 10K and 5K race/walk. As participants near the finish line into Reser Stadium, cheerleaders root them on as they finish down the players’ ramp, through the inflatable football helmet and are pictured on the stadium Jumbotron. They cross the finish line while the band plays the school fight song and are pictured with the Oregon State mascot, Benny the Beaver. Fans then take part of a day full of festivities, culminating with the spring game.

**Location/course:** The race/walk is conducted on a flat loop course around the campus. A 1,000-meter race is conducted inside Reser Stadium for kids 12 and under.

**Results:** The Beaver Fun Run was conducted for the third time in 2002 and has grown from 150 runners to 500 runners.

## **VIP Autograph Session and Meet-the-Coach Event Northwestern University**

**What:** This first-time invitation-only event featured several players and coaches on hand to sign autographs, picture opportunities with the mascot and cheerleaders, free soft drinks and appetizers, the opportunity to complete a season-ticket-holder survey, and a chance to register for a \$10,000 field-goal kick. The Northwestern head football coach wrapped up the event with an address to the crowd and a question-and-answer session.

**When:** The 90-minute event was conducted the morning of the spring football game.

**Where:** It was held in the basketball arena, which is adjacent to the football stadium. The giveaways and surveys were set up in the lobby, with player and coach autograph stations on the court. Attendees then were directed to lower-level seats on one side of the arena, where they were addressed by the coach.

**How:** Major steps included identifying an appropriate start time based on the availability of the players and coaches. Invitations (e-mails and postcards) were sent to all season-ticket holders. Other challenges included laying out the arena, securing product and sponsor involvement, developing a survey and developing appropriate signage.

**Results:** Organizers were pleased with the results, attendance and feedback. Several hundred season-ticket holders attended. “We have made it a top objective to add more value and incentives to being a season-ticket holder,” Boyer said, “and exclusive events will become a more frequent occurrence.”

## **Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge**

### **University of Iowa**

**Who:** Members of the men's basketball student support group, the Hawk's Nest, were targeted to participate in the Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge.

**What:** Necessary items include two pogo balls, pizza boxes and two contestants.

**When:** The event was conducted during a media timeout in the first half.

**Where:** The promotion was executed at both men's and women's basketball games. However, it easily could be used with other sports.

**How:** Before game time, two contestants were selected and instructed to meet an Iowa sports marketing representative before the media timeout. The marketing staff set up two rows of pizza boxes at the foul line, midcourt and opposite foul line. Participants were instructed to weave in and out as they bounced on the pogo ball down the court. The arena was divided into halves, with each contestant representing his side of the arena. The winner of the Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge received a large pizza, and the other contestant received an order of bread sticks. A selected section and row of the winning side also received gift certificates for free breadsticks.

**Results:** The Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge had many fans laughing and cheering as their representatives bounced down the court. The promotion went over best when the contestants helped get the crowd into the contest.

## **Sumo Basketball**

### **Arizona State University**

**What is needed:** Two sumo wrestling suits, two basketballs, two participants.

**When:** Halftime of a basketball game.

**How:** Pick two students from the student section. Focus on the students who look the most spirited and bring them down to the court about five minutes before halftime. Explain the game to them and put them in the sumo suits. Make sure you have extra help because if the participants fall, it will take two people to get them up.

**Object of the game:** Have each contestant at a different basket. The object is to make a layup, then run to half-court, put the ball down, spin around a bat 10 times, pick the ball back up and run to the other basket and make a layup. The first person to complete all of the requirements wins.

**Results:** The student section had a great time with the promotion and requested it for all games. The result was higher numbers in the student section.

## **Cat Caravans**

### **Kansas State University**

**Who:** The promotion was targeted at potential season-ticket holders for women's basketball.

**How:** In the preseason, members of the athletics department traveled to towns near Manhattan to provide on-site ticket sales. To do this, a pep-rally atmosphere was created by inviting the team, coaching staff and cheerleaders to join in the caravan. Team members and the coaching staff spoke about the upcoming season and much-needed fan support, which created a prime ticket-selling atmosphere. Pompoms were distributed, along with "Powercat" tattoos, schedule posters, schedule cards and raffle tickets for an autographed ball.

After the meal and team introductions, tables were set up at which fans could purchase their season tickets and other ticket packages. The response, along with the accompanying attendance increase, was outstanding.

**Results:** Season ticket sales were the highest in Kansas State women's basketball history. Three games sold out, and overall attendance set a record.

## **Elementary School Days**

### **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

To further promote two Olympic sports, Virginia Tech tapped the target audience of the local elementary school system.

During the fall, Virginia Tech offered physical education teachers the opportunity to have the Hokies' cross country team visit their schools and discuss the importance of physical fitness, good sportsmanship and proper nutrition while also describing cross country. After the lesson, the kids were taken to a makeshift cross country course where they were given posters and pompoms before an actual varsity race. Sitting in strategic spots, they cheered the Virginia Tech team to a successful race. The Hokies then signed autographs.

The same promotion was conducted in the spring for the women's lacrosse team, which visited two elementary schools and discussed the history of the sport and the fundamentals of the game. Brief sessions were conducted on passing, shooting and running with the ball. Later that week, the two schools bused their classes to a Virginia Tech home game. There, the kids received free pompoms, stickers and posters, and some even practiced their new lacrosse skills in a halftime relay contest. The event was successful and will be repeated in future years.

**Girl Scout night**  
**University of Oregon**

During a women's volleyball match and a women's basketball game, local Girl Scout troops were invited to attend a match or game at a discounted price. Flyers were sent to all troops in the area specifying the date and time of the event, as well as where tickets could be purchased. Presenting the flyer at the time of purchase allowed troop members a discounted price of \$3 per general admission ticket.

The flyer also specified a chance for those who brought the best banner to win a pizza party courtesy of Papa John's. Troops were judged by the marketing staff and were encouraged to wave the banners during a timeout or during a critical point of the game or match.

The promotion has been a huge success with area Girl Scout troops. About 60 flyers were redeemed for volleyball and 700 were redeemed for basketball.

## **Read to Win**

### **University of Nebraska, Lincoln**

The Nebraska women's basketball team and the department of athletics marketing offered local elementary schools the opportunity to be a part of the "Read to Win" program, which successfully reached 15,000 elementary students who read more than seven million pages. The Nebraska athletics department offered the program to all Lincoln area elementary schools in an effort to promote reading to kindergarten-level to sixth-grade students.

The Nebraska women's basketball team encouraged children to read as much as possible during October. Every school received a video featuring coach Paul Sanderford and several women's basketball players who explained details of the program. The video was shown before the program to students and faculty. It explained the contest rules and got them excited about the program.

The rules provided that parents could read to young children and to children who needed special assistance. Children recorded the number of pages they read and worked to get prizes. The marketing staff scheduled an assembly for each school in which members from the women's basketball team and coaching staff talked to students in a 30-minute program.

Those who participated received a Nebraska women's basketball poster and bookmark featuring the women's basketball schedule. Everyone in kindergarten through third grade who read 100 or more pages and those fourth through sixth grade who read 200 or more pages received a certificate. The most prolific reader in each classroom received two tickets to a women's basketball game. The most prolific reader in each grade in all of the participating Lincoln schools was recognized at a women's basketball game and received two season tickets to the remaining home games and a prize from Barnes & Noble.

The most prolific reader overall received recognition at a women's basketball game, two season tickets to the remaining home games and a prize from Barnes & Noble. The winner also received a basketball autographed by the women's basketball team. The elementary school whose combined students read the most pages received two tickets per student to a women's basketball game. Also, the entire women's basketball team, coaching staff and Li'l Red (the mascot) went to the elementary school for a pep rally.

## **Greek Attendance Contest High Point University**

**How to win:** The fraternity and sorority with the highest percentage of its members attending men's and women's basketball games wins the grand prize.

**Rules:** Each organization member must present an ID card and sign in at the beginning of the game. To be eligible, the participant is required to arrive no later than 15 minutes after the listed start time of the game. At the end of the game, the participant must check out at the same location to get credit for attendance.

**Bonus points:** Bonus points are provided for place finishes for competitions conducted at the designated games. The competitions include the "Who's Got the Most Spirit Contest" (most spirit, most dressed in letters, most encouraging to the team), "Three-Point Shooting Contest" (make as many shots as possible from behind the three-point line in 30 seconds), "Dizzy Bat Contest" (spin around a baseball bat six times at one baseline and then run to the other end to make a layup), "Banner Contest" (fraternity or sorority banner, judged on spirit and creativity) and "Crab Crawl Contest" (participants crab crawl to the hoop from center court with a basketball in their lap and make a lay up).

**Point system:** After the game, each fraternity and sorority is ranked based on the percentage of its members who attended the game. First place receives 100 points, second place 75, third place 50 and fourth place 25. The winning fraternity or sorority receives 25 points.

**Winner:** The fraternity or sorority with the most points at the end of the season wins \$250.

## **The Great Spring Tailgate East Carolina University**

The promotion centered on East Carolina's nationally ranked baseball team during a three-game series late in the season. Two sponsors were secured to cover all costs associated with the event -- a television station that promoted the event and another sponsor that provided \$30,000 of commercial airtime during the month preceding the event. The idea was for fans to attend a baseball game and have a tailgate experience similar to what they would experience at an East Carolina football game.

Events: Day One -- Golf tournament (12:30 p.m.) and game 1 of the three-game series (7 p.m.); Day Two -- Live band (3:30 p.m.), barbecue served (4 p.m.), baseball letter-winners tailgate (4:30 p.m.), mascot birthday party, with cheerleaders (for children, 5 p.m.), game 2 of three-game series (7 p.m.), postgame fireworks (9:45 p.m., approximately); Day Three -- Game 3 of the three-game series.

**Results:** The event was successful in its first year. About 400 game tickets and 300 barbecue tickets were sold before the event on Saturday, and game attendance on Saturday was 2,800. Attendance for the weekend series was 5,655.

## **Mini Stress Volleyball Giveaway and Name that Tune Contest Ohio State University**

**Promotion:** A total of 500 mini stress volleyballs, imprinted with the Ohio State logo, were distributed to fans at a Buckeyes volleyball game. In conjunction with the giveaway, the promotion staff designed a “Name that Tune” contest that offered spectators the chance to win a variety of prizes.

**Description:** The women’s volleyball promotional calendar was mailed, faxed and otherwise distributed to Ohio high-school and middle school volleyball programs and to Ohio State students. The public was made aware of the upcoming promotions through advertising. Upon entrance to the match, fans were given a mini stress volleyball, each packaged individually. Before the match, the marketing staff affixed to the wrapper a label detailing information about the match promotion and the “Name that Tune” contest. A small number of labels notified recipients that they were instant winners of a volleyball autographed by the Ohio State team. Other labels qualified 10 fans for participation in an intermission contest with a chance to win a DVD player. The remaining labels described the “Name that Tune” contest, which involved the marketing staff playing music by certain artists throughout the match; if the name of the song matched the artist on the wrapper, the fan received a free Buckeye volleyball T-shirt.

**Results:** The promotion was designed to increase attendance while giving fans opportunities to participate in contests, and it was successful in both regards. The mini stress volleyballs were especially popular.

## **Jenny Eller Blood Drive Challenge Fresno State**

**Description:** The Fresno State Bulldog Diamond was transformed into a blood-donation site during a day of practice for the Bulldogs' softball team. Those who came to the Diamond to donate blood received a T-shirt, a free lunch, a voucher worth \$2 off any ticket for any remaining home softball game and permission to watch the team practice that afternoon. Donors also received the opportunity to meet the Bulldogs after practice for an autograph session. (The drive was named after a local high-school player who died of leukemia in 1995. Fresno State was among many programs who were recruiting Eller.)

**Results:** The challenge issued by coach Margie Wright and her players yielded 55 donors, which benefited about 165 people across California.

## **Kids Take Over the Park Rice University**

This promotion was named Collegiate Baseball's "Promotion of the Year" after it attracted nearly 200 children in its first year.

Children and parents alike responded enthusiastically to this promotion. It was not costly, although it did require patience among the staff and organization on the part of the marketing team.

Children 14 and under were given the opportunity to "take over the park" as each child was assigned a duty to perform during a half-inning at a Rice baseball game. Forms were created and made available at the baseball park souvenir shop for children to indicate their preference of duties. They chose from among the following: field preparation, music, program sales, helping with the radio broadcast, singing the national anthem, staffing the souvenir shop, serving as ushers, leading the seventh-inning stretch, measuring pitch speed, public address, scoreboard operation, statistics and taking tickets.

Because of the lighter demand in the first year, Rice gave the children six weeks to turn in the forms with their preferences. The next year, it was first-come, first-served. The children were notified by mail, and then by phone, of their duties and time slot two weeks before game day. Selected children were required to RSVP to the notice.

Participating children met one hour before the start of the game. Each participant was given a name tag that included his or her name, duty and time slot. The sponsor also provided each child with an "I Took Over Reckling Park" T-shirt.

The children and/or parents were instructed to meet the marketing department representative one-half inning before their assigned time slot at a specified place. The children then waited in a suite (or a specified secure area) with snacks and beverages (providing the children with snacks is a tradeoff for them being in the right place, in the right time and being well-behaved). Between each inning, the children then went on duty and, with the guidance of a full-time employee, performed the specific duty.

## **Hawaiian Night/Aloha Saturday University of Colorado, Boulder**

In an attempt to create more excitement at home volleyball matches, every Saturday home match for the Colorado women's volleyball team was designated as Hawaiian Night. The idea stemmed from the attire for each match worn by Buffalo head coach Pi'i Aiu, a Hawaii native. All advertising for those matches called for fans to come in their Aloha shirts and other Hawaiian-like paraphernalia. Coaches, managers, athletics department staff, parents, press row workers, ball shaggers and the mascot Chip all participated and urged the fans to join in.

Advertising for the matches had a Hawaiian theme -- flyers for campus and local youth and community organizations, newspaper ads, BuffVision spots, and press releases. In-game activities centered on the Hawaiian theme as well. Colorado volleyball T-shirts with Hawaiian art were created and given to the first 300 fans at early season matches. They also were thrown into the crowd between games at every match and used as prizes for contests.

Those contests included hula-hooping, limbo contests and Hawaiian serving contests, in which participants tried to serve the volleyball over the net and into a baby pool. Hawaiian music was played over the arena audio system and the dance team performed to surfer/beach style music.

The promotion created a more exciting atmosphere in the Coors Event/Conference Center and proved to be popular with fans.

## **Shirt Off Your Back Day** **Arizona State University**

**Concept:** Arizona State baseball raffles off jerseys that the team no longer uses on a regular basis. The team and coaches wear the jerseys for the last regular-season game and autograph the jerseys for raffle winners directly after the game. Raffle winners have the opportunity to meet the players when they receive the jerseys. The promotion not only fosters fan relations but also raises money to benefit the athletics program.

**Promotion:** Beginning about eight games before the last regular-season home game, raffle tickets are available for fans to purchase (\$5 per ticket or \$20 for five tickets). The number of tickets that can be purchased is not limited. Information about the raffle drawing is posted in the same location where tickets are purchased. The display is further enhanced by displaying an example of the actual jersey.

On the day of the raffle, several winning numbers are randomly drawn and announced over the public address system at every half-inning break until all 29 jerseys (25 players and four coaches) have been won. Winners then present their winning raffle ticket to the marketing information booth at the entrance to the stadium and are presented with a coupon naming the player or coach whose jersey has been won. After the game, those with coupons are allowed onto the playing field to meet the players and receive the autographed jersey.

## **Home Run Derby with the Football Team Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

With the Virginia Tech football team earning national recognition in recent years, players are especially revered in the small community of Blacksburg and the surrounding area.

In an effort to promote the softball team, several members of the football team were asked to participate in a "Home Run Derby" similar to the program seen on television. Several members of the football team expressed the ease with which they planned to drive the softball out of the park; others proclaimed a total lack of softball skills. In either case, the softball assistant coach, a former professional player, offered to pitch to the football players.

The event was publicized on two local radio stations with softball players making guest appearances on a morning show and on a sports-talk station. On the day of the doubleheader, about 500 fans enjoyed two Virginia Tech wins and stayed for the postgame festivities. Round One featured the assistant coach blazing fastballs past the helpless players. Round two featured slower pitching and numerous tape measure shots by the football players that the fans truly enjoyed.

All told, the event promoted the softball games that day while also giving the football team a new respect for women's athletics -- particularly Hokie softball.

## **Gummy Worm Squirm Northwestern University**

Four children are needed for this contest. Each contestant represents a different side of the basketball arena. Winners take home great prizes, and they also win prizes (gummy worms) for everybody on their side of the arena.

The public address announcer introduces the contestants to let each side know which child it should cheer for during the contest. Contestants also are given T-shirts that tell the crowd which side they are representing.

The contestants take their place in one of the four corners of the court. The PA announcer gives a signal and the kids squirm (army crawl) on their stomachs to center court where a mud pie (chocolate pudding) is waiting for each of them. They must search for the hidden gummy worm inside the pie using only their mouths. The first contestant to find the worm wins.

An addition to this contest is having the contestants make a basket after they find the worm. The first contestant to find the worm and make a basket wins. (The only problem with the addition is the mess that is made on the court when the kids are dripping with chocolate pudding as they are shooting baskets.)

**Baby Derby**  
**Texas Tech University**

**Concept:** Babies ages 12 months or under race on a padded blanket to win prizes. Sixteen babies compete in four heats. The winners of the four heats compete in the final race.

**Length of promotion:** About 10 minutes.

**Entry forms:** They should be tied in with baby products and placed at retail outlets such as a grocer that carries a sponsor's baby product brand.

**Prizes:** First place -- \$500 savings bond; second place -- Six-month supply of diapers and wipes; third place -- One-month supply of diapers.

## **Milk Challenge Presented by Blockbuster Video University of Florida**

The University of Florida conducted the Milk Challenge with the goal of breaking the women's single-game attendance record. Not only did the promotional effort help the Lady Gators break the old mark of 5,031, it shattered the record with a standing-room-only crowd of 12,222 when Florida battled the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

With the sponsorship support of Dairy Farmers, Inc., Blockbuster Video and Gator Computers, the Florida marketing department was able to reach thousands of youths and parents in the Gainesville/Ocala market. The key elements were:

- \* The first 2,000 kids eighth grade and under received replica Lady Gator jerseys.
- \* Free admission coupons were distributed through Blockbuster Video in Gainesville, Ocala, Lake City and select Jacksonville locations.
- \* Kids attending participated in a postgame ice cream and milk party with the Lady Gator basketball team.
- \* The area elementary or middle school that brought the largest percentage of fans compared to their school populations won \$5,000 in computer hardware/software.

An aggressive advertising campaign used television, radio, newspaper and Internet outlets to blitz the Gainesville market for four weeks leading up to the game. Response to the promotion was overwhelmingly positive, and work already has begun on the 2002 event.

## **Women's Expo University of New Mexico**

To attract more businesses to women's basketball games and increase attendance, the University of New Mexico looked to meet the goals of businesses with high exposure numbers at games at an affordable cost. The university knew if it could get thousands of fans to a game, more companies would be interested in spending money with its program. The athletics department also sought to bring in new businesses that would not normally attend or advertise during sporting events. With those premises in mind, the Women's Expo for basketball was born.

Here is the sales pitch: One game was determined to be the Women's Expo. Companies then were asked to purchase 100 tickets to the game. In return, each company received booth space on the concourse to promote its business. The tickets were sold at the normal group-discounted rate (for New Mexico, \$2 per ticket for groups of 100-499).

This idea works since companies can use the tickets as employee or customer incentives; they also get exposure in front of thousands of people. The benefit of the promotion for the institution is that ticket sales and revenue will be among the highest of the season; also, the institution is introducing new companies into advertising at its athletics venues.

For this event to succeed, two strategies must be implemented. First, organizers should inform companies about the opportunity; second, they need to make sure that people attend the expo in addition to the basketball game. To accomplish the first objective, New Mexico partnered with local chambers of commerce by including information in their monthly direct-mail pieces. Athletics staff also attended the chambers' networking receptions and distributed information at those events. The staff also focused on women-owned businesses. Second, to inform people about the expo, the athletics department distributed numerous press releases and reminded fans through public address announcements not only to attend the game but also to visit the booths during pregame, halftime and postgame.

New Mexico was able to fit 30 booths around the arena concourse (the booths are nothing more than 1 foot x 6 foot tables). That corresponds to more than 3,000 group tickets sold for the game. With the season-ticket base and other walk-up -- a crowd attracts a crowd -- New Mexico had Women's Expo attendance of 11,000 one year and 16,000 the next.

The goal this year is to move the expo to an annex building and surpass the 16,000 mark by selling 50 booths (or 5,000 group tickets). Another option is to have the promotion during a men's and women's doubleheader and allow the businesses to set up during both games if they purchase 200 tickets for the women's game or 100 tickets to each. If companies cannot use all of the tickets they have purchased, they can offer them to local underprivileged youth. The key is to make sure people attend the expo.

After the event, organizers should follow up with the companies that participated with a thank you note from the head coach and a short survey to get feedback. Companies can

be treated as “season ticket holders” the next year in a renewal campaign to continually build the event.

This program can be used for any sport and does not have to be limited to women. The “expo” can focus on general health, business, sports, clothing or any number of other topics.

## **Military Appreciation Night University of Hawaii, Manoa**

During the 2001 baseball season, Hawaii honored the military during a promotional night. There is an immense military community in the area, and the university wanted to gain a few more fans. The goals were (1) to increase attendance, (2) create a more fun-filled atmosphere for the usual attendees and (3) generate a few more loyal Hawaii baseball fans from the military group. A game against Rice University was chosen because it was one of the most competitive on the schedule (Rice was ranked No. 2 nationally at the time).

Hawaii wanted to provide a special offer for the military groups, so it charged \$1 per ticket for anybody with a valid military ID. In addition, the athletics department worked closely with the university's ROTC group.

The event included a pregame reception at Rainbow Baseball Stadium for top-ranking officials from the different services on the island. When the gates opened, several pieces of military artillery were on display outside the gates. The island's top K9 and his kennel master also were on hand. During the pregame, the Marine Forces Band of the Pacific performed on the field, culminating with the National Anthem and the Hawaii state song. It was accompanied by the university's Army ROTC Color Guard and the Air Force ROTC Rifle Drill Team.

Just before the songs, the top-ranking officials from four of the different services threw out the first pitch. Between innings, the university's marketing department proceeded with its normal promotions using military personnel picked from the crowd.

The last promo was the grand finale as the kennel master and his K9 acted out a skit in the outfield where the master acted as a padded decoy while the dog "attacked." The canine section of the Air Force base security squadron handled the "situation" by firing blanks into the air.

Military Appreciation Night was very successful. Attendance increased 50 percent, and the crowd was the second-largest of the season.

**All-weekend-long promotion  
Georgia Institute of Technology**

This is a promotion that will encourage students to attend all sporting events in a weekend. It works well during transition periods between football/volleyball and basketball or the transition between basketball and baseball/softball.

At each event, you give something -- food, T-shirts or similar items -- to a specified number of students arriving at the game first. At the end of the Friday and Saturday game, students must pick up a raffle ticket. At the Sunday event, students with tickets from Friday and Saturday are eligible to enter a drawing for something of greater value (plane tickets, television, etc.).

This will increase attendance and student awareness for sports of which they are less aware. It can be developed into an annual event.

## **SCream Team**

### **University of Southern California**

**Sport:** All.

**Target:** Students.

**Promotion:** Evolving from last year's "6th Man Club," the "SCream Team" was created to reward students for frequent attendance at all home athletics events. Using electronic magnetic-strip readers at each event, students could swipe their student I.D. to be credited with points for each game they attended. Double points were awarded for games against Southern California's rivals. Students registered and tracked their points on [ustrojans.com](http://ustrojans.com). Prizes ranging from movie passes to a home entertainment system were awarded based on students' level of attendance. All sports with venues that could support the magnetic-strip readers were included.

**Goal:** The goal was to increase awareness and support for Olympic sports and basketball. Students who attended only football games had no hope of winning while those who supported basketball, volleyball and baseball had an advantage. The registration process also gave the athletics department the ability to track and target promotions at the best student fans.

**Results:** More than 1,000 students participated in the program (about 13 percent of the 8,000 who purchased the student all-sport activity card). Staffing the scanners at each event was a challenge, but it was managed relatively well. Recruiting sponsors for the program was difficult because it was new and organizers didn't know how it would be received.

**Future:** The program will be targeted heavily at freshmen next year in order to make the card scanning become more of a habit. Card swiping at the SCream Team booth and Internet page views allow the athletics department to quantify the number of impressions it can offer to a title sponsor. Once the program reaches 5,000 students, organizers hope to expand the program to the entire fan base.

## **\$25,000 Papa John's Scholarship Samford University**

**Description:** This year, Papa John's was approached to become Samford's premier pizza partner. In conjunction with the advertising package, Samford wanted to offer a season-long promotion to reinforce brand awareness. In creating the Papa John's \$25,000 Scholarship, organizers came up with a way to promote the product on campus while getting students to participate.

Numerous drop boxes equipped with pads of entry forms were positioned in high-traffic areas on campus. Students entered the contest by filling out an entry form. Before every men's and women's basketball game, the entries were collected and one contestant was drawn to participate in a shooting contest. If the contestant scored six points in a designated amount of time, he or she qualified for a chance to win a \$25,000 scholarship at the end of the season.

During halftime of the final men's and women's basketball games, organizers brought all of the qualifying contestants to the center of the court. Each contestant then randomly picked up a money bag that was on the court. Each bag had coupons for free Papa John's pizza, but one bag had a special coupon for a shot at the \$25,000 scholarship. The student with the special coupon had to make a lay-up, free throw, three-point shot and half-court shot in 24 seconds. The final contestants did very well in their effort but fell short of making all the baskets.

Ultimately, the promotion created great enthusiasm for students and got them actively involved with the sponsor. At the end of the season, organizers gave the sponsor all the entry forms so it could market directly to Samford students. The promotion allowed the students to connect with the sponsor by active participation fulfilling sponsor needs and adding excitement to Samford basketball games.

## Shooting from the Cheap Seats DePaul University

**Objective:** One of DePaul's goals at athletics events is to interact with fans during the slow times. The institution has been especially successful at this during women's basketball games. During halftime, there is a seven-minute period between the end of the dance team act and when the teams return to the floor. Instead of paying for a high-priced act to occupy the down time, DePaul found that fans would rather be a part of halftime. The best halftime promotion with bigger crowds was "Shooting from the Cheap Seats."

**How it works:** Staff wheels out three carts, each at least as big as a volleyball cart, on to the court and places them at the two free-throw lines and center court. Six assistants (student workers or cheerleaders) are stationed at each cart facing a designated section. Each assistant is armed with a mini foam basketball and a pile of T-shirts. The public address announcer explains the rules of the promotion to the crowd. The assistants then throw the ball into the crowd; the fan who catches it is supposed to shoot for the cart from his or her seat. If the fan gets the ball in on the fly or on a bounce, he or she wins a T-shirt. Staff members continue to throw the balls into the crowd until the teams return for warm-ups.

**Success:** Fans are entertained with the nonstop action occurring in their sections. About 250 to 300 shots may be taken on any given night. Organizers can vary the size of the ball and cart depending on the number of winners they want. Those who are assisting with the promotion should try the shot themselves; you don't want to make it so difficult that you look cheap.

## **Air Force Honor Guard and Mascot Mania Fresno State**

**Description:** Fresno State is attempting not only to provide competitive athletics programs but also to create an atmosphere to which fans want to return. The budget is limited, but the low-cost promotions are effective in building fan enthusiasm.

**Air Force Honor Guard:** During the 2000 football season, Fresno State brought the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard's 16-man team to Bulldog Stadium for a halftime performance. The demonstration is similar to the beginning of the movie "A Few Good Men," in which the Naval Honor Team flips rifles with precision. The eight-minute performance was a major hit with fans.

**Mascot mania:** This season, Fresno State used women's basketball as the platform to showcase Mascot Mania. Those participating included TimeOut (the Fresno State Bulldog), Tony the Tiger, the Carl's Jr. Star, Bobby the Bubbles Beaver, Sammy Slice, Captain Deal and Friends the Fresno Bee, Gabe from Red Robin Restaurants and others. Mascots also were used during the 2000 women's soccer season. In both cases, the promotion was geared toward San Joaquin Valley youth. A "meet and greet" session for children followed each event.

## **Team Whiteman Day**

### **Central Missouri State University**

**Description:** The two largest local employers are Central Missouri State and Whiteman Air Force Base. The institution has a good relationship with the base and is always looking for ways to interact with Air Force personnel, who often become fans after attending games. For that reason, Central Missouri State created “Team Whiteman Day” for Mules baseball games. The athletics department set the event up through the base commander’s office. The commander threw out the first pitch and participated in the broadcast for an inning. Anyone with a base identification card, along with his or her family, was admitted at no charge. The concessions group helped by providing a “Whiteman Special” at low cost. Photographers took pictures that were sent to the base, and the Air Force color guard provided a great start to the day during the National Anthem. The result was one of the best crowds in Central Missouri State baseball history -- and several new fans.

## **Kids in College Program Big South Conference**

**Objective:** Too many of our youth do not have an understanding of what it takes to go to college and do not understand the numerous benefits of a college education. Many businesses in the private sector are seeking ways to build their image and level of awareness in their respective communities. The “Kids in College Program” is a unique, feel-good marketing program that is guaranteed to catch the eye of the prospective client and give back to the community at the same time. It can be instituted on a conference-wide basis (with a regional sponsor) or can be implemented at an individual institution (with a local sponsor).

**How it works:** A select area middle school is chosen to participate in the “Kids in College Program” (the client can select the particular school if it wishes). The school will award a number of students, typically about 100, with the opportunity to visit the campus for a day. The schools can select the students however they wish (for example, the top 100 grades in the class or the top 100 spellers). As a part of the agreement with the client, they will cover the school’s expenses, such as buses and lunches. A mutually agreed-upon day is selected on which the students will visit the campus.

Before the visit, a ceremonial check presentation is made at a school assembly with the client’s representative and representatives from your institution participating. The ceremonial check is given to the school principal with the understanding that, thanks to the client, the visit to the campus is a reality.

During the campus visit, the students will be given a tour of campus, sit in a “real” college classroom, visit the library, eat in the cafeteria and listen to a motivational speech by a head coach or student-athlete. Most importantly, the children will leave with a clear understanding of what it takes to be admitted to a college and of the many benefits of a college education.

**Promote, promote, promote:** This is a “feel-good” marketing program, but your community needs to know about it in order to get a prospective client excited enough to make the buy. Therefore, include in the sales package information that the local media will be invited to the ceremonial check presentation and to the on-campus event. Design a media plan in which the program is recognized during the game broadcasts, coaches shows, on the Web site, etc. Also include in the sales package a radio or television interview with the client during a select game broadcast talking about the program and how it is a “win-win” opportunity for all involved parties.

The program works. Exxon Company USA partnered with the Atlantic Coast Conference with this marketing program and had a great deal of success in many regards.

**Read with the Runners  
California State University, Bakersfield**

**Objective:** To position California State University, Bakersfield, within the community as an advocate for literacy within middle schools. This program targeted school-age children from 12 to 14 at 35 local schools and challenged them to read. The institution received assistance from the Library Services Media Department in getting information to schools, which proved valuable. Teachers were given the contest outline displaying the following participation levels: Level I (0-4 books), Level II (5-9 books), Level III (10-plus books) and Top Page-Turner.

**Strategy:** Allows Cal State Bakersfield to keep an ongoing presence during the basketball season within local middle schools and allows the university to stress the importance of literacy in the schools and community it serves. It also brings together nontraditional businesses that are not interested in marketing their companies to the public, unless it is cause-related.

**Incentive:** Basketball ticket vouchers were distributed to participating students as part of the incentive. The Top Page-Turner, along with the school that reads the most books, is honored each year during halftime of a Cal State Bakersfield home game. The Top Page-Turner receives gifts from the university and the top school wins a computer. Plus, the university hosts a giant pizza party for all Level III participants.

**Closed promotion:** Although the promotion must be completed by a specified date, it allows the university to maintain a strong presence in the participating schools for four months.

## **Learn from the Best**

### **University of California, Irvine**

**Objective:** To increase overall attendance during men's and women's basketball games during December with a community-outreach program to entertain and educate local youth.

**Program:** With the assistance of local school districts, UC Irvine designed a promotion to invite local schools to men's and women's basketball games with free admission to the session for all youths. Once the youths arrived, they were given a stat sheet to keep track of shots attempted, shots made, turnovers, rebounds, steals, etc. At halftime, the youths turned in their stat sheets from the first half, and the sheets were compared to the official stat sheet. If the student recorded the correct statistic, he or she was given a prize, such as a T-shirt or sticker provided by the athletics department. Students who recorded the best percentage of correct statistics were recognized at the first media timeout of the second half.

**Conclusion:** The promotion created an atmosphere of fun and excitement for area youth and generated additional interest for the men's and women's basketball programs.

## **SCream Team**

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**Sport:** All.

**Target:** Students.

**Promotion:** Evolving from last year's "6th Man Club," the "SCream Team" was created to reward students for frequent attendance at all home athletics events. Using electronic magnetic-strip readers at each event, students could swipe their student I.D. to be credited with points for each game they attended. Double points were awarded for games against Southern California's rivals. Students registered and tracked their points on [ustrojans.com](http://ustrojans.com). Prizes ranging from movie passes to a home entertainment system were awarded based on students' level of attendance. All sports with venues that could support the magnetic-strip readers were included.

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**Future:** The program will be targeted heavily at freshmen next year in order to make the card scanning become more of a habit. Card swiping at the SCream Team booth and Internet page views allow the athletics department to quantify the number of impressions it can offer to a title sponsor. Once the program reaches 5,000 students, organizers hope to expand the program to the entire fan base.

### **Reading is Your Ticket** **Temple University**

**Who:** Kids and schools.

**What:** Any sport in which there is a need to build attendance and a relationship with the school system and the community.

**How:** Temple sends out a letter in the spring (football) and then in the fall (women's basketball) to Philadelphia school administrators letting them know that the "Reading is Your Ticket" program is available. Temple generally will provide tickets to any classroom that signs up, providing that the classroom puts together a reading program, either for the summer or the fall. The kids get the tickets if they complete the school-designed reading program.

**Results:** In its first year, the program was well-received by the participating schools. The challenge may be in developing continuity with a changing base of teachers and administrators from year to year.

### **Baby Derby** **Texas Tech University**

**Concept:** Babies ages 12 months or under race on a padded blanket to win prizes. Sixteen babies compete in four heats. The winners of the four heats compete in the final race.

**Length of promotion:** About 10 minutes.

**Entry forms:** They should be tied in with baby products and placed at retail outlets such as a grocer that carries a sponsor's baby product brand.

**Prizes:** First place -- \$500 savings bond; second place -- Six-month supply of diapers and wipes; third place -- One-month supply of diapers.

### **Crunch Time** **Western Carolina University**

**When:** Timeouts.

**Events:** Football, men's and women's basketball games.

**How:** At a timeout in the second half of the game, cheerleaders run around the stands with a 10-pound Nestle Crunch Bar, trying to get the fans to stand up and make noise. The loudest and rowdiest fan wins the 10 pounds of chocolate. Mini Nestle Crunch Bars and T-shirts also are thrown into the crowd during Crunch Time.

**Results:** This promotion has been one of the most popular at Western Carolina football and basketball games. The fans even know when Crunch Time is coming and have made signs to attract the cheerleaders attention. The promotion also gets fans up and making noise, which pumps the team up.

### **Fill Up and Pump Up Western Kentucky University**

**Who:** Local community.

**What:** Single-game tickets.

**When:** One game per season.

**What sports:** Football and men's basketball.

**How:** The promotion involved Junior Foods convenience stores, Western Kentucky athletics and the Big Red Radio Network. Junior Foods bought the promotion as a sponsorship and received 8,000 general admission tickets to one home football game and 2,000 general admission tickets to one men's home basketball game at the group-rate price. The Big Red Radio Network advertised the promotion throughout the region the week before the games. During the week, customers who bought eight or more gallons of gas at any Junior Foods location received a free game ticket.

**Results:** Organizers said it was a win-win situation. The promotion drove traffic to Junior Foods convenience stores and Western Kentucky athletics events. Junior Foods distributed all 8,000 tickets for the football games and all 2,000 tickets for the basketball game. The promotion also resulted in increased gate sales because fans received only one free ticket per gasoline fill-up.

### **Charo Chicken Dance University of California, Irvine**

**Who:** UC Irvine baseball games and Charo Chicken Restaurant.

**What's needed:** A videotron board, Chicken Dance music and gift certificates.

**How:** Between the designated innings, the public address announcer says it is time for the Charo Chicken Dance. The Chicken Dance music then begins; the fan doing the best chicken dance wins a \$15 gift certificate from the restaurant. Some participants are shown on the videotron scoreboard. A marketing representative determined the winner.

**Results:** The promotion was the most interactive of all baseball promotions. Almost everybody likes to do the Chicken Dance, so many people participate and have a great laugh.

### **Learn from the Best** **University of California, Irvine**

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**Program:** With the assistance of local school districts, UC Irvine designed a promotion to invite local schools to men's and women's basketball games with free admission to the session for all youths. Once the youths arrived, they were given a stat sheet to keep track of shots attempted, shots made, turnovers, rebounds, steals, etc. At halftime, the youths turned in their stat sheets from the first half, and the sheets were compared to the official stat sheet. If the student recorded the correct statistic, he or she was given a prize, such as a T-shirt or sticker provided by the athletics department. Students who recorded the best percentage of correct statistics were recognized at the first media timeout of the second half.

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nontraditional businesses that are not interested in marketing their companies to the public, unless it is cause-related.

**Incentive:** Basketball ticket vouchers were distributed to participating students as part of the incentive. The Top Page-Turner, along with the school that reads the most books, is honored each year during halftime of a Cal State Bakersfield home game. The Top Page-Turner receives gifts from the university and the top school wins a computer. Plus, the university hosts a giant pizza party for all Level III participants.

**Closed promotion:** Although the promotion must be completed by a specified date, it allows the university to maintain a strong presence in the participating schools for four months.

### **Team Whiteman Day Central Missouri State University**

**Description:** The two largest local employers are Central Missouri State and Whiteman Air Force Base. The institution has a good relationship with the base and is always looking for ways to interact with Air Force personnel, who often become fans after attending games. For that reason, Central Missouri State created “Team Whiteman Day” for Mules baseball games. The athletics department set the event up through the base commander’s office. The commander threw out the first pitch and participated in the broadcast for an inning. Anyone with a base identification card, along with his or her family, was admitted at no charge. The concessions group helped by providing a “Whiteman Special” at low cost. Photographers took pictures that were sent to the base, and the Air Force color guard provided a great start to the day during the National Anthem. The result was one of the best crowds in Central Missouri State baseball history -- and several new fans.

### **The Great Spring Tailgate East Carolina University**

The promotion centered on East Carolina’s nationally ranked baseball team during a three-game series late in the season. Two sponsors were secured to cover all costs associated with the event -- a television station that promoted the event and another sponsor that provided \$30,000 of commercial airtime during the month preceding the event. The idea was for fans to attend a baseball game and have a tailgate experience similar to what they would experience at an East Carolina football game.

Events: Day One -- Golf tournament (12:30 p.m.) and game 1 of the three-game series (7 p.m.); Day Two -- Live band (3:30 p.m.), barbecue served (4 p.m.), baseball letter-winners tailgate (4:30 p.m.), mascot birthday party, with cheerleaders (for children, 5 p.m.), game 2 of three-game series (7 p.m.), postgame fireworks (9:45 p.m., approximately); Day Three -- Game 3 of the three-game series.

**Results:** The event was successful in its first year. About 400 game tickets and 300 barbecue tickets were sold before the event on Saturday, and game attendance on Saturday was 2,800. Attendance for the weekend series was 5,655.

### **Jenny Eller Blood Drive Challenge Fresno State**

**Description:** The Fresno State Bulldog Diamond was transformed into a blood-donation site during a day of practice for the Bulldogs' softball team. Those who came to the Diamond to donate blood received a T-shirt, a free lunch, a voucher worth \$2 off any ticket for any remaining home softball game and permission to watch the team practice that afternoon. Donors also received the opportunity to meet the Bulldogs after practice for an autograph session. (The drive was named after a local high-school player who died of leukemia in 1995. Fresno State was among many programs who were recruiting Eller.)

**Results:** The challenge issued by coach Margie Wright and her players yielded 55 donors, which benefited about 165 people across California.

### **Blackbeards Family Fun Center Bulldog 500...Feet Fresno State**

The Bulldog 500 uses two go-carts provided by Blackbeards Family Fun Center. The event takes place between the foul poles at the Fresno State baseball stadium. Each car "represents" one-half of the fans, giving them a chance to win various prizes from Blackbeards Family Fun Center. Insurance requires that only employees of Fresno State can drive the cars, so different "marquee match-ups" among coaches, administrators, faculty and staff are used to generate excitement. Included are races between men's and women's head coaches, those involving the school mascot, and those between the athletics director and the university president.

The promotion provides the institution with the opportunity to promote all of its sports in a fan-friendly way that sparks the interest of the general population.

### **Between-inning promotions Georgia Institute of Technology**

**Who:** Students and adults.

**Needs:** One contestant, one car tire, long measuring tape.

**How:** The contestant gets one chance to see how far he or she can roll a tire. The promotion is done at every game, and at the end of the season, the longest roll wins a new set of tires from Costco.

**Results:** The promotion has gained a good following. The crowd becomes excited on long rolls and boos the short ones. Players shout “rolling suggestions” from the dugout.

### **The Delta Derby**

**Who:** Any fans.

**Needs:** Four contestants, four corrugated “horses” on wooden poles, four runners.

**How:** Four contestants are seated on the field in front of the dugout, and each is assigned a horse. Four volunteers race the horses around the outfield wall. The contestant with the winning horse receives two round-trip tickets on Delta Airlines.

**Results:** The event is a longtime fan favorite. The horses always “jockey” for position up to the end of the race, which keeps the crowd involved. One or two horses always hit a light pole or start running backward to make it interesting.

### **Friday Night ‘80s**

**Who:** Any fans.

**Needs:** Entry sheets, 1980s music.

**How:** Fans are given Friday Night ‘80s entry sheets upon entering the park. After the bottom of the seventh inning, an ‘80s song is played. Fans fill out the song title and artist on their sheets and turn them in after seven songs are played. A winner is drawn from the correct entries. With the addition of a video board this year, promoters also added clips from ‘80s movies.

### **Military Appreciation Night University of Hawaii, Manoa**

During the 2001 baseball season, Hawaii honored the military during a promotional night. There is an immense military community in the area, and the university wanted to gain a few more fans. The goals were (1) to increase attendance, (2) create a more fun-filled atmosphere for the usual attendees and (3) generate a few more loyal Hawaii baseball fans from the military group. A game against Rice University was chosen because it was one of the most competitive on the schedule (Rice was ranked No. 2 nationally at the time).

Hawaii wanted to provide a special offer for the military groups, so it charged \$1 per ticket for anybody with a valid military ID. In addition, the athletics department worked closely with the university’s ROTC group.

The event included a pregame reception at Rainbow Baseball Stadium for top-ranking officials from the different services on the island. When the gates opened, several pieces of military artillery were on display outside the gates. The island’s top K9 and his kennel master also were on hand. During the pregame, the Marine Forces Band of the Pacific performed on the field, culminating with the National Anthem and the Hawaii state song.

It was accompanied by the university's Army ROTC Color Guard and the Air Force ROTC Rifle Drill Team.

Just before the songs, the top-ranking officials from four of the different services threw out the first pitch. Between innings, the university's marketing department proceeded with its normal promotions using military personnel picked from the crowd.

The last promo was the grand finale as the kennel master and his K9 acted out a skit in the outfield where the master acted as a padded decoy while the dog "attacked." The canine section of the Air Force base security squadron handled the "situation" by firing blanks into the air.

Military Appreciation Night was very successful. Attendance increased 50 percent, and the crowd was the second-largest of the season.

### **Delta Fan of the Game University of North Carolina, Wilmington**

During each home baseball game, organizers selected a "Fan of the Game" through random selection, winning a baseball bingo game, answering trivia questions or doing certain tricks. Those selected as "Fan of the Game" were recognized but didn't win anything. However, each fan automatically qualified for "Pack Your Bags Night."

On "Pack Your Bags Night," each fan came to the ballpark with their bags packed for the weekend. Before the game, eligible contestants came on the field with their bags. A drawing then was conducted for the "Pack Your Bags Night" winner. A local representative from Delta Airlines drew the winning name. The winner left directly from the game to the airport and caught a Delta flight to Atlanta. The total package included round-trip airfare for two from Wilmington, North Carolina, to Atlanta; two nights accommodations at a Buckhead hotel; two tickets to a Braves baseball game; and \$50 in spending money. The promotion worked well and was very inexpensive. The airline tickets and baseball tickets were donated. The total cost was about \$200.

### **Kids Take Over the Park Rice University**

This promotion was named Collegiate Baseball's "Promotion of the Year" after it attracted nearly 200 children in its first year.

Children and parents alike responded enthusiastically to this promotion. It was not costly, although it did require patience among the staff and organization on the part of the marketing team.

Children 14 and under were given the opportunity to "take over the park" as each child was assigned a duty to perform during a half-inning at a Rice baseball game. Forms were

created and made available at the baseball park souvenir shop for children to indicate their preference of duties. They chose from among the following: field preparation, music, program sales, helping with the radio broadcast, singing the national anthem, staffing the souvenir shop, serving as ushers, leading the seventh-inning stretch, measuring pitch speed, public address, scoreboard operation, statistics and taking tickets.

Because of the lighter demand in the first year, Rice gave the children six weeks to turn in the forms with their preferences. The next year, it was first-come, first-served. The children were notified by mail, and then by phone, of their duties and time slot two weeks before game day. Selected children were required to RSVP to the notice.

Participating children met one hour before the start of the game. Each participant was given a name tag that included his or her name, duty and time slot. The sponsor also provided each child with an "I Took Over Reckling Park" T-shirt.

The children and/or parents were instructed to meet the marketing department representative one-half inning before their assigned time slot at a specified place. The children then waited in a suite (or a specified secure area) with snacks and beverages (providing the children with snacks is a tradeoff for them being in the right place, in the right time and being well-behaved). Between each inning, the children then went on duty and, with the guidance of a full-time employee, performed the specific duty.

### **Junior reporter plan** **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

**Who:** Elementary and middle school sports enthusiasts with journalism aspirations.

**What:** An informational brochure for school teachers to pass out, press passes, media guides and roster sheets. Organizers can get those props from the sports information director. In this case, organizers printed copies of media guides from the Web site and prepared a set of game notes geared toward kids. They also checked with the head coach and the team's sports information director about holding postgame interviews and touring the press box. A soda and hot dog also were provided to each participating junior reporter.

**When:** Organizers had a pregame Q&A session with the coaches, provided in-game updates and then conducted postgame interviews.

**What sport:** Softball.

**How:** The Virginia Tech marketing office sent fliers/brochures (made in-house) to area English teachers inviting their kids to attend a select home softball game. Their students received a media guide, game-day notes, a game program, hot dog and soda, and a great seat to "cover" the game. Throughout the game, kids were taken to the press box to watch how the statistician/scoreboard operator worked, how the Internet live stats crew worked,

how the PA worked and how the sports information director handled the flow of the game from a game-day standpoint. After the game, kids were invited to select a player to interview. The students then were encouraged to write a report and turn it in to their teachers. The best stories and students would be recognized at a future home game.

**Results:** It was the promotion's first year. Organizers say that in the future, they will provide students four or five dates from which to choose. They also will recruit English teachers, possibly through a coffee-and-doughnuts session. They also will try to tie the idea with a local newspaper so that kids can sign up through the newspaper to cover the game. The idea can be used for other sports, but the coaches and student-athletes must be receptive to the idea. Some sports may not be able to do this for a large number of kids.

### **Baseball direct marketing Wichita State University**

**Who:** Boosters, individual game-ticket purchasers, sponsors without baseball season tickets, faculty and staff.

**What:** Direct dial marketing.

**When:** Mid-February, at the start of college baseball season.

**How:** Wichita State coach Gene Stephenson recorded a scripted message that mentioned several of the season's selling points (for example, a high national ranking). The message then was given to NVS Interactive Media, along with a database of telephone numbers of fans, boosters, previous season ticket holders who had not renewed, season ticket holders in other sports, and so on. The idea is for the message to be left on the fan's voice mail or answering machine, so the calls were made at a time when most of the target group would not be at home or at the office. If a fan purchased season tickets and mentioned the message from Stephenson, he or she won a free pizza and a Shocker hat.

**Results:** The season ticket promotion was a new and unique strategy that worked well. However, timing and planning are important on a promotion such as this one. First, there were problems in coordinating schedules, so the calls were made just before the first home series; ideally, the calls would have been made somewhat earlier. Second, organizers had a problem with calls made to on-campus faculty and staff. The telemarketing service can call up to 20,000 numbers in an hour. Because all campus numbers were called at about the same time, it caused problems with the university's voice-mail system. The organizers learned from the problems and plan on using the approach for other campaigns.

### **Shirt Off Your Back Day Arizona State University**

**Concept:** Arizona State baseball raffles off jerseys that the team no longer uses on a regular basis. The team and coaches wear the jerseys for the last regular-season game and

autograph the jerseys for raffle winners directly after the game. Raffle winners have the opportunity to meet the players when they receive the jerseys. The promotion not only fosters fan relations but also raises money to benefit the athletics program.

**Promotion:** Beginning about eight games before the last regular-season home game, raffle tickets are available for fans to purchase (\$5 per ticket or \$20 for five tickets). The number of tickets that can be purchased is not limited. Information about the raffle drawing is posted in the same location where tickets are purchased. The display is further enhanced by displaying an example of the actual jersey.

On the day of the raffle, several winning numbers are randomly drawn and announced over the public address system at every half-inning break until all 29 jerseys (25 players and four coaches) have been won. Winners then present their winning raffle ticket to the marketing information booth at the entrance to the stadium and are presented with a coupon naming the player or coach whose jersey has been won. After the game, those with coupons are allowed onto the playing field to meet the players and receive the autographed jersey.

### **Sumo Basketball** **Arizona State University**

**What is needed:** Two sumo wrestling suits, two basketballs, two participants.

**When:** Halftime of a basketball game.

**How:** Pick two students from the student section. Focus on the students who look the most spirited and bring them down to the court about five minutes before halftime. Explain the game to them and put them in the sumo suits. Make sure you have extra help because if the participants fall, it will take two people to get them up.

**Object of the game:** Have each contestant at a different basket. The object is to make a layup, then run to half-court, put the ball down, spin around a bat 10 times, pick the ball back up and run to the other basket and make a layup. The first person to complete all of the requirements wins.

**Results:** The student section had a great time with the promotion and requested it for all games. The result was higher numbers in the student section.

### **A Night of Excellence** **University of California, Irvine**

**Who:** Middle school students from the surrounding area who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement were presented with certificates of academic achievement.

**When:** Students were presented with the certificates at a basketball game during halftime of basketball games and brought on to the court. An announcement was made to acknowledge their outstanding academic accomplishments. Evening weekend games seemed to work best for the families and faculties of the honorees.

**How:** The athletics staff contacted school district offices to inform them about the program and to let them know they would be invited as well. The staff then drafted a general information letter and promotion flyer and sent those to the participating schools. Since it was the first year, organizers started small and invited only three nearby school districts, which had a total of 10 middle schools. The top 10 students from each school then were invited, with each school selecting the honorees based on grades and school involvement.

UC Irvine then sent general congratulatory letters to the schools. The selected students were given three ticket vouchers, which could be used the night of the event for the basketball game. The students were asked to RSVP two weeks before the event so they could have their name printed on the certificates. General certificates also were made available for late or non-responders.

On the night of the event, students reported to a check-in table, where they were given more details about where to meet before halftime. At halftime, they walked on to the court to receive their certificate.

**Results:** Of the 100 students who were notified, 60 showed up and received their certificate. UC Irvine plans to repeat the promotion this year and include more school districts.

### **Ring it from Half Court The Citadel**

Before every Citadel home basketball game, a student ticket is drawn for a cadet to participate in the “Ring it from Half Court Shootout.” At the beginning of halftime, the lucky cadet gets a chance to hit a half-court shot to win his Citadel class ring. The promotion is a big hit with cadets because it saves them the cost of purchasing the class ring. If they already have purchased a ring, they are provided with a refund. What makes the promotion so popular is that The Citadel class ring is the crowning achievement of a cadet’s career.

### **Shooting from the Cheap Seats DePaul University**

**Objective:** One of DePaul’s goals at athletics events is to interact with fans during the slow times. The institution has been especially successful at this during women’s basketball games. During halftime, there is a seven-minute period between the end of the dance team act and when the teams return to the floor. Instead of paying for a high-priced

act to occupy the down time, DePaul found that fans would rather be a part of halftime. The best halftime promotion with bigger crowds was “Shooting from the Cheap Seats.”

**How it works:** Staff wheels out three carts, each at least as big as a volleyball cart, on to the court and places them at the two free-throw lines and center court. Six assistants (student workers or cheerleaders) are stationed at each cart facing a designated section. Each assistant is armed with a mini foam basketball and a pile of T-shirts. The public address announcer explains the rules of the promotion to the crowd. The assistants then throw the ball into the crowd; the fan who catches it is supposed to shoot for the cart from his or her seat. If the fan gets the ball in on the fly or on a bounce, he or she wins a T-shirt. Staff members continue to throw the balls into the crowd until the teams return for warm-ups.

**Success:** Fans are entertained with the nonstop action occurring in their sections. About 250 to 300 shots may be taken on any given night. Organizers can vary the size of the ball and cart depending on the number of winners they want. Those who are assisting with the promotion should try the shot themselves; you don’t want to make it so difficult that you look cheap.

### **Milk Challenge Presented by Blockbuster Video University of Florida**

The University of Florida conducted the Milk Challenge with the goal of breaking the women’s single-game attendance record. Not only did the promotional effort help the Lady Gators break the old mark of 5,031, it shattered the record with a standing-room-only crowd of 12,222 when Florida battled the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

With the sponsorship support of Dairy Farmers, Inc., Blockbuster Video and Gator Computers, the Florida marketing department was able to reach thousands of youths and parents in the Gainesville/Ocala market. The key elements were:

- \* The first 2,000 kids eighth grade and under received replica Lady Gator jerseys.
- \* Free admission coupons were distributed through Blockbuster Video in Gainesville, Ocala, Lake City and select Jacksonville locations.
- \* Kids attending participated in a postgame ice cream and milk party with the Lady Gator basketball team.
- \* The area elementary or middle school that brought the largest percentage of fans compared to their school populations won \$5,000 in computer hardware/software.

An aggressive advertising campaign used television, radio, newspaper and Internet outlets to blitz the Gainesville market for four weeks leading up to the game. Response to the promotion was overwhelmingly positive, and work already has begun on the 2002 event.

## **Stocking Stuffer Special George Mason University**

George Mason used an automated telemarketing company to send a message (in italics below) from its basketball coach on the Monday before Thanksgiving. The time of year was important because organizers thought people would have shopping and Christmas gift buying on their minds with the busiest shopping day of the year coming up. Organizers also sent a direct mail piece to the same list that arrived on the Friday after Thanksgiving so they could read more details about the promotion. The target group was fans who did not hold season tickets.

The message from the coach:

*“Hi, this is head coach Jim Larranaga from the George Mason University men’s basketball team. Here is a special offer to catch exciting Patriots basketball: It’s three games for free! No, we’re not kidding. We just want to show you what a thrilling experience GMU basketball is. Look for the “Be a Patriot” season ticket flyer in your mail that explains how you can get a free Coleman water jug and a three-game season ticket by calling 703/993-3270. It’s a great deal. Here is how it works. Call and ask for the Coach L Stocking Stuffer Special and get a free three-game season ticket when you purchase one. It’s that easy. Some come out and “Be a Patriot” by calling 703/993-3270 and tell them Coach L sent you. Good for new orders only and while supplies last.”*

The rate for connected calls was 18 cents each.

## **Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge University of Iowa**

**Who:** Members of the men’s basketball student support group, the Hawk’s Nest, were targeted to participate in the Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge.

**What:** Necessary items include two pogo balls, pizza boxes and two contestants.

**When:** The event was conducted during a media timeout in the first half.

**Where:** The promotion was executed at both men’s and women’s basketball games. However, it easily could be used with other sports.

**How:** Before game time, two contestants were selected and instructed to meet an Iowa sports marketing representative before the media timeout. The marketing staff set up two rows of pizza boxes at the foul line, midcourt and opposite foul line. Participants were instructed to weave in and out as they bounced on the pogo ball down the court. The arena was divided into halves, with each contestant representing his side of the arena. The winner of the Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge received a large pizza, and the other contestant

received an order of bread sticks. A selected section and row of the winning side also received gift certificates for free breadsticks.

**Results:** The Pizza Hut Pogo Challenge had many fans laughing and cheering as their representatives bounced down the court. The promotion went over best when the contestants helped get the crowd into the contest.

### **Cat Caravans** **Kansas State University**

**Who:** The promotion was targeted at potential season-ticket holders for women's basketball.

**How:** In the preseason, members of the athletics department traveled to towns near Manhattan to provide on-site ticket sales. To do this, a pep-rally atmosphere was created by inviting the team, coaching staff and cheerleaders to join in the caravan. Team members and the coaching staff spoke about the upcoming season and much-needed fan support, which created a prime ticket-selling atmosphere. Pompoms were distributed, along with "Powercat" tattoos, schedule posters, schedule cards and raffle tickets for an autographed ball.

After the meal and team introductions, tables were set up at which fans could purchase their season tickets and other ticket packages. The response, along with the accompanying attendance increase, was outstanding.

**Results:** Season ticket sales were the highest in Kansas State women's basketball history. Three games sold out, and overall attendance set a record.

### **T-4-3 T-Shirts** **Kansas State University**

**What:** T-shirts for three-pointers.

**When:** During a game.

**What sport:** Basketball.

**How:** Two seasons ago, the Kansas State athletics department started the "T-4-3" T-shirt concept. During each home game, three T-shirts were thrown into the crowd by the cheerleading squad after every Wildcats three-pointer. In the beginning, it was solely a women's promotion, but over the past season, it was expanded to men. To pay for the T-shirts, the athletics department solicited local sponsors and placed their logos on the back of every shirt.

**Results:** The fan reaction was outstanding. After a few games, fans became accustomed to the T-shirt distribution and would automatically get on their feet, screaming for a shirt.

Even the broadcasting radio station picked up on the atmosphere “jolt” and stated talking about T-shirts being tossed into the crowd. As a result, T-4-3 shirts can be seen throughout Manhattan. Sponsors already are calling with inquiries about next season.

### **‘Maize Rage’ Beach Day University of Michigan**

**Game:** Basketball.

**Objective:** Faced with an 11 a.m. start against a low-profile opponent, the athletics department wanted to create a party atmosphere for the student section to stimulate attendance and enthusiasm from the beginning of the game.

**Promotion:** The 12 “best-dressed” students were selected from the “Maize Rage” student section to participate in a halftime limbo contest. Students were judged on their creative beach attire, which was required to include the student section’s official “Maize Rage” T-shirt. The winner of the limbo contest received two free airline tickets for spring break.

**Execution:** The athletics department sent an e-mail to student season ticket holders challenging them to be the best-dressed Beach Day fan and informing them of the contest. One thousand Hawaiian leis were distributed to fans before tip-off. Staff selected 12 competitors out of the crowd to participate in the halftime limbo contest, which was accompanied by beach theme music and inflatable palm trees.

**Evaluation:** The contest gave students a reason to come to the morning game early and prepared. The rest of the crowd was energized by the students’ enthusiasm. Since the event, students have been independently submitting their ideas for follow-up theme games.

### **Dunkin’ Donuts Munchkin Slamfest Monmouth University**

**Who:** Kids 5 years old and under.

**What:** Fisher Price youth basketball hoop and ball, kids’ T-shirts with your mascot dunking a basketball on one side and a corporate logo on the back with promotion name and sponsor information.

**When:** During a media timeout of men’s and women’s basketball games. The promotion takes about 60 seconds.

**How:** Select a youngster to complete two dunks. Put the basket at halfcourt and have the contestant start from the top of the three-point arc. At Monmouth, two ball boys hold the sign displaying sponsor information and the promotion name, “Dunkin’ Donuts Munchkin Slamfest.” After the second dunk, the PA announcer says if the participant

gets a standing ovation from the crowd, he or she wins a box of Dunkin' Donut munchkins.

**Results:** It has been a fan favorite. It gets people out of their seats to give a “standing O” to a little kid, which creates smiles for the kid and the nearby parents. It’s also fun to see the kids try to top each other game-to-game with different dunks. If the target crowd is a young family market, the promotion is perfect.

## **Read to Win University of Nebraska, Lincoln**

The Nebraska women’s basketball team and the department of athletics marketing offered local elementary schools the opportunity to be a part of the “Read to Win” program, which successfully reached 15,000 elementary students who read more than seven million pages. The Nebraska athletics department offered the program to all Lincoln area elementary schools in an effort to promote reading to kindergarten-level to sixth-grade students.

The Nebraska women’s basketball team encouraged children to read as much as possible during October. Every school received a video featuring coach Paul Sanderford and several women’s basketball players who explained details of the program. The video was shown before the program to students and faculty. It explained the contest rules and got them excited about the program.

The rules provided that parents could read to young children and to children who needed special assistance. Children recorded the number of pages they read and worked to get prizes. The marketing staff scheduled an assembly for each school in which members from the women’s basketball team and coaching staff talked to students in a 30-minute program.

Those who participated received a Nebraska women’s basketball poster and bookmark featuring the women’s basketball schedule. Everyone in kindergarten through third grade who read 100 or more pages and those fourth through sixth grade who read 200 or more pages received a certificate. The most prolific reader in each classroom received two tickets to a women’s basketball game. The most prolific reader in each grade in all of the participating Lincoln schools was recognized at a women’s basketball game and received two season tickets to the remaining home games and a prize from Barnes & Noble.

The most prolific reader overall received recognition at a women’s basketball game, two season tickets to the remaining home games and a prize from Barnes & Noble. The winner also received a basketball autographed by the women’s basketball team. The elementary school whose combined students read the most pages received two tickets per student to a women’s basketball game. Also, the entire women’s basketball team, coaching staff and Li'l Red (the mascot) went to the elementary school for a pep rally.

## **10-Millionth Fan**

## University of New Mexico

**Who:** All fans at any sport approaching a milestone attendance record. In this case, it was the 10-millionth fan for University of New Mexico men's basketball games.

**What's needed:** (1) One fan is chosen when walking through the door or gate; (2) prizes; (3) spirit squad and mascots; (4) media; (5) banner.

**When:** Pregame initially, then recognition at halftime.

**How:** New Mexico wanted to recognize the 10-millionth fan attending Lobo men's basketball games. Organizers sent a press release to all local media informing them that New Mexico would select the honorary 10-millionth fan during the final game of the 2002 season (when the university would reach the milestone) during pregame at a specific location and time. Once everybody was ready (media and marketing staff), organizers chose an honorary 10-millionth fan (since it would be too difficult to choose the exact fan -- in this case, the 13,453rd fan through the turnstiles). The fan was photographed, received balloons and was instructed to meet for recognition at halftime. During halftime, organizers brought the fan onto the court and gave him sweatshirts, T-shirts and hats while the spirit squad held up a banner that said "Thank you to all Lobo fans!" and "10-millionth Lobo men's basketball fan!" A short public address announcement recognized the fan and thanked all men's basketball fans through the years.

**Results:** The university received interest from local media, which greatly contributed to the success of the event. The local newspaper included a short story and photo of the honorary fan, and the event also was included on the local news that night.

## Women's Expo University of New Mexico

To attract more businesses to women's basketball games and increase attendance, the University of New Mexico looked to meet the goals of businesses with high exposure numbers at games at an affordable cost. The university knew if it could get thousands of fans to a game, more companies would be interested in spending money with its program. The athletics department also sought to bring in new businesses that would not normally attend or advertise during sporting events. With those premises in mind, the Women's Expo for basketball was born.

Here is the sales pitch: One game was determined to be the Women's Expo. Companies then were asked to purchase 100 tickets to the game. In return, each company received booth space on the concourse to promote its business. The tickets were sold at the normal group-discounted rate (for New Mexico, \$2 per ticket for groups of 100-499).

This idea works since companies can use the tickets as employee or customer incentives; they also get exposure in front of thousands of people. The benefit of the promotion for

the institution is that ticket sales and revenue will be among the highest of the season; also, the institution is introducing new companies into advertising at its athletics venues.

For this event to succeed, two strategies must be implemented. First, organizers should inform companies about the opportunity; second, they need to make sure that people attend the expo in addition to the basketball game. To accomplish the first objective, New Mexico partnered with local chambers of commerce by including information in their monthly direct-mail pieces. Athletics staff also attended the chambers' networking receptions and distributed information at those events. The staff also focused on women-owned businesses. Second, to inform people about the expo, the athletics department distributed numerous press releases and reminded fans through public address announcements not only to attend the game but also to visit the booths during pregame, halftime and postgame.

New Mexico was able to fit 30 booths around the arena concourse (the booths are nothing more than 1 foot x 6 foot tables). That corresponds to more than 3,000 group tickets sold for the game. With the season-ticket base and other walk-up -- a crowd attracts a crowd -- New Mexico had Women's Expo attendance of 11,000 one year and 16,000 the next.

The goal this year is to move the expo to an annex building and surpass the 16,000 mark by selling 50 booths (or 5,000 group tickets). Another option is to have the promotion during a men's and women's doubleheader and allow the businesses to set up during both games if they purchase 200 tickets for the women's game or 100 tickets to each. If companies cannot use all of the tickets they have purchased, they can offer them to local underprivileged youth. The key is to make sure people attend the expo.

After the event, organizers should follow up with the companies that participated with a thank you note from the head coach and a short survey to get feedback. Companies can be treated as "season ticket holders" the next year in a renewal campaign to continually build the event.

This program can be used for any sport and does not have to be limited to women. The "expo" can focus on general health, business, sports, clothing or any number of other topics.

### **Gummy Worm Squirm Northwestern University**

Four children are needed for this contest. Each contestant represents a different side of the basketball arena. Winners take home great prizes, and they also win prizes (gummy worms) for everybody on their side of the arena.

The public address announcer introduces the contestants to let each side know which child it should cheer for during the contest. Contestants also are given T-shirts that tell the crowd which side they are representing.

The contestants take their place in one of the four corners of the court. The PA announcer gives a signal and the kids squirm (army crawl) on their stomachs to center court where a mud pie (chocolate pudding) is waiting for each of them. They must search for the hidden gummy worm inside the pie using only their mouths. The first contestant to find the worm wins.

An addition to this contest is having the contestants make a basket after they find the worm. The first contestant to find the worm and make a basket wins. (The only problem with the addition is the mess that is made on the court when the kids are dripping with chocolate pudding as they are shooting baskets.)

### **Halloween Hoop-La Northwestern University**

**Who:** The primary target is Northwestern students.

**What:** Since Northwestern does not have a Midnight Madness event for its basketball teams, it decided to do a smaller preseason event during a practice on Halloween. The athletics department invited Northwestern students to attend a scrimmage, which was followed by an interactive session with players and coaches. Coach Bill Carmody selected five students and taught them to run his favorite offensive plays. Organizers also conducted a three-point contest that involved students teaming up with men's basketball players. The band and cheerleaders also performed, and the women's basketball team appeared to introduce itself to the men's fans that were on hand. All students attending received a free T-shirt, pizza, soda and schedule cups filled with Halloween candy and snacks.

**When:** Men's basketball practice on Halloween.

**How:** The event was conducted in an on-campus facility instead of the basketball arena, which is about a mile from campus. It was publicized in the student newspaper, flyers on campus, public address announcements at football games, flyers at football games and through e-mail.

**Results:** Organizers were pleased with the turnout. Students took the opportunity to get to know the players and coaches, which helped increase excitement for the men's basketball team for the next season.

### **Girl Scout night University of Oregon**

During a women's volleyball match and a women's basketball game, local Girl Scout troops were invited to attend a match or game at a discounted price. Flyers were sent to all troops in the area specifying the date and time of the event, as well as where tickets could be purchased. Presenting the flyer at the time of purchase allowed troop members a discounted price of \$3 per general admission ticket.

The flyer also specified a chance for those who brought the best banner to win a pizza party courtesy of Papa John's. Troops were judged by the marketing staff and were encouraged to wave the banners during a timeout or during a critical point of the game or match.

The promotion has been a huge success with area Girl Scout troops. About 60 flyers were redeemed for volleyball and 700 were redeemed for basketball.

### **Kids Bounce Challenge Oregon State University**

**Who:** The target audience is all fans attending a basketball game.

**When:** The Kids Bounce Challenge can be conducted during any timeout.

**What:** Two or three participants between the ages of 5 and 8 are needed, along with two or three fun hop balls (about \$11 each), different colored T-shirts that represent the different sides of the stadium and prizes to throw out to the fans (T-shirts, miniature basketballs).

**How:** The promotion is easy to set up.

- \* Select two or three kids.
- \* Each kid represents one side of the stadium. The T-shirts help distinguish them.
- \* The public address announcer lets the crowd know which kids represent which sides of the stadium.
- \* The kids race down the floor on the balls. The first one who makes it down the floor wins, and that side of the stadium gets the prizes thrown to them by the cheerleaders.

**Results:** The fans enjoy the contest, and the kids often are unpredictable, which makes the contest fun to watch.

### **\$25,000 Papa John's Scholarship Samford University**

**Description:** This year, Papa John's was approached to become Samford's premier pizza partner. In conjunction with the advertising package, Samford wanted to offer a season-long promotion to reinforce brand awareness. In creating the Papa John's \$25,000 Scholarship, organizers came up with a way to promote the product on campus while getting students to participate.

Numerous drop boxes equipped with pads of entry forms were positioned in high-traffic areas on campus. Students entered the contest by filling out an entry form. Before every men's and women's basketball game, the entries were collected and one contestant was drawn to participate in a shooting contest. If the contestant scored six points in a designated amount of time, he or she qualified for a chance to win a \$25,000 scholarship at the end of the season.

During halftime of the final men's and women's basketball games, organizers brought all of the qualifying contestants to the center of the court. Each contestant then randomly picked up a money bag that was on the court. Each bag had coupons for free Papa John's pizza, but one bag had a special coupon for a shot at the \$25,000 scholarship. The student with the special coupon had to make a lay-up, free throw, three-point shot and half-court shot in 24 seconds. The final contestants did very well in their effort but fell short of making all the baskets.

Ultimately, the promotion created great enthusiasm for students and got them actively involved with the sponsor. At the end of the season, organizers gave the sponsor all the entry forms so it could market directly to Samford students. The promotion allowed the students to connect with the sponsor by active participation fulfilling sponsor needs and adding excitement to Samford basketball games.

### **Big Foot, Big Shot Temple University**

**Who:** Kids about 5 to 8 years old.

**What you need:** An oversize basketball uniform (shirt and shorts), oversize shoes (about size 18) and a basketball.

**When:** During a media timeout or at halftime of basketball games.

**How:** The contestant is at one baseline. The uniform, shoes and basketball are at midcourt. With 45 to 60 seconds on the shot clock or scoreboard, the contestant must run to midcourt, get dressed in the oversized gear and dribble the ball to the other basket. If the contestant makes the basket, he or she wins a Temple/Sponsor Prize Pack.

**Results:** The promotion is not necessarily unique, but it consistently draws the biggest fan reaction. It generally comes down to the last second, and the crowd generally is pulling hard for the contestant.

### **Great American Paper Airplane Toss Winthrop University**

**Who:** Everyone in attendance.

**What:** An automobile and paper airplanes.

**When:** Halftime of a basketball game.

**How:** Get a car dealership to put up a car as a prize and to cover the insurance of the contest. Display the car at some of the games before the target date. Give everyone who comes through the door piece of paper that can be made into an airplane. Drive the car under a goal and put a trash can on the floor so that people from all sides of the coliseum can participate. Give them a countdown and watch the paper airplanes fly. Fans put their names on the airplanes; if one goes in the trash can (or some other small target), the fan wins the car.

**Results:** Winthrop has conducted the contest for six years, and it has become a community and student favorite. A large advertisement in the local newspaper touts the contest; the car dealership also promotes it to customers the week of the contest.

### **Air Force Honor Guard and Mascot Mania Fresno State**

**Description:** Fresno State is attempting not only to provide competitive athletics programs but also to create an atmosphere to which fans want to return. The budget is limited, but the low-cost promotions are effective in building fan enthusiasm.

**Air Force Honor Guard:** During the 2000 football season, Fresno State brought the U.S. Air Force Honor Guard's 16-man team to Bulldog Stadium for a halftime performance. The demonstration is similar to the beginning of the movie "A Few Good Men," in which the Naval Honor Team flips rifles with precision. The eight-minute performance was a major hit with fans.

**Mascot mania:** This season, Fresno State used women's basketball as the platform to showcase Mascot Mania. Those participating included TimeOut (the Fresno State Bulldog), Tony the Tiger, the Carl's Jr. Star, Bobby the Bubbles Beaver, Sammy Slice, Captain Deal and Friends the Fresno Bee, Gabe from Red Robin Restaurants and others. Mascots also were used during the 2000 women's soccer season. In both cases, the promotion was geared toward San Joaquin Valley youth. A "meet and greet" session for children followed each event.

### **Women's Football Clinic University of New Mexico**

**Who:** The target group is women age 21 and over.

**Goals:** To increase opportunities for underprivileged youth, to get women more interested in football and to promote general education about football.

**What is needed:** Female participants, football coaching staff assistance, football field access, football information packets, football equipment, space for a reception and refreshments.

**When:** August, to promote the approaching season.

**Where:** The football stadium and a nearby pavilion for a reception.

**How:** The clinic is \$15 per woman, with all proceeds going directly to New Mexico's "Send-A-Kid Program," which purchases season tickets for underprivileged youth in the Albuquerque area.

The athletics staff finds participants and sends renewal or prospect letters. The prospect list consists of women in business from the Albuquerque Women in Business directory, Lobo Club members and corporate sponsors.

The marketing staff sets up the event, which begins with dinner, beverages and a short welcome speech from the director of marketing, who explains the Send-A-Kid Program. A guest speaker from one of the Send-A-Kid recipient agencies then thanks the women for contributing to the program.

After dinner and speakers, the women tour the facilities, including the athletic training room, the weight room and the locker room. The head football coach gives a speech in the locker room and answers questions for about 10 minutes. The women then divide into their respective clinic groups -- on-field or classroom, beginner or advanced.

The football staff runs the clinic. The on-field clinic allows women to get on the field and use practice equipment (tackling dummies, pads, shields, etc.). The classroom clinic is a Football 101 class, in which women hear about different plays and strategies.

**Results:** This was the eighth year of the clinic, but the first year of the "on-field" clinic. The women enjoyed the event and liked being able to get on the field with the coaches. The event has become well-known with callers now inquiring annually about when it will be conducted. The age range of the participants has been from 25 to 72.

### **VIP Autograph Session and Meet-the-Coach Event Northwestern University**

**What:** This first-time invitation-only event featured several players and coaches on hand to sign autographs, picture opportunities with the mascot and cheerleaders, free soft drinks and appetizers, the opportunity to complete a season-ticket-holder survey, and a chance to register for a \$10,000 field-goal kick. The Northwestern head football coach wrapped up the event with an address to the crowd and a question-and-answer session.

**When:** The 90-minute event was conducted the morning of the spring football game.

**Where:** It was held in the basketball arena, which is adjacent to the football stadium. The giveaways and surveys were set up in the lobby, with player and coach autograph stations on the court. Attendees then were directed to lower-level seats on one side of the arena, where they were addressed by the coach.

**How:** Major steps included identifying an appropriate start time based on the availability of the players and coaches. Invitations (e-mails and postcards) were sent to all season-ticket holders. Other challenges included laying out the arena, securing product and sponsor involvement, developing a survey and developing appropriate signage.

**Results:** Organizers were pleased with the results, attendance and feedback. Several hundred season-ticket holders attended. "We have made it a top objective to add more value and incentives to being a season-ticket holder," Boyer said, "and exclusive events will become a more frequent occurrence."

### **Beaver Fun Run Oregon State University**

**Race information:** The spring football game starts with a "Countdown to Kickoff" 10K and 5K race/walk. As participants near the finish line into Reser Stadium, cheerleaders root them on as they finish down the players' ramp, through the inflatable football helmet and are pictured on the stadium Jumbotron. They cross the finish line while the band plays the school fight song and are pictured with the Oregon State mascot, Benny the Beaver. Fans then take part of a day full of festivities, culminating with the spring game.

**Location/course:** The race/walk is conducted on a flat loop course around the campus. A 1,000-meter race is conducted inside Reser Stadium for kids 12 and under.

**Results:** The Beaver Fun Run was conducted for the third time in 2002 and has grown from 150 runners to 500 runners.

### **Big Hawk/Little Hawk Quincy University**

The Quincy Big Hawk/Little Hawk program pairs football players with youngsters in Quincy-area schools. The program involves football players in the community as they help in elementary schools. "There's always something for them to do," said Kelle Bunch, principal of St. Boniface Elementary School. "Even the custodians take advantage of their visits, asking the young men to set up tables for bingo or move heavy equipment. They spend time with the teachers in the classroom to help with whatever they need."

Offensive lineman Ivan Taylor said he talks with the pupils about staying in school and reaching their dreams. "I have a little brother at home in the sixth grade," he said. "I happen to be with the sixth-grade class this year, so it is kind of touching for me. It reminds me of home."

The children are enthusiastic about the extra attention. "I like them," said fifth-grader Scott Sass. "They are really cool and they hang out with us. I love it when these guys come."

### **Home Run Derby with the Football Team Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

With the Virginia Tech football team earning national recognition in recent years, players are especially revered in the small community of Blacksburg and the surrounding area.

In an effort to promote the softball team, several members of the football team were asked to participate in a "Home Run Derby" similar to the program seen on television. Several members of the football team expressed the ease with which they planned to drive the softball out of the park; others proclaimed a total lack of softball skills. In either case, the softball assistant coach, a former professional player, offered to pitch to the football players.

The event was publicized on two local radio stations with softball players making guest appearances on a morning show and on a sports-talk station. On the day of the doubleheader, about 500 fans enjoyed two Virginia Tech wins and stayed for the postgame festivities. Round One featured the assistant coach blazing fastballs past the helpless players. Round two featured slower pitching and numerous tape measure shots by the football players that the fans truly enjoyed.

All told, the event promoted the softball games that day while also giving the football team a new respect for women's athletics -- particularly Hokie softball.

### **B.U. Annual Chowderfest Boston University**

**Who:** This event targets students, faculty and staff, community, sponsors, alumni, kids and families.

**What:** (1) Promoters need restaurants to participate. Boston U. uses a clam-chowder theme because Boston is known for its great chowder. However, a school can use a signature food for its particular city or feature a variety of food samples and call it "Tastefest"; (2) tables and tablecloths; (3) electrical outlets for restaurants to keep food warm throughout the event; (4) a voting booth or table at which participants can select their favorite chowder (or other food); (5) a drink station; and (6) famous alumni or former athletes who are available to sign autographs.

**When:** Boston U.'s Chowderfest was a pregame event at men's soccer games. At halftime, promoters announced the winning restaurant based on fans' votes. This particular event was tied to a field dedication celebration and took place on homecoming weekend when parents and families were in town.

**How:** (1) Create a proposal for local restaurants to show how this promotion can benefit them. Permit them to hand out coupons, flyers, directions and other material to promote their business. Organizers either can pay the restaurants to participate or develop a trade-out agreement with them; (2) call area restaurants (especially those known for the specialty food involved) and present the proposal; (3) draw a site map of how the event is to be set up; (4) be prepared with extra helpers since the restaurants may be willing to provide the food but no servers; (5) follow up with restaurants on delivery time, how long to stay, the location of the event, etc., at least a week in advance so there is no misunderstanding; (6) be prepared with extra extension cords, plastic utensils, paper plates or bowls, plastic cups, napkins and trash bags; and (7) if a sound system is available, choose some “mood music” to play while people are sampling.

### **Elementary School Days Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

To further promote two Olympic sports, Virginia Tech tapped the target audience of the local elementary school system.

During the fall, Virginia Tech offered physical education teachers the opportunity to have the Hokies’ cross country team visit their schools and discuss the importance of physical fitness, good sportsmanship and proper nutrition while also describing cross country. After the lesson, the kids were taken to a makeshift cross country course where they were given posters and pompoms before an actual varsity race. Sitting in strategic spots, they cheered the Virginia Tech team to a successful race. The Hokies then signed autographs.

The same promotion was conducted in the spring for the women’s lacrosse team, which visited two elementary schools and discussed the history of the sport and the fundamentals of the game. Brief sessions were conducted on passing, shooting and running with the ball. Later that week, the two schools bused their classes to a Virginia Tech home game. There, the kids received free pompoms, stickers and posters, and some even practiced their new lacrosse skills in a halftime relay contest. The event was successful and will be repeated in future years.

### **Hawaiian Night/Aloha Saturday University of Colorado, Boulder**

In an attempt to create more excitement at home volleyball matches, every Saturday home match for the Colorado women’s volleyball team was designated as Hawaiian Night. The idea stemmed from the attire for each match worn by Buffalo head coach Pi’i Aiu, a Hawaii native. All advertising for those matches called for fans to come in their Aloha shirts and other Hawaiian-like paraphernalia. Coaches, managers, athletics department staff, parents, press row workers, ball shaggers and the mascot Chip all participated and urged the fans to join in.

Advertising for the matches had a Hawaiian theme -- flyers for campus and local youth and community organizations, newspaper ads, BuffVision spots, and press releases. In-game activities centered on the Hawaiian theme as well. Colorado volleyball T-shirts

with Hawaiian art were created and given to the first 300 fans at early season matches. They also were thrown into the crowd between games at every match and used as prizes for contests.

Those contests included hula-hooping, limbo contests and Hawaiian serving contests, in which participants tried to serve the volleyball over the net and into a baby pool. Hawaiian music was played over the arena audio system and the dance team performed to surfer/beach style music.

The promotion created a more exciting atmosphere in the Coors Event/Conference Center and proved to be popular with fans.

### **Volleyball honorary captain Indiana University, Bloomington**

**Who:** This promotion was reserved for children under 12.

**What:** One child and an IU goody bag.

**When:** At each Big Ten Conference volleyball match.

**How:** During the nonconference portion of the home schedule, kids were invited to sign up to be an honorary captain at a future Big Ten match. The honorary captains were given free tickets for themselves and reserved courtside seats for their family. They also were given a goody bag upon arrival. The bag included an autographed team poster, schedule cards, stickers and an IU Credit Union seat cushion. Before the match, the honorary captain was introduced with the team on the court. Kids were selected randomly from the entries received and contacted by the IU sports marketing staff.

**Results:** Children loved this as they got a chance to be part of the team for a few minutes. Most kids loved the chance to run onto the court and be introduced. The families also enjoyed the event, and many photos were snapped by proud parents.

### **NCAA Men's Volleyball Championship Pennsylvania State University**

**Who:** The promotion was targeted toward Penn State students.

**What:** Two or three marketing representatives were assigned to sell sponsorships. A total of 175 all-session student tickets were given away at the semifinal and championship matches.

**How:** After acquiring approval from the NCAA, organizers presented four opportunities to local vendors so they could feel like a part of the championship. The Ace, Spike, Assist and Dig packages include the sponsorship of student tickets, along with tickets to the event and ads in the championship program. The arrangement was successful,

resulting in a total of 175 sponsored student tickets. The first 175 students each night were to bring a receipt from one of the local businesses to get into the championship free.

**Results:** All sponsored tickets were given away both nights even though Penn State lost in the semifinals. The crowd exceeded the listed capacity of 5,400 both nights.

**Additional promotions:** In addition to the sponsored tickets, Penn State increased attendance at the Men's Volleyball Championship in the following ways.

- Organizers placed a magnetic NCAA volleyball logo with the telephone number for tickets on an attractive new car provided by a local auto dealer. The car was parked in visible areas, such as at baseball games and on College Avenue downtown.
- In November, organizers sent 700 letters to high-school boys' volleyball teams in Pennsylvania and neighboring states. The letters included a group ticket form.
- Fliers were distributed in the student union during finals week.
- Posters with ticket information were displayed at key sites.

### **Future Irish University of Notre Dame**

Local elementary and middle schools (private and public) were contacted during August through letters and promotional flyers. All schools were presented with an opportunity to choose one home volleyball match to attend for free. Children and chaperones were asked to arrive one hour before the start of the match. Tickets were held for attendees at will-call, and a marketing representative met the group upon arrival. All children attending the Future Irish program received the following: a certificate of promotion (signed by the coach), a special pass to the concession stand, a greeting by two or three volleyball players before the match, a schedule poster and schedule magnet, the featured giveaway item of the match, and the opportunity to take part in a postgame autograph session with the team. The group leader also received a packet with 10 to 15 Notre Dame items (T-shirts, mini-volleyballs, etc.) for the purpose of raffling them off to students before the start of the match. Throughout the season, the number of Future Irish participants ranged from 30 to 200 a match, helping to enhance the atmosphere.

### **Mini Stress Volleyball Giveaway and Name that Tune Contest Ohio State University**

**Promotion:** A total of 500 mini stress volleyballs, imprinted with the Ohio State logo, were distributed to fans at a Buckeyes volleyball game. In conjunction with the giveaway, the promotion staff designed a "Name that Tune" contest that offered spectators the chance to win a variety of prizes.

**Description:** The women's volleyball promotional calendar was mailed, faxed and otherwise distributed to Ohio high-school and middle school volleyball programs and to Ohio State students. The public was made aware of the upcoming promotions through advertising. Upon entrance to the match, fans were given a mini stress volleyball, each packaged individually. Before the match, the marketing staff affixed to the wrapper a

label detailing information about the match promotion and the “Name that Tune” contest. A small number of labels notified recipients that they were instant winners of a volleyball autographed by the Ohio State team. Other labels qualified 10 fans for participation in an intermission contest with a chance to win a DVD player. The remaining labels described the “Name that Tune” contest, which involved the marketing staff playing music by certain artists throughout the match; if the name of the song matched the artist on the wrapper, the fan received a free Buckeye volleyball T-shirt.

**Results:** The promotion was designed to increase attendance while giving fans opportunities to participate in contests, and it was successful in both regards. The mini stress volleyballs were especially popular.