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**SITUATION ANALYSIS**

 *Rubber City Rollergirls Inc. is a nonprofit women’s roller derby league based in Akron Ohio. The organization was established in 2008 and competes annually in local and national roller derby competitions. The roller derby league gives back to the community by primarily supporting causes that serve underprivileged children and women.*

**Problem Statement**

 The RCRG is lacking a consistent fan base that supports the organization year round and is willing to help the organization raise funds through ticket sales and individual donations that can in turn be given to other established nonprofits groups in Summit County that support women and children.

 **Strengths** Beyond love for the sport, the Rubber City Roller Girls (RCRG) as an organization shares a unique mission. All the women on the team support local charities. They specifically look to promote the empowerment of women and children. With a limited budget, the RCRG manage to make some monetary donations and service time as a contribution to a number of charities.

The RCRGs have a very consistent fan base, meaning the same people go to bouts and buy team merchandise. Although the fan base is small, it is reliable.

**Weaknesses *Perception vs. Reality***

The RCRG face several challenges that are all interconnected. First, it is an organization that participates in an extremely physical contact sport that may be perceived as rough, aggressive and possibly violent. Their mission, which is positive, is not known to the public. Although the RCRG do have a consistent and reliable fan base it isn’t large, nor is it growing.

***Profit & Support***

In direct correlation to the lack of fans, the RCRGs have a minuscule budget. Their limited funds are typically allocated toward things such as practice/bout facilities, marketing/promotional materials, team uniforms, and charitable donations. RCRG find that they are constantly bargaining for cheaper rates and deals. The RCRG have never identified a definite target audience. By aiming for a broad audience, the organization can’t reach any one market in particular which prevents them from increasing their profits. Their merchandise sales are dwindling because they have had the same logo design for years. To address this need, RCRG agreed to look at revamping their logo, but don’t want to necessarily rebrand themselves.

***Online Presence***

The RCRG have social media and website presence, but it is weak in several aspects. They are not utilizing the potential of free social media platforms; they do not update their social media pages regularly or post information that is relevant, informative, intriguing, and consistent. The website lacks the structure of an attractive and functional website. There are visibility issues, due to the overuse of team colors and other contrasting color pallets. Usability problems are present because not all of the links are active.

**Opportunities** There are an abundance of opportunities for the RCRG. Most of their weaknesses can be overcome if they can build a platform to work from. When some effort is put forth, the RCRG will be able to carry out the proposed public relations plan themselves.

***Generating Interest***

By strengthening and organizing their online presence the RCRGs can educate potential fans about the sport of roller derby, their mission/goals, and information pertaining specifically to the team and bouts.

If the team is able to identify a target audience and market themselves toward that population, they are likely to effectively reach more people. An updated logo could be useful for new merchandise, but slogans could be implemented and created in a number of ways and prove to be just as beneficial.

**Threats *Lacking Popularity***

Rubber City Roller Girls already face a huge challenge by competing in a unique sport that isn’t mainstream. There is little publicity for the sport and some people don’t understand the appeal of roller derby. If potential consumers don’t understand the sport or who it is on the team its unlikely that they will pay to watch or support such an organization.

***Time Restraints***

The RCRG is an entirely volunteer-run organization. Many of the team members enjoy roller derby as a hobby, but have a limited amount of time to devote towards marketing and managing. This time constraint makes delegation of tasks impossible, leaving the president to handle everything on her own.

***Struggling to Exists***

Ultimately, if the RCRG don’t begin to generate revenue they could possibly face extinction. This is a nonprofit organization, composed of team members who share an interest in a hobby and their operational budget barely supports team cost.

***Charitable Voice***

 RCRG’s charitable efforts are not well established in the community and in order to strengthen their charitable voice the organization needs to build relationships with nonprofit organizations within Summit County. Once this is established, RCRG will began to cultivate relationships with nonprofit charitable organizations, which compliments the core values and principles of their mission. These relationships will also root them in the nonprofit sector and may help establish inform community leaders, funders and philanthropist

**IDENTIFYING KEY PUBLICS**

*-Previously, the RCRG defined its target audience as college-age students. It was an extremely broad and unfocused target audience. Roller derby is a type of sport that attracts women and former athletes and its target audience should be more reflective of those most often drawn to the sport itself.*

**Target Audience A** It is recommended that the RCRG target an audience comprised of married women age 18-50 that reside in the Summit County metropolitan area with children between the ages of 10 to 25. The women should be former athletes that now hold flexible jobs that allow time for volunteering at nonprofits organizations and partaking in various after work activities. The woman should live in a household with an annual income of $50,000 or more. The women should also be high school graduates with some college in their background. In addition, women should enjoy drinking beer and socializing in sports bars.

**Target Audience B** The RCRG should also target single women between the ages of 18 to 30 that live in the city of Akron. These women should be sports enthusiasts that hold either part-time jobs or attend a local college or both. This target audience typically is childless and seeks out interactive and physically challenging activities as a way to socialize and keep fit. Their annual income should be less than $35,000, but almost 20 percent of their income can go toward personal and entertainment expenditures.

**GOAL, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, & TACTICS**

**GOAL: FOR RUBBER CITY ROLLERGIRLS TO INCREASE AND STRENGTHEN THEIR ROLLER DERBY BOUT ATTENDANCE WITHIN SUMMIT COUNTY**

**Objective 1:** Increase RCRG’s bout attendance by 5% by targeting former female athletes with children within one year.

**Strategy 1a:** Use a Facebook social media strategy to inform families about women’s roller derby by promoting the family friendly events at RCRG’s bout season.

**Tactic 1a:** (End of December) Appoint a social media representative to manage Facebook and Twitter pages.

**Tactic 2a:** (End of first week of January) Set up Facebook page, using the redesigned logo as the profile picture.

**Tactic 3a:** (End of first week of January) Connect Facebook account to Hootsuite

**Tactic 4a:** (End of first week of January) Post the bout schedule so that families know about them far enough in advance to plan for attendance.

 **Tactic 5a:** (Mid-January) Begin posting facts about what roller derby is and, thereby, increase awareness about the sport of roller derby. Post 2-3 times per week in order to create a consistent media presence.

*Sample Post*



What is a pack in roller derby?

 A pack, is group of eight players that block the opposing team’s point scorer out of bounds. Learn more about roller derby live and in action at Rubber City Rollergirls first bout February 15!

**Tactic 6a:** (Beginning of February) Begin posting videos from last season, using bit.ly links to assist with tracking the views of each of the videos.

**Tactic 7a:** (During the season) Announce a new Facebook fan of the month. This individual will be selected randomly and will be announced at each bout, as well as on Facebook.

**Tactic 8a:** (Different times during the season) Begin offering discount tickets on Facebook. For this promotion, people would have to say a special code word when they go to purchase the tickets. This will encourage fan interaction on the Facebook site.

**Tactic 9a:** (Throughout the year): Use Hootsuite to keep track of how fans interact with your Facebook page. Use Hootsuite to reply to any comments that are left on your page.

**Tactic 10a:** (During off season): Continue to post facts and information about Roller Derby. This will help you to remain relevant during the off-season.

**Strategy 1b:** Develop a media relations strategy to heighten RCRG’s community efforts with families in Summit County.

**Tactic 1b:** (By end of January) Appoint a webmaster to assist with new webpage launch and to regularly update the content of the website.

**Tactic 2b:** (By end of January Designate a public relations liaison to serve as the contact person for the organization. This person will be the primary individual who communicates with the media.

**Tactic 3b:** (Mid-February) Begin using redesigned webpage. Regularly update with relevant information about upcoming bouts and charitable events.

**Tactic 4b:** (End of February) Begin contacting local community newspapers and magazines within Summit county to discuss placing promotional ads for discount tickets and family themed bout events.

**Objective 2:** Increase RCRG’s bout attendance by 7% by targeting single women who are sports enthusiasts within one year.

**Strategy 2c:** RCRG will implement a media relations strategy to target single women sports enthusiast by redefining the organization’s public relation sources.

**Tactic 1c:** (By mid-January) Appoint a webmaster to assist with new webpage launch and to regularly update the content of the website.

**Tactic 2c:** (By mid-January) Designate a public relations liaison to serve as the contact person for the organization. This person will be the primary individual who communicates with the media.

**Tactic 3c:** (End of January) Begin using redesigned webpage. Regularly update with relevant information about upcoming bouts and charitable events

**Tactic 4c:** (Mid-February) Begin contacting local community newspapers and magazines within Summit county to discuss placing promotional ads for discount tickets and family themed bout events. This press release will state who the Rubber City Rollergirls are, the impact that they have had on the community in the past (stating past charitable efforts), and what they plan on doing in the future for the community.

**Strategy 2d:** Use a Twitter social media strategy to inform the target audience about the competitive and theatrical aspects of women’s roller derby.

**Tactic 1d:** (End of December) Appoint a social media representative to manage Facebook and Twitter pages.

**Tactic 2d:** (End of first week of January) Set up Twitter page, using the redesigned logo as the profile picture.

**Tactic 3d:** (End of first week of January) Connect Twitter account to Hootsuite

**Tactic 4d:** (End of first week of January) Post bout schedule so that sports enthusiasts are informed far enough in advance.

**Tactic 5d:** (Beginning of February) Begin posting pictures and video clips to show the competitive nature of women’s roller derby. Use bit.ly links in order to track the views of each picture and clip.

**Tactic 6d:** (Throughout the season) Announce a new Twitter follower of the month. This individual will be selected randomly and will be announced at each bout, as well as on Twitter.

**Tactic 7d:** (Different times during the season) Begin offering discount tickets on Twitter. For this promotion, people would have to say a special code word when they go to purchase the tickets. This will encourage fan interaction on the Twitter site.

**Tactic 8d:** (Throughout the year): Use Hootsuite to keep track of how fans interact with your Twitter page. Use Hootsuite to reply to any tweets or direct messages that your followers post.

**Tactic 9d:** (During off season): Continue to post facts and information about Roller Derby. This will help you to remain relevant during the off-season

**Tactic 9e:** (During off season): Continue to monitor Hootsuite to keep track of how fans interact with the Roller Derby information posted on Twitter. Use Hootsuite to reply to any tweets or direct messages that your followers post.

**BUDGET**

RCRG has a budget of $2,000 for marketing costs.

If the RCRG wish to move the redesigned website to their current domain, it will cost between $100 and $150 per year. Beyond this, outside of their usual expenditures for advertisements in the West Side Leader, the Repository and other print material, the proposed plan can be implemented at no additional cost.

**TIMELINE**

To maintain a presence in the public eye and to encourage the public to support its nonprofit mission, through the next six months the organization needs to have a detailed plan of how to efficiently handle changes to its social media sites, its website, its media relations goals and community outreach. Below, the monthly timeline gives the RCRG a checklist of to-do-items and will keep members of the organization from being overwhelmed.

**December 2013**

**Website:**

* Appoint a webmaster to handle website redesign and content
* Decide on a low-cost website developer to use (wix.com; web.com, ect.)

**Logo:**

* Designate a designer to revamp logo

**Social Media:**

* Designate a social media representative
* Join Hootsuite, connecting all online social media sites

**Community Relations:**

* Designate a community relations liaison

**January 2014**

**Media Relations:**

* Send out a press release to local newspapers, local online information news websites about the upcoming season
* Send out a press release about new logo
* Send out a press release about T-shirt design contest
* Send out a press release about new RCRG website

**Website:**

* Launch a new RCRG website
* Hold a new RCRG website launch party
* Create a content calendar for updating the website

**Logo:**

* Hold a T-shirt design contest with the new logo

**Social Media:**

* Create a content calendar for social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Vine, Youtube)
* Make it a priority to connect to other local female-based sports organizations via social media sites

**Handbill:**

* Create a handbill with new logo and pertinent information on it including days of the bouts, cost information, contact number and ways to interact and donate to the organization through social media sites
* Disperse handbills to local stores, restaurants, gyms, sports bars, coffee shops that target audience may visit

**Community Relations:**

* Join a mobile donation website to give supporters an easy way to donate to the organization by just texting a number

**February**

**Website:**

* Prioritize content for the start of the season, which begins 15th
* Begin featuring “Fan of the Month” on the website
* Begin a column on the website that is written by a different player each week about their roller derby experience

**Media Relations:**

* Call local publications to remind them about the upcoming season
* Call niche publications (traditional and online) about the possibility of a weekly or monthly feature on RCRG players
* Call newspapers and online news publications after first bout to get scores of the bout published

**Community Relations:**

* Designate a community relations liaison
* Contact various schools in Summit and surrounding counties about holding roller derby demonstrations at the schools
* Contact various charities that align with the RCRG Mission about volunteer opportunities
* Announce winner of the T-Shirt design contest

**Handbill**

* Distribute additional handbills at local shops, outside of athletic events and on cars at local athletic venues closer to the first bout

**March**

**Website:**

* Continue to update the website on a regular basis
* Make sure to link the information on the website to information on the RCRG’s social media sites

**Community Relations:**

* Volunteer as a group at a function wearing uniforms
* Hold a roller derby party, with skaters in uniform, at a local skating rink during peak time to show off roller skating skills and to hand out handbills

**Media Relations:**

* Remind local publications about upcoming bout a two days before the bout
* Call newspapers and online news publications after first bout to get scores of the bout published
* Send a press release pitching a couple possible of story ideas

**April**

**Media Relations:**

* Remind local publications about upcoming bout a two days before the bout
* Call newspapers and online news publications after first bout to get scores of the bout published
* Send a press release pitching a couple possible of story ideas (fill-a-skate)

**Community Relations:**

* Hold fill a skate up with donations at a busy area intersection (as fire fighters do to raise funds)
* If weather permits have a possible flash derby (like a flash mob) at a local park that as smooth asphalt and is highly visible

**Social Media:**

* Make sure all social media sites are used to make current fans and followers of the RCRG aware of the flash derby and fill-a-skate events that are taking place

**May**

**Media Relations:**

* Remind local publications about upcoming bout a two days before the bout
* Call newspapers and online news publications after first bout to get scores of the bout published
* Send a press release pitching a couple possible of story ideas

**Community Relations:**

* Invite the female athletic teams from various colleges to a bout for free
* Hold a pre-bout celebration giving a few low-cost items
* Hold a raffle for several pair roller skates and a large ticket item if possible (money raised will be donated to a charity that aligns with the R

**Social Media:**

* Make sure all social media followers are notified about the raffle and about free entrance to a bout for female college athletes

**EVALUATION**

**In order to determine if these objectives are met, the following things can be done:**

First, RCRG can use Facebook analytics to understand how fans are interacting with their brand. Additionally, RCRG can use Google Analytics to look at the traffic to the website. RCRG can also use Hootsuite to keep track of how fans and followers are interacting with the RCRG brand.

**In order to measure bout attendance, the following things can be done:**

First, RCRG can keep track of their ticket sales throughout the season. Once the season ends, they can compare the ticket sales this year to last year’s sales to determine whether or not there was an increase in fan attendance. For this first year (2014), it will not be possible to measure whether or not there was a 5% increase for former female athletes with children, as there are no specific records about the types of fans that attend the bouts. However, RCRG can strive to reach this goal in the 2015 season. To start out the 2014 season, RCRG will give a survey to each attendee at each bout. This survey will be very basic, simply asking questions about demographics and involvement with sports. At the end of the season, they will then analyze the results of the survey. This will help them to better understand their fan base for their bouts. This survey data will be the basis for any future surveying. During the 2015 season, RCRG will conduct the same survey, gathering data at each bout. At the end of the second year, they will analyze the data. Then, they will compare the results of the second year to the results of the first year. This comparison will show whether or not RCRG was successful in meeting these objectives. This same strategy can be adopted in order to measure whether or not there was a 7% increase for female sports enthusiast.