2010- 2011 MARKETING PLAN

This plan will outline the marketing initiatives for the Lady Lancers Softball programs at Longwood University.

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Longwood University 2010-2011

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Executive Summary

Longwood University (Lancers) is a public university in the center of Farmville, VA. Founded in 1839, Longwood became a university in 2002. After a 4-year reclassification period, Longwood Athletics transitioned from Division II to Division I on September 1, 2007; The Lancers are officially eligible for conference and NCAA championships as a Division I school. Prior to 2007, Longwood competed at the Division II level since 1980 following Division III and AIAW competition previous to that, with women’s teams dating back to the 1920’s as the school became co-educational in 1976.

Longwood University Athletics is competing as an Independent member of NCAA Division I for the third year during 2009-10.  The Lancers received their official certification and eligibility prior to 2007-08 (see below).  Longwood does have single-sport conference affiliations in the fall sports of field hockey (Northern Pacific Field Hockey Conference) and men's soccer (Atlantic Soccer Conference), while the spring sport of women's lacrosse (National Lacrosse Conference) has single-sport affiliation as well.

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Mission

The Mission of the Longwood University’s Department of Athletics is to foster a broad-based athletics program emphasizing democrative values as well as the personal growth and development of all student-athletes. The Department of Athletics operates in synergy with the university’s stated purpose and goals, namely Longwood University is an institution of higher education dedicated to the development of citizen leaders who are prepared to make positive contributions to the common good of society.

The Department encourages attitudes of self-discipline, group loyalty, good sportsmanship, and personal integrity; an appreciation for the benefits of hard work, motivation, and perseverance; and a feeling of pride in achievement, and tolerance in diversity. Athletic competition is dedicated to fostering important values such as respect for every individual, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility.

Through a dedicated commitment to educational excellence, personal and civic responsibility, a strong athletic program and integrity in all areas, the student-athletes, coaches and staff strive to bring credit and recognition to Longwood University. Furthermore, the Department of Athletics strives to develop student athletes academically and athletically with the total commitment to aiding their development in a manner that enables them to advance in a chosen career as productive citizen leaders upon graduation.

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2011 Softball Schedule

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Lancer Leadoff Classic Opponent Time Promotions | | | | | |
| **2/19/2011** |  | [**IUPUI**](http://iupuijags.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** | **“Blue and White” Opener** |
| **2/19/2011** |  | [**Army**](http://www.goarmysports.com/SplashPage.dbml?SPLASH_AD_ID=513624) | **Farmville, Va.** | **3:00 p.m.** |  |
| **2/20/2011** |  | [**Quinnipiac**](http://www.quinnipiacbobcats.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** |  |
| **2/20/2011** |  | [**IUPUI**](http://iupuijags.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **3:00 p.m.** |  |
| **2/26/2011** |  | [**Stony Brook**](http://www.goseawolves.org/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** |  |
| **2/26/2011** |  | [**Quinnipiac**](http://www.quinnipiacbobcats.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **3:00 p.m.** |  |
| **2/27/2011** |  | [**Stony Brook**](http://www.goseawolves.org/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** |  |
| **2/27/2011** |  | [**Bucknell**](http://www.bucknellbison.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **3:00 p.m.** | **Batter Up/**  **Youth Day** |
| **3/25/2011** |  | [**Cornell (DH)**](http://www.cornellbigred.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** |  |
| **3/26/2011** |  | [**Hampton (DH)**](http://www.hamptonpirates.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** |  |
| **3/30/2011** |  | [**James Madison (DH)**](http://www.jmusports.com) | **Farmville, Va.** | **4:00 p.m.** |  |
| 4/6/2011 |  | [Radford (DH)](http://www.ruhighlanders.com) | Radford, Va. | 2:00 p.m. |  |
| **4/9/2011** |  | [**South Carolina (DH)**](http://gamecocksonline.cstv.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** |  |
| **4/10/2011** |  | [**Charleston Southern (DH)**](http://www.csusports.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **12:00 p.m.** |  |
| **4/21/2011** |  | [**Binghamton (DH)**](http://www.bubearcats.com) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:30 p.m.** |  |
| **4/23/2011** |  | [**Liberty | Senior Day (DH)**](http://www.libertyflames.com) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** |  |
| **5/7/2011** |  | [**East Carolina**](http://www.ecupirates.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **12:00 p.m.** |  |
| **5/7/2011** |  | [**UMBC**](http://www.umbcretrievers.com) | **Farmville, Va.** | **4:00 p.m.** |  |
| **5/8/2011** |  | [**East Carolina**](http://www.ecupirates.com/) | **Farmville, Va.** | **1:00 p.m.** | **“Hey Hey Goodbye”/ Relay Race** |

Situational Analysis

Longwood is entering the third year as a full Division I post-season eligible Athletic Department. The community and university are excited about the exposure and level of talent that will be heading in Farmville.

Market:

Demographics

Longwood University

Enrollment

Students: 4800

Undergraduate: 4080 Graduate: 720

- Female: 69%

- Minority: 12%

- In- State students: 90%

- Students come for 25 different states and foreign countries

Faculty: 211

Farmville (2009)

Population: 7,396

* Female: 59.7%
* Minority: 27%
* Average household income: $34,428
* Residents 18-64 years old: 70.4%
* Unemployment: 19%

Prince Edward County (2009)

Population: 22, 370

* Female: 50.1%
* Minority: 38.2%
* Avg. Household income: $41, 062
* Residents over 18 years old: 79.8%
* Unemployment: 9.5%

Market Trends & Potential

Longwood University has increased enrollment from 3,300 to 4,800 since 2000.

Farmville has grown from a population of 6,845 to 7,396 since 2000.

Prince Edward County has grown from a population of 19,720 to 20,530 since 2000.

The Longwood population has gradually increased every year since 2000. As our university and athletic department continue to grow, we will gain more national exposure. The move to Division I provided the stepping stone for Longwood Athletics to join a conference as a whole, and eventually, earn the right to represent the conference in NCAA Championships. This inevitable conference will give us an opportunity to expand our fan-base and sponsorship opportunities.

Marketing Strategies

Value Proposition:

Longwood is looking to compete at the highest level of college basketball competition and draw national attention to the university and the community. Competing at this level of college basketball will provide fans and sponsors with an exceptional experience and connection to Longwood University. This valued association will aid Longwood in becoming successful at the Division I level, and in turn, bring more revenue to the University and the Farmville community.

Financial Objectives

Ticket Sales:

Marketing Objectives:

1. To increase average home game attendance by 30%.
2. To create awareness about our Division I Athletic programs and build fan loyalty through promotional initiatives.
3. To create awareness among local businesses about the potential sponsorship opportunities available through Longwood Athletics. We will also increase awareness by becoming actively involved in community related events.
4. To create effective promotional incentives that will attract the interest of the student population, youth in the community, and members in the community.
5. To encourage current fans and sponsors to continue to support Longwood Athletics, and show appreciation for all participation and feedback.
6. To create new promotions and marketing materials in order to reach others to become fans of the women of the Softball team.

SWOT Analysis

Based on the marketing objectives, previously mentioned, we formed a SWOT analysis that illustrates what we may encounter while implementing the stages we plan to take to reach the goals that are set forth Listed below are the strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats for the Longwood Softball programs. Longwood needs to emphasize on their strengths and capitalize on the opportunities while realizing the weaknesses demonstrated and to use them to our advantage.

Strengths:

Not Televised: The games are not televised, so this pushes forth people coming out to show their support in attendance for the games especially home games.

Division I: Longwood University is eligible for the NCAA tournament. This allows for more attention to our Softball Lancers.

Large Market: The freshmen are an important key to the Softball games, in that they make up 25% of the student population. This, in

Venue: The Lancer Field has more space where people can park. This can help increase attendance.

Weaknesses:

Location: Softball games are at the Lancer Field. This location makes it harder for those people who don’t have appropriate transportation to come out and support the games.

Opportunities

Student Organizations- There is over 100 student organizations on campus. This is beneficial to our marketing strategy because it will allow us to get the student organizations involved by hosting contests between groups and other promotions geared towards student organizations.

Threats

Other Universities- There are 14 Division I universities in The Commonwealth of Virginia. Of the 14, Virginia Tech and University of Virginia nearly monopolizes the Virginia population. The bigger threats though are the colleges in closer proximity, directly competing for the same sponsorships and fan base.

Entertainment Options- Farmville offers a movie theater and a bowling alley for community entertainment. Prince Edward High School and Fuqua Schools also provides the community with other sporting options.

TARGET MARKET:

Our target market is the Longwood community and Farmville/Prince Edward County community.

Longwood students, faculty, and staff are our primary target market for game attendance. We feel that this is so because they are more likely to be loyal in connection to our university. Students are more likely to attend the games because they are closest, and also close to some of the players. The student population is over 50% of the overall Farmville area.

The Farmville/Prince Edward County community is our secondary market. It is essential that we get the local community involved in Longwood Athletics if we are to succeed as a Division I university.

**MARKETING MIX STRATEGIES**

**Product Marketing**:

Longwood is building awareness in the community and university on Longwood’s official Division I status. Longwood is in the process of changing consumer’s perception of Longwood as a Division II school and repositioning Longwood with the big name schools in the country. As a Division I university, Longwood will bring national recognition to the university, and recruit Division I caliber athletes that will compete against tougher competitors.

**Price:**

\*\*\* Single Game Ticket Prices

Longwood Students free with ID

$6.00 – Adults

$4.00- Senior Citizens

Free- Children 3 and under

**Place:** Longwood Lancer Field capacity 2250, is home to Lancers Softball team. It is in a new location as of the Spring of 2008. Further renovations to the Lancer Field took place in 2009 including additional land added to the field. There is an average of 160 that come to the home games while 113 at the away games.

**Promotions**

Many of the promotions are geared towards increasing student attendance at home softball games. We want to start the season off with a bang so our fans, freshmen especially, will have positive experiences when they are introduced to the Lancer Softball team. The following is a list of promotions:

***Lancer Goes Blue--- Batter Up: (2-19---Season Opener)***

Our Softball season openers will be our Blue and White Out games.

The inspirations behind the name are the colors of Longwood University , blue and white. All of the fans will be asked to wear blue and white to show unity and support for the Lancers Softball team. We will advertise this promotion through flyers, email, campus radio, and newspapers. In an effort to pack the Longwood Lancer Field, the marketing team could give out coupons perhaps from a sponsor to the first 10 Lancer fans that are present.

I’m seeing Blue and White! This halftime promotion will be a batter contest between two fans. They are to run up to the line and run a home run and the one who gets the farthest wins a prize. The prize will be Longwood gear of course.

Our goal is to increase attendance at the season opener and get student and fans excited about the upcoming softball games.

***Youth Day: (2-27-11)***

This will be a day where a kid will get to come out onto the field with the players and get to interact with each other. There will also be a Sac Race around the field and the winner gets a prize or both participants…lancer gear and autographs from the players. (maybe a plaque or something to present to a someone who will represent the Youth Empowerment Center)

We will contact The Youth Empowerment Center in Farmville, VA as a sponsor to come out and support this event. This will make a connection with the Lancers and the Farmville community . Before the game is over, there will be someone to come out and speak to the youth about what the Youth Empowerment Center is about.

***Hey, Hey Goodbye: ( 5-8-11)***

This will be the last game of the season, and I will play the musical chairs with the song titled Hey, Hey Goodbye.

**Ongoing Promotion: Lancer Trivia**

The trivia will always have something to do with Longwood University. “It’s time for Lancer Trivia” and you may win a prize!

**Advertisements**

Throughout the season, ads and releases will be placed in the campus newspaper (The Rotunda) as well as posters and flyers to be made. I will come up with unique ways to grab the attention of the students and Farmville Community.

For example: Youth Day: may use the logo of the Youth Empowerment Center, and some kids on a flyer or to put in The Rotunda.

**Channels of Distribution**

All the games may be broadcasted on Longwood’s station (WMLU), and online. Live webcasts also.