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## **EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROMOTIONS USED BY BGSU ATHLETICS**

Christopher R. Novak

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EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROMOTIONS USED BY BGSU ATHLETICS

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Master's Project Proposal

In  
Sport Administration

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## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	3
Introduction.....	5
Research questions.....	9
Literature review.....	9
Promotions in Youth Sports.....	9
Promotions in College Sports.....	10
Promotions in Professional Sports.....	12
Motivations for College Sports.....	15
Motivations for Professional Sports.....	16
Motivations for Males and Females.....	17
Method.....	19
Participants.....	19
Design.....	21
Procedure.....	21
Measurement.....	22
Data Analysis.....	23
Results.....	24
Research Question 1.....	24
Research Question 2.....	25
Research Question 3.....	27
Discussion.....	27
Implications.....	29
Limitations and Future Research.....	30
References.....	32
Appendices.....	36
Appendix A: Summary of RQ1, RQ2, RQ3.....	36
Appendix B: Questionnaire.....	38
Appendix C: IRB Approval.....	41
Appendix D. Recruitment Script.....	42
Appendix E. Consent Forms.....	43

**Abstract**

Promotions are commonly used to bring people to athletic events from anywhere to youth levels all the way up to professional levels. Elements of the promotional mix include advertising, sales promotions, personal selling, and public relations. Understanding what elements of the promotional mix the greatest influence on increasing attendance at athletic events along with what motivates fans to attend is critical to developing a strong marketing plan. This is especially true for universities that have issues with attendance at athletic events. Thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate what forms of promotions BGSU Athletics currently execute and to examine the efficiency of promotional campaigns. Another goal was to incorporate some motivational factors for students at BGSU and members of the community in why they attend athletic events so that more effective promotional strategies can be developed. An interview was conducted with a former Assistant Director of Marketing at BGSU to gain an understanding of all the ways BGSU promotes athletic events. A questionnaire was distributed to students enrolled in Intro to Sport Management (SM 2010) and Sport History (SM 2210) along with members of the Bowling Green community. The students were selected because of the familiarity with athletics and promotions so they were deemed to provide a good basis for what is effective. BGSU community members were selected because they provide revenues to the athletic department, so it is important to understand what promotions they find to be effective. A total of 83 people participated in the study. Results indicated that BGSU promotes athletic events using social media, television, radio, newspapers, food discounts, dorm storms, meet the players, flyers, signs/posters, preview days, cross promotion. The promotions of radio and television had a significant difference in responses between community members and BGSU students. The two motivations of social and family had a significant difference between community members and

BGSU students which means two groups have different motives to attend the BGSU sporting events. Recommendations on ways BGSU athletics can improve their promotion strategies are discussed along with limitations of this study and ideas for future research in this area.

## Introduction

It's a cool November day in Bowling Green, Ohio. I walk downtown on a Friday night with my roommates and the wind is so strong it sounds like it's singing. A light snowfall begins to fall, and I begin to shiver as I get closer and closer to the bar we are going to. I approach the bar DOC's and walk in feeling a warm sensation in my body. Looking around the bar, it is relatively empty. I see a group of people sitting along the bar and a few others scattered at tables. My roommates walk over to the bar counter while I take off my gloves and proceed to sit down. As they are purchasing the first round of drinks, I look down and see a couple flyers on the ground. One is more crumpled up than the other and it seems to have the appearance a football picture. I pick up the one closest to my foot. It reads Bowling Green Vs. Toledo, 8pm @ The Doyt. The one further away is the same flyer as well. *Clearly whoever was handed the flyers was not interested in keeping them. Is this really the most effective way the university can market their athletic events? What would be more effective?* Thoughts rush through my head as the night goes on. I cannot get the image of the flyers being trashed under the table out of my head.

The flyers are distributed by the marketing staff in the athletic department. Having worked as an intern in the marketing department for three semesters allowed me to see how the operations are run. I was a critical component of the marketing team because I assisted in all the pregame preparations for athletic events and the promotions during games. Marketing prior to the games was done daily using flyers which we would hand out to students across campus. The flyers would indicate the time of the game and who BGSU was playing in their respective sport. Promoting the game was also done through tailgates, free giveaways, and posting on social media. These are some examples of promotions and they play a key role in the success of athletic departments and businesses as well.

Promotions are used by organizations to communicate with consumers regarding their product offerings (Rowley, 1998). When deciding to do a promotion it is important to identify all target market considerations. This means analyzing the complete market segment for the product to determine the most effective promotional strategy. After doing this, promotional objectives should then be set. This involves setting goals that organizations want to accomplish. Once that is done, the promotional budget should be established. There are different approaches to calculating a promotional budget as it can be set as a percentage of sales, basing it on what is affordable, and analyzing desired objectives to reach a decision. Finally, the last step is to develop the promotional mix. Some of the elements included in the promotional mix include advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations. Advertising is the most common promotion tool which is used to create brand awareness. Rowley (1998) describes advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation which promotes ideas, goods, and services by a sponsor. Personal selling is face-to-face communication where a product is directly sold. Sales promotions are short-term incentives to get consumers to go out and make a purchase. Lastly, public relations are used to identify, establish, and maintain relationships (Rowley, 1998). When breaking down the promotional elements, it is important for the marketing department to understand some factors that influence fans to attend athletic events.

Finding out the reasons that people attend athletic events is paramount to developing a strong marketing plan. Swanson, Gwinner, Larson, and Janda (2003) find that the four major motivations for collegiate students attending sporting events are team identification, eustress, group affiliation, and self-esteem enhancement. Team identification is the perceived connectedness to the team. Eustress is a positive form of stress that excites an individual. Group affiliation is the desire to be with other people when attending sporting events. Self-esteem

enhancement involves the desire to achieve and maintain a positive social identity (Swanson et al., 2003). These four factors predicted how many games students attended. Some other motivational factors for why people attend athletic events are diversion from everyday life, entertainment value, economic value, aesthetic value, and family ties (Trail & James, 2001). This study will examine these factors and discover what students at Bowling Green State University (BGSU) and members of the Bowling Green community find most important. This will then allow the marketing department to come up with promotion strategies that have a greater impact towards BGSU students in deciding to attend athletic events. It will also show the marketing department some promotional strategies they could use in targeting members of the community.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The marketing department at BGSU places the majority of its focus on bringing students to athletic events. The department consists of a director, assistant director, and about fifteen to twenty student interns. The director and the assistant come up with the marketing plans for each sport and the student interns carry out that plan. However, the first problem is the promotion strategies that are being used are not as effective in terms of increasing attendance at athletic events as they could be. This can be seen through a lack of attendance at a variety of BGSU athletic events. The use of flyers, posters, billboards, social media, signs, word-of-mouth, promotions, etc. are all used to persuade more students to attend athletic events. A problem with the signs and posters placed around campus is the fact that not enough detailed information is included. They sometimes simply show the time but not the location of the game or even the opponent. Another example might be a 'Meet the Players' type event where the athletes try and motivate students to come support them at their game. The issue with these strategies is they have such a wide spread amount of promotions. They do not have sufficient evidence that show

what students enjoy and whether students attend that athletic event via any of the promotions that are currently used.

As previously mentioned, the marketing department is not placing enough emphasis on targeting community members. Therefore, this is limiting the amount of growth that the athletic department can have in terms of making profits. Therefore, placing an emphasis on targeting members of the community, boosters, and sponsors are additional targets that the marketing team should consider. These groups will be contributing to the growth in ticket-sales revenue.

### **Significance of the Study**

The current study is conducted to investigate what forms of promotions BGSU Athletics currently execute and to examine the efficiency of promotional campaigns. The first problem is that the athletic department is using many different types of marketing communication tools without investigating which strategies make an impact on fans attending athletic events. The second major problem is the marketing department is not targeting community members enough in their promotional strategies. These problems help show why BGSU is not flourishing from a financial standpoint. The athletic department in 2016 had a budget of \$21,824,966 which ranks last in the Mid-American conference (Rucker, 2016). Therefore, they must be extremely careful in how they spend their limited budget and where they put their resources. If the department is able to have an understanding on what promotion strategies have the most impact on their fans, this means they will be able to cut back on certain parts of their budget. For example, if they find that the use of social media is what makes fans come to the games then they can emphasize more on social media than flyers or other resource. This study will also show the marketing department that they should also be targeting more members of the community to attend athletic

events. They provide an additional revenue source and that will lead to the athletic department having a larger budget overall.

Another key aspect of this study is incorporating some motivational factors for students at BGSU and members of the community to attend athletic events. These underlying reasons that students attend will give the marketing department a better understanding of what their promotion strategies should be and that should lead to the increase of students and members of the community coming to athletic events. This will in turn create a better image for the athletic department because they have more fans coming to athletic events.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions are as follows:

RQ 1. What forms of promotions does BGSU Athletics do?

RQ 2-1. What forms of promotions make students at BGSU more likely to attend BGSU athletic events?

RQ 2-2. What forms of promotions would make members of the Bowling Green Community more likely to attend athletic events?

RQ 3. What are the motives that influence student's decision making to attend athletic events?  
How do the motives of students compare to members of the community?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Promotions**

##### **Promotions in Youth Sports**

Promotion has been a strategy that has been used across all levels of sports. Whether it be youth sports, collegiate sports, or even professional; it is critical to bring fans to athletic events. Using various promotional strategies to get the information out there is what will help lead to the

occurrence of a successful event. In youth sports, promotion plays a key factor in awareness of events. With regards to the Summer Youth Olympic Games in Singapore in 2010 and Innsbruck in 2012, Judge, Lee, Hoover, Petersen, Bellar, Deitz, and Holtzclaw (2016) analyzed how they have increased their successfulness each year. However, many people still were not aware of these types of events around the world. It was found that the majority of the participants in the study were not aware of these events and they were not willing to engage in the events. This showed that organizers of youth events have to try and find more effective promotion strategies to encourage people to be involved. This means finding the right target market which in this case was found to be young adults. Building upon what was found by Judge et al., 2016 in youth sports, Walsh, Green, and Cottingham (2017) examined how youth sport camps could be used as effective promotions for professional teams. They found that youth camps were effective in terms of enhancing fan identification, improving attitudes towards the teams, and higher overall satisfaction. These camps also assisted in building relationships with the parents of the children. This showed that different types of promotions helped accomplish objectives. Promotions played a crucial role in the growth of youth sports. Promotions also play a key role at the collegiate level.

### **Promotions in College Sports**

***Tailgating.*** Another factor that has played a role in promotion in collegiate sporting events is tailgating. James, Breezeel, and Ross (2001) further examined promotions and identified reasons for tailgating to develop a measurement tool for its effectiveness. They found that people tailgate to change up their normal routines and used it as a way for fans to enjoy the game-day experience. It was an important time to be with friends. Results also indicated that tailgating increases with age and it was an integral part of game-days which made it an extremely

effective promotion tool. This indicated that promotion was an important ancillary product that marketers can use to enhance the experience of attending sporting events. Nemeč (2011) builds upon the importance of tailgating as a promotion tool in his study. The study examined fans' satisfaction with tailgating based on their satisfaction with the game-day experience at college football games and how it related to future behavioral intentions. An economic benefit was brought to the host city because of tailgating. The study showed that the hours that were spent traveling to and leading up to the sporting event provided an opportunity that can be shared with fans, friends, and family. The celebration was unique because it was associated with the students, alumni, and fans of the teams that created an "outdoor living room" (Nemeč, 2011, p. 50). This social interaction created an experience that is important to gamedays, and thus, tailgating played a vital role in being a gameday promotion in this study. Another promotion has played a key role in promoting collegiate athletics is social media.

***Social Media.*** Social media has played an important role in promotion in collegiate athletic departments across the United States. Dixon, Martinez, and Martin (2015) analyzed the importance of social media in examining its usage and perceived effectiveness at 158 Division 1 schools. The results found that the majority of athletic departments use social media to make people more aware of athletic events. They also used it to support marketing objectives. The findings helped athletic departments by showing evidence-based rationale that supported the use of social media in being an effective promotion strategy. Expanding on the use of social media as a promotion Popp, McEvoy, and Watanabe (2017) analyzed the relationship with growth of social media engagement and the outcomes of attendance and ticket revenue. They found that social media was not statistically significant in predicting the number of people that attend games or the amount of ticket revenue (Popp et al., 2017). Promotions also play a role in the growth of

professional sports.

### **Promotions in Professional Sports**

*Sales Promotions.* In examining how sporting events are successful Cebula (2013) looked at how promotions impacted attendance in Minor League baseball. The study found that various levels of merchandise promotions, food specials, fireworks, family discounts on tickets, and beer discounts had a significant impact on increasing attendance at the Minor League Baseball games. Another impact on the attendance involves the scheduling of games. Games that were played on Fridays and Saturdays experienced much higher attendance than games on Mondays and Tuesdays. Cebula (2013) also found that raising ticket prices had the most significant effect on reducing attendance. McDonald and Rascher (2000) further examined how one major goal of promotion is to increase attendance at sporting events. The study found that sales promotions have been the most widely used form of promotion for teams. However, the trend has been moving toward having sponsored promotions. In professional baseball it was found that having an abundance of promotions that were not that desirable had more impact on increasing attendance than having a small number of effective promotions. There was a minimal ‘watering down’ effect on having too many promotions but having an extra promotion for each game outweighs this. Promotions were able to increase attendance at baseball games by about 14% (McDonald & Rascher, 2000).

Paul, Weinbach, and Robbins (2013) further analyzed the positive effects of promotion in the American Hockey League (AHL). For the most part, promotions were popular with AHL fans. The promotions that had the highest positive effect were post-game concerts, giveaways on opening night and closing night, and nights involving fan appreciation. Some other promotions that were successful were jersey nights, merchandise giveaways, and college night. Team quality,

scoring, and fights also impacted fans purchasing tickets (Paul et al., 2013). Overall, promotions were a success as teams continue to find ways to attract fans. Building on the importance of promotion in major sport leagues in the United States, Boyd and Krehbiel (2006) discussed types of promotions and other variables such as timing, weather, and winning percentage to see when promotions were more successful in increasing attendance in professional sports. They found that bobblehead giveaways and different combinations of promotions were very effective in increasing attendance. A giveaway and a special event or two special events were also found to be successful in increasing attendance. Promotions during games in the evenings were also found to increase attendance (Boyd & Krehbiel, 2006). Research has found that other factors have played a role in promotion in the sporting industry.

**Television.** Walker (1993) examined the advertising medium of television and its effectiveness as a promotional tool. The study found that promotions were more effective when used with returning programs. The study shows that promotions were also more effective when they were not shown for long periods. In fact, promotions were most effective within the first month of television programs airing. It was important to promote during successful programs because that increases the likelihood that products would be bought (Walker, 1993). Cianfrone and Zhang (2006) further analyzed television as a promotional tool in their study. They examined the differential effectiveness of television commercials, athlete endorsements, and combined promotions. Their study showed that television and promotion was the most effective in terms of increasing awareness for brands. Combining promotions and athlete endorsement were the next most effective in increasing brand awareness (Cianfrone & Zhang, 2006).

(See Table 1 for Summary of Literature Review on Promotions).

**Table 1.*****Summary of Literature Review on Promotions***

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Researchers</b>
Youth Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotion increases awareness</li> </ul>	Judge, Lee, Hoover, Petersen, Bellar, Deitz, and Holtzclaw (2016)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Youth sports camp build relationships and increase fan identification</li> </ul>	Walsh, Green, and Cottingham (2017)
College Sports-Tailgating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tailgating is an integral part of game-days making it an effective promotional tool</li> </ul>	James, Breezeel, and Ross (2001)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tailgating brings an economic benefit to the host city</li> </ul>	Nemec (2011)
College Sports-Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social media increases awareness for athletic events</li> </ul>	Dixon, Martinez, and Martin (2015)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social media does not predict ticket revenue</li> </ul>	Popp, McEvoy, and Wantanabe (2017)
Professional Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotions such as family discounts and fireworks increased attendance</li> </ul>	Cebula (2013)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Having more less desirable promotions is more effective than having few effective ones</li> </ul>	McDonald and Rascher (2000)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotions were successful in finding ways to attract fans</li> </ul>	Paul, Weinbach, and Robbins (2013)
Professional Sports-Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Different combinations of promotions such as bobblehead giveaways increased attendance</li> </ul>	Boyd and Krehbiel (2006)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotion increased likelihood products will be bought</li> </ul>	Walker (1993)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Combining promotions and athlete endorsement were the next most effective in increasing brand awareness.</li> </ul>	Cianfrone and Zhang (2006)

**Conclusion**

In summary, promotion plays a vital role in sports from the youth level all the way up to the professional level. At the youth level, promotions are used mainly to increase awareness for

the sporting events. Youth sport camps can be used as a promotional tool for professional teams to build relationships with fans in the sense that they enhance fan identification and improve attitudes. Moving along to the collegiate level, tailgating is an extremely effective promotion tool in that it brings friends together and provides an economic benefit to the host city. Social media plays an important role at the collegiate level in increasing awareness for sporting events. Finally, at the professional level, promotions are effective in terms of increasing attendance. They are used to find new ways to attract fans. Television and the use of athlete endorsement at the professional level is a great way to increase brand awareness.

## **Fans' Motivations**

### **Motivations for College Sports**

While it is important to understand what promotions are successful in terms of increasing attendance, it is also important to understand what motivates fans to come to athletic event. Snipes and Ingram (2007) identified the motivators for college sport fans across three different sports to understand the demographic variables that have an impact on the motivators. The study showed that collegiate sports depend on students, alumni, and the community. It is important to consider the sport being promoted, and the potential targets for the sporting event to develop promotion strategies. The schedule and the facility were the top motivators for attending sporting events (Snipes & Ingram, 2007). A few factors that played a role in attendance were the admission price and records of the team. The admission price and the overall team records also impacted attendance. This study showed that some of the least important motivation factors were corporate sponsorships and school bands (Snipes & Ingram, 2007). The special prizes were more of an influence for college students attending but not members of the community or alumni. James and Ross (2004) further analyzed the motives that drive consumers' interest in attending

college sporting events. The study looks at motives that drive the interests of consumers in non-revenue sports. The study showed that interest in three non-revenue sports happened to be based upon factors that were associated with sport in a general sense. The sport related motivations that were most important were entertainment, skill, drama, and team efforts (James & Ross, 2004). This provides sport marketers with data that can be used to develop promotions which will increase attendance at the programs

### **Motivations for Professional Sports**

Bernthal and Graham (2003) analyzed what motivates fans to attend Minor League Baseball. The study found that Minor League fans believe that value and entertainment (promotions, music, mascots, etc.) were important regarding their decision to attend the game. Meanwhile, the study showed that fans of collegiate sports were more motivated by the play of the game and communal aspects when deciding to attend (Bernthal & Graham, 2003). The results showed the importance of comprehending the influence of contextual effects on fan motivation and shows that managers should attend to the various aspects that drive attendance to sporting events. Yamashita, Yumita, and Harada (2018) build upon the research done by Bernthal and Graham by examining some of the motivation differences for attending sporting events between local residents of the community and non-residents. The study found that seven motivation factors played a role in attending the sporting event. These factors were aesthetic, interaction, achievement, knowledge, skills, drama, and performance (Yamashita et al., 2018). Several differences in spectators' motivations for attending the event were based upon spectator types. There was a high variance which shows that the motivational factors are only one aspect that explains why spectators attend sporting events.

### **Motivations Comparison for Males and Females**

James and Ridinger (2002) exemplified the work done by Yamashita et al., 2018 in that they examined whether the motivations for being fans of a sports team and attending games were alike or different for females and males. The study showed that males and females were not equally likely to be fans of a sport. In fact, males were significantly more interested in being fans of specific teams. Males had higher overall ratings than females on the sport consumption scale and there were many differences based upon the motivations that were measured. However, there was not a significant difference between the actions of sports and the opportunity to escape and these were the two motivations rated highest by males and females. The main difference involved aesthetic appeal. Males appreciated the beauty in basketball games more, and females found women's basketball to be more aesthetically appealing (James & Ridinger, 2002). Funk, Mahony, and Ridinger (2002) build upon the study done by James in that they further examined how individual differences could explain levels of support for sport properties. More specifically, they focused on understanding consumer motives with regards to women's sports. The study showed fourteen individual difference factors had a relationship to attending women's sporting events. The five motivational characteristics that explained the variance for attending women's soccer were team interest, role modeling, sport interest, vicarious achievement, and entertainment value (Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002). Augmenting the traditional spectator offered more of an understanding of the motivational characteristics in various situations and showed the impact these motivations have on behavior. Zhang, Pennington-Gray, Connaughton, Braunstein, Ellis, Lam, and Williamson (2003) elaborated on the work done by Funk et al., 2002 in that they examined the hierarchical relationships within sociodemographic, lifestyle, and the level of game consumption by women's profession basketball game spectators. The study found

that game consumption emerged with regards to level of spectator participation variables. Meanwhile, professional sports, recreational sports, amateur sports, and amusement activities emerged for lifestyle variables. With the use of regression analysis and ANOVA, the study showed that all sociodemographic variables and some lifestyle factors relate to game consumption. (See Table 2 for Summary of Literature Review on Motivations).

**Table 2.**

*Summary of Motivations*

Themes	Findings	Researchers
Motivations for College sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schedule, facility, price, and records all impacted decisions to attend games</li> <li>▪ Interest was based upon entertainment, skill, drama, and team efforts</li> </ul>	Snipes and Ingram (2007)  James and Ross (2004)
Motivations for Professional Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Value and Entertainment were important considerations for attending games</li> <li>▪ The motivation factors of aesthetic, interaction, achievement, knowledge, skills, drama, and performance played a role in decision process</li> </ul>	Berenthal and Graham (2003)  Yamashita, Yumita, and Harada (2018)
Motivation Comparison between Males and Females	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Males more interested than females in being fans of specific teams. Both use as an opportunity to escape from day-to-day lives</li> </ul>	James and Ridinger (2002)
Motivations for Women's Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Team interest, role modeling, sport interest, vicarious achievement, and entertainment value explained variance for attending games</li> <li>▪ Game consumption emerged with regards to level of spectator participation</li> </ul>	Funk, Mahony, and Ridinger (2002)  Zhang, Pennington, Connaughton, Braunstein, Ellis, Lam, & Williamson (2003)

However, the lifestyle factors did not mediate some of the relationships involving sociodemographics and game consumption (Zhang et al., 2003). The findings illustrated the

importance of promoting women's professional basketball through sociodemographics

## **Conclusion**

Motivations play a key role in deciding to attend athletic events at any level. At the collegiate level, the schedule and facility were strong motivators for attending games. Sport related motivations that were most important were entertainment, skill, drama, and team efforts. At the professional level, value and entertainment were important considerations for attending games. In comparing males to female motivation factors, it was found that males were more motivated by being a fan of a specific team. However, the actions of sports and the opportunity to escape were the two motivations rated highest by males and females.

All of the previously mentioned motivations show there are differences in what motivates fans to attend athletic events. This research demonstrates a need for Bowling Green State University Athletics to further analyze motivations that BGSU students and members of the Bowling Green community have for attending athletic events. This leads into the third research questions that is used to guide the study. Research question 3 examines all how motives influences both students and community members of Bowling Green decisions to attend athletic events.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants in this study are members of the Bowling Green community and students of Bowling Green State University. A total of 83 people participated in this study. More specifically, 42 are students of the University and 41 are from the community. There were 46 males (55.42%), 36 females (43.37%), and 1 that preferred not to answer (1.2%). The majority of the ages of the participants was 20-29 (56.63%). Regarding race, whites accounted for the

majority in being 80.72%. As for education level, some college and bachelors accounted for about 68% of the participants with 32.53% being some college and 36.14% being bachelors. The students and community members provide answers for how effective the promotions that BGSU Athletics uses are on increasing athletic game attendance. Table 3 contains a brief summary about the participants

**Table 3.**

*Summary of Participants*

<b>Field</b>		<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
	Total	83	100%
	BGSU students	42	50.6%
	Community Members	41	49.4%
Gender	Males	46	55.42%
	Females	36	43.37%
	prefer not to answer	1	1.2%
Age	19 or under	7	8.43%
	20-29	47	56.63%
	30-39	19	22.89%
	40-49	5	6.02%
	50-59	4	4.82%
	60 or over	1	1.2%
Ethnicity	White/Caucasian	67	80.72%
	Hispanic/Latino	3	3.61%
	Asian	3	3.61%
	African American	6	7.22%
	Other	2	2.41%
	Prefer not to answer	2	2.41%
Education Level	Some High School	2	2.41%
	High School Graduate	13	15.67%
	Some College	27	32.53 %
	Associates	3	3.61%
	Bachelors	30	36.14%
	Masters	7	8.43%
	Prefer Not to answer	1	1.2%

## **Design**

A mix method design is defined as a study that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research methodology (Heyvaert, Maes, & Onghena, 2013). Therefore, the design used in the study is mixed methods. The researcher uses an interview to identify BGSU Athletics' promotional activities which is qualitative. A questionnaire is used to assess the effectiveness of each promotional activity and motivation from BGSU students and BG community members which is quantitative..

## **Procedure**

To answer the first research question on what forms of promotions BGSU Athletics employs, an unstructured interview was conducted with Chad Clark, former Assistant Director of Marketing at BGSU, to gain a better understanding about all the promotions BGSU athletics executes. Interviews are helpful because they help find information that we need (Markula & Silk, 2011). The interview was conducted over the telephone. The first questions were basic demographic questions such as Chad's age, gender, and highest educational level. This was done to ease the interviewee into the conversation. Following this, some background questions were asked about the interviewee. Some examples of the questions were: how many years of experience do you have in marketing? What were some of the responsibilities of your position? And how long do you work as the Assistant Director of Marketing? Once this was answered, Chad was asked what all forms of promotions are that BGSU athletics does and what promotions he found to be most effective.

Students in two of the sport management program courses at BGSU, a sport history and intro to sport management course, participated in the current research. The reason to select them is they have a relationship with BGSU athletics. Sport management students are generally involved with athletics in that many are volunteers. Some examples of the positions sport

management students hold are marketing interns, compliance interns, game-managers, event-managers, statisticians, etc. Thus, these students are the ones that are more familiar with the promotions that athletics do so they provide a good basis of data for what is deemed to be effective. I contacted the instructor of the courses to get permission to distribute the questionnaires. Once I received permission, I provided an electronic questionnaire via email with the survey link to the professor and she sent the questionnaire electronically to their students. Students were informed that the survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete outside of class time.

To collect data from the community members, a Sports Specialist and Recreation Coordinator for Bowling Green Parks and Recreation were contacted. By contacting them, I could reach the community members who have an existing relationship with Bowling Green Parks and Recreation and are familiar with BGSU Athletics. I electronically distributed the survey to community members of the Bowling Green. I instructed the participants to do the first part of the questionnaire about how games are marketed, and then to answer questions about effectiveness of each promotional communication. I informed the participants the questionnaire would take no more than 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

### **Measurement**

Research question 1 contained all forms of promotion BGSU athletics does and it is answered through a face-to-face interview. The questions for the interview were developed to gain a complete understanding of every method BGSU athletics uses to promote games. Some demographic questions and background questions were asked in the first part of the interview and the second part of the interview was used to discover all ways BGSU promotes games along with which promotions were perceived to be most effective.

Research question 2-1 and 2-2 comprised each promotion and its effectiveness in terms of increasing student attendance and community members at athletic events respectively. The responses are collected in a questionnaire. The first set of promotions that were examined involved advertising and the mediums that were analyzed were radio, television, social media, and newspapers. The second set of promotions that were examined were sales promotions. The sales promotions included coupons, tailgates, meet the players events, dorm storms, flyers, and signs. The third set of promotions that were examined involved public relations. The public relations promotions included marketing athletics at preview days and cross promotion between athletic teams (i.e. basketball promotes football). Each of the previously mentioned promotions were evaluated on a 7-point Likert scale (1=not Effective Promotion, 7=extremely effective promotion). The same questionnaire was taken by community members and students to provide a comparison between groups.

Research question 3 consisted of how motives influence decision making with regards to attending athletic events for BGSU students and Bowling Green community members. The Motivation for Sport Consumption Scale was modified and adopted to answer this (Trail & James, 2001). This scale has multiple sub-factors including game achievement, knowledge, aesthetics, drama, social, family, and escape. They are evaluated in a 7-point Likert type scale (1=strongly disagree 7=strongly agree). A sample questionnaire question for achievement is, “I feel I have won when BGSU wins” and the items are summarized in Appendix A.

### **Data Analysis**

The analysis of the first research question was based off the responses that are achieved from the Assistant Director of Marketing. In order to analyze the data, the first step was the process of immersion which means becoming familiar with the data (Bennett, Barrett, &

Helmich, 2019). This was done through transcribing the data, analyzing the transcripts, keeping the research question in mind, and taking notes. After this was completed, the process of coding the data began. This was done through examining the data and giving a descriptive code that related to the research question. Finally, thematic analysis was used to analyze patterns within the data (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013).

The data of second and third research question were analyzed using an independent t-test. This provided a comparison between community members and BGSU students. More specifically, the second data analysis provided evidence on how effective the promotions are on increasing the chances of attending athletic events and the third data analysis demonstrated the differences on what motivates between students and members of the Bowling Green community to attend athletic events.

## **Results**

### **Research Question 1 Results: Ways BGSU Promotes Athletic Events and the Perceived Effectiveness of Promotion Strategies**

Chad Clark was interviewed, and he worked previously as the Assistant Director of Marketing at BGSU. He is 24 years old, male, and completed his bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University in sport management. He now has 6 years of experience in working in marketing. Some of his responsibilities as the Assistant Director of Marketing were supervising approximately 15-20 interns through office hours and at athletic events. During major events such as football, he was responsible for controlling the music. At Bowling Green hockey games, he was in charge of directing all promotions that were carried out throughout the games. Finally, he assisted in developing marketing plans for athletic events. Chad worked the position for 2 years. He stated that BGSU promotes games through the uses of social media,

television, radio, newspapers, food discounts, dorm storms, tailgates, meet the players events, flyers, signs/posters, preview days, and cross promotion (C. Clark, personal communication, November 7, 2018). Cross promotion is when athletic team markets another. The most effective forms of promotion were believed to be social media and flyers. Table 4 provides a brief summary of Chad's responses.

### **Research Question 2 Results: How Promotions Increase the Likelihood of Attending BGSU Games for BGSU Students and Community Members**

The promotions of radio and television had a significant difference in responses between community members and BGSU students: Radio promotion ( $t_{(81)}=-3.40, p<.05$  [C.I. -1.70, -.45]) and television promotion ( $t_{(81)}=-3.85, p<.05$  [C.I. -1.83, -.59]). In terms of effectiveness of each promotion, radio and television promotions were more effective promotions for community members than for BGSU students (see Table 5).

**Table 4.**

#### *Summary of Research Question 1 on Ways to Promote Athletic Events*

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Summary</i>
What is your gender?	▪ Male
What is your age?	▪ 24
What is your highest education level?	▪ Bachelors
How many years of experience do you have in marketing?	▪ 6 years
What were some of your responsibilities as the Assistant Director of Marketing?	▪ Supervising interns, running music, leading promotions at BG hockey games, assisting in coming up with new promotions/ways to market games
How long did you work that position?	▪ 2 years
What promotions does BGSU athletics do?	▪ Social media, television, radio, newspapers, food discounts, dorm storms, meet the players, flyers, signs/posters, preview days, cross promotion
What promotions did you find to be most effective?	▪ Social Media, flyers

There were no statistical differences between community members and BGSU students in the following promotions of social media, newspapers, coupons, tailgates, meet the players, dorm storms, game-day flyers, game-day signs, preview days, and cross promotion. More specifically, there was no difference on how effective each promotion is in social media promotion ( $t_{(81)}=.21, p>.05$  [C. I. -.48, .60]), newspaper promotion ( $t_{(75)}=-1.47, p>.05$  [C.I. -1.15, .17]), coupon promotions ( $t_{(81)}=-.26, p>.05$  [C.I. -.81, .62]), tailgate promotion ( $t_{(81)}=.93, p>.05$  [C.I. -.39, 1.09]), meet the players promotion ( $t_{(81)}=-.01, p>.05$  [C.I. -.79, .78]), dorm storm promotion ( $t_{(81)}=.81, p>.05$  [C.I. -.48, 1.14]), game-day flyers ( $t_{(81)}=-1.65, p>.05$  [C.I. -1.30, .12]), game-day sign promotion ( $t_{(81)}=.25, p>.05$  [C.I. -.65, -.84]), preview day promotion ( $t_{(81)}=.24, p>.05$  [C.I. -.50, .64]), and cross promotion ( $t_{(81)}=1.00, p>.05$  [C.I. -.30, -.91]). Table 5 provides a summary of the Research Question 2 results.

**Table 5.**

*Summary of Results: The Effectiveness of Promotions*

	<b>Community Members</b> M(SD)	<b>BGSU Students</b> M(SD)	<i>t-test (df)</i>
<b>Radio*</b>	<b>4.05 (1.53)</b>	<b>2.97 (1.33)</b>	$t_{(81)}=-3.40, p<.05$ [C.I. -1.70, -.45]
<b>Television*</b>	<b>4.90 (1.45)</b>	<b>3.69 (1.42)</b>	$t_{(81)}=-3.85, p<.05$ [C.I. -1.83, -.59]
Social Media	5.66 (1.35)	5.71 (1.11)	$t_{(81)}=.21, p>.05$ [C.I. -.48, .60]
Newspaper	3.49 (1.69)	3.00 (1.39)	$t_{(75)}=-1.47, p>.05$ [C.I. -1.15, .17]
Coupons	4.93 (1.79)	4.83 (1.48)	$t_{(81)}=-.26, p>.05$ [C.I. -.81, .62]
Tailgates	4.46 (1.75)	4.81 (1.66)	$t_{(81)}=.93, p>.05$ [C.I. -.39, 1.09]
Meet the Players	4.10 (1.87)	4.10 (1.72)	$t_{(81)}=-.01, p>.05$ [C.I. -.79, .78]
Dorm Storms	3.12 (1.83)	3.45 (1.88)	$t_{(81)}=.81, p>.05$ [C.I. -.48, 1.14]
Game-Day Flyers	3.71 (1.78)	3.11 (1.45)	$t_{(81)}=-1.65, p>.05$ [C.I. -1.30, .12]
Game-Day Signs	4.02 (1.89)	4.12 (1.50)	$t_{(81)}=.25, p>.05$ [C.I. -.65, -.84]
Preview Days	5.17 (1.30)	5.24 (1.30)	$t_{(81)}=.24, p>.05$ [C.I. -.50, .64]
Cross Promotion	5.12 (1.49)	5.43 (1.29)	$t_{(81)}=1.00, p>.05$ [C.I. -.30, -.91]

*Note.* Scale: 1: not effective at all – 7: extremely effective. M=mean, SD=standard deviation. Bold\*=statistically significant; group difference exists.

### Research Question 3 Results: A Comparison of Motivations between BGSU Students and Community Members

There was a significant difference between community members and BGSU students in the two motivations of social and family, which means two groups have different motives to attend the BGSU sporting events: Social ( $t_{(76.18)}=5.22, p<.05$  [C.I. .55, 1.22]) and family ( $t_{(80)}=-5.55, p<.05$  [C.I. -2.23, -1.05]). The following motivations of achievement, knowledge, aesthetics, drama, and escape had no statistical differences: Achievement ( $t_{(81)}=1.67, p>.05$  [C.I. -.10, 1.08]), knowledge, ( $t_{(81)}=-.84, p>.05$  [C.I. -.10, .54]), aesthetics ( $t_{(81)}=-1.01, p>.05$  [C.I. -.94, .31]), drama ( $t_{(81)}=-.26, p>.05$  [C. I. -.58, .45]), escape ( $t_{(81)}=-.53, p>.05$  [C.I. .79, .46]). Table 6 provides a summary of the results of RQ 3.

**Table 6.**

#### *Summary of Research Question 3 Results: Motivation Difference*

	<b>Community Members M(SD)</b>	<b>BGSU Students M(SD)</b>	<b><i>t</i>-test (df)</b>
Achievement	5.09 (1.46)	5.58 (1.20)	$t_{(81)}=1.67, p>.05, [C.I. -.10, 1.08]$
Knowledge	3.24 (1.61)	3.10 (1.54)	$t_{(81)}=-.84, p>.05, [C.I. -.10, .54]$
Aesthetics	4.26 (1.46)	3.94 (1.40)	$t_{(81)}=-1.01, p>.05, [C.I. -.94, .31]$
Drama	5.13 (1.16)	5.06 (1.19)	$t_{(81)}=-.26, p>.05, [C.I. -.58, .45]$
Escape	4.52 (1.31)	4.36 (1.54)	$t_{(81)}=-.53, p>.05, [C.I. .79, .46]$
<b>Social*</b>	<b>4.39 (.66)</b>	<b>5.27 (.87)</b>	$t_{(76)}=5.22, p<.05, [C.I. .55, 1.22]$
<b>Family*</b>	<b>4.73 (1.43)</b>	<b>3.10 (1.23)</b>	$t_{(80)}=-5.55, p<.05, [C.I. -2.23, -1.05]$

*Note.* Scale: 1: not effective at all – 7: extremely effective. M=mean, SD=standard deviation. Bold\*=statistically significant; group difference exists.

### Discussion

The purpose of this research was a) to explore about all methods BGSU athletics uses to

promote games and gain an understanding of how effective each promotion was perceived by community members and BGSU students and b) to understand what motivates BGSU students and community members to attend BGSU athletic events. In interviewing Chad Clark, I learned that BGSU uses advertising, sales promotions, and public relations to promote athletic events. Through advertising BGSU athletics uses radio, television, social media, and newspaper to promote athletic events. For sales promotion, BGSU athletics uses coupons, tailgates, meet the players events, dorm storms, game-day signs, and game-day flyers. In terms of public relations, BGSU promotes athletics through preview days and cross promotion. In finding out that social media and flyers were believed to be two of the most effective methods for promoting events that is where major emphasis was placed in the promotion of games.

The results of research question 2 explained how certain promotions are more significant in increasing attendance than others. In analyzing how effective promotions are on increasing attendance at BGSU athletic events, we understood what promotions BGSU students and community members found to be effective. The results provided evidence that the effectiveness of radio and television has been perceived differently between community members and BGSU students. The effectiveness on television and radio were significantly higher for community members compared to BGSU students. This indicates that BGSU athletics should be tailoring their promotion strategies for radio and television more towards community members. Promotions such as social media, tailgates, coupons, meet the players, and game-day signs were found to increase the chances of attending BGSU athletic events. Meanwhile, such promotions did not show the group difference to attending athletic events between community members and BGSU students. This allows administrators in the athletic department to development promotional plans that place more of an emphasis on these areas to be effective on both

community members and BGSU students.

In comparing motivations between BGSU students and members of the Bowling Green Community, the results for research question 3 showed that there is not a significant difference between community members and BGSU students on the sub-factors of achievement, knowledge, aesthetics, drama, and escape. However, there is a significant difference between community members and BGSU students for the factors of social and family. Specifically, BGSU students were more motivated to attend sporting events because of the social context than community members. Meanwhile, community members were more motivated to attend sporting events because of family. This allows administration to promote the social aspect more to BGSU students and the family aspect to community members. Thus, it will be more effective if some social promotions (e.g., having basketball tournaments or forms of competition that students can participate with friends prior to games) plan for student groups. Contrarily, some family promotions including hosting youth sport events that partner with BGSU athletics or providing family bundle ticket discounts would be effective for community members. The athletic department can approach other motives including achievement, drama, and escape to both community and student groups. These factors can be used to develop promotion strategies as well. For example, for achievement it would be important to promote how successful BGSU has been in winning MAC championships in football.

### **Implications**

This study provided plenty of insight for BGSU marketing to understand what promotions are effective towards increasing attendance at athletic events along with what motivates fans to attend. Based upon the results of the study there are multiple implications that can be applied to promoting BGSU athletics. The first major implication is that radio and

television promotions that are tailored towards specifically targeting community members should highlight family motives.

In addition, some promotional strategies such as dorm-storms and newspaper were not as effective as other forms of promotion in the study. They had average responses that were slightly under the mid-point (i.e., 3.5 in a 7-point scale) whereas some of the more promotion strategies were above the mid-point including social media, cross promotion, preview days, coupons, and tailgating. These promotions provided evidence that BGSU students and community members are significantly more likely to attend athletic events.

A major implication of this is that BGSU should take into account which promotions are more effective in increasing attendance for community members. In doing so, this will bring additional revenue to the athletic department because of the increase of ticket sales. Another implication is it may be necessary to eliminate less effective promotion strategies. Instead, it may be necessary to try out new promotional ideas. An example might be doing more family related activities that partner with athletics instead of dorm storms or newspaper promotion.

The results of this study also show how motivations play a role in the attendance of athletic events for community members and BGSU students. A major implication was the motivation difference between community members and BGSU students on social and family. In developing promotional strategies, community members should be targeted more in terms of family events. For BGSU students, promotion strategies should be used that are more tailored to the social aspect of athletic events.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

There are a few limitations. First, the results from this study are specific to BGSU athletics and the promotions they do. Therefore, other schools would need to do an analysis of

the promotions their athletic department uses along with examining motivations their community members and students have. The findings would likely vary depending on the types of promotions and the location of the university. In future research, other universities are encouraged to study how effective they are promoting their athletic events and find what motivates their community members and students to attend athletic events.

Another limitation of this study was the students that were selected for the study. Being that the students were conveniently selected from sport management courses, these students may be more motivated to attend sporting events than other majors. In future research, it should include diverse majors throughout the university. This would mean there is a larger sample size and provide even more understanding about the promotions that increase the likelihood of attending athletic events. Therefore, doing a study with students of all majors might have yielded different results.

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## Appendix A.

### Summary of Questions in RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3

Research Questions	Scale	Demographics
Research Question 1:  What forms of Promotions does BGSU athletics do?	Demographics  Background  Promotions	What is your Gender What is your age? What is your highest education level? How many years' experience do you have in marketing? What were some of your responsibilities? How long did you work as the Assistant Director of Marketing? What promotions does BGSU athletics do? What promotions did you find to be most effective?
Research Question 2:  What forms of promotions make students at BGSU and members of the community more likely to attend athletic events?	Advertising effectiveness  Sales promotion effectiveness  Public relations effectiveness	Games on Radio Games Television Games on Social Media Games through Newspaper Coupons for food Tailgates Meet the players Dorm Storms Game day signs Game day Flyers Preview days Cross Promotion
Research question 3:  How do motives influence the decision making to attend athletic events for BGSU students and community members?	Achievement  Knowledge  Aesthetics  Drama  Escape  Social	I feel I have won when BGSU wins I feel a personal sense of achievement when BGSU does well I feel proud when BGSU plays well I regularly check stats of BGSU players I usually know BGSU's Win/Loss record I read BGSU box scores regularly I appreciate the beauty in BGSU games There is a certain natural beauty to BGSU games I enjoy the drama of a one run BGSU game I prefer a close BGSU game over one-sided A BGSU game is more enjoyable if the outcome isn't decided till the end BGSU games represent an escape for me from my day-to-day activities BGSU games are a great change of pace from what I regularly do BGSU games are a great opportunity to socialize It is important for me to socialize at BGSU games

Family

I like going to BGSU games with my family

I like going to BGSU games with my spouse

I like going to BGSU games with my children

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## Appendix B: Questionnaire

**Please circle or indicate the most appropriate response for the following items.**

### 1. Advertising

How effective do you think each of the following promotions are on increasing attendance at athletic events:	<b>Not Effective</b>			<b>Extremely Effective</b>			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BGSU Athletics' advertising games on the radio	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BGSU Athletics' advertising games on television	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BGSU Athletics' advertising games on social media	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BGSU Athletics' advertising games through newspaper	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### 2. Sales Promotion

How much more likely are you to attend athletic events, when BGSU marketing:	<b>Not at all likely</b>			<b>Extremely likely</b>			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Offers coupons or promotes discounts on food for games	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Promotes Tailgates	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Promotes 'Meet the Players' events	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Promotes Dorm Storms	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Distributes game-day flyers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Places game-day signs across campus	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### 3. Public Relations

	<b>Not better image</b>			<b>Strongly better image</b>			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When BG markets their athletics at preview days, does this give athletics a better image?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When BG marketing does cross promotion where other teams market each other, does that give athletics a better image as well?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Please circle or indicate the most appropriate response for the following items.**

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
I feel like I have won when BGSU wins	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel a personal sense of achievement when BGSU does well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel proud when BGSU plays well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I regularly check the statistics of BGSU players	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I usually know BGSU's win/loss record	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I read the box scores and team statistics regularly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I appreciate the beauty inherent in BGSU games	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is a certain natural beauty to BGSU game	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I enjoy the drama of a "one run" BGSU game	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I prefer a "close" BGSU game rather than a "one-sided" game	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A BGSU game is more enjoyable to me when the outcome is not decided until the very end	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BGSU games represent an escape for me my day-to-day activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BGSU games are a great change of pace from what I regularly do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BGSU games are a great opportunity to socialize	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important for me to interact with people at BGSU games	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I like going to BGSU games with my family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I like going to BGSU games with my spouse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I like going to BGSU games with my children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

#### 4. Demographic Information

**Please circle or write in the appropriate response for the following items**

BGSU Student or Community Member

**Gender:** Male Female Other I prefer not to answer

**Year of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ethnicity:** White/Caucasian Black/African American Native American  
 Hispanic/Latino Asian/Pacific Islander Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 I prefer not to answer

**Highest Education Level:** Some High School      High School Graduate  
Some College      Associates      Bachelors  
Masters      Doctoral      I prefer not to answer

**Residential Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_  
I prefer not to answer

## Appendix C: IRB Approval

**BGSU**

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Research Compliance

DATE: February 1, 2019

TO: Chris Novak  
FROM: Bowling Green State University Institutional Review Board

PROJECT TITLE: [1356283-2] Exploring the Effectiveness of Promotion Strategy: The Case of BGSU Athletics

SUBMISSION TYPE: Revision

ACTION: APPROVED  
APPROVAL DATE: February 1, 2019  
EXPIRATION DATE: December 6, 2019  
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this project. The Bowling Green State University Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

The final approved version of the consent document(s) is available as a published Board Document in the Review Details page. You must use the approved version of the consent document when obtaining consent from participants. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that you are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the IRB. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures, those modifications must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the modification request form for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must also be reported promptly to this office.

This approval expires on December 6, 2019. You will receive a continuing review notice before your project expires. If you wish to continue your work after the expiration date, your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Good luck with your work. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at 419-372-7716 or [orc@bgsu.edu](mailto:orc@bgsu.edu). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence regarding this project.

## Appendix D: Recruitment Script

Dear Student/Community Member,

I am conducting research pertaining what forms of promotions BGSU Athletics currently execute and examining the efficiency of promotional campaigns. Essentially, I will be taking a look at how the marketing department in BGSU athletics promotes games to students to see how effective they are in increasing attendance. As a student who has volunteered within BGSU Athletics you can provide considerable data to assist me in understanding how effective BGSU is currently promoting athletics.

Please take a few moments to complete the questionnaire that can be accessed through the link provided at the bottom of this email. The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. All responses will remain confidential and completely anonymous, as there is no way for me to identify responses. Your decision whether or not to participate in the research study will have no impact on your grades/class standing and will not affect you or your relationship with Bowling Green State University. By completing this questionnaire, you are giving your consent to participate in this study. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself at novakc@bgsu.edu (937-242-5951) or my advisor, Lucy Lee at jielee@bgsu.edu (419-372-7234). You may also contact the Chair of the Institutional Review Board at orc@bgsu.edu (419-372-7716).

PLEASE RESPOND BY FRIDAY, MARCH 15.

Sincerely,  
Chris Novak  
Graduate Student  
Sport Administration  
Bowling Green State University

P: 937-242-5951

## Appendix E: Consent Forms



BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Human Movement, Sport, and Leisure  
Studies  
College of Education and Human Development

### Informed Consent

**Introduction:** This research is being conducted by, Chris Novak (masters program student) and J. Lucy Lee (Advisor) in the School of Human Movement, Sport, Leisure Studies at Bowling Green State University. You are invited to be in a research study exploring the effectiveness of promotions executed by BGSU athletics. We ask that you read this form before agreeing to participate in the study.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to investigate what forms of promotions BGSU athletics current execute and to examine the efficiency of promotional campaigns. In determining the motivations that students of BGSU and members of the community have for attending sporting events will also show what types of promotions can be effective in terms of increasing attendance. The benefits to participation are not direct, but they will give the athletic department a better understanding of what promotions are effective and that will lead to better relationships being built in the future.

**Procedure:** Participation in this research includes taking a paper survey question regarding to promotions used by BGSU athletics (i.e., how promotions increase the chances of attending athletic events), how effective you see each form of promotion (i.e., how effective you think advertising through radio is), motivations for attending sporting events (i.e., game attractiveness) and basic demographic information. We estimate that your participation will take approximately 15-20 minutes.

**Voluntary nature:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to skip questions (or not do a particular task) or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Deciding to participate or not will not affect your relationship with Bowling Green State University, your school, job or institution.

**Anonymity Protection:** No identifiable information will be collected. In any sort of report, I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Electronic copies of completed survey will be kept in the cloud-based storage with a password for a period of 1 year then erased. Only the principal investigator will have access to the records. I recommend you use Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome to participate in the survey. Some employers may use tracking software so you (1) may want to complete your survey on a personal computer, (2) do not leave survey open if using a public computer or a computer other may have access to, (3) clear your browser cache and page history after completing the survey. We will not collect/store IP addresses of those who participate in the online survey

**Risks:** The anticipated risks to you are no greater than those normally encountered in daily life. But at any time, you may terminate your participation in the study.

**Contact information:** The researcher conducting this study is Chris Novak. You may ask any question you have now. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact Chris Novak, 937-242-5951, novako@bgsu.edu. You may contact my advisor Lucy Lee if you have any questions

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about the study, [jielee@bgsu.edu](mailto:jielee@bgsu.edu), 419-372-2879. You may contact the Chair, the BGSU Institutional Review Board at 419-372-7716, or by email at [irc@bgsu.edu](mailto:irc@bgsu.edu) if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research. You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records. Thank you.

**Statement of Consent:**

If you click the "CONTINUE" button, it implies you have read the above information and consent to participate in the study. Otherwise, you may leave the page. Thank you.



BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to investigate what forms of promotions BGSU athletics current execute and to examine the efficiency of promotional campaigns. In determining the motivations that students of BGSU and members of the community have for attending sporting events will also show what types of promotions can be effective in terms of increasing attendance. The benefits to participation are not direct, but they will give the athletic department a better understanding of what promotions are effective and that will lead to better relationships being built in the future.

**Procedure:** Participation in this research includes being interviewed about promotions used by BGSU athletics. You will be asked some basic demographic questions at first. Following that, you will be asked about your background working in marketing. Finally, you will be asked about all the forms of promotions BGSU athletics does and which ones you believe are most effective. We estimate that your participation will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

**Voluntary nature:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to not answer questions or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Deciding to participate or not will not affect your relationship with your school, job or institution.

**Confidentiality protection:** This interview will be a one-on-one interview, so data will not be anonymous. This shows that your name will be used and means anything you say will be used as data which will not be anonymous. Electronic copies of the completed interview will be kept in the cloud-based storage with a password for a period of 1 year then erased. Only the principal investigator will have access to the records. Deciding to participate or not will not affect your relationship with Bowling Green State University.

**Risks:** The anticipated risks to you are no greater than those normally encountered in daily life. But at any time, you may terminate your participation in the study. By completing this interview, you are indicating your consent to participate in the study.

**Contact information:** The researcher conducting this study is Chris Novak. You may ask any question you have now. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact Chris Novak, 937-242-5951, novake@bgsu.edu. You may contact my advisor Lucy Lee if you have any questions about the study, jlee@bgsu.edu, 419-372-2879. You may contact the Chair, the BGSU Institutional Review Board at 419-372-7716, or by email at [orc@bgsu.edu](mailto:orc@bgsu.edu) if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research. You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your

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records. Thank you.

**Statement of Consent:**

If you sign in the bottom line, it implies you have read the above information and consent to participate in the study. Otherwise, you may leave the room. Thank you.

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