

# MARKETING PLAN

---

GREATER RALEIGH SPORTS COUNCIL  
EVENING OF CHAMPIONS

BY: CHRIS WHITE

APRIL 28, 2014

## **Executive Summary**

The Greater Raleigh Sports Council is an organization devoted to promoting the best sports and sporting events the Triangle-area of North Carolina has to offer. It also aims to foster a healthy economic environment with its promotion. The Sports Council has established itself as a top sports supporter organization by offering various opportunities and unique experiences for its members. This marketing plan will cover the organization as a whole but will focus specifically on the Sports Council's marquee event, the Evening of Champions.

Taking a more in depth look at the organization, the Sports Council possesses numerous strengths that make it the organization it is today. Some examples include offering unique opportunities for members and even non-members as well as having partnerships with various businesses as well as local college and professional sports teams. These strengths are crucial for the overall success of the organization and the Evening of Champions event. There are also several weaknesses within the organization including a lack of dynamic advertising for the organization and Evening of Champions event, a lack of presence on social media and relatively high price point to join and/or attend the Evening of Champions.

To expand the Greater Raleigh Sports Council's footprint across the Triangle-area, I am presenting several marketing strategies to implement for the coming year. The Sports Council not only wants to be a sports promotion organization but wants to offer unmatched, quality benefits and experiences for any person or business that joins. The first strategy is generate a higher level of awareness and exposure for the organization and Evening of Champions event throughout the local area. The tactic through which I will carry out this strategy is creating dynamic advertisements on radio, television and other forms of media to spread information about the organization and the Evening of Champions to a broader audience. Second, I would like to generate a higher level of awareness and exposure for the organization and Evening of Champions event. I will do this by improving the organization's social media footprint as well as overall website design to attract more potential members. Finally, I will differentiate the Greater Raleigh Sports Council and Evening of Champions event from competition both locally and nationally by creating a new student member program and improving activities at the Evening of Champions. With careful planning, thought to a target market and implementation, this marketing plan will be successful.

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<i>Company Description and Mission Statement</i>	4
<i>Background</i>	4-5
<b>Situational Analysis</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<i>Internal Analysis</i>	6-7
<i>External Environmental Analysis</i>	8-9
<i>Examination of Product Portfolio and Positioning</i>	9
<b>Competitive Analysis</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Customer Analysis</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<i>Demographics</i>	12
<i>Psychographics</i>	12
<i>Product Usage and Benefits</i>	12-13
<i>Selection of Target Market</i>	13
<b>Marketing Goals</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Marketing Strategies and Tactics</b> .....	<b>15-17</b>
<b>Implementation and Control</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<i>Action Plan</i>	18
<i>Budget</i>	18-20
<i>Evaluation</i>	20-21
<b>Appendix</b> .....	<b>22-26</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>27</b>

## **Introduction**

### **Company Description and Mission Statement**

The Greater Raleigh Sports Council hosts and executes as well as assists with quality sporting events in Wake County that develop the sports landscape of the Triangle-area. The Greater Raleigh Sports Council is a membership-based organization and is a department within the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce. The Sports Council's mission is to foster a healthy economic environment by promoting the Triangle-area as a leading site for sporting events involving all sport competitions from youth to professional.

The Sports Council relies heavily upon volunteers for its overall success with events. It also offers a wide variety of sponsorship opportunities throughout the year for corporations. The Sports Council uses partnerships with area collegiate and professional teams to provide exclusive networking events, opportunities and other benefits for members both on the corporate and individual side. The organization has a simple phrase it uses to attract people to join: "Be a Team Player." The council urges prospective individual and corporate partners to become a key player by joining the organization and helping to build the Raleigh-area and beyond as a "powerhouse in the world of sports."

### **Background**

The primary target market for the Sports Council and the Evening of Champions event is Raleigh and Wake County but it has expanded its footprint to the greater Triangle-area. Since its inception in 1998, the Sports Council has been a key player in hosting exclusive, high quality sporting events in Wake County and beyond. The Sports Council has one full-time manager, Erin Anderson, as well as an intern, Erich Horner, on staff as well as a steering committee that is comprised of 15 volunteer members from various organizational partners. The committee assists the Sports Council with the shaping of future sports agendas and plans, executes the organization's mission and assists staff as needed. The Sports Council has assisted with hosting a wide range of special events such as the 2011 NHL All Star Weekend that was held in Raleigh, IRONMAN Raleigh 70.3, the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon and Half Marathon, MEAC and NCAA Basketball Tournaments and its celebratory event, the Evening of Champions.

The Evening of Champions event is a signature event for the Triangle-area, honoring the best in local sports. The event is open to both members and non-members and is held at the PNC Arena in Raleigh. The evening includes food and cocktail sampling, raffles for exclusive prizes, behind the scenes tours of the Carolina Hurricanes and N.C. State locker rooms, as well as photo opportunities on the Olympia Zamboni machine. The event gives attendees a chance to get up close and personal with the best in sports. This year's event honored UNC Women's Basketball coach, Sylvia Hatchell, Duke Football coach, David Cutcliffe and N.C. State Baseball pitcher, Carlos Rodon, among others.

Most of the Sports Council's marketing efforts are primarily through word of mouth although the organization has used other forms including radio advertisements, social media and event sponsorship agreements. The Sports Council has an operational website with information on the organization, how to join, how to become a sponsor, member testimonials and a schedule of events. It also has a Twitter account that is updated regularly.

A major benefit of joining and interacting with the Sports Council is the opportunity to connect and network with dozens of professionals and organizations throughout the Raleigh area. Some of the Sports Council's current corporate members include: 99.9 FM The Fan, the Carolina Hurricanes, the Carolina Mudcats, the Durham Bulls, Lenovo, North Carolina Electric Cooperative, Saint Augustine's College and the Kay Yow Cancer Fund. It also has dozens of individual members which include small businesses. As a member, you receive numerous other benefits as well including opportunities to volunteer at Sports Council events, and complimentary registration for Sports Council "nights out" at the Durham Bulls, Carolina RailHawks, Carolina Mudcats and Carolina Hurricanes.

The Sports Council's marketing program is year-round as there are numerous events that the council and its members are involved in. Additionally, the council hosts a number of its own events, meetings, outreach programs and the Evening of Champions, its marquee event of the year.

## **Situational Analysis**

### **Internal Analysis (Strengths and Weaknesses)**

#### Strengths

A strength for the Greater Raleigh Sports Council is it is a well-managed organization that honors and supports the local sports scene not only in Raleigh and Wake County but in the Triangle area as a whole. With negative headlines regarding sports in the news quite often, it is imperative to have an outlet in which to celebrate and support the good in sports and put the local area sports scene in a positive light. Putting the sports scene in a positive light translates into promoting the local area as a whole and making the area attractive for business.

A second strength is the Evening of Champions event gives attendees a unique opportunity to interact with stars of the local sports scene. Something attendees may not be able to do every day. The event allows for attendees to not only get up close and personal to star athletes and coaches but it also allows them to go behind the scenes and tour the Carolina Hurricanes and N.C. State locker rooms at PNC Arena. This could be a once in a lifetime opportunity for some people.

A third strength is sponsorship and corporate partner agreements for both the organization and the event. The Sports Council has an extensive corporate partner agreement program that offers numerous benefits including complimentary tickets to organizational outings at local sporting events, logo and link to the partnering company's website on the Sports Council's website and an invitation and discounted corporate tickets to the Evening of Champions event. Through its relationship with the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, the Sports Council also offers numerous sponsorship opportunities throughout the year and includes an updated list of these opportunities on its website.

A fourth strength is inclusiveness. Although there is heavy emphasis on corporate partners and sponsors, both the organization and the event are open to anyone who would like to join. Neither is geared toward a particular demographic or corporate entity. Additionally, the Evening of Champions event allows fans – whether they attend the event or not – to vote on whom they

would like to win the various awards that are given at the event. This generates an interest in the event and assists in additional advertising for the event as well.

### Weaknesses

One weakness for the organization is awareness and overall advertising. Although it has been around since 1998, the organization has not been as widely publicized in the Triangle-area. This is also true for the Evening of Champions event as it is mainly advertised through some radio advertisements, the Sports Council's website and word of mouth.

Closely associated with advertising of the organization and the event, there is also a slight weakness when it comes to the organization's website and social media use. The website has an overall professional and clean look. However, it could be updated to be more appealing to visitors. A glaring problem with the Sports Council's website is it has a bar at the top of the page that has a purpose of being a place for an advertisement to be placed. The bar has no advertisement and simply states "Your Ad Here" which could give site visitors the impression that the organization either cannot obtain sponsors or staff members are not updating the website on a regular basis. In addition, the Sports Council should definitely beef up its use of social media. According to its website, the organization only has an active Twitter account and an email newsletter currently. Although Sports Council staff keeps the Twitter account up to date, the account has a mere 886 followers.

A third weakness is the price point for Sports Council membership and the Evening of Champions event. An individual membership is \$300 annually while tickets to the Evening of Champions event are \$60 per person for Sports Council members and \$75 per person for non-members. These price points may be too much for some people compared to attending other, cheaper events in the local area.

A fourth weakness is appeal of the Evening of Champions event to children. The Sports Council has numerous events that are family friendly and it can be argued that this event is as well. But most young children would probably not be as interested in going to the Evening of Champions event and some really young children may get bored by it. Other than the locker room tours and photo opportunities, there are no real activities for families with children. This could pose a

problem for adults who would like to attend but do not have something for their children to do or somewhere for them to stay.

## **External Environmental Analysis (Opportunities and Threats)**

### Opportunities

Although the Sports Council's main target market is Raleigh and Wake County as a whole, it has expanded to cover the Triangle-area, including Durham and Chapel Hill. The organization has a big opportunity to expand its reach and footprint in an even broader sense through incorporating more advertising through radio, television, newspapers and magazines.

For both itself and the Evening of Champions event, the Sports Council has the opportunity to expand its use of social media in order to incorporate a broader clientele. Additionally, with numerous sports entities across the Triangle-area, the Sports Council has a great opportunity to expand even more into these entities as well as new entities. Through this, the organization can advertise itself even more, develop a larger clientele and provide additional benefits for its members by holding special events.

Another opportunity the Sports Council has, especially with its Evening of Champions event, is to tap into a younger demographic through not only social media use but also who is scheduled to appear at events. The Evening of Champions has a special interviewee each year and the Sports Council has an opportunity to attract attendees depending on who that interviewee is, especially those in a younger demographic.

### Threats

One of the main threats for the Evening of Champions event is any other events that are going on in the Triangle-area the night this event will be held. This could be either sporting or not and this is especially a threat if other events in the area are cheaper and offer more than the Evening of Champions. Coinciding with this is the event is held on a weekday, which could present conflicts for parents with children who would like to go.

Another threat is weather and when this event is scheduled. The event is typically scheduled sometime in February and, with unpredictable wintry weather in North Carolina during this time,

it could pose a threat to the event. In fact, the 2014 Evening of Champions had to be rescheduled due to wintry weather and refunds were offered to those who could not attend on the new date.

A third possible threat for the organization and the Evening of Champions event is who is brought in to be the special interviewee. This was especially true for the 2014 Evening of Champions as NFL quarterback, Michael Vick, was scheduled to be the special guest. Vick has been a figure of criticism in recent years in the wake of a dog fighting scandal. The decision sparked quite a bit of controversy and even made local as well as national headlines in the *Huffington Post*. There was also a petition started on Change.org with more than 70,000 supporters to get the Council to change its decision. Weather and the event's date change ultimately forced Vick to back out of the engagement but the decision still could have been a catastrophic threat to the overall success of the event. If that many people were upset over it, members could have been as well and could have back out of attending and/or funding the event.

### **Examination of Product Portfolio and Positioning**

The Greater Raleigh Sports Council has a good outline for how it wants to position and market its Evening of Champions events and to whom the event should be marketed to. There is great value placed not only on the event itself but also on the product of joining the Sports Council. Joining gives members the benefit of networking with top sports officials from the local area and also gives corporate members the opportunity to sponsor and advertise at numerous events throughout the year.

This is also true for the Evening of Champions event. Through this, members and sponsoring entities are able to not only participate in the event but make their names and/or companies available for a broad audience to see. The Evening of Champions event offers attendees a once-in-a-lifetime experience to celebrate the achievements in Triangle-area sports and get a behind the scenes look at how sports success happens. It is not only an event to celebrate champions, it is an event to discover where champions are born.

## **Competitive Analysis**

The Evening of Champions event is fairly unique in the area, but there are many competitors – both sports and non-sports related – however that offer more intriguing alternatives at cheaper price points than this event as well. For instance, there are countless collegiate sporting events, professional sporting events and non-sports related activities and events throughout the Triangle-area and beyond year round. All could drive some customers away from the Evening of Champions and more toward a cheaper event.

On the college side, there are many various institutions in the Triangle-area and even outside of the Triangle-area. The three main Triangle-area institutions are UNC-Chapel Hill, N.C. State and Duke. There is also N.C. Central, William Peace University and Meredith College, to name a few. All institutions offer both sporting and non-sporting events throughout the year, with most of which being at cheaper price points than the Evening of Champions. That would, therefore, make these institutions main competitors for the Evening of Champions event.

There are also numerous professional sporting events held throughout the Triangle. Some of these events could include soccer, golf and basketball. Some of the entities related to this are the Charlotte Bobcats and, perhaps, the Carolina RailHawks as well. If the Evening of Champions event was scheduled sometime in the spring, say, April, then the Durham Bulls and Carolina Mudcats would also play a role as competitors.

There is also a countless number of non-sports related competition in the area. This includes events at local performing arts centers and concert facilities such as Duke Energy Center in downtown Raleigh and the Carolina Theatre in downtown Durham, various community events, festivals and even movie theaters and museums. Each of these competitors offers events and activities for customers that are both entertaining and at a similar or cheaper price point than the Evening of Champions. Plus, the selected competitors offer events and activities that are for every age group, unlike some aspects of the Evening of Champions event. Therefore, families may choose one of these competitors instead of the Sports Council and the Evening of Champions.

One final competitor for the Sports Council would be other, similar Sports Councils or organizations in other cities and states. There are several other sports councils including ones in Nashville, Tenn., Atlanta, G.A. and Tallahassee, Fla., just to name a few. These organizations hold and sponsor similar events as the Greater Raleigh Sports Council so there could also be some competition between cities and states for getting the best events and sponsorships.

All of the above competitors offer enjoyable and entertaining experiences for customers like the Sports Council and Evening of Champions event. However, the competing events do not necessarily offer the same exclusivity and uniqueness that comes with the Evening of Champions and other events organized by the Sports Council. The competitors also do not offer opportunities to connect and network with top sports officials in the area as what is inherent with a Sports Council membership.

## **Customer Analysis**

### Demographics

According to SBRNet, 60.1 percent of college basketball fans were male as opposed to 39.9 percent female in 2013. Similar trends can be found in other sports such as college football (55.6 percent male, 44.4 percent female), National Football League (52.7 percent male, 47.3 percent female) and Major League Baseball (53.4 percent male, 46.6 percent female). Based on this research, the primary demographic for the Evening of Champions event would be males although females are included in the mix as well.

As far as age, this event is non-sporting and, although star athletes and coaches attend it, more than likely no person under the age of 12 and 13 years would attend although there is no minimum age requirement on the site listing for the event. Any person above this age would probably find this an entertaining event to attend. Based on the costs associated with becoming a member of the Sports Council and the Evening of Champions event itself, it would be safe to say that the income level for the market would be about \$50,000 per year and greater.

### Psychographics

In order for customers to appreciate and enjoy this event, there would have to be an overall interest in sports, especially in the Triangle-area. There should also not only be an interest in sports but interest in attending the Evening of Champions event. There would have to be some form of knowledge or familiarity in sports and/or the Triangle-area sports scene needed in order to appreciate those who are honored at the event.

Additionally, the customers would need to have an appreciation and desire for a “high end” sporting event such as the Evening of Champions. It is not an ordinary sporting event like a game so there would be a completely different set of expectations for attendees at the Evening of Champions as opposed to an ordinary, everyday sporting or non-sporting event.

### Product Usage and Benefits

Customers use this product in order to participate in a unique experience with the Evening of Champions event as well as so they can have the opportunity to connect and network with area sports professionals. There are numerous benefits with using the product of the Evening of

Champions event such as being able to get up close and personal with star athletes and coaches from the local area as well as go behind the scenes in the N.C. State and Carolina Hurricanes locker rooms. All are things people normally cannot do at regular sporting and/or non-sporting events.

#### Selection of Target Market

Based on the information and research above, it would be in the best interest for this marketing plan if adult males, 18-34 years of age and living in the Triangle-area as the target market. Adults males within this age demographic and living in the area are the most likely to be interested in an event such as the Evening of Champions and would be the best possible demographic to solicit for more potential Sports Council members and/or attendees of the Evening of Champions event. This target market would also include local college students which could potentially be a large pool to market toward.

## **Marketing Goals**

There are two main goals that the Greater Raleigh Sports Council should focus on in order to be successful: (1) be an organization that promotes the best in all sports within the Raleigh and greater Triangle-area and (2) offer unique opportunities for members in order to differentiate from key competitors both locally and nationally.

This marketing plan will assist the Sports Council achieve its goals through using various marketing strategies. These strategies will, in turn, be paired and implemented with new and different marketing tactics that will enable the organization to increase its footprint across the Triangle-area and beyond.

The Greater Raleigh Sports Council and Evening of Champions is in the latter part of the growth stage in the product life cycle. There is still quite a bit of growth that can be achieved with the organization and the event as a whole. A SWOT analysis showed that the organization's major weaknesses were: (1) generating awareness about the organization and the Evening of Champions event, (2) utilizing its website and other forms of social media to their maximum potential and (3) making organizational events, such as the Evening of Champions, more appealing to a younger audience.

## Marketing Strategies and Tactics

The first marketing strategy to be focused on is generating more awareness and exposure for the Greater Raleigh Sports Council and the Evening of Champions event throughout the local area. Although the Sports Council is a fairly well-established organization, improvements can be made in the way the organization interacts with the local community in order to generate exposure and new clientele.

**Goal:** Develop the Greater Raleigh Sports Council further into a premier organization that supports the best sports the Triangle-area has to offer.

**Strategy:** Generate a higher level of awareness and exposure for the organization and Evening of Champions event throughout the local area.

**Tactic:** Create advertisements about the organization and Evening of Champions.

It was found in the SWOT analysis that one of the Greater Raleigh Sports Council's main weaknesses was advertising, especially when it came to the Evening of Champions event. The advertising for the event itself is kept at a minimum and should be expanded to ensure that, at the very least, word would get out to a larger number of people within the target market (18-34 year-old males). This is a crucial tactic in order to generate a higher level of awareness and exposure for the organization and its marquee Evening of Champions event. I propose the organization create even more dynamic advertising not only for the Evening of Champions but for itself as well. This will come in the form of television and radio advertisements as well as advertisements in various sports teams' programs such as the Durham Bulls "Play Ball" program.

*See Appendix I for sample television and radio scripts and program advertisement.*

**Goal:** Develop the Greater Raleigh Sports Council further into a premier organization that supports the best sports the Triangle-area has to offer.

**Strategy:** Generate a higher level of awareness and exposure for the organization and Evening of Champions event.

**Tactic:** Improve social media footprint and website to attract more potential members.

The SWOT analysis found this to be another one of the main weaknesses for the Greater Raleigh Sports Council. Currently, the Sports Council utilizes Twitter as its only independent social media source. It would be beneficial for the Sports Council to expand its social media platforms to include at least Facebook and Instagram as well in order to solicit a broader range of potential clientele and/or just general interest in the organization and its mission.

It should also be a priority for the Sports Council to expand its presence on Twitter in order to potentially gain more followers. This can be achieved by, for instance, live tweeting the Evening of Champions event. According to SBRNet, almost half (45.1 percent) of college basketball fans within the target market of 18-34 years old use some form of social media. Similar percentages can be found for college football, NFL and MLB as well. Therefore, an improved website and social media landscape would be very beneficial to people within the target market as most use social media on a daily basis.

*See Appendix II for plans to improve website design.*

**Goal:** Showcase the Greater Raleigh Sports Council as a dynamic organization that offers unmatched opportunities for its members compared to competitors.

**Strategy:** Differentiate the Greater Raleigh Sports Council and Evening of Champions event from competition both locally and nationally.

**Tactic:** Create a student member program for the Greater Raleigh Sports Council.

The Greater Raleigh Sports Council promotes college institutions across the Triangle-area. Why not create a student member program for the organization? This could potentially have a big impact especially since this would fall within the target market. The student member program would be considerably less in cost than a regular membership and would include some of the same benefits regular members receive.

The creation of a student member program could also have student ambassadors at area colleges and universities to recruit even more potential members. The student program would also foster the creation of special events which students who were, perhaps, interested in the sport field could network and get ideas from professionals in the field. This would differentiate the Sports

Council from its competitors both locally and nationally by providing unique opportunities for students within the target market.

*See Appendix III for a sample flyer to be handed out at local colleges and universities.*

**Goal:** Showcase the Greater Raleigh Sports Council as a dynamic organization that offers unmatched opportunities for its members compared to competitors.

**Strategy:** Differentiate the Greater Raleigh Sports Council and Evening of Champions event from competition both locally and nationally.

**Tactic:** Add and/or improve activities at the Evening of Champions event.

Currently, the Evening of Champions is a high-end, unique event that many on the younger side of the target market may not be as interested in attending. I propose that the Greater Raleigh Sports Council transform the event into more of a celebratory event for all ages – especially within the target market – that would include activities outside of PNC Arena (weather permitting). These activities would include live music, games, giveaways, etc.

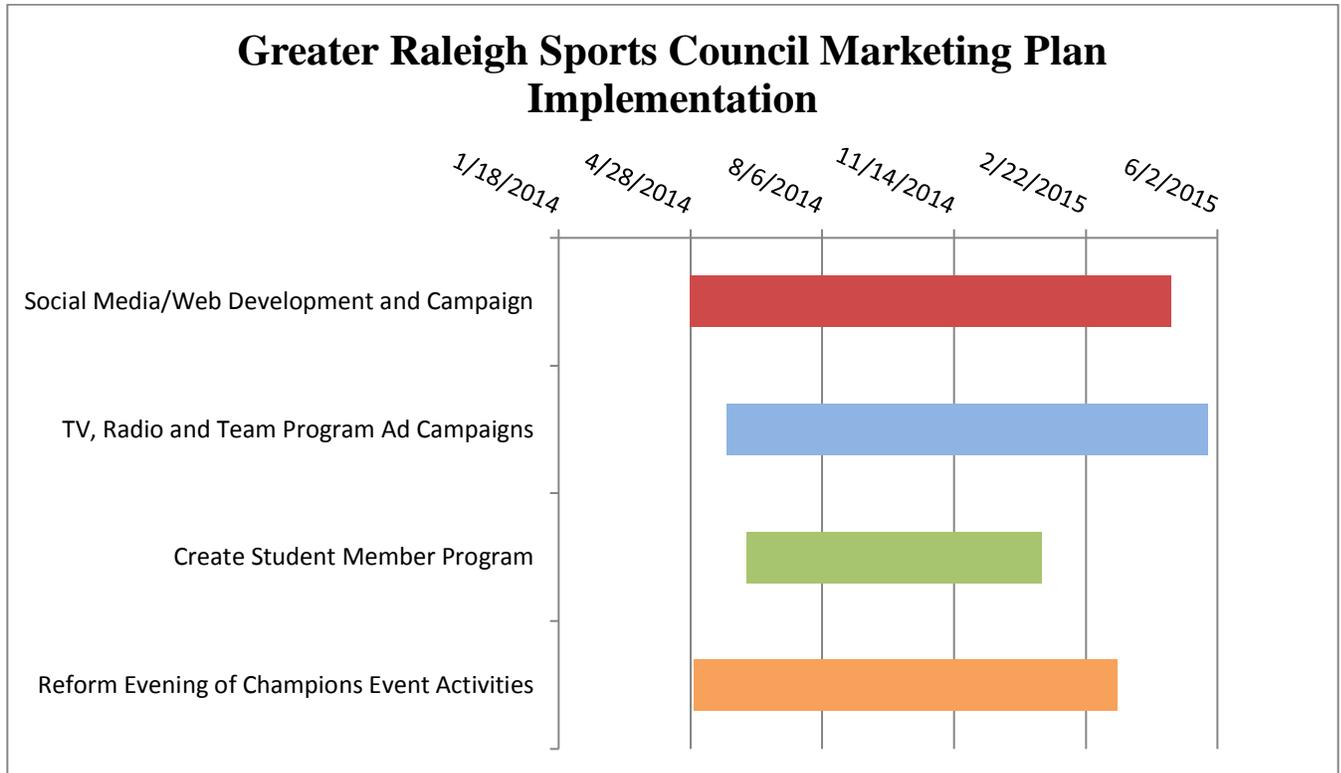
Of course, this would also mean that the date for the Evening of Champions event would have to be pushed up if outdoor activities would become part of the event; perhaps in the spring. I would also propose that the Sports Council keep some of the current activities such as behind the scenes tours of the locker rooms, photo opportunities and raffles.

The Sports Council should also schedule a special guest for the event that would attract those within the target market and have an overall positive perception in the area. To save time and money (perhaps), for instance, maybe have a former player or figure from an area college or university such as David Thompson from N.C. State or Stuart Scott from UNC-Chapel Hill be the special guest interviewee at the event.

*See Appendix IV for a map of the activity area on the PNC Arena complex during Evening of Champions event.*

## Implementation and Control

### Action Plan



### Budget

Finances will play an integral part in the creation and implementation of the marketing plan and process. Some of the items included in the plan will require a great amount of financial budgeting while some of the others will be virtually free to implement. In preparing the marketing goals, strategies and tactics all financial figures have been estimated.

The first marketing tactic is increasing the number of advertisements for the Sports Council and Evening of Champions event. This would include three main areas: (1) radio, (2) television and (3) sports team programs. The 2014 Evening of Champions event did advertise on local sports talk radio station 99.9 FM The Fan. I would like to continue this advertising and expand to MIX 101.5 WRAL-FM, G-105 and Pulse 102.5 FM as well. I would estimate the cost for each station

to be about \$1,500 per week per station, making it about \$6,000 per week. I would choose to do this for three weeks for a total of \$18,000. Television advertising would be considerably higher, therefore I would devote about two weeks of the total implementation period for this tactic to television advertising. This will be done closer to the actual event day, perhaps, two weeks before the event. I would want advertisements to be shown during the evening hours on local television stations and I would estimate a cost of \$3,000 per 30-second spot. I would want three spots to be shown throughout the two-week time period, totaling \$9,000. For a sports team program like that of the Durham Bulls and/or a one-third page advertisement in a magazine would cost an estimated \$1,600 for one time. I would like for this to be printed a total of five times for a total of \$8,000.

The second tactic is developing the Greater Raleigh Sports Council's web and social media landscape. This is, perhaps, the least expensive to implement out of all of the tactics. As far as the website, an intern or volunteer along with one other staff person could work together to use the current website template and improve its overall appearance and features. That would minimize cost as only the staff member would get paid for the task. I would estimate the cost of this to be about \$500, which would be included in the staffer's full paycheck.

It would also be beneficial for the Sports Council to create, at minimum, its own Facebook and Instagram accounts to add to its already active Twitter account. Those social media accounts are free to create and could be updated by an intern or volunteer which would, once again, be a free expense. If the organization decided to promote its social media accounts then a cost would come into play. Facebook offers a "Lifetime Budget" option where the organization sets how much it wants to pay for promotion and ads along with the dates of the promotional period. The period of time for this tactic will be 365 days and I will choose to pay \$5 per day, totaling \$1,825.

The third tactic is creating a student member program for the Sports Council. This would not cost too much as it would go hand-in-hand with the traditional member program already in place. I would also use social media to advertise in order to help keep costs at minimum. However, I would also like to create some flyers about the new student program to post at local college campuses. For just this time period, I would print about 250 flyers to post. Vistaprint can print these in size 8.50" x 10.98" for \$14.99 per 25 flyers, totaling about \$3,800.

The final tactic would be to improve activities at the Evening of Champions event to attract more within the target market. The idea is to keep most of what the event already does but add some things to make it a more community-wide event. That way, more people – whether members or not – could buy tickets to the event and it would position the event to compete with other events in the area. I would estimate the cost to rent PNC Arena for a small to medium size event, plus staging, lighting, food, etc. would cost about \$50,000 depending on the size of the crowd expected.

I would add just a few activities outdoors, including a concert from a band and three inflatables for children. I chose the band Parachute as an example for the event and, according to Main Stage Productions, it would cost about \$10,000 to have the band perform. The typical cost for a stage with lighting and everything included would be about \$2,200. To reduce any additional costs, I would partner with area teams such as the Carolina Hurricanes and the Durham Bulls, to provide additional outdoor activities like the moon bounce, inflatable obstacle course, etc.

All of the figures are highly estimated as numerous factors come into play such as size of the event, number of people, changes in prices, etc. I would estimate this plan to cost anywhere from \$103,325 for implementation of this one event and efforts leading up to it. Some of the funds could be obtained through membership fees and some from corporate partners and sponsors.

## **Evaluation**

This plan cannot be completely guaranteed but I feel that it is practical and could bode great success for the Greater Raleigh Sports Council and the Evening of Champions event. As with any event, the most efficient method to see if the event – and ultimately the plan itself – is successful is thorough research of the customer or member base, especially those within the target market. The goal for the Sports Council, especially through events like the Evening of Champions, is to promote the Triangle-area as a marquee location for both sport and economic growth. The Sports Council wants to also differentiate itself from competitors by offering top-notch programs and opportunities to members.

In looking at tactics such as creating more dynamic advertisements and increasing presence on the web and social media, their effectiveness can be measured by seeing if web traffic numbers,

follower counts or even membership levels or attendance numbers at events including the Evening of Champions increase. If so, then these methods were successful. For the final two tactics – creating a student member program and adding activities to the Evening of Champions event – increased membership from college students as well as increased interest and/or ticket sales to the Evening of Champions event could be indicators of success.

## Appendix

### Appendix I

#### Sample Radio Script

*(Light music plays throughout)*

**Voice:** “Sports, stars...CHAMPIONS. Join with the Greater Raleigh Sports Council to celebrate the best in Triangle-area sports. The 2015 Evening of Champions will be held on April 18 at 8 p.m. at PNC Arena. It will feature activities for everyone, food, live music from Parachute and special guest: ESPN’s Stuart Scott. For more info or tickets, visit [thesportscouncil.org](http://thesportscouncil.org) or call 919-664-7070. The Evening of Champions: where you not only celebrate champions, you discover where champions are born.” *(Music ends)*

#### Sample Television Script

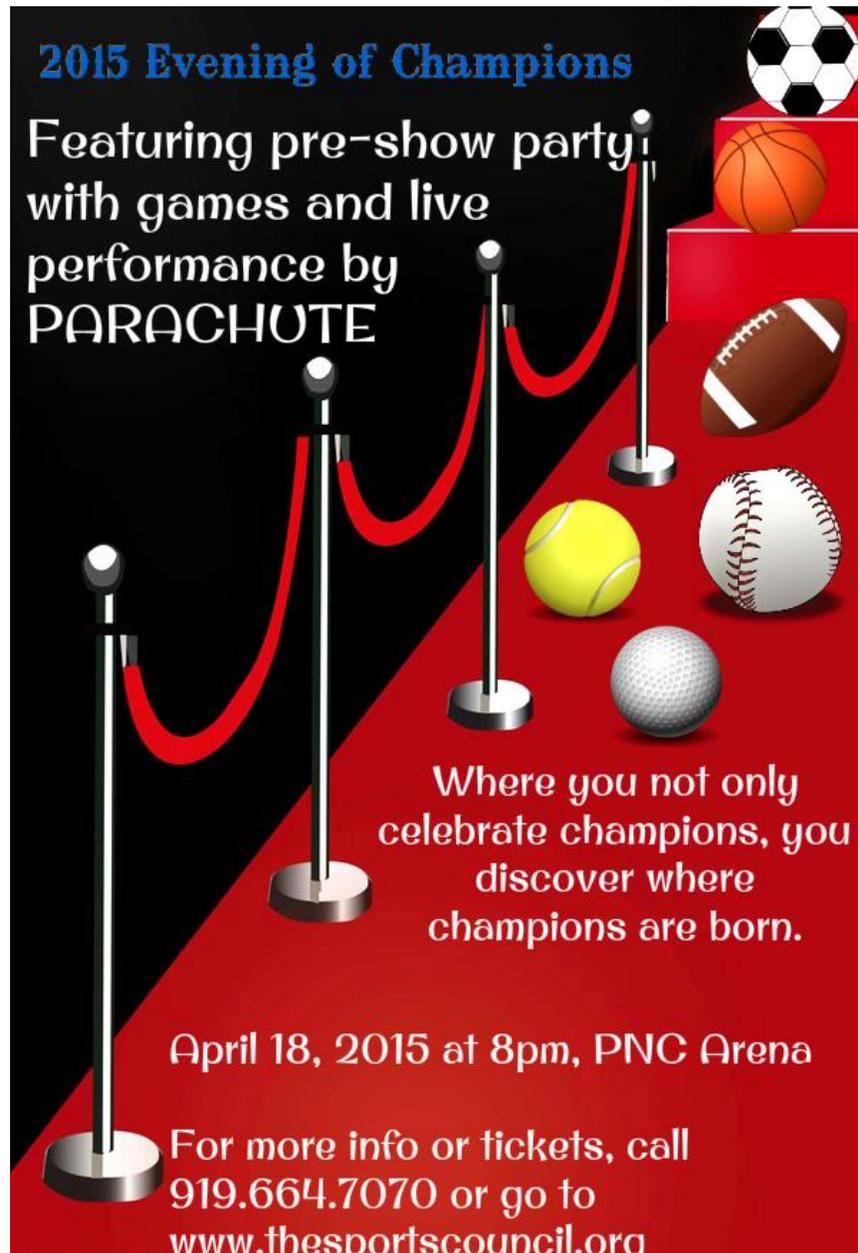
*(PNC Arena animation appears with camera closing in on doors)*

**Voiceover:** “Sports, stars...CHAMPIONS.” *(Doors open to bright light and staging when this word is said)*

**Voiceover:** “Join the Greater Raleigh Sports Council as we salute the best in local sports. The 2015 Evening of Champions will feature live music from Parachute, activities for the whole family and special guest, ESPN analyst Stuart Scott.” *(Graphics with these words will appear on screen)*

**Voiceover:** “April 18, PNC Arena, 8p.m. For more information or for tickets, visit [thesportscouncil.org](http://thesportscouncil.org) or call 919-664-7070 *(Graphics with this information will appear on screen)*

**Voiceover:** “The Evening of Champions: where you not only celebrate champions, you discover where champions are born.” *(Graphics with these words will appear on screen)*



**2015 Evening of Champions**

Featuring pre-show party  
with games and live  
performance by  
**PARACHUTE**

Where you not only  
celebrate champions, you  
discover where  
champions are born.

April 18, 2015 at 8pm, PNC Arena

For more info or tickets, call  
919.664.7070 or go to  
[www.thesportscouncil.org](http://www.thesportscouncil.org)

The advertisement features a red carpet leading up a set of stairs. On the carpet are several silver stanchions connected by red ropes. Various sports balls are scattered on the carpet: a soccer ball, a basketball, a football, a tennis ball, a baseball, and a golf ball. The background is black, and the stairs are red.

## Appendix II

### Sample Plans to Improve Greater Raleigh Sports Council Website

The screenshot shows the website's header with navigation links: Home, Join, Sponsorship Opportunities, and Contact. The logo for the Greater Raleigh Sports Council is on the left, and a placeholder for an advertisement, 'YOUR AD HERE', is on the right. Below the header is a dark navigation bar with menu items: ABOUT, GET INVOLVED, EVENTS, NEWS, LOCAL SPORTS, and VOLUNTEER. The main content area features a large banner image of a golf course with a golf ball in the foreground. A text box on the banner reads: 'A LOOK AT PINEHURST NUMBER 2 AHEAD OF THE U.S. OPEN. Pinehurst Resort & Spa is just weeks away from hosting both the Men's and Women's U.S. Open. Get a glimpse of the changes made to the historic course.' To the right of the banner is a 'SUBSCRIBE' section with links for 'SUBSCRIBE TO OUR' and 'FOLLOW US ON TW'. Below that is an 'UPCOMING EVENTS' section listing: April 8 (Sports Council Quarterly Meeting), June 11 (U.S. Open Practice Round Outing), June 13 (U.S. Open Championship Round Outing), and July 24 (Triangle Pigskin Preview 2014). At the bottom left, a 'NEWS' section is partially visible with the headline 'DURHAM BILLS LAUNCH OFFICIAL A...'. Three callout boxes provide improvement suggestions: one points to the logo area, another to the banner image, and a third to the navigation bar.

Home | Join | Sponsorship Opportunities | Contact

**GREATER RALEIGH SPORTS COUNCIL**

YOUR AD HERE

ABOUT | GET INVOLVED | EVENTS | NEWS | LOCAL SPORTS | VOLUNTEER

**Improve overall site design and create a new, dynamic organization logo.**

**Utilize this space for advertisements or do away with it altogether.**

**Improve functionality with this feature. Arrow buttons do not work when clicked on.**

**SUBSCRIBE**

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR  
FOLLOW US ON TW

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- ▶ **April 8**  
Sports Council Quarterly Meeting
- ▶ **June 11**  
U.S. Open Practice Round Outing
- ▶ **June 13**  
U.S. Open Championship Round Outing
- ▶ **July 24**  
Triangle Pigskin Preview 2014

**NEWS**

DURHAM BILLS LAUNCH OFFICIAL A... HE

## Appendix III

### Sample Flyer for College and Universities



**2015 Evening of Champions**

Featuring pre-show party  
with games and live  
performance by  
**PARACHUTE**

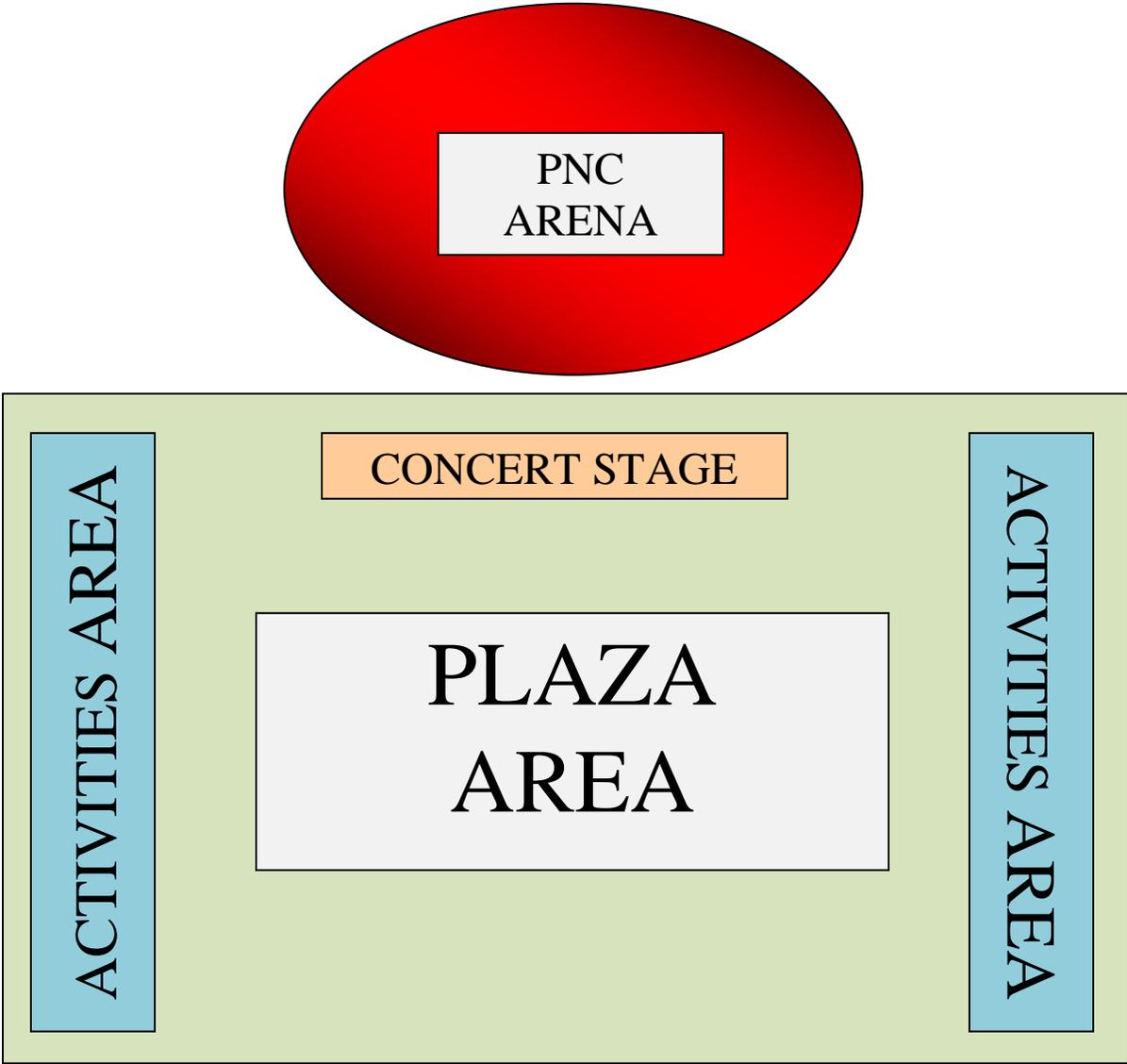
Where you not only  
celebrate champions, you  
discover where  
champions are born.

April 18, 2015 at 8pm, PNC Arena

For more info or tickets, call  
919.664.7070 or go to  
[www.thesportscouncil.org](http://www.thesportscouncil.org)

**Appendix IV**

Map of Potential Area for Pre-Event Activities and Concert.



## References

<https://www.change.org/petitions/erin-anderson-raleigh-nc-replace-michael-vick-as-keynote-speaker-at-2014-evening-of-champions>

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/03/michael-vick-evening-of-champions\\_n\\_4717230.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/03/michael-vick-evening-of-champions_n_4717230.html)

<http://localmarketingideas.com/how-much-does-radio-advertising-cost/>

<http://main-stageproductions.com/music>

<http://www.quirks.com/advertise/print/adrates.aspx>

[http://www.raleighchamber.org/about/greater\\_raleigh\\_sports\\_council.aspx](http://www.raleighchamber.org/about/greater_raleigh_sports_council.aspx)

<http://www.raleighchamber.org/External/WCPages/WCEvents/EventDetail.aspx?EventID=689>

<http://www.roadwayevents.com/RoadStar/Stages.asp>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=714>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=721>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=722>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=723>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=763>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=769>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=771>

<http://www.sbrnet.com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/research.asp?subrid=773>

<http://www.thesportscouncil.org/index.html>

<http://www.vistaprint.com/flyers.aspx?couponAutoload=1&GP=4%2f28%2f2014+12%3a45%3a21+AM&GPS=3169421304&GNF=0>

<http://www.wralsportsfan.com/hatchell-cutcliffe-rodon-will-be-honored-at-evening-of-champions/13413792/>