

SEATTLE[®] ATHLETICS

Strategic Communication Plan
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Situation Analysis

Seattle University Athletics sponsors 20 NCAA Division I teams in the Western Athletic Conference. They embrace the Jesuit philosophy of educating the whole person in body, mind, and spirit. The department aims to provide the university with a common bond and a source of community pride, foster school spirit, and create excitement that enriches the lives of those on campus and in the local community, and generate positive visibility in the public media that helps communicate Seattle University's mission, vision, and core values. During the spring quarter, Seattle University Athletics' primary goal is to drive ticket sales and attendance for specific baseball and softball games.

Seattle University Athletics uses social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) and its website to promote upcoming games, provide game results, and share athlete interviews and stories. On Instagram, they have 3,098 followers and post about 3-4 times per week. On Facebook, they have 5,600 followers and post about 3 times per week. On Twitter, they have 5,214 followers and post 3-4 times per week. On YouTube, they have 436 subscribers and post 1-2 times per week. The posting schedule on all social media platforms is consistent, the content is consistently high quality, and much of the content across these platforms is the same. There is a good variety of content including photos, video interviews, and graphics. The Instagram account makes good use of reels by sharing interviews with athletes called the Redhawk Report. This content consistently receives a high number of likes. It could be beneficial to post promotional reels for specific games. Furthermore, the stories function does not seem to be used much. Stories could be used to remind followers of upcoming games. On Twitter, Seattle University Athletics frequently retweets content from the teams' accounts which helps the content reach a broader audience. When games are promoted, they are usually posted the day of which does not give the audience much time to attend the game. For the targeted games, Seattle University Athletics could begin promoting them at least a week in advance.

Seattle University Athletics' website is visually appealing and easy to navigate. Users can quickly find upcoming games and purchase tickets using the tabs at the top of the website. On the baseball and softball news tabs, game previews and recaps are consistently posted. However, there is an opportunity for more personal content such as player profiles in the form of blog articles. Shorter quotes from these stories can then be used as content for social media.

The biggest challenges to driving ticket sales and attendance for select baseball games are the location and time of the games. The home field is located in Bellevue, and games must be played earlier in the day due to the absence of stadium lights.

Seattle University Athletics does a great job at consistently posting a variety of content on its social media accounts and website. Overall, creating content that builds personal connections between athletes and spectators and clearly showcases the benefit and value of attending Seattle University baseball and softball games is important to driving ticket sales and attendance.

SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent and high-quality social media posts with about 14k followers across Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube ● Well-organized website that is updated in a timely manner ● Many corporate sponsors ● The softball team plays on campus and admission is free which makes it convenient for students to attend 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Website lacks profile features on athletes ● Games are not promoted with enough advance notice on social media ● Bannerwood Park does not have stadium lights which means baseball games must be played earlier in the day (Inconvenient for people at work and school)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make greater use of Instagram reels and stories which are popular with the audience ● Build personal connections between athletes and spectators ● Showcase the benefit/value of attending Seattle University baseball and softball games ● Promote selected games at other games and through the email newsletter ● Provide a shuttle from Seattle University to Bannerwood Park on selected game days 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Traveling to Bannerwood Park in Bellevue is difficult for students ● Have to compete for ticket sales and attendance with teams with bigger markets such as UW and the Mariners ● There are many other activities and events in the Seattle area ● Games can be canceled by inclement weather

Audience

Primary Audience:

Demographics:

- Seattle University students (Usually ages 18-25)
- Seattle University faculty and staff
- Seattle University alumni
- General baseball and softball fans
- College sports fans
- All ages, genders, races, and income levels

Psychographics:

- People with Seattle University pride and spirit
- Values the campus and local communities and wants to support them
- Enjoys baseball and softball
- Sociable and enjoys spending time with others
- People with active lifestyles
- People looking for something to do with their friends or family

- People who want to attend university athletic events
- People in search of school-related events

Geographics:

- Seattle University community

Audience persona:

Rachel Redhawk

- Female, caucasian, age 20
- Full-time Seattle University student majoring in Marketing
- Works as a resident assistant in Campion Hall
- Involved with the on-campus community
- Prefers to spend money on experiences over material items
- Hobbies:
 - Intramural soccer
 - Going to concerts
- Goals:
 - Participate in more school-related activities
 - Meet new people
 - Graduate college
 - Pursue a marketing career in Seattle
- Challenges:
 - Balancing school work and social life
 - Does not have a car to travel far from campus



Key Opportunity

- Seattle University baseball and softball games offer fans the opportunity to support the campus community as well as the greater Seattle community through charities and local businesses.

Objectives

1. Increase ticket sales and attendance for the selected baseball and softball games by 5% (from 150 and 70 attendees respectively).
2. Strengthen campus community and athlete relations by publishing two athlete feature stories on the website for the baseball and softball teams that receive 5% more clicks than the average story click count by May 26, 2023.
3. Increase the average number of likes on Seattle University Athletics' social media posts by 5% by May 26, 2023.
4. Raise awareness among Seattle University students, staff, and alumni of Seattle University Athletics' commitment to supporting the greater Seattle community by posting a promotional Instagram reel for each selected game and a graphic for each Food Truck Friday.

Key Messages

- Student-athletes are part of the campus community like any other student, and there is much more to know about them than just being athletes.

- Seattle University Athletics games are a place to foster school spirit, have fun, and bond with those who have a common school pride.
- Seattle University Athletics supports the greater Seattle community by dedicating games to benefit shelter dogs available for adoption, conducting food drives, and promoting local food trucks.

Strategies and Tactics

Strategy 1: Create social media content with an emphasis on community

To achieve Objectives 1, 3, and 4, we will create social media content to promote the selected games for the Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts of the Seattle University baseball and softball teams. We want to communicate our primary message that Seattle University Athletics supports the greater Seattle community by dedicating games to benefit shelter dogs available for adoption, conduct food drives, and promote local food trucks. First, we will create a series of Instagram reels that explains the significance of the cause to the Seattle community. We chose to use Instagram reels because we noticed that Seattle University students tend to receive most of their campus event information on this platform. Furthermore, Instagram reels have 35% higher engagement rates than carousels, videos, and images [according to Business of Apps](#). Second, we will create graphics that announce and showcase the vendors for Food Truck Fridays. These graphics will be posted on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Third, we will create Instagram reels and social media posts that show highlights from specific games and series for those who were unable to attend the games. This strategy will include the following tactics:

- Create an Instagram reel promoting the softball game against UW on 4/26.
 - Showcase the intracity rivalry between Seattle University and UW
- Create an Instagram reel promoting the Bark in the Park baseball game on 4/30.
 - Post as a joint post with the Seattle Humane Society (the sponsor of the event)
 - Use photos and videos from past Bark in the Park games
 - Announce that there will be dogs available for adoption at the game
- Create an Instagram reel promoting the food drive baseball game on 5/2.
 - Explain the prevalence of hunger in Seattle
 - List what types of food can be donated
- Create social media graphics for Food Truck Fridays.
 - Display the menu items
 - Brief introduction to the food truck's owner and their story
- Create Instagram reels and social media posts recapping specific games and series.
 - Instagram reel recap of the Bark in the Park baseball game on 4/30.
 - Recap post of the softball series against CBU on 5/5 -5/6
 - Recap post of the baseball series against ACU on 5/18 - 5/20

Strategy 2: Athlete spotlights

To achieve Objective 2, we will spotlight baseball and softball athletes to strengthen campus community and athlete relations. We will communicate our primary message that student-athletes are part of the campus community just like any other student, and there is much more to know about them than just being athletes. We will interview two baseball players and two softball players to publish four feature stories on the Seattle University Athletics website. These stories will delve into who the students are as people and not just as athletes. To promote the feature stories, we will turn quotes from the interviews into social media posts. Furthermore,

we will have baseball and softball players host Instagram story takeovers during the days leading up to selected games. During these takeovers, athletes will show their daily routines and talk about the importance of the upcoming game. This strategy will include the following tactics:

- Write four feature stories to be published on the Seattle University Athletics website.
 - Two baseball athletes
 - Two softball athletes
- Create social media content using pull quotes from the feature stories.
 - One social media post per feature story
- Schedule a baseball athlete Instagram story takeover leading up to the food drive game.
 - Takeover lasts from May 1-2
- Schedule a softball athlete Instagram story takeover leading up to the game against UW.
 - Takeover lasts from April 24-26

Strategy 3: Traditional forms of communication

To achieve Objective 1, we will promote selected games via more traditional forms of communication. This will help us reach members of the campus community who may not be as active on social media and people who already attend other Seattle University Athletics games. This strategy will help us communicate our primary message that Seattle University Athletics games are a place to foster school spirit, have fun, and bond with those who have a common school pride and support the greater Seattle community. First, we will promote the selected games in the weekly Seattle University Athletics email newsletter. Second, we will promote the selected games via PA system announcements at Seattle University baseball and softball games. This strategy will include the following tactics:

- Create graphics to include in the weekly Seattle University Athletics email newsletter that provide game and ticket sales information for selected games.
- Write PA system announcements promoting the selected games to be read at the baseball and softball games leading up to the selected games.

Timeline

Strategy	Proposed Task	Completion date
Create social media content with an emphasis on community	Post food truck graphic for 4/21 baseball game	4/19
	Post Instagram reel promoting 4/26 softball game	4/20
	Post joint Instagram reel with Seattle Humane Society promoting 4/30 baseball game (Bark in the Park)	4/23
	Post Instagram reel promoting 5/2 baseball game (Food drive)	4/25

	<p>Post food truck graphic for 4/28 baseball game</p> <hr/> <p>Post Bark in the Park game recap Instagram reel</p> <hr/> <p>Post 5/5 - 5/6 softball series recap post</p> <hr/> <p>Post food truck graphic for 5/19 baseball game</p> <hr/> <p>Post 5/18 - 5/20 baseball series recap post</p>	<p>4/26</p> <hr/> <p>5/1</p> <hr/> <p>5/7</p> <hr/> <p>5/17</p> <hr/> <p>5/21</p>
Athlete spotlights	<p>Identify athletes for feature stories</p> <hr/> <p>Contact softball team to schedule Instagram story takeover</p> <hr/> <p>Schedule interviews</p> <hr/> <p>Write and approve interview questions</p> <hr/> <p>Conduct interviews</p> <hr/> <p>Contact baseball team to schedule Instagram story takeover</p> <hr/> <p>Publish softball feature #1 and post pull quote on social media</p> <hr/> <p>Publish baseball feature #1 and post pull quote on social media</p> <hr/> <p>Publish softball feature #2 and post pull quote on social media</p> <hr/> <p>Publish baseball feature #2</p>	<p>4/14</p> <hr/> <p>4/17</p> <hr/> <p>4/19</p> <hr/> <p>4/21</p> <hr/> <p>4/22 - 4/28</p> <hr/> <p>4/24</p> <hr/> <p>5/4</p> <hr/> <p>5/11</p> <hr/> <p>5/18</p> <hr/> <p>5/25</p>

	and post pull quote on social media	
Traditional forms of communication	Create email newsletter graphic promoting 4/26 softball game	4/19
	Create email newsletter graphic for Food Truck Fridays	4/19
	Write PA script to promote 4/26 softball game	4/20
	Write PA script to promote 4/30 baseball game (Bark in the Park)	4/20
	Write PA script to promote 5/2 baseball game (Food drive)	4/20
	Create email newsletter graphic promoting 4/30 baseball game (Bark in the Park)	4/21
	Create email newsletter graphic promoting 5/2 baseball game (Food drive)	4/21

Evaluation

Increase ticket sales and attendance for the selected baseball and softball games by 5% (from 150 and 70 attendees respectively).

- Identify if we carried out all of the tactics for Strategy 3.
- Record the number of ticket sales and attendance at the selected games and compare these numbers to the numbers from games before the campaign.

Strengthen campus community and athlete relations by publishing two athlete feature stories on the website for the baseball and softball teams that receive 5% more clicks than the average story click count by May 26, 2023.

- Identify if two baseball features and two softball features were published on the Seattle University Athletics website.
- Record the number of clicks on each feature story and compare these numbers to the average story click count.

Increase the average number of likes on Seattle University Athletics' social media posts by 5% by May 26, 2023.

- Identify if we posted all of the tactics for Strategy 1.
- Compare the average number of likes on Seattle University Athletics' Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts before and after our campaign.

Raise awareness among Seattle University students, staff, and alumni of Seattle University Athletics' commitment to supporting the greater Seattle community by posting a promotional Instagram reel for each selected game and a graphic for each Food Truck Friday.

- Identify if we posted a promotional Instagram reel before each selected game.
- Identify if we posted a graphic before each Food Truck Friday.