

MLB MEDIA PLAN



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Executive Summary

Budget - \$250 Million

Time Frame - March-October

Marketing Objective - Improve Ratings, Increase Youth Participation

Target Audience - Children and Teens Ages 8-17

Ad Objective - Promotions will connect with youth, Increase interest in the sport of baseball, Create a new audience for the sport

Spending Objective - The \$250 Million will cover four campaigns: Social Media (Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok), Community Outreach (MLB Sponsored Leagues and Youth Academies), Streaming Platforms (Netflix, Hulu, Prime, HBO Max, Youtube, Twitch), and Music Streaming Platforms

Media Objective - The campaign will focus heavily on social media and streaming platforms to increase awareness and positive opinion of the MLB and the sport of baseball.



Company History

Major League Baseball (MLB) is a professional baseball organization and the oldest major professional sports league in the world. As of 2022, a total of 30 teams play in Major League Baseball—15 teams in the National League (NL) and 15 in the American League (AL)—with 29 in the United States and 1 in Canada. The NL and AL were formed in 1876 and 1901, respectively. Beginning in 1903, the two leagues signed the National Agreement and cooperated but remained legally separate entities until 2000 when they merged into a single organization led by the Commissioner of Baseball. MLB is headquartered in Midtown Manhattan.

Baseball's first all-professional team, the Cincinnati Red Stockings, was founded in 1869. Before that, some teams had secretly paid certain players. The first few decades of professional baseball were characterized by rivalries between leagues and by players who often jumped from one team or league to another. The period before 1920 was the dead-ball era, when home runs were rarely hit. Professional baseball in the United States survived the Black Sox Scandal, a conspiracy to fix the 1919 World Series. The sport rose in popularity in the 1920s and survived potential downturns during the Great Depression and World War II. Shortly after the war, Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier.

The 1950s and 1960s were a time of club expansion and relocation for the AL and NL. Modern stadiums with artificial turf surfaces began to change the game in the 1970s and 1980s. Home runs dominated the game during the 1990s, and media reports disclosed the use of anabolic steroids among MLB players in the mid-2000s. In 2006, an investigation produced the Mitchell Report, which implicated many players in the use of performance-enhancing substances, including at least one player from each team.

Teams play 162 games each season and five teams in each league advance to a four-round postseason tournament that culminates in the World Series, a best-of-seven championship series between the two league champions that dates to 1903. Baseball games are broadcast on television, radio, and the Internet throughout North America and in several other countries. MLB has the highest total season attendance of any sports league in the world with more than 69.6 million spectators in 2018.

MLB also oversees Minor League Baseball, which comprises lower-tier teams affiliated with the major league clubs. MLB and the World Baseball Softball Confederation jointly manage the international World Baseball Classic tournament.

Source: MLB.com



Marketing History

Baseball historically has relied on being America's past time. From the 1920s through the 1980s, Major League Baseball was king. Many industries grew around the sport and demand for baseball, including: the sports magazine trade, dedicated sports television and radio stations, tour companies specializing in sports trips, and an active memorabilia industry. While not all of this is devoted exclusively to baseball, it is indicative of the passion for sports, including baseball. Major League Baseball uses wide-ranging promotions, including TV commercials, merchandising, online ads, media coverage, as well as individual team and stadium promotions.

Originally radio was perceived a foe for Major League Baseball marketing. The MLB resisted putting their games on the radio for fear that customers would stay home and listen to the game for free rather than come to the park. They soon discovered that radio (and eventually television) was a source of income and free advertising, helping to attract even more fans as well as serving as an additional source of revenue. By 2002, media revenue exceeded gate revenue for the average MLB team. With television, 1939 was also the year that the first game was televised on an experimental basis. In 1946 the New York Yankees became the first team with a local television contract when they sold the rights to their games for \$75,000. By the end of the century, they sold those same rights for \$52 million per season. By 1951 the World Series was a television staple, and by 1955 all teams sold at least some of their games to local television. In 1966 MLB followed the lead of the NFL and sold its first national television package, netting \$300,000 per team. The latest national television contract paid \$24 million to each team in 2002.

Major League Baseball is a highly successful oligopoly of professional baseball teams. The teams have successfully protected themselves against competition from other leagues for more than 125 years. The closest call came when two rival leagues, the established National League, and a former minor league, the Western League, re-named the American League in 1900, merged in 1903 to form the structure that exists to this day. The league lost some of its power in 1976 when it lost its monopolistic control over the player labor market, but it retains its monopolistic hold on the number and location of franchises. Now the franchise owners must share a greater percentage of their revenue with the hired help, whereas prior to 1976 they controlled how much of the revenue to divert to the players.

Sources:

<https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-major-league-baseball/>



SWOT Analysis

S

- Rich History with loyal fan base
- Deep established media roots
- Global Game
- Highly Competitive League with many markets competing

W

- Focus on team's history instead of individual stars
- Average Viewer - 58 Years Old
- Small Market Teams pulling from revenues



O

- Further expansion in growing Asian and African Markets
- World Tours
- Aggressive Youth Marketing
- Innovate, Innovate, Innovate

T

- Heavy professional competition for elite athletes
- Aging Fanbase
- Diminishing attention spans
- Collective Bargaining Stoppages



Competitive Analysis: NFL/NBA

NFL

The National Football League currently stands as the King of America. The NFL has taken over the country's Sundays for over forty years. The NFL's yearly championship game, dubbed "The Super Bowl" is consistently the most watched event every single year. The NFL consistently outranks the MLB in television ratings even when putting up MLB Playoff games against NFL regular season game. The NFL has somewhat unsuccessfully attempted to branch out to other countries. The NFL maintains strong media presences, sports betting, and Fantasy league culture. Football has been trending downwards in youth participation in the last ten years due to parents being concerned about concussion concerns.



NBA

The National Basketball Association is one of the fastest growing leagues in fans across the world. The NBA does a superb job at utilizing social media to show off highlights and have players interact directly with fans. The NBA has created a soap opera like atmosphere during the offseason to build buzz for the upcoming seasons. NBA TV ratings and TV contracts are similar in scope to that of the MLB. NBA fans trend young, which bodes well for the NBA.



Target Market

The target market for this campaign is youth from eight years old to seventeen years old. Sports leagues are as only strong as their pool of future athletes so it is crucial that Major League baseball recruits the best and brightest to ensure the lasting health of the league.

Media Mix

The media mix will be centered on four campaigns: Social Media (Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok), Community Outreach through media (MLB Sponsored Leagues and Youth Academies), Streaming Platforms (Netflix, Hulu, Prime, HBOMax, Youtube, Twitch), and Music Streaming Platforms.



Promotions

“We’re Fun Guys”

The social media campaign will involve star players of various markets giving insight scoops into their daily lives, routines, and highlights. This mix will focus heavily on relatability, personality and the human side of the players (Pets, Families, Hobbies).

“Baseball is My Favorite Sport”

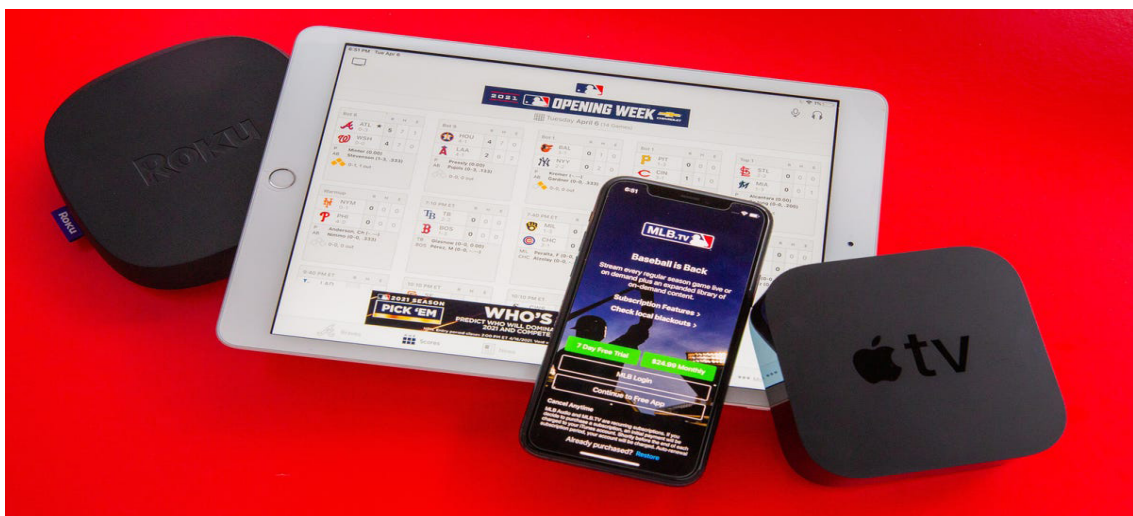
The community outreach media campaign will focus heavily on sponsoring youth leagues and academies, particularly in the inner city. We will focus on getting the equipment and resources necessary to get kids into the game early.

“We Are Where You’re At”

Advertising stars in commercials speaking directly to the fans and highlighting how fun it is to be at the game directly on streaming platforms where the youth are at.

“Radio Didn’t Kill The Baseball Star”

Having some of the biggest young music stars talk about their love for baseball and inviting fans to come out to a local game in a music streaming platform advertisement.



The Past.

The Present,



The FUTURE