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NHL Expansion Case Study: Milwaukee

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Introduction

This capstone project will be focused on relocating a National Hockey League (will now be referred to as NHL) team to the Milwaukee market, a city that has never had an NHL team but is fit for one for a host of reasons. The NHL is a league that is not afraid to expand when it believes a particular city is fit for a professional hockey team and that the potential owners are committed to a city for the long term. There are a few major markets including Seattle, Cincinnati, Portland and Milwaukee that all have been involved in talks of acquiring a NHL team in its city, and this study will be relevant to showcase why Milwaukee is a viable city that can handle the economic pressures associated with operating a professional sports organization. This case study will also show the strength of the Milwaukee sports market and why that will help the case for this NHL franchise in Milwaukee. The different theories and practices learned in Public Relations in Sport, Sport in the Society and other MSA classes will provide a framework around this capstone idea and bring it to life. There will be an emphasis on a family-friendly sporting event regarding price and promotions as well as community relations and working with key stakeholders to generate goodwill and buy in with for-profit and public entities. Using data from other sport organizations and looking at the cultural implications of hockey are two key metrics that will be helpful when arguing why a NHL team can thrive in this environment.

Milwaukee is a market that has professional sport organizations that are a part of the Major “Pro 4” (Milwaukee Brewers and Bucks) that have competed against teams for fans in the Chicago Market for decades. There are minor league and semi-professional teams as well with the Milwaukee Admirals, Milwaukee Wave and Milwaukee Aces. Looking at every aspect of an organization from

sponsorship, media, marketing and revenue plan that is generated will give this project a holistic view and perspective on other NHL markets and why Milwaukee can handle an NHL organization. Likewise, this expansion is possible considering the Milwaukee Bucks are creating a state-of-the-art sport and entertainment facility that will be hockey-friendly come fall 2018. (Milwaukee Business Journal, 2018) If there was not an arena ready or suitable for hockey, this expansion might be more farfetched or analyzed for the long-term future. However, since this new arena in Milwaukee is almost complete and able to handle hockey operations, it works to analyze this as a legitimate scenario to consider. This NHL team would not have to try and get buy in from city or county officials for the building of a new stadium, but instead, can work with the Milwaukee Bucks on becoming the third tenant for this arena.

As for viewing this team's games at home or on mobile devices, the streaming distribution would fall under Fox Sports Wisconsin and potentially with a digital property like Facebook or Twitter. Tying in a deal for digital rights would allow fans to watch a smaller portion of games online, placing more of an emphasis on the in-game experience and venue. This combination of digital and TV rights would give fans from around the state a chance to tune into this hockey team's games. Jason Blake's "Canadian Hockey Literature: A Thematic Study" focuses on media shaping a narrative about a team and establishing loyalty with fans. This is very important to consider because a lot of fans grow up rooting for teams that they watched on television, a primary product extension for a professional sports team. In an era where media rights still have a lot of importance for professional sports teams, this influence can now extend to other digital platforms once a fan has become accustomed to its sports team that they have watched via their smart devices and television. This team will also showcase how eco-friendly and sustainable practices can be implemented at large scale sport organizations, the economic viability of this potential expansion and interest that there is in this city and state to have a NHL

team. Along with Blake's piece, there are a few academic and historical resources that will be used to give some context to my event and business, which can be found below. These sources will provide more insight into how this expansion would be a successful venture for the NHL to consider and dives deep into the history of hockey, professional sports in Wisconsin and Milwaukee and the fandom associated with sports.

History of Hockey:

Ice hockey originated in Canada in the early 19th century, based on several similar sports played in Europe, although the word "hockey" comes from the old French word "hocquet," meaning "stick." (Olympic.com) Before ice hockey came to Canada, it started in Europe on grass with a stick and ball. This sport has also lent itself to field hockey and lacrosse, which has similar elements of hockey.

In 1994, bill C-212, making ice hockey the official winter sport of Canada, was made law by Canada's parliament, and this law highlights how important hockey is to Canadians, and this kind of fervor for hockey has extended to other places in North America and grown even more in Canada, especially the National Hockey League. Canada has five professional hockey teams, and very successful ones at that. Hockey first was played indoors in Montreal, a sign of things to come for Canada and illustrates the roots of hockey and ice hockey. (History, 2017)

Looking at the type of sports that are popular in its city, country, state and continent can also provide some unique insight into the culture of that geographic location. Jason Blake analyzed hockey in Canada and offered some common themes and

reasonings why it has been so popular for so long and the factors that play into this theory. This essay could be helpful in looking at why ice hockey has become so popular in the state of Wisconsin for youth and adults, and what this popularity of ice hockey means for the culture of Milwaukee and Wisconsin, how to continue cultivating an environment that lends itself to hockey-crazed fans and interest in this sport. Specifically, Blake focuses on the theme of fighting in hockey and what that means for fans who enjoy this kind of behavior. Does it make them more aggressive, passionate about the sport? These types of questions are interesting to dissect because it highlights sport in a social context that can explain more about why a team or sport thrives in a setting. Blake also examines the media coverage of sport and how it helps with the rise of hockey, something that is particularly interesting for many reasons. One, when thinking about the rise and popularity of a sport, media coverage is a part of this equation but there might also be participant interest to start taking a liking to a sport. That said, focusing on Blake's commentary surrounding media could be helpful to figure out how to best shape the narrative surrounding this NHL hockey team and the positive attention that could come from it

Focusing on ice hockey's popularity in cold weather states is what could be looked at and viewed through the lens of a social context. Without the bitter, cold weather in Wisconsin, one could argue that hockey would not be as popular for viewing and especially playing in this region and in other cold weather climates. While ice hockey has turned into a global sport to play, its roots are in North America, which might explain why a lot of northern U.S. states have taken a liking to this sport because of the similar weather conditions that exist in Canada. Weather can play a crucial role in determining the type of sports that are popular in an area. P Tucker (2007) analyzes someone's participation levels and interests in a sport based on a host of factors, including weather. Tucker believes that weather is largely overlooked when determining the type of sports that interests youth, and this study relates to this

expansion case study because ice hockey is generally played outdoors and more in cold weather environments. While there are hockey rinks across the country, the opportunity to engage with a sport due to these external factors like weather provide a helpful framework around why professional hockey is more sustainable in colder climates where youth can participate in the same sport and feel more associated with the region's culture. While these articles and journals give a good framework of how to address sustainability in relation to sports and this basketball tournament, more research will need to be conducted to find more results and data to make sound strategic decisions for this sports organization.

Wisconsin Sports:

There have been a wide array of hockey teams in Milwaukee including the Falcons, the Chiefs, the Seagulls, the Clarks the first pro team, the Milwaukee Drueckers from the early 1900's. (WUWM, 2017) The Milwaukee Brewers, Bucks, Milwaukee Admirals, Wave and other sports teams have been around for decades in Milwaukee and have solidified its place in Milwaukee sport-favorites. Wisconsin fans are known to be loyal to all their teams, even to a fault. Brewers fans regularly have top 10 attendance, especially in the past 5 seasons, even though this team has never won a World Series. Miller Park, which is being paid for from taxpayer money, is emblematic of the sports scene here. Even if higher-priced venues do appear, the executives of this organization know how important sports are to this city and state and will not allow any deterrents to impede the future success of this organization. Likewise, when thinking about fan interest and the potential success this NHL team could have, one can point to the tailgating activities of the Brewers that happen throughout the season. Although the Brewers play in the summer when it is typically

warmer in Milwaukee, April and May still bring cooler temperatures and fans still come out and support their team and tailgate. Look at the Green Bay Packers, who have some of the most loyal fans in sports that cheer, tailgate and support its team in any weather. This organization even has a season-ticket waiting list of 133,000, and while this team has built its brand over time, the fans with this team continue to support it through the exchange of stock, fan engagement. Although the Green Bay Packers are not in the Milwaukee market, it is an important side note to recognize within Wisconsin's broader sport context.

These examples showcase the fandom in Wisconsin, and measures that are taken to ensure teams stay here (which is important to ensure re-location does not occur for this hockey team). The Milwaukee Brewers, who have not won a World Championship, have kept its team in the city and have a large following throughout the state. When there were reports of the Milwaukee Bucks moving in 2014, former owner Senator Kohl made it a point to keep this team here, get buy in from the now owners, and build an arena for this organization. Senator Kohl even sold the team for less money just to ensure the team would stay in Milwaukee. (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2016) This kind of dedication to the city and fans who cheer on these teams despite inconsistent seasons on the field will highlight how important sports are to this community despite wins and losses. To gain a general sense of the amount of professional sports that have existed within Wisconsin, below is an excerpt from the History of Wisconsin outlining professional sports in Wisconsin:

BASKETBALL (All data obtained from History of Wisconsin, Vol. 6)

Professional basketball first came to Wisconsin with the formation of the National Basketball League (NBL) in 1937. These professional sports lauded by three corporations. The Oshkosh All-Stars and Sheboygan Redskins were two of the NBL's top teams,

with one or the other competing for the league championship virtually every year. The All-Stars were back-to-back league champions in 1941 and 1942, while the Redskins claimed the title in 1943. The league lasted 12 years before merging with the Basketball Association of America in 1949, which was renamed the National Basketball Association. The Redskins joined the NBA but played only one season in the league before folding.

Professional basketball came back to Milwaukee in January of 1968 when the NBA awarded the city a franchise. The Milwaukee Bucks played their first regular season game against the Chicago Bulls in October of 1968. In 1971, the Bucks, led by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Oscar Robertson, won the league championship, the fastest win by an expansion team in professional sports history. The team was also notable for hiring general manager Wayne Embry in 1971, the first African American to serve in that position. Fears that the Bucks would leave Milwaukee in 1985 led to their acquisition by businessman (and now Senator) Herb Kohl who sought to ensure that the team remained in the city.

History of Winter Sports in Wisconsin

Settlers began curling on the frozen Milwaukee River in the early 1840s, forming the Milwaukee Curling Club in 1845. (Milwaukeecurlingclub.com) Dating back to 16th century Scotland, curling came to North America with Scottish immigrants and quickly spread across Canada and the northern United States. Milwaukee joined the Grand National Curling Club of America in 1867, playing teams primarily from the East and from Canada, although the two largest teams were in Milwaukee and Chicago. The

Milwaukee curlers won their first Grand National Gordon Champion Rink Medal in 1872 and claimed the international medal in 1884. The club relocated to Riverside Park in 1915 where they remained for the next fifty-five years. Women's curling began in Milwaukee in 1949, followed soon after by mixed teams of men and women. The Milwaukee Curling Club is the oldest club in continual existence in the United States. This last stat related to Milwaukee Curling Club being the oldest club in existence highlights how a cold weather sport can thrive when there are resources, funding and interest, Likewise, the geographic makeup of Wisconsin allows this sport to thrive and interest people. The Badger State Games, which have existed since 1986, also focus on the outdoor elements and part of Wisconsin that make it a viable place to engage in these activities. These games are held annually and include sports like alpine skiing billiards bowling, curling, figure skating, indoor archery and Nordic Skiing. (SportsinWisconsin.com, 2018) While these sports that were played in the winter are not as popular as ice hockey is now, it gives some context into how long winter sports have been around and the popularity of winter sports in Wisconsin, providing more reasoning and background for NHL in Milwaukee.

Current Look at Wisconsin Hockey Scene

There has always been an appetite for hockey in Wisconsin, a state that experiences cold weather temperature (lending itself an easy opportunity to play outside) and a culture that breeds hockey players and professional athletes. Milwaukee fans and generations have seen 8 teams play in the city ranging from semi-pro to minor league professional hockey in a wide range of leagues and has experienced enough turnover to know what a well-run organization should look like. The Milwaukee Admirals, an AHL team and

affiliate of the Nashville Predators, have been around since 1970 and have obtained some loyal fans who have been following the team for decades. In addition to having a hockey-capable facility already being built, having a minor league team here can create a direct line for this professional team to work with players on the minor league level. Most professional NHL hockey teams have AHL affiliates near the NHL Headquarters, but this partnership could become the model to have an AHL and NHL team in the same city, if possible. (SB Nation, 2017)

There are 90 sanctioned high school hockey teams in the state, and the Wisconsin Badgers men's ice hockey team have a huge following, having won six NCAA titles. The Badgers women's ice hockey team has also had great success and having broken attendance records for women's hockey games in recent years at the Kohl Center. (Sports Illustrated, 2017) The Madison Capitals are another junior ice hockey team that plays its games in Middleton, Wisconsin as part of the Eastern Conference Hockey League. Other colleges around the area have hockey including the Milwaukee School Engineering and Concordia College in Mequon. All these examples of teams in Milwaukee and around the state highlight the prevalence of ice hockey teams and organizations in Wisconsin. There will be a lot of data later in this analysis on the high interest levels of fans around the state in relation to ice hockey and other sports to show the interest levels of fans in Milwaukee and around the state. Madison is only one hour away so there is potential to draw even larger crowds considering the prevalence and appetite for NHL hockey and ice hockey in general. Victoria Wilkins' "Understanding Loyalty and Motivation of Professional Sports Fans" provides strong academic research on fandom and why moving fans from casual to loyal advocates of a fan base is smart for the future of sport organization. While providing entertainment value to these people is important, it is just as important to create loyalty to ensure fans want to spend their discretionary income with an

organization for years to come. USA Hockey adult hockey numbers continue to rise, (USA Hockey, 2017, and this will be analyzed in the statistical analysis section to provide more background on its fast climbing rate and why it is important for this proposal.

The BMO Harris Bradley Center was a stadium built in the late 1980's that was also designed for a hockey team. (WUWM, 2017) There have been a lot of myths and rumors as to why there has been no NHL team in Wisconsin, specifically Milwaukee, and it is not related to any legal or logistical matters, making this expansion possible in that respect. Mitch Teich wrote a piece surrounding why hockey is not in Milwaukee and it is centered around finances, not the fact that there was not enough interest from fans.

(WUWM, 2017) This piece highlights the constant conversation on why pro hockey is not in Milwaukee and debunks the common myths that appear with this discussion. This story and many others help solidify the need for hockey in Milwaukee and the positive economic effect it could have on the city. Overall, there are many factors that make Milwaukee a viable market to land an NHL franchise, and looking at the state of other NHL organizations, the Milwaukee sports market and the state of youth and adult sports will provide a good framework to build upon for this proposition to make this case for a NHL team.

Although youth hockey participation rates are rising, youth participation for sports in the United States is down, according to the Aspen Institute of Research. (2015) It could be argued more technology, climate change and a host of other factors are main reasons for this lack of interest. Likewise, the prices to play club or travel for sports continues to rise, which may be a major deterrent for parents. There need to be ways to combat this issue, and one is to simply go outside and take in the elements. In every part of the country this is possible, whether in a hot or cold environment, but in an environment that lends itself to a colder climate, playing

hockey outdoors in the natural thing to do, leading to the next point about the importance rivers lakes and bodies of water in a region that is known for its lakes and major rivers. Milwaukee has an influx of water treatment organizations and these same companies pay close attention to how residents are taking care of water, the main resource needed to play ice hockey outside and indoors. (Water Council, 2017)

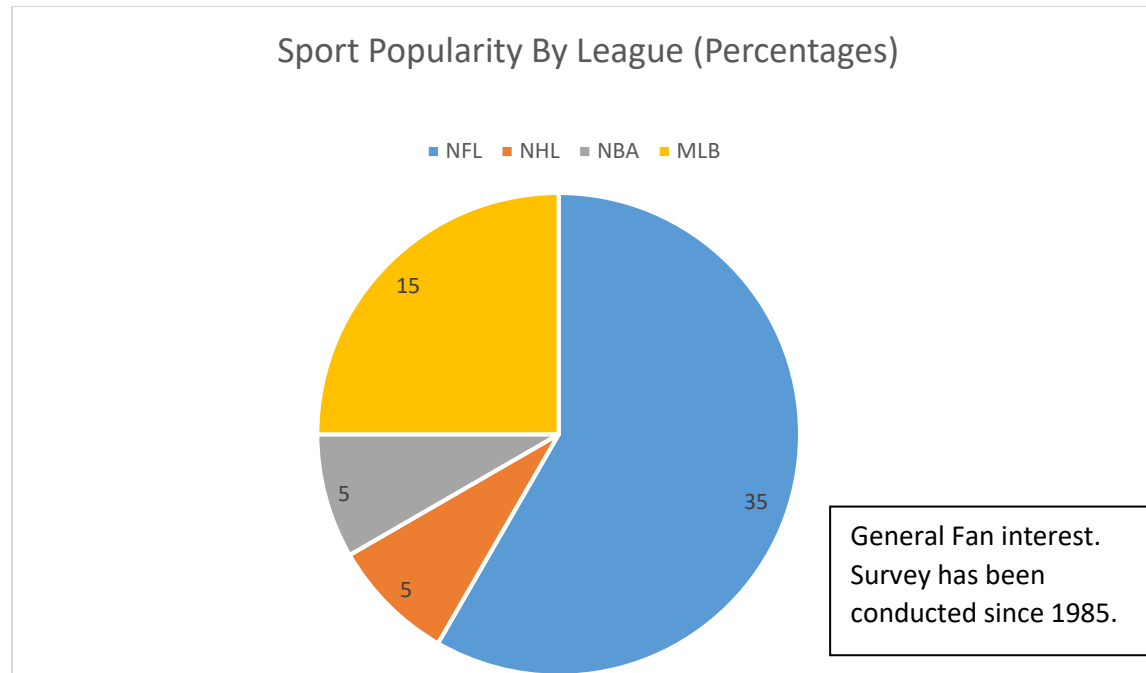
Go Green

There have been a lot of issues centered around sustainability within the last 40 years and issues surrounding how to preserve the United States' lakes, rivers and other aspects of nature and the environment that are a hot topic, making this expansion timely. Likewise, corporate social responsibility is another subject that has become more important for organizations, as employees of these organizations find this to be a key part of their career. Looking at the importance of corporate social responsibility and following examples of past companies who have implemented their own events and programs related to CSR will be beneficial to see how to best serve the needs of those interested in this field. Richard Smith's "Defining Corporate Social Responsibility: A Systems Approach For Socially Responsible Capitalism" (2013) takes an in-depth look at CSR programming, its origins and the many dimensions that are included in this programming, including environmental dimension that directly relates to this event that is focused on improving a city's eco-friendly practices long-term. While one event can shed light on sustainable practices, finding ways to promote long-term sustainability for this organization is important for this event to team an indelible impact on its community. This piece by Smith focuses on stakeholders to address when creating corporate social responsibility efforts, and this holistic view of social responsibility

can provide a blueprint for how organizations need to address the needs of all its constituents. Likewise, finding a way to be socially responsible while also generating revenue is an ongoing issue for companies, as there should be a balance with this measure. As such, this team that is geared toward doing well by doing good also needs to find ways to generate revenue through corporate partnerships and advertising revenue, among many sources. There needs to be an emphasis on how to make revenue for this event while creating social change in the communities where this tournament exists.

There continues to be a special emphasis on eco-friendly practices for some companies, but it does not seem like America as a society has moved forward on this issue and begun to promote how to be eco-friendlier in public places including restaurants and grocery stores. Authors Pratima Bansal and Kendal Why Companies Go Green: A Model of Ecological Responsiveness (2000) addresses this newfound realization for companies that going green can be good for their public perception, image and bottom line in relation to revenue. Companies now see the benefit of being eco-friendlier and the simple steps a company can take to implement green practices within an organization. This academic journal shows why more companies are more responsive to this type of issue now versus before where it may have gone unnoticed or been neglected by previous generations. Milwaukee has always been closely connected to the water, how to keep rivers clean and Lake Michigan. The Milwaukee Water Council is a key organization that focuses on this initiative and finding ways to work with them to teach people about water conservation and how to best treat water could be a seamless fit for a team that plays its games on ice. (Milwaukee Water Council, 2017)

Statistical Analysis

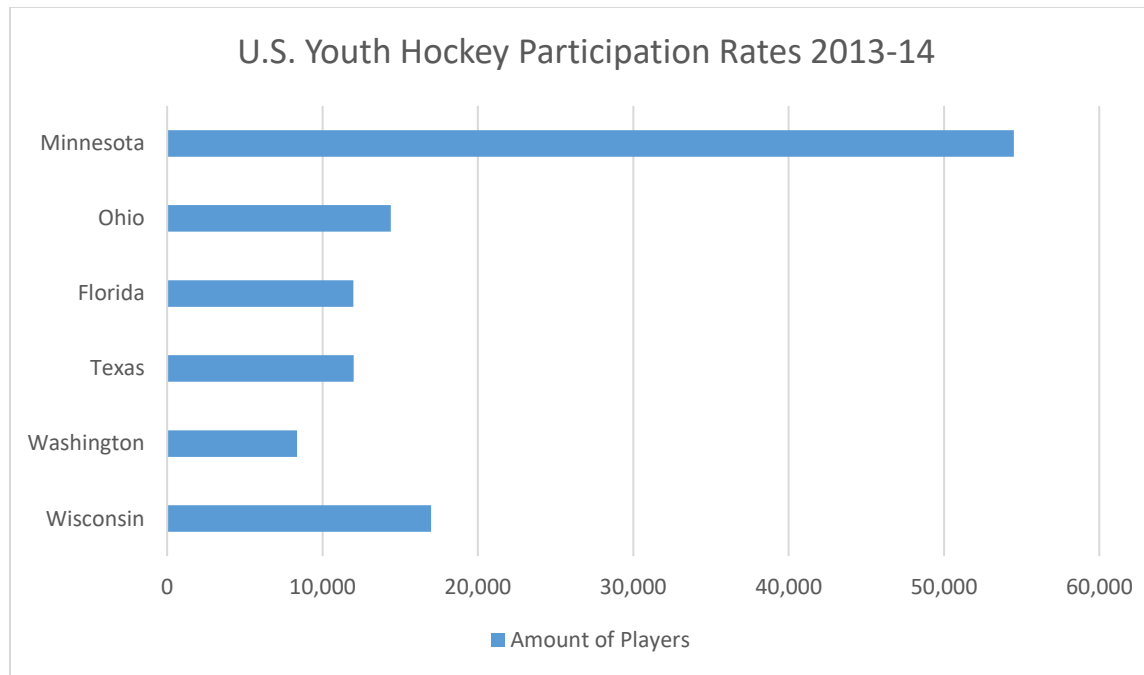


Source: ESPN, Harris Poll

ESPN's Darren Rovell looked at the popularity of professional sports in 2014, and this snapshot provides a glimpse of where the sport of hockey currently sits amongst fans interest across the nation. This is important to understand as the first statistic because it can foreshadow the challenges this organization might have to face when competing against other leagues and teams. Not to mention, the Green Bay Packers, arguably the most decorated NFL team with an extremely loyal fan base, are two hours north of Milwaukee and play during the same time of year as NHL hockey. The Brewers are also in town and pose as a major threat during the beginning and end of their season, as it bleeds into NHL Season. That said, this data should be taken lightly considering there is no NHL team in

Wisconsin to compare against other professional sports, the reason for this proposal and exploration. There is general fan interest in hockey in Wisconsin (as the following data points will show), and the Milwaukee Bucks are the only major sports competitor that this team will have to compete with for attendance. Luckily, this team will play in the same arena as the Bucks and not have to worry about a large segment of fans being at a game the same night as NHL team. The Milwaukee Admirals draw a decent amount of their fans to their games, but if anything, these two organizations could work out a deal and schedule that allows for optimal attendance and interest from hockey fans.

Understanding the popularity of sports according to fans provides a broad view of sports and how they are consumed and received by fans. Looking at youth hockey rates in comparison to two other states that have strong youth hockey numbers will provide a microcosm into the popularity of the sport among youth, key consumers that will be focused on for the growth and sustainability of this NHL franchise. Next, there will be an analysis of Milwaukee Bucks and Brewers attendance numbers in comparison to other large market teams below to show the strength of Milwaukee's sports market and how there are enough fans and people in city to support this hockey team. This will be helpful to see from a year over year view to show the increase in attendance when a team's product is good or bad facility that supports a team with the necessary resources to compete in a somewhat crowded sports market. Using two other Milwaukee professional sport teams to gauge attendance numbers will be useful in figuring out a broader sense of fandom in Milwaukee.

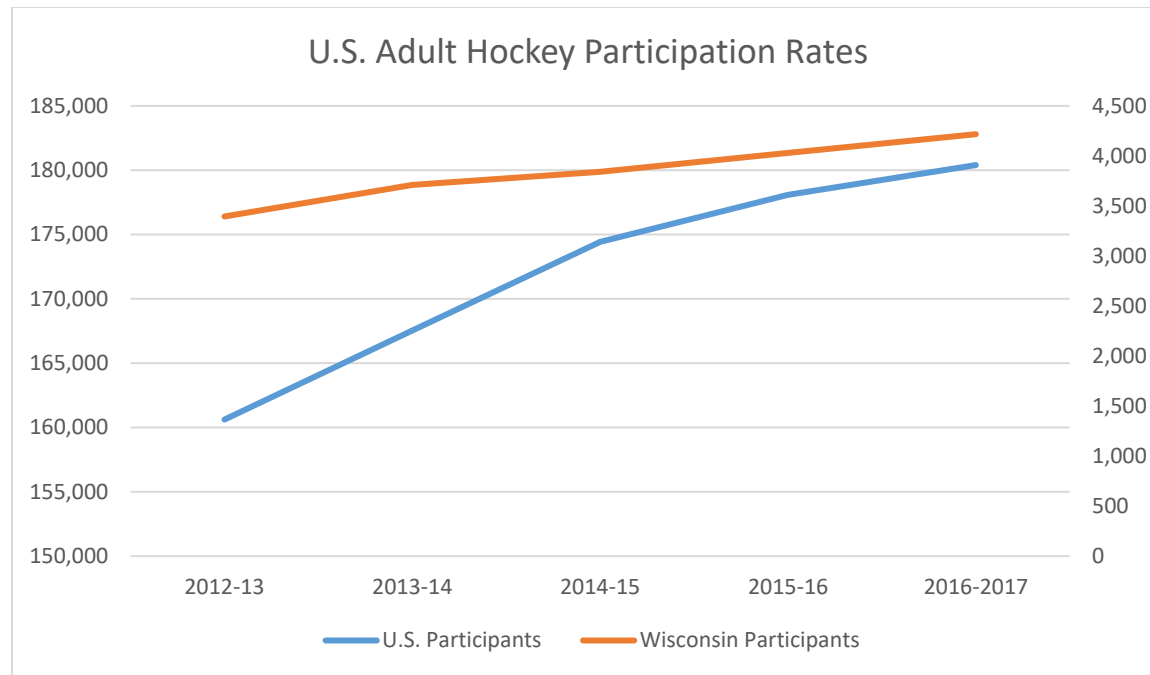


Source: [United States of Hockey](#)

This chart highlights youth hockey participants in 2013-14. Looking at a state like Texas, which has a much larger population than Wisconsin and an NHL team with the Dallas Stars and Washington State, which does not have an NHL team but is in the works to try and get one. Looking at Ohio and Florida, where more NHL teams exist in comparison to a prospective NHL city can provide some helpful data on the popularity of youth hockey in Wisconsin and strengthen Milwaukee's case for high interest in this sport and more fans. It should be noted that Wisconsin ranked number 9 on this list in 2013, the highest out of any state without an NHL team. To have an NHL team in Wisconsin, there must be an appetite from younger generation to build and cultivate these fans beliefs to have a sustainable business model. When there is buy in from younger hockey players, there is a better chance for those fans to stay

fans throughout childhood and adulthood and as result, attend more games and pass on this tradition with hockey to their children. Also, this NHL team would focus heavily on youth hockey development and growth in the greater Milwaukee area and it is key to have a strong youth hockey community. Lastly, there are 19,294 youth hockey players in Wisconsin, 4th most in Midwest behind Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota, teams with NHL franchises. Ohio and Missouri are two notable states behind Wisconsin, as they have the Columbus Blue Jackets and St. Louis Blues. (USA Hockey, 2017)

Washington State is trying to bring an NHL team to Seattle and has the arena to do it, like the new Milwaukee Bucks arena. (Sports Illustrated, 2017) It seemed appropriate to compare another state's hockey participation rate to Wisconsin considering this project is tied around why an NHL team would do well in this market. Seattle is the potential landing spot of a new NHL team, and looking at different metrics including youth hockey rate can help tell the story of why professional hockey would do well here. Washington has a population of just over 6 million, more than Wisconsin, but Wisconsin has double the participants in youth hockey. While youth hockey interest is one part of the puzzle, it provides a glimpse into the fervor and passion of hockey players in Wisconsin. Ohio, home of the Columbus Blue Jackets, also have an AHL team and a lot of youth hockey teams. Later, there will be some data that helps support Milwaukee's stake for a NHL franchise, and starting off with youth hockey participation numbers is going to help provide an idea of the interest levels of ice hockey before taking a franchise to a city.

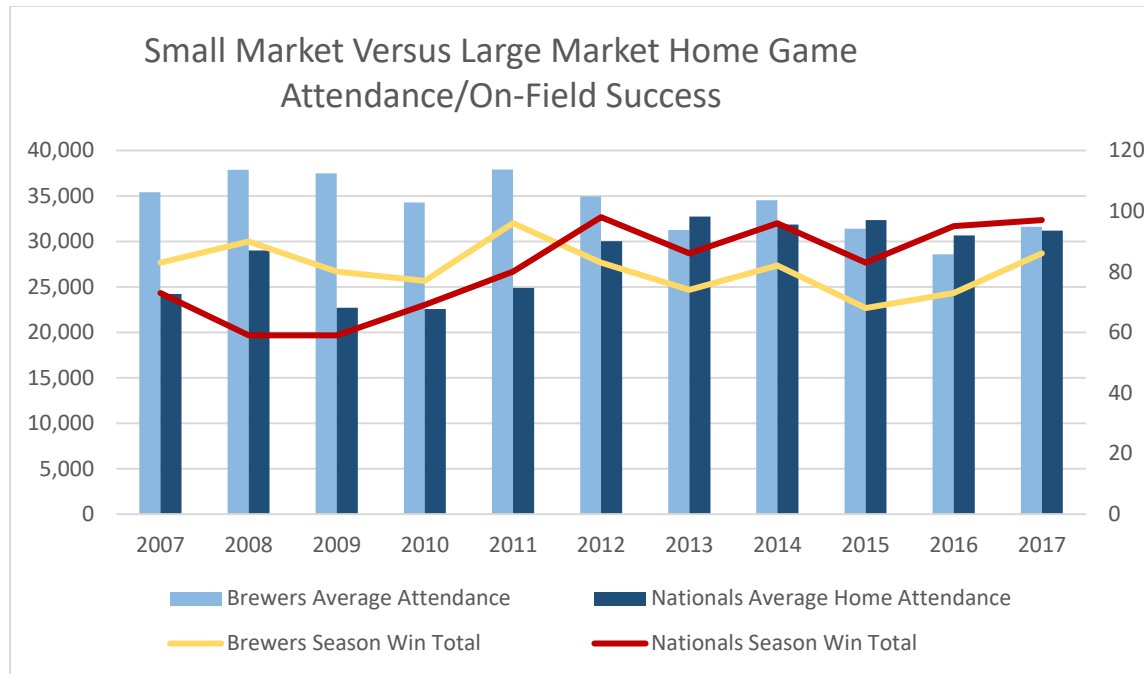


Source: [USA Hockey Inc.](#)

Adult hockey participation rates are important to consider as well for this proposal. U.S. Youth Hockey is on the rise and continues to become more popular around the country, and this rise in ice hockey helps this proposal, as it will be even more timely and relevant to capitalize off this general interest in hockey from younger and older consumers. (CBS, 2013) Participants 19 and over may want to one day play for an AHL, NHL team or find a common bond with teammates on these hockey teams. Likewise, this group of people have a high interest in hockey and most likely has been a major part of these players' identity. As the data shows, there has been a constant increase in adult hockey participation from 2012-to 2017, and this is encouraging to see. While the NHL

continues position itself as a global brand popular U.S. sport, the youth and adult participation rates are extremely healthy and is a harbinger of the positive state of hockey. Any league that is looking to expand as fast as the NHL must have valuable data to lean upon. Finding a way to cater to this audience will be important for business but looking at the broader context of ice hockey is helpful to understand some of the challenges, areas to focus on and if there is a general interest in this sport in Milwaukee from older hockey fans, which the data shows this to be the case. Wisconsin adult hockey participation has also seen an uptick in participation in parallel with the rest of the country. This data confirms that Wisconsin is seeing the same healthy increase in adult hockey for people, and that it is not just a trend happening in other states and throughout the country. This is very important to note because it shows that younger people and adults are both playing hockey at an increased rate, and that there is a high level of interest and participants in Wisconsin, the people who would become fans of the team.

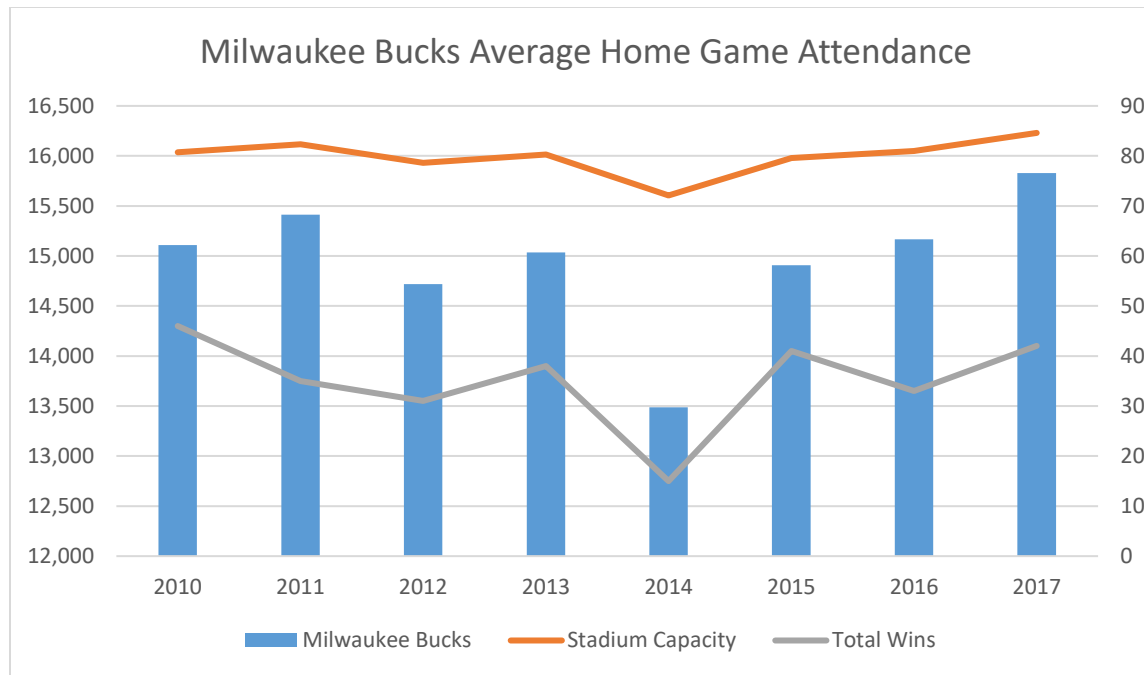
Now that youth hockey and adult hockey has been analyzed, the conversation will now look at the state of Milwaukee sports franchises, NHL market, its expansion teams and how they are faring with attendance and TV ratings, two metrics that provide valuable insight into the success of a professional sports organization. Looking at the viability of these local sport-specific organizations and NHL teams can provide a framework around why Milwaukee can succeed as a city with an NHL franchise.



Source: MLB Attendance, 2010- 2017, Milwaukee Brewers, Washington Nationals

The Nationals, who play in almost the same-sized park as the Brewers, have seen larger win totals than the Brewers but lower attendance numbers over time. Considering Milwaukee is the smallest MLB market, these statistics that show a consistent attendance hovering near 30,000 fans show a strong interest in sports illustrates the interest and fandom of Milwaukee Brewers baseball fans. Using the Nationals are a good example to compare against the Brewers because they play in a larger market with a higher population of people and have been very successful over the past 5 years. Regarding population and how that contributes to this study, Milwaukee County has 947,736 people according to a recent census, whereas the Greater Washington DC area has close to 6,097,684. (U.S Census) The appetite for sports in this smaller city exists and gives reason as to why a hockey team would do well here, as the

D.C. area has the Capitals, Redskins, Wizards and other major sports teams. The data shows a common relationship between wins and losses and attendance, but it is more important to analyze how there is a less of correlation between total wins and attendance for the Milwaukee Brewers, who have had more consistent attendance over the last ten years than this team in a large market. This chart illustrates the loyalty of Milwaukee fans over the years and shows how on-field performance has less of an impact on attendance than other teams which is important for the potential of an expansion team that may not be successful in the early years. The Brewers can attract fans from around the state because of their facilities (able to open and close roof), and this gives them an added advantage over other teams. This attendance metric and building capability shows that fans will travel when there is a facility that fits their needs and provides them with top-quality entertainment every year.

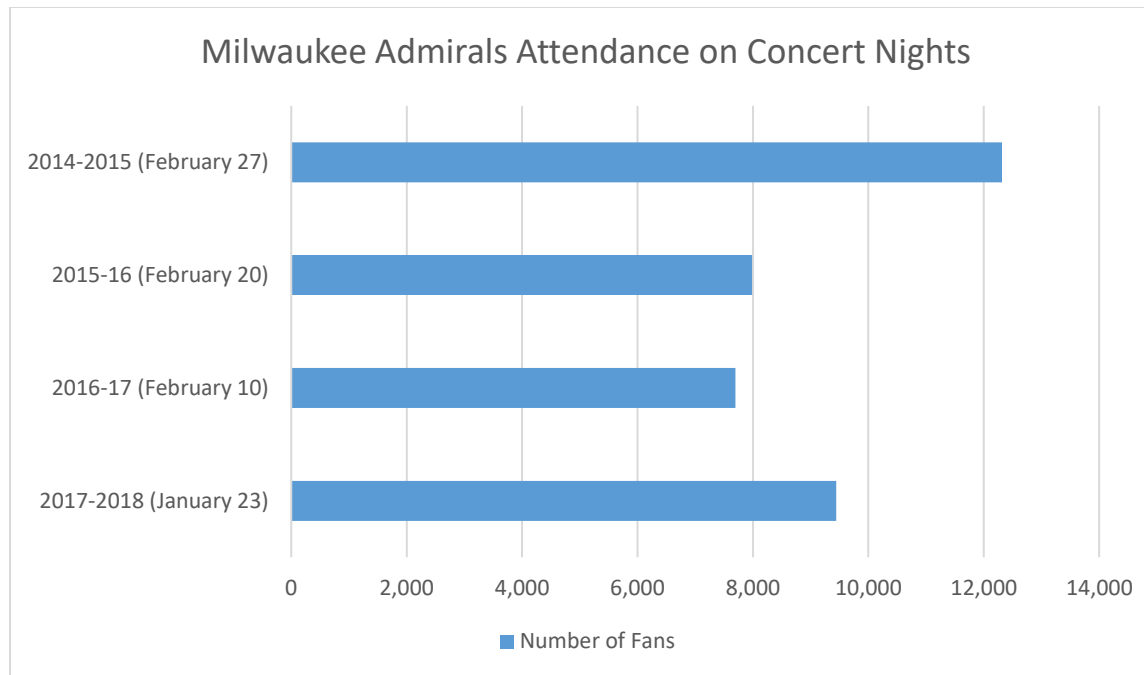


Source: NBA Attendance 2010-2017

The Milwaukee Bucks play in the BMO Harris Bradley Center, which seats around 18,500 people. For the past 7 years, the Milwaukee Bucks have hovered around 35 wins per year but have still managed to reach 80 percent capacity for its arena. This is extremely important to understand because there are teams with higher win totals per season but far less attendance or capacity numbers. Even if the NHL team obtained 14,000 fans in the new Bucks arena of 17,500, this would still be near 77 percent capacity, which is a little above average for the NBA this season. These statistics give hope to the possibility of NHL in Milwaukee and show that fans in Milwaukee still attend game even with a losing team. The Bucks were only last in attendance once over the past 8 years

despite having some of their worst records in the year, specifically during the 2014-15 season, but still were able to attract a larger audience. Given that the Bucks won 15 games and still had a stadium filled above 70 percent throughout the year is an important loyalty statistic to consider for the fan interest of this NHL hockey team in Milwaukee. In 2016, the Milwaukee Bucks had fewer wins than in their previous season and managed to have a higher average home game attendance. While this data does not tell the entire story of variables to consider including the rise of star players like Jabari Parker and Giannis Antetokounmpo, it does show that the on-court performance is not a major factor with attendance as it might be in other major U.S. professional sport markets. Fans in Milwaukee will attend games and analyze and criticize teams if they are bad, but this data shows that gate receipt numbers are still favorable for a smaller sports market like Milwaukee even with marginal to average performance.

Now that a closer look has been taken at Milwaukee fandom in relation to two of the four professional sporting leagues, taking a closer look at attendance number of the Milwaukee Admirals that would produce the same product as this NHL Milwaukee team—ice hockey and quality entertainment—will give more context surrounding hockey in Milwaukee and the success it has seen with a smaller sample size. It is important to look at specific days that will drive more people to arena (concert nights) to get a better idea of how crowds will be paired with entertainment, as Summerfest will be this NHL's team presenting sponsor and key stakeholder with the launch of this NHL expansion. This data will give a great representation of what to expect and considering the UWM Panther Arena seats far less seats than the new Bucks arena, there is reason to believe that this NHL franchise would be able to bring in a healthy number of fans every game, especially on nights when artists are performing post-game concerts.



Source: Milwaukee/AHL stats

The Milwaukee Admirals experienced an estimated 9,444 fans at a game on January 23, 2018 where there was a post-game concert, showing there is an appetite and market for hockey in Milwaukee, especially when paired with top-quality entertainment. The UWM Panther Arena is where they currently play, and this facility only holds about 12,700. This alone shows that there is a possibility for more fans to come to watch hockey at the professional ranks when a building has a higher capacity to hold more people. (see next graph to compare this attendance with NHL teams) Going back 4 years is more valuable to analyze considering the Admirals used to play at the BMO Harris Bradley Center, an arena that fits 18,500 and gave the Admirals an opportunity to market to more than

11,000 fans on concert nights. (BMO Harris Bradley Center, 2017) This added value proposition can help Milwaukee's newest NHL team assess what product extensions gets people into seats and use the Admirals data on concert nights to market to their own fans.

While these concert nights for Admirals games highlight a small sample size versus NHL's team yearly attendance average, it does show that there is an opportunity to market to many fans and get them inside an arena to watch hockey. Overall, these attendance statistics of a minor league team displays that a professional hockey team could have the chance to be just as successful and obtain an even larger contingent of fans through its on-ice product and elevated entertainment experience. (as they will have even more resources to draw fans to games) Now that there has been a deep dive into Milwaukee sports, the high levels of interest, youth hockey participation numbers and other key metrics, it will be helpful to look at the NHL's most recent expansion teams and see where some of them have struggled in relation to attendance, TV ratings to then compare to Milwaukee sports attendance and interests. While there is obviously no NHL hockey team to compare numbers, using the data obtained from other professional sport teams in Milwaukee will be helpful, as it provides a general idea of fandom in the city and the loyalty of fans.

Current NHL Locations & Climate Influence



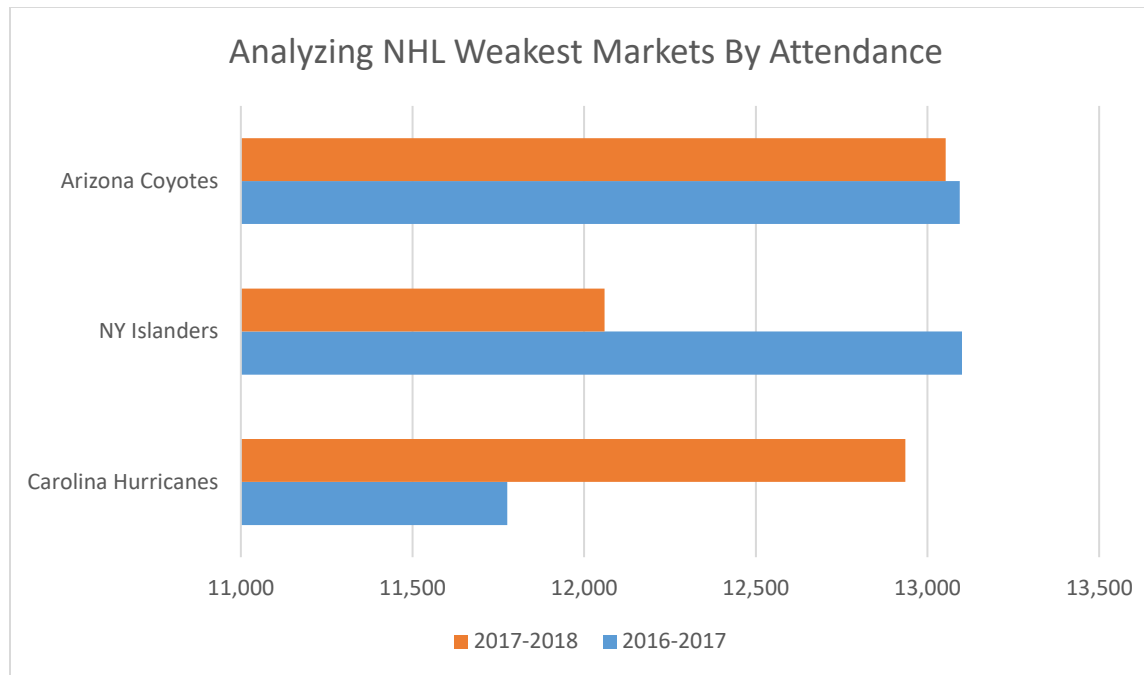
January
Average High Temperatures

Source: Google Maps, Weather

This map pins all the current locations of NHL teams, and it is clear there are more professional hockey teams within Canada, the Northeast and Midwest part of the United States (21) than there are within the southeast, southwest and western region. While one could argue that this graph could highlight the need to expand in warm weather climates, there are more NHL teams in areas where the weather tends to be much colder is more prevalent. Looking at the average temperature in January, the start of winter is significant for this expansion case study considering Milwaukee sits in the climate where there are low average temperatures throughout the winter. (the season which hockey operates on a junior and professional level) The NHL and its owners would not allow and/or bring

expansion teams in colder climates if it found that it was not economically logical, and as such, more expansion teams continue to appear in climates where hockey is played outdoors. The weather is simply much colder during the winter than in other regions of the country for two of the NHL's most recent expansion teams. (Ohio, Minnesota) Likewise, the NHL's marquee Winter Classic Game is played outside, and this is emblematic of the kind of environment hockey should be played in to commemorate the uniqueness of the sport, as one is not capable of doing so in a warm weather environment. As such, Milwaukee seems fit for NHL expansion when taking a closer look at the weather and its implications on youth participation and increased fandom over time because of the conducive weather conditions. While one can also argue that NHL and junior teams play mostly indoors, outdoor ice hockey is how a lot of people enjoy ice skating and hockey recreationally, which is important for people who might be casual fans of the sport.

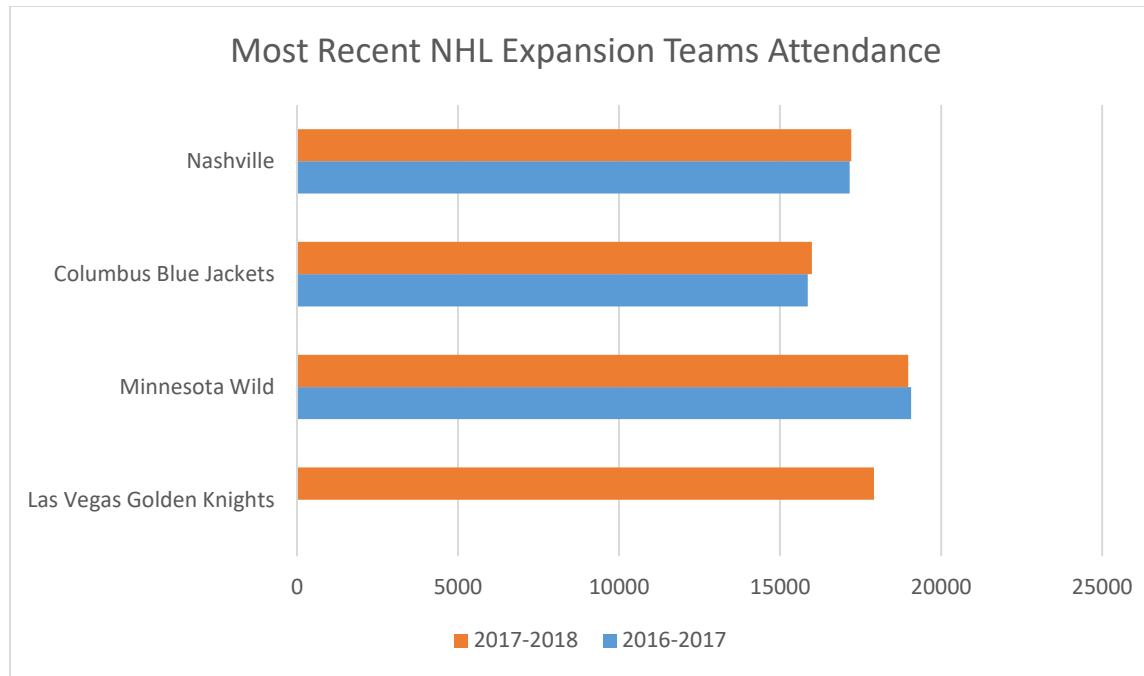
These data points are interesting because one can draw a conclusion that NHL expansion and overall fan interest hockey is influenced by its environment. The Winnipeg Jets, Minnesota Wild are two expansion teams that did not have a NHL team 2011 and 1997, and these two organizations play in cities and regions where hockey is the most popular sport. (NHL, 2017) These two teams are good examples of why NHL teams should continue to expand in the Midwest, northeast and Canada until they have reached a point where it would like to focus heavily on the southeast and western region of the United States. Now that there has been some analysis on the current state of NHL teams and where they are located, taking a brief look at some of the current weaker NHL markets (especially those in warm weather states) will provide more insight and connection to the strong Milwaukee sports market and why its youth hockey participation rates also speak to a broader interest in this sport than in other states. Also, this data could serve as the very basis to why relocation of one of these franchises to Milwaukee makes the most sense.



Source: NHL Attendance, 2016-17, 2017-18

When looking at why Milwaukee would be a prime market to have a professional hockey team, analyzing the current situation of other NHL teams would provide better insight into why moving to Milwaukee will be better for that market and the NHL. The Arizona Coyotes, Carolina Hurricanes and NY Islanders sit at the bottom of NHL attendance and have all been around these numbers for the past couple of years. These teams have considerably lower attendance numbers than other NHL teams and the league average, which sat at 18,117. While this data only shows information from the past two years, it illustrates the current situation of these franchises in relation to attendance and the lack of fan interest for these franchises. The Islanders all have larger populations in the

greater Phoenix, Charlotte and New York areas than Milwaukee and much lower attendance rates for their games the last few years. The Milwaukee Admirals are not at the same attendance mark as these larger organizations but still bring in more people relative to their city and arena's size, meaning an NHL team should be able to sustain this mark to the same or greater degree with the right marketing, promotion and business deals. Next, looking at the successful expansion NHL teams from the past 20 years can provide some helpful data that supports why a NHL team in Milwaukee aligns with the likes of Minnesota and Columbus—two teams in the Midwest and the support it could have from Milwaukee Admirals fans—who are the affiliate of the Nashville Predators, another recent expansion team in the last 20 years.



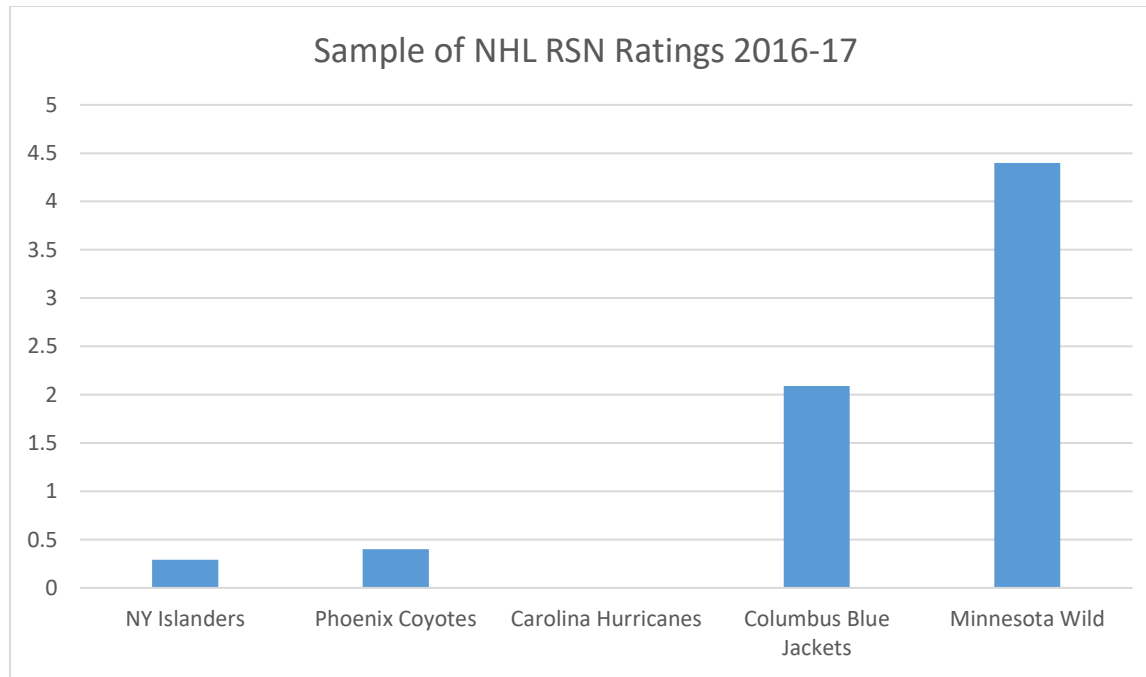
*The Las Vegas Golden Knights did not play during the 2016-17 season

Source: NHL Attendance, 2016-17, 2017-18

This graph illustrates four of the most recent NHL expansion teams' attendance numbers. Compared to the graph that showed the league's three worst attendance numbers by market, there is plenty of reason to believe that another expansion team can be just as sustainable as the Minnesota Wild, Las Vegas Golden Knights and Columbus Blue Jackets, especially considering two of these teams are in the Midwest near the Wisconsin market. Three of these four teams rank within the top 15 in attendance, and this graph displays that expansion in the right market can be accomplished.

There were a lot of pundits who were apprehensive about having hockey in a warm weather state like Nevada, as well as the tourism that might have affected consistent attendance and interest. Instead, opposing fans are interested in going to Vegas and experiencing the NHL's newest expansion team in person. Likewise, the Nashville Predators are the NHL affiliate of the AHL's Milwaukee Admirals, and a lot of fans in Wisconsin already follow the NHL because of this connection. While Milwaukee's NHL team will have to build up a following and establish a positive rapport in the community of their own, there will already be a fan base at around 6,000 or 7,000 people if they market to the right consumer and use the existing relationship they will have with another minor league professional hockey organization within the city.

Next, the television ratings for each of these teams will show if there is an interest in watching the NY Islanders, Phoenix Coyotes and Carolina Hurricanes at home considering in-game attendance numbers are the lowest in the NHL. While in-game attendance numbers are the lifeblood of most, if not all sport organizations, there are also reasons to consider TV data as all fans are not able to attend games as frequent as a season ticket holder that makes every game. Some of these teams were chosen because of their low attendance numbers (to give more reasoning behind potential relocation) while others were chosen because their population and overall interest in hockey and youth participation numbers are similar to Milwaukee. Finding a correlation between low attendance and low television ratings can signify that this team is not profitable and able to operate in a manner that is acceptable to all NHL owners. While it is easy to point to one season and make conclusions, these teams have been operating for at least a decade and have had time to build a franchise, generate positive goodwill and generate revenue for their respective organizations.



*Data was not obtained by Sports Business Journal for the Carolina Hurricanes or Nashville Predators.

Source: [Sports Business Daily](#)

The Minnesota Wild and Columbus Blue each were in the top 5 TV ratings in the NHL for the 2016-17 season, and these same teams also saw successful in-game attendance numbers. If a team's attendance numbers are higher than the league average, fall within the top half and have good television numbers, there could be an opportunity for another Midwest team to be successful that has a smaller TV market than the Phoenix Coyotes and New York Islanders. (TV Markets, 2017)

This graph can be useful to highlight Milwaukee as a promising TV market because the Blue Jackets and Wild had higher RSN ratings and are just as new to the NHL as the three bottom teams in terms of attendance and TV ratings. An older “Original Six” franchise like the Chicago Blackhawks also has had a television deal for just over ten years so there is an opportunity to work with RSN Fox Sports Network from the start with this franchise. Likewise, using streaming service Fox Sports Go can make this idea of showing hockey to most of the state of Wisconsin a reality and help keep TV ratings high and consistent, especially as consumers look for more digital options that are convenient for them. While TV ratings account for viewership trends and show areas to improve, there is reason to believe that TV ratings should be considered a supplement to the gate receipt numbers that have been highlighted. Getting people to these hockey games is the crux of this proposal and is a goal of this organization. Now that there has been a deeper dive into youth hockey participation rates, the state of Milwaukee sports, the NHL’s history and current state with some of its expansion teams’ attendance and TV ratings, there will be a look into the staff that will help drive revenue, create positive publicity and generate goodwill within the community.

Organizational Structure:

Owner

- This person will be the final decision maker when it comes to all business and hockey-related matters. They will have oversight and vision over the team while delegating other responsibilities to team president and other executive level employees.

Team President

- This person oversees the day-to-day operations of our organization including arena operations, ticket sales and service, corporate partnerships, premium seating, analytics, marketing, corporate communications, broadcasting, social responsibility, digital, finance and human resources. This person will also be the decision maker when it comes to player operations as well. This person should have 15-20 years of experience as an executive or leadership position in sports and business. This person will be responsible for doing a lot of strategic planning over all departments and find ways for the organization to be sustainable. This person will report to the owner. Master's Degree preferred. Bachelor's degree required.

Marketing

Chief Marketing Officer

- This person oversees the overall brand strategy, innovation efforts and corporate communications efforts for the organization. This person should have 10 to 15 years working in brand planning, management, creative at a sports team and/or marketing/advertising agency. This person reports to the Team President.
- Director of Marketing/Communication
 - This person oversees and executes all marketing functions including game presentation, advertisements, press releases, media buying, logo design and other marketing and communication material related to the team. This person will also

oversee all entertainment and game promotions at home games. They should have at least 8 to 10 years working in entertainment, specifically with a sports organization and be comfortable working in a fast-paced environment. This person reports to the CMO. Bachelor's degree required.

New Media

- Manager, New Media
 - This role will oversee all digital efforts including our organization's website and social media platforms. This person should have 5 to 7 years working with social media and digital platforms. This person will also oversee our team's app and all the content on this platform. This person reports to the CMO. Bachelor's degree required.

Guest Experiences

- Manager, Guest Services
 - This individual will focus solely on the fan experience and ensure all their needs are met when they are at the arena. This person will have exemplary customer service skills, have 7 or more years of experience working in sports and entertainment and have good conflict-resolution skills. They will also track all customer issues, complaints and questions with an internal system and find insights to improve the fan experience. This person must be able to work in a fast-paced environment and be able to lead a team to ensure all fans' needs are being met. Bachelor's degree required.

Retail

Manager, Retail

- This individual will oversee and operate all aspects of the team's online apparel and merchandise on site at our stadium's team store. This person will have had 10 years working in retail and have quality customer service when working with fans and external vendors. This person will report to the CMO. Bachelor's degree required.

Finance and Accounting

VP of Accounting and Finance

- This person will be responsible for every financial part of the organization, from tracking the sponsorships and negotiations to the bookkeeping for this organization. This person should have 13 to 15 years of experience working with an accounting firm or sports organization. This person will report to the Team President. CPA certification preferred. MBA preferred. Bachelor's Degree required.

Community Relations

Director, Community Relations

- This person will be responsible for overseeing our organization's foundation, 50/50 community raffle on game days and working with community partners. This person should have 8 to 10 years of experience working for a nonprofit or

in community relations for a professional or collegiate sports organization. This person reports to the Chief Marketing Officer. Bachelor's degree required.

Sustainability/Social Responsibility Specialist

- The person in this role should have a background in sustainability and environmental science and have 3 to 5 years of experience working in a role centered around sustainability. This person will not only focus on how the organization can be a better partner to its community about eco-friendly best practices, but also internally, finding solutions to sustainability and how the organization operates. This person will be an integral part of our organization moving forward and will work with community organizations to learn best practices about sustainability and social responsibility. This person will report to the Director of Community Relations. Bachelor's degree required.

Sales & Sponsorship

VP, Sales & Sponsorship

- VP of Sales and Service This person should have 12+ years of experience working in a sales setting. They will oversee the other 3 members of the sales department and will oversee the strategic planning for this department and continue finding innovative ways to sell tickets and drive revenue. Bachelor's degree required. Master's Degree Preferred.

Premium Sales Specialist

- This person will focus on selling premium seating around the arena including suites and corporate seats. This person should have 5 to 7 years working with a sports or sales organization and be comfortable executing large-scale deals with external clients. They will also check in with clients daily. This person in this role will report to the VP of Sales. Bachelor's degree required.

Group and Season Ticket Account Manager

- This role will focus on group sales and generate revenue for group sales, referrals, upselling and other forms of selling. This person will also handle day-to-day ticket requests that come in for single games. The person in this role should have 3 years of experience with a sport organization or sales experience and understand how Arctic and other ticketing systems work. The person in this role will report to the VP of Sales. Bachelor's degree required.

Sponsorship/Ticket Operations Coordinator

- This person in this role will focus on the day-to-day operations of the ticket office and answer any fan questions that arise before, during and after the game ends. They will ensure all inquiries are handled in a timely fashion and ensure that all tickets (paid, community donations) are accounted for and given to the correct person. This person will also negotiate the

team's sponsorship deals, with an emphasis on local deals. This person should have 5 to 7 years of experience working in the sport and entertainment industry. Bachelor's degree required.

Hockey Operations

GM

- This role will oversee all functions of hockey operations from scouting to salary cap management. The person in this role should be a seasoned sports executive and understand how to build a championship team. This person should have 15 to 20 years of experience in player operations, management and be able to work with the head coach and other front office personnel on key roster moves. The person in this position will report to the Team President.

Director of Hockey Operations

- The person in this role will be responsible for coordinating everything for our hockey team's players including travel, lodging and incoming player requests. This person must be a skilled veteran who understands how to work while on a tight deadline and at odd hours of the day. This person will also be over the equipment for our team and ensure that all player and coach needs are met. This person will have over 12-15 years working in an operations role. This person will report to the GM.

Head Coach

- The head coach of Milwaukee's NHL team should have at least 20 years' experience working in professional or amateur hockey and at least 10 years' experience working as an assistant or head coach. This person will manage the day-to-day execution of the team on ice and will lead film sessions, practices and other strategic parts of an organization.

Assistant Coach

- The assistant coach of Milwaukee's NHL team will handle all game planning and scouting for the team's games. This person will oversee all video-related tasks, retrieve game film, lead film sessions and practices and focus on player development. This person should have 15 or more years working in collegiate, amateur or professional sports.

Scouts (2)

- These employees will execute all day-to-day aspects of scouting, drafting, free agency and other personnel matters. One scout will stay in-house at the team's headquarters while the other scout travels throughout the month. Upon each month these two scouts will rotate to ensure each is getting enough exposure to the internal and external demands of the scouting department. These positions will be crucial consider this team will be starting from scratch. These individuals

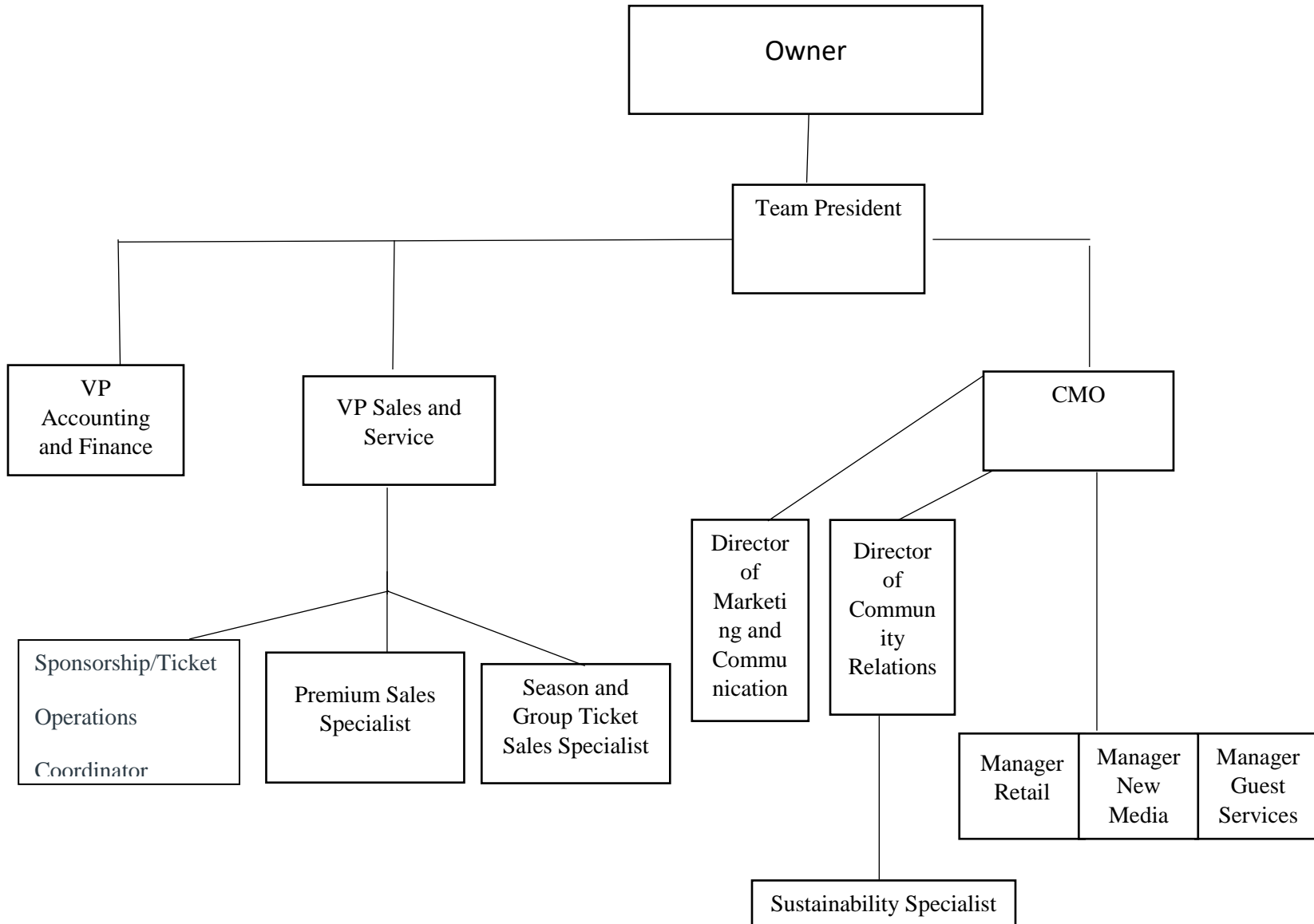
should have 8 to 10 years working in a professional organization's sport operations department and knowledge of salary cap, NHL regulations and should have a proven track record of making sound strategic decisions.

Outsourcing

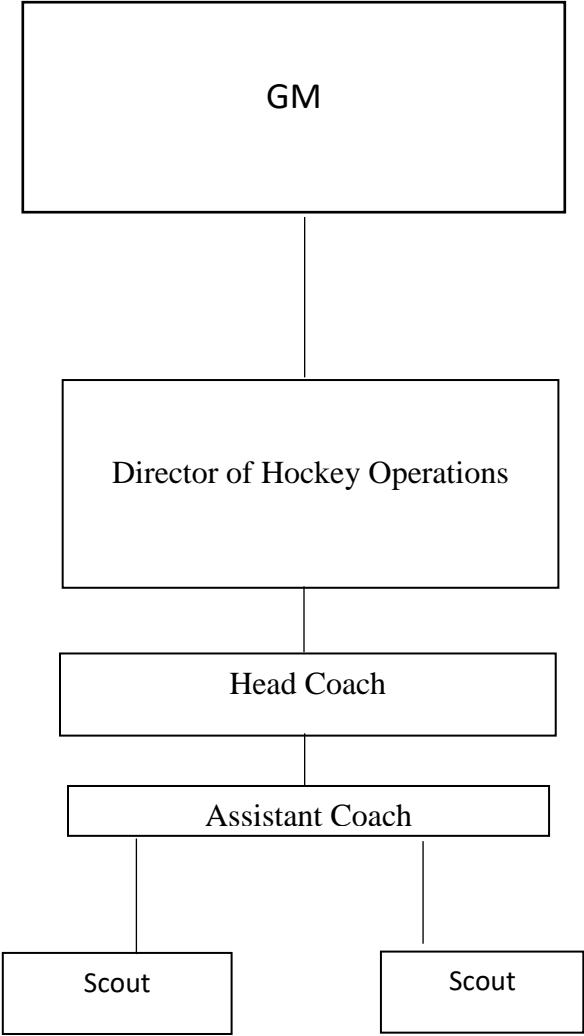
- Information Technology issues including internet issues will be outsourced to a third-party vendor. Anything related to information and cybersecurity will be flagged and share with this vendor. All information related to analytics and storage of this information will be handled by them. We also will outsource any legal functions to a legal team at a law firm in town that can handle any issues in a proficient manner.
- Legal counsel to handle compliance issues and anything related to legal problems that might appear with city, state regulations and laws. Help deal with contractual issues with sponsors and players as they arise. This team will work with Foley & Lardner, a well-known law firm in Milwaukee.

This staff will have extensive experience working in the sports industry. There will be a host of challenges for this new franchise but hiring people who have worked in different leagues in executive, manager and mid-level roles is very important for the long-term outlook of this franchise. Members on staff will be college-educated and know the ins and outs of the sports industry. Hopefully we would be able to obtain employees who worked in both small and large markets that could bring their perspective to this organization.

The executive team will be comprised of only 3 people, who will make decisions to the rest of employees. The Hockey Ops side will have a GM who oversees all day-to-day functions of the team and will interact with coaches on daily basis.



Hockey Front Office Staff



NHL Expansion Milwaukee Revenues and Expenses

	High Projections	Low Projections
Ticket sales & revenue sharing	\$ 40,000,000	\$ 14,000,000
Television, digital and radio broadcast revenues	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 5,000,000
Sponsorship revenues	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
PSL Revenue	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
Suite revenues	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 6,000,000
Merchandise revenues	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Parking revenues	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 3,000,000
Concession revenues	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Other miscellaneous revenues	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 700,000
Total revenues	\$ 78,000,000	\$ 37,700,000
Player expenses	\$ 65,000,000	\$ 38,000,000
Team operating expenses	(15,000,000)	\$ 9,000,000
Facility rental fee expenses	\$ 350,000	\$ 500,000
Practice facility operating expenses	(1,000,000)	\$ 600,000
Game operations & arena expenses	\$ (2,000,000)	\$ 6,000,000
Franchise expansion fee expenses	\$ 50,000,000	\$ 300,000,000
Sponsorship expenses	\$ 500,000	\$ 700,000
Ticket sales expenses	(1,000,000)	\$ 1,200,000
Marketing & advertising expenses	\$ (200,000)	\$ 120,000
Public & media relations expenses	\$ (150,000)	\$ 90,000
Community relations expenses	\$ (500,000)	\$ 300,000
Depreciation & amortization expenses	\$ (800,000)	\$ 480,000
Outsourced expenses	\$ 400,000	\$ 200,000
General & administrative expenses	\$ 800,000	\$ 5,400,000

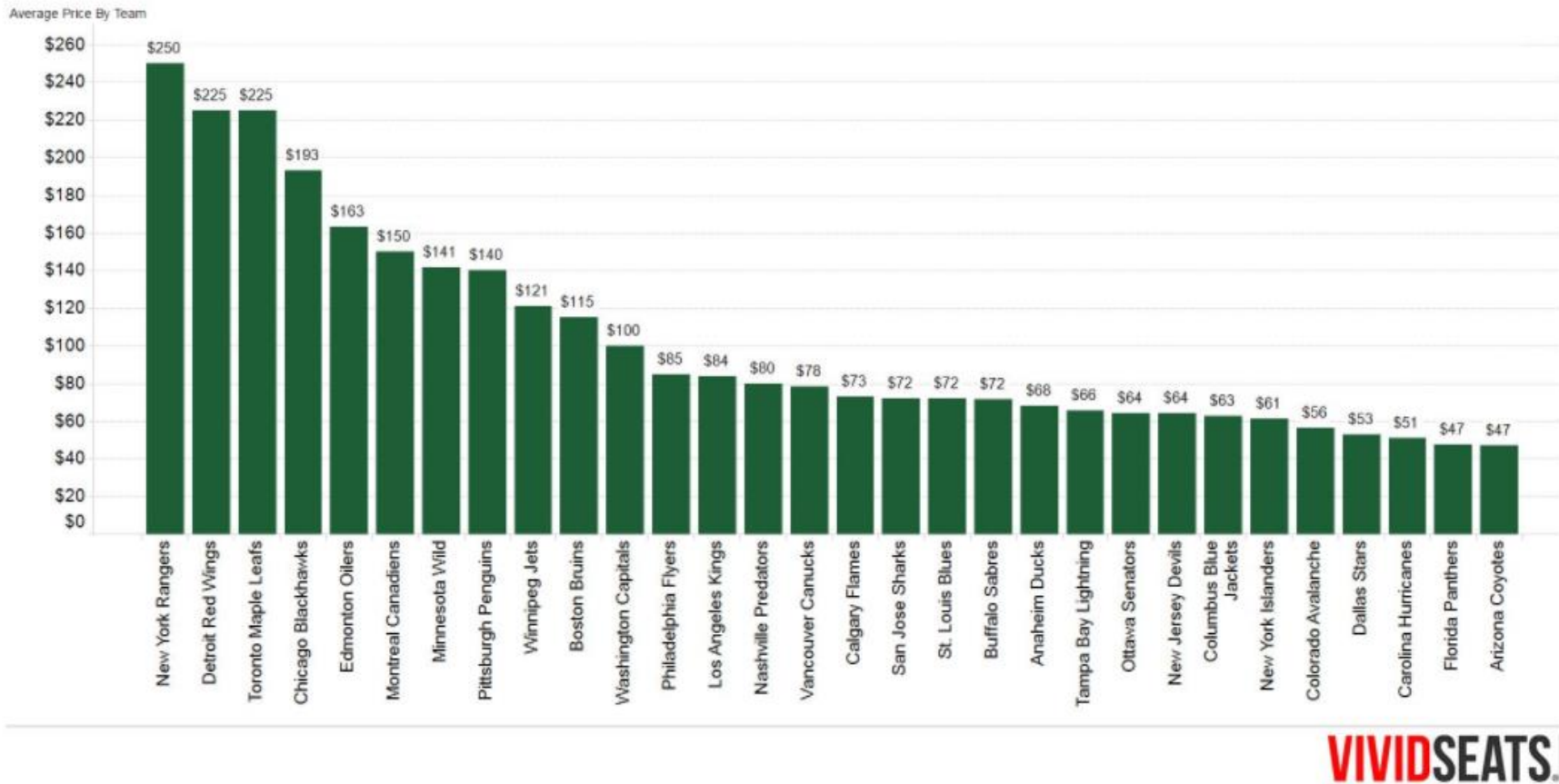
	\$	
Total operating expenses	137,700,000	\$ 362,590,000
INCOME FROM OPERATIONS:	\$ 256,650,000	153690000
Interest income	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 600,000
Gain (loss) on investments	\$ 500,000	\$ 300,000
	\$	
Interest expense	(3,000,000)	\$ 1,800,000
	\$	
Income tax expenses	(5,000,000)	\$ 3,000,000
	\$	
Total other income (expense)	(6,500,000)	\$ 5,700,000
	\$	
NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$ 118,950,000	(173390000)
<i>Reconciliation to operating cash flows:</i>		
Deferred revenue	\$ 106,000,000	\$ 63,600,000
		\$
Depreciation & amortization expenses	\$ 800,000	(480,000)
		\$
Gain (loss) on investments	\$ (500,000)	(300,000)
OPERATING CASH FLOW	\$ 369,450,000	222210000

Key Revenues and Expenses:

This NHL team will try to keep prices low regarding food, merchandising, and ticketing. The average ticket price will be \$55, a bargain when compared to most professional sporting events. If tickets are purchased at the average price of \$55 for 15,500 fans, that equals \$852,500 per game. As such, revenue for this price would be around 34 million. Considering there would be nights where attendance might not reach 15,500 people or there are community tickets, lower priced tickets being sold, establishing a goal for \$30 million in ticket revenue seems like a feasible goal especially with revenue sharing. (See Vivid Seats chart below) \$2,000,000 is the amount this team would like to generate in concessions revenue. This figure would then be divided by 41 games, the amount of home games this team will have, which equals \$48,780.49 generated per game. 15,500 fans are the attendance goal for every home game, and 48,780.49 divided by 16,000 is 3.04. This would be the price point that all food and drinks will be marked at throughout the stadium. \$3 price point is low for most sport organizations, but the theory of buying more when items cost less is going to be how this organization will justify this amount. Likewise, this team would work with Levy Food Group and the Milwaukee Bucks to ensure prices are reasonable, especially considering there will be a lot of local favorites to try, and it does not make sense to lose out on revenue if fans decide to go somewhere else before games because food is too expensive.

Also, this number considers the concessions revenue that this team will share with the Marquette Golden Eagles and Milwaukee Bucks. Going to sporting events also costs money for parking purposes, not to mention if fans want to buy gear at team's pro shop. There is no reason why fans should feel like they have to penny pinch when at games. Likewise, premium suite prices when

increase considering average ticket price being one of the lowest in the NHL (Vivid Seats, 2017) The capacity for this arena would be 17,500 so 15,500 fans seem like a very logical number to aim for considering that is 88 %, which would rank this team between 17-20 in this year's capacity standings for NHL teams. (NHL Attendance, 2017) This number would place them near the Columbus Blue Jackets, a team that was previously analyzed and viewed similarly to this organization in terms of region, city population, TV revenue and market, and youth hockey participation numbers.



[Source Vivid Seats, 2017](#)

\$5,000,000 is the figure for sponsorship revenue and this would be obtained if there was an average of 15 sponsors who signed on for 300,000. Each sponsor would have exclusive rights as the official cell phone company, official transportation provider (Lyft, national sponsorship) official bank and other product categories. Team payroll would sit around 70,000,000, which is in the bottom

half of the NHL, and this conservative payroll amount would be more advantageous for the long term versus spending a lot of money in the early expansion years. (Spotrac, 2018) \$800,000 is the general costs for full-time team employee salaries on the business side, as that is an average salary of 35,000. Considering salaries in this industry are typically low, these full-time salaries are livable wages that would give employees a chance to provide for themselves and family. Franchise relocation fees typically cost around 500 million, but there would be a push to cut a lot of costs on this considering there would not be a need to build an arena. The hope would be to get buy in from the city to help mortgage this fee over a longer period until this organization would be able to pay the city back. Instead of building a new corporate headquarters for this organization, this team would buy space inside of the many office buildings in downtown Milwaukee. Eventually there would be talks to build a new facility to players to practice and employees to work in, but right now it makes more sense to not even worry about those costs.

Lastly, the Nashville Predators operating expenses were at 14 million two years ago, so it seems likely that \$15 million would be a similar price range for this organization. Marquette Men's basketball team pays \$9,000 per game to play at the Bradley Center so it seems likely that an NHL team would be required to pay more, and especially because they play more games than a collegiate basketball team. The deferred revenue stems from premium seating and other ticketing metrics to have more cash toward middle and back end of season when it is time to plan for next year and use these financial resources to make sound strategic decisions. This money also comes from media revenue and gate receipts as part of NHL's revenue sharing program. (Forbes, 2017)

Marketing Plan:

Mission statement and belief for Milwaukee NHL Franchise

- Delivering top-quality professional hockey and creating new memories for fans in Wisconsin. We will use hockey to create valuable relationships with for-profit and nonprofit teams throughout the state and place an emphasis on sustainability to ensure our organization displays a commitment to preserve the many lakes, bays and green space in Wisconsin that make the game of hockey possible to play outdoors.
- Our organization is a part of Milwaukee's sports commission and provides fans with professional hockey and memorable experiences in an eco-friendly building.
- Our organization is a sports and entertainment entity that ensures all fans have satisfying and fun experiences through the game of hockey.

Positioning statement:

- Deliver a fan-friendly NHL experience to Wisconsin residents at an affordable price. We are focusing on top-quality entertainment and corporate social responsibility.

Target

- Residents and families who live in Milwaukee, Shorewood, Glendale, Wauwatosa and other surrounding suburbs around the downtown area. Focusing on families will provide our organization to create ticket packages that promote families and work with a demographic that typically has more discretionary income to spend. Youth hockey is important to this organization and there are a high concentration of families and youth hockey teams in the suburbs around Milwaukee.
- Secondary target: Urban residents who are between the ages of 19-35. This includes groups from the area including churches, Boys and Girls Club and from schools including Marquette University-Wisconsin Milwaukee, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Carroll University. This group also includes young professionals living in this dense area and have time and some discretionary income to spend.
- Tertiary target: Residents living in Ozaukee County, Waukesha County and around the state of Wisconsin

Frame of Reference

- The Milwaukee Bucks and Brewers have fans that are included in this demographic. This organization would run certain promotions on specific nights to cater to college students, families, churches and other nonprofit organizations.
- The Milwaukee Bucks have averaged close to 16, 315 fans at homes games during the 2017-18 season.

- The Brewers (ESPN, 2017) averaged 31,589 fans in 2017 for 61 home games throughout their season. Groups from all over the state attend their games during the season. There will be 20 less home games for Milwaukee's NHL team compared to the Brewers so it seems feasible to obtain 14,000 or 15,000 fans per game considering the amount of people who live in the Greater Milwaukee area and attend sport events in the city seems feasible.
- Point of Differentiation
 - Run a promotion every night that highlights a nonprofit organization and discount for fans or added value portion of ticket sales
- Reason to Believe
 - Highlighting the work this organization is doing in the community before the season starts is palpable, impactful and is more than about hockey, it's about community.

Goals:

- Average 15,500 fans per home game in NHL in first year of expansion.
- Generate \$5 million in sponsorship revenue.
- Generate highest single-game ticket conversation rate through digital platforms including Twitter, Facebook Snapchat, and Reddit

- Create most fan-friendly prices in the NHL and in Milwaukee Market

Strategies:

- Use past financial data from NHL league office on expansion history and revenues.
- Study other NHL and professional sports teams' promotions to see what has been successful in the past
- Work with local food and event management vendors to obtain specific tools that may reduce waste in kitchen and around arena
- Use social listening tools and platforms to see which one works best with vision to go all digital for streaming of games, listening to fans' wants and curating content
- Work with each department to ensure organizational needs and mission are all aligned with each other through team meetings

Tactics:

- Issue tickets to nonprofit and groups and create group night ticket deals and promotions with Milwaukee Public Schools, Boy Scouts and other youth groups to ensure the stadium is filled every night
- Sign more local sponsorship deals versus trying to sign with one national sponsor to generate that revenue. (still try to obtain two national sponsors to million-dollar contracts.)

- Charge \$3 for all food items and \$5 for drinks. Alcoholic beverages will cost \$7. All food items in premium seating will remain consistent with industry standards within ticket package. (to offset lower general food costs)

Traditional advertising

TV advertising

- Run 30 sec commercial introducing the team to Milwaukee throughout first half of season
- Run 30 sec ads during 4 to 6 p.m. CT encouraging people to check out social feeds and consider attending a game and being a part of history

Radio advertising

- Run 30 sec spots on ESPN Milwaukee, 660 Fan, 105.3, 95.7, 850 WEEI with sounds of a NHL game during 6 to 8 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m. These ads could also encourage fans to check out the team's website or hashtag (this ad would play throughout season)

Transit advertisement

- Full bus wrap advertising on Milwaukee County Transit System buses encouraging those who are driving to attend an NHL game in Milwaukee
 - run 15 second audio advertisements on buses to inform residents about discounted tickets for those who take the bus the day before games and use Milwaukee
- Signage inside streetcar showing fans they can get to games via streetcar if they are looking for an alternative way to get to game
- 300 x 200 signage in Milwaukee and Chicago Amtrak stations near Milwaukee to Chicago and Chicago to Milwaukee gates

Billboard advertising

- Run 15 second spots along I-94 and I-43 toward Green Bay, two of Milwaukee's major expressways, of the different promotions that will be available before the start of the season and when the season starts

Other advertising

- Buy ad space on NHL-related podcasts and Spotify advertisements based on geo-targeting in the greater Milwaukee area.
- Deliver 1,000 table tents to Milwaukee area businesses and restaurants

Direct mail

- Send out direct mail to local businesses and restaurants around the area (specifically to areas within a 2-mile radius of stadium) to create a relationship with businesses that may have sports fans and potential hockey fans
- Send direct mail pieces to college athletic departments (specifically soccer, lacrosse and club, NCAA hockey) in area including Concordia, Marquette University, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, letting them know about HockeyU student pass that costs \$100 to get into every hockey game for the first season. Students who want to renew for second season can do so before May when they return home.
 - This deal includes a meet and greet with hockey player or team executive before specific games throughout the season. (depending on availability)
 - This direct mail piece would also go to every college sorority in students' mailbox with special promotions for sororities, fraternities and clubs at local schools if interested in single game deal

- Work with local university club hockey and NCAA teams and its give fans of those games discounted tickets when purchased in packs of 4. These tickets will be available on Wednesdays and Fridays only and promo code HockeyU will have to be entered for organization to track who is taking advantage of this deal.

Public relations plan:

- Work with local media outlets in spring and summer before first season including the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and broadcast TV stations to give them a behind-the-scenes look into the expansion draft and process that is involved to generate awareness surrounding team.
- Execute a Q & A session on Reddit with team president answering fans and residents' questions on NHL and team's page
- Perform a Facebook live video showing team executives choose 5 nonprofit partners to work with and donate to for community 50/50 raffle for upcoming season
- Create a Facebook TV mini-series on the importance of preserving our ponds and lakes through the NHL's Green initiative and highlighting what it means for our organization and why it is so important.
- Crowdfund logo designs and team names through team website and social media platforms to get valuable consumer feedback in real time and create goodwill with potential fans in community.
- Create internship program with Milwaukee School of Art and Design that allows one student to work with organization every season on graphic design and advertising projects.

- Visit local hospitals with the Milwaukee Athletes Against Childhood Cancer, a local nonprofit that works with all Milwaukee sports properties. Create a MACC Fund preseason game to highlight the importance of community relations for this organization.

Experiential/grassroots:

- Host a fan fest at the Summerfest grounds throughout festival and again at the Wisconsin Convention Center
- Visit local high schools and colleges before season to perform grassroots marketing and promotions including the giving away of items for them to consume the brand at an early part of expansion process
- Hand out response cards about team name creation and colors at local festivals and Pick N' Save, a potential sponsor of this hockey team

Social/digital advertising

- Twitter sponsored ads
 - These ads would run throughout the season and encourage fans to watch our games via Twitter throughout the season if they can't make it to game.
 - Encourage fans to experience games to then keep conversation moving about team on this platform

- Facebook sponsored posts
 - These posts would show the ability to buy tickets for games through SeatGeek's platform and highlight how it is better than wasting paper. (SeatGeek) This is important because it ties back to community relations and the social responsibility of the organization, a major emphasis.
 - Create mini video series about the different groups that come to games and sit in specific section every game. Groups who sit in special section will receive custom-made promotions to take home as a keepsake.
- Instagram sponsored posts
 - Encourage fans to start using #ProHaukeeinMilwaukee when attending games, hinting at the Native American influence in the state and ode to culture and diversity of fans that we want in Milwaukee and at our games (likewise, with cities like Ozaukee, Pewaukee it is a play on words that could engage fans in areas further from Wisconsin and create a point of interest and relevance)
 - Fans could appear on the team's Instagram feed when showcasing a fan of the week
- Snapchat
 - Create miniseries about the team's mascot, Freeze, and show it at local charity events, environmental events, elementary school outings and youth hockey events.
 - Find a way to implement promotions into snapchat stories and provide fans a chance to buy tickets by swiping up in app

- Venmo
 - Issue 100 tickets via Venmo to purchase at 50 percent off the week before team's first game and during Cyber Monday.
 - Announce via all social media platforms
- General social media promotion:
 - Create social posts encouraging potential fans to send songs via Spotify that the organization could play during games
(could utilize a collaborative playlist that would be live until season starts)
 - Create online advertisements in partnership with Uber to highlight "Drive Home a Winner" campaign
 - Fans will receive a free mini replica Stanley Cup for beer with their ticket purchase if they take an Uber or Lyft to the game

Sponsorship Prospect: Summerfest

Summerfest, home to Milwaukee's largest musical festival (Summerfest.com), is packed with millions of people every year. Summerfest's audience ranges between 18-65, male and female but if you look closer on certain days, there is a more specific age range and more confined target market, like how it might be on game days with specific promotions, post-game activities and day of the week. For example, Summerfest's buying team devoted an entire day to millennials and the local music scene. (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2017) Summerfest brought in mainly local artists but also ones who were younger and appealed to a specific audience. This kind of market segmentation bodes well for a post-game concert featuring an artist who may appear at Summerfest, be a local artist

and draw a similar crowd. Summerfest runs for only a short period of time during the end of June and beginning of July, and this sponsorship with the Milwaukee NHL team can keep this well-known brand in front of potential consumers on game days when there are concerts and in general through activation around the arena.

Summerfest likes to position itself as a major festival and place for top tier entertainment including all the other ethnic festivals including Summerfest, Irish fest, Mexican fiesta, and these types of crowds would align with the diverse crowd that is expected at these hockey games. Hockey audiences and players participating in the sport have always been known to be less diverse, (Reid, 2011) but there would be an emphasis to bring people of all ethnic backgrounds together the way Summerfest and their platform brings together all people and celebrates the different cultures and music genres.

Summerfest attendees are also skewed more toward being families, 48 percent, more than any other category and are more likely to be married. These stats about Summerfest's demographic are encouraging for sponsorship purposes because the games are geared toward a family-friendly atmosphere as well as budget friendly prices throughout the arena. While attracting a younger audience with single people is also important, finding ways to create family ticket packages and Summerfest deals is important to allow families to experience hockey in the winter and live music in the summer together.

Some of the income data explains that more festival attendees make less than \$25,000 a year than other income levels, and this is fine considering the ticket deals that will be centered around promotions, provide added value and provide days where fans can get

to game for \$10 in upper bowl of arena. Although this organization will be marketing first to families and individuals with more discretionary income, a younger crowd who may have less money will still be able to experience a NHL game at moderate prices. Price is the one barrier to entry that alters and shapes how fans experience and interact with a team or brand (especially when dealing with fans with lower income levels), and this can be altered to allow fans to watch live hockey. Likewise, the cost of living in Milwaukee is lower than the national average so fans would expect prices to be somewhat reasonable even for a professional hockey team.

This sponsor would be the most likely choice as main sponsor to do a stadium activation with for new season. Tying in new artists with national anthem, intermission activities and post-game entertainment could touch every part of a NHL game.in terms of entertainment. Summerfest draws some of the area’s largest crowds but finding a way to target specific audiences based off the artist that is performing after a hockey game could give the team and Summerfest valuable data for future summers. Music is a genre that correlates extremely well to sports including player introduction music, in-game music, and music during promotions. Using data obtained from Summerfest will be helpful when tailoring specific promotions to fans on concert nights.

Creative Idea: Winter Summerfest

One creative idea that could create deeper engagement and interest in this hockey team could be centered around a “Winter Summerfest VIP” experience for two select fans at games where there is a postgame concert during the months of December, January

or February. These two fans would be able to have a meet and greet with the artist that is performing that night after the game and get a chance to get autographed jerseys signed by the artist that is performing that night. Fans interested in this sweepstakes would have to sign up and provide their contact information, which will be useful for the organization and Summerfest when sending out specific announcements later for festival.

This elevated experience for fans combines hockey, a core sponsor and a chance to tell the story of a sponsor, something crucial in this digital era where sponsorships can go to the wayside. There will be videos about this post-game concert leading up to an artist performing at a hockey game and showcase the artist in a behind-the-scenes feature. This sweepstakes can draw in more consumers who may not be passionate fans, but people enjoy social experiences. This sponsorship can ensure that these people are move up the engagement ladder.

Sponsorship features

- Presenting Sponsor for 2018-19, 2019-20 seasons.
- Official music sponsor
- 2 fans get opportunity to be selected for Winter Summerfest VIP Experience every post-game concert
- 10 fans will be selected to meet a Summerfest artist at the festival in June
- Summerfest booth set up with giveaways at every home game

- Sponsor of 4 post game concerts throughout the season
- Sponsor of 10 national anthems that feature local Milwaukee artists
- Game Operations team could throw out mini microphones providing fans a chance to win an 11-day Summerfest pass on post-game concert nights
- Summerfest ticket to first 3,000 fans on opening night and 1,000 fans on post-game concert nights
- Summerfest Karaoke video promotion throughout every home game
- #SummerfestinWinter hashtag and paid social posts throughout the season

Reciprocal benefits

- Ticket Voucher to hockey game to first 1,000 festival goers on festival's first three days, symbolizing a hat trick and ode to hockey games that will be in town
- Signage at one of the main stages on Summerfest Grounds with team logo
- Inflatable shooting tent at game area near basketball court on Summerfest grounds
- Summerfest passes for all team employees and their families
- Total Sponsorship Amount: 500,000 per year

- Takes Summerfest ticket prices, booth set up, post-game concert costs and impressions and positive publicity generated through social media and paid sponsored posts and events and hospitality experience at hockey game and at Summerfest

Summerfest Sponsorship Revenue Generator:

Creating a deal that allows fans to buy special edition co-branded NHL and Summerfest “hat trick” hat for \$3.00 on the Summerfest grounds that would allow fans to buy tickets to three games of their choice (minimum \$25.00-dollar purchase) before other fans would be able to purchase single game tickets. The NHL regular season schedule is announced the day Summerfest starts its festival (June 22) so this promotion lines up perfectly and could generate a lot of revenue from casual fans and people who might be more aware of Summerfest’s brand, but not this hockey team. (NHL, 2017).

Likewise, creating a “Power Play” ticket promotion that allows fans to buy tickets to 5 games when purchased with friends would give fans the chance to have an advantage over other people who wait until the season starts to buy tickets. This advantage would be harped on and create a sense of community early on with these consumers. Getting buy in from people early on is going to be vital. One more method to drive revenue to this sports organization could be to auction off game worn items or special-edition Summerfest gear to play off the fact that the hockey team, that plays it sport during the colder weather and inter months, is at Summerfest’s marquee event during the summer. Being able to play off the weather and tell the story of each sponsor is important,

and it is even more important for this hockey team to use Summerfest's brand to leverage its own in the community this hockey team plays in and engages with daily.

Crisis Plan and Risk Audit

Goals

- Provide services that promote emergency and crisis preparedness through partnerships, collaboration, guidance and other activities to support the needs the organization
- Lead the team in development, dissemination and application of emergency preparedness programs using state-of-the-art technologies and innovative solutions
- Emergency Management programs will be integrated into all aspects of organization
- Emergency Management activities will incorporate the values of quality, responsibility, accountability, trust, diversity, flexibility and respect

Our Principles

We use an "All Hazards" approach that encompasses the five phases of emergency management: prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. This approach is set in place to protect people, property, assets and the environment within the

organization. The following components play a vital role in the organization's success: Planning, prevention, protection, mitigation, training, exercising, assessments, emergency response and recovery coordination, continuity of operations, internal and external partnerships and collaboration.

These principles serve as the foundation of the all-hazards emergency preparedness:

1. People: Health and safety of staff, players, hospital patients, contractors, renters and any other people on university premises
2. Facilities: Security and preservation of university facilities and equipment, especially with officials of Wisconsin Sports and Entertainment Center.
3. Community: Maintenance of support for community partnerships and the public. Keep our stakeholders informed and remain transparent always.

Crisis Team Members:

Team President: The team president will be the spokesperson for any crises, and he or she will work with the manager of new media and legal counsel on talking points, basic facts and how to prepare for questions media members may have. The president will be the expert on the topic, and information that is disseminated to media members, city officials or fans will come from the president.

Chief Marketing Officer: The CMO will oversee this crisis from an operations standpoint and bring in resources and employees that might help with the crisis at hand. The CMO will also work with external public relations vendors to obtain best

practices on how to respond to media, how to handle inquiries and how to come up with an effective strategy for the different platforms there are to speak on in today's digital-friendly world.

Manager of New Media: The person in this role will be responsible for disseminating content to media outlets surrounding a potential announcement or press release. This person will also develop talking points for the team president or CMO to use when discussing sensitive topics with the media. They will work closely with outside the outside legal counsel to ensure all compliance matters are met and work with team members extensively until the crisis is under wraps and handled in an appropriate manner.

Sustainability/Social Responsibility Specialist: This person will be responsible for tracking all media coverage of a crisis, reaching out to all external stakeholders including nonprofit organizations, city officials and other major players that donate to this sports organization. This person must have strong speaking skills and be able to generate ideas for events and community outreach during and after a crisis.

Outside or Third-Party Legal Counsel: One member from Foley and Lardner will be in constant contact with team officials on any crises that appear and help develop a crisis communications and risk audit plan ahead to ensure it is sound in its legal jargon (especially when dealing with law enforcement entities).

Stakeholder List:

1. **Current players and coaches** - Face to face communication by crisis team president is the preferred channel of communication for this stakeholder. These are the stakeholders affected most directly, and deserve to know appropriate

information about the crisis, including how they university plans on handling it. They should hear the directly from the crisis team leader along with other team members, as appropriate.

2. **Team employees** - Email is the chosen communications for this internal stakeholder. Employee relations is an important part of public relations, and there are numerous employees that will need to be addressed. While a firing may not be cause for a town hall meeting, a crisis in where a high-profile coach is involved, as well as extremely inappropriate acts and workplace misconduct need to be addressed immediately. These stakeholders need to know what is happening and need to be reminded of the correct conduct to implement for a myriad of issues. An email is used to quickly disseminate relevant information to the department, with an emergency meeting to discuss in further detail soon thereafter. They will be kept abreast how the crisis is being handled, and how to handle speaking with external stakeholders.

3. **Season-ticket holders** - They will first be alerted through e-mail and then have opportunity to talk to their ticket representative about issues, concerns and anything related to their season-ticket package. There will be a follow-up letter sent to this stakeholder group as well. This email will highlight our plans to fix the crisis, move on from it, and continue our proud legacy. This is also an opportunity to mention how we appreciate their continued support and fandom.

4. **Sponsors and local officials** – Addressing this group via e-mail, along with a follow up letter will be the preferred way to contact this stakeholder. This stakeholder group helps the organization generate a lot of money and getting support and buy in from city officials will be important for lobbying and other efforts that may include city officials. (think new arena, renovations, city ordinances, etc.) Likewise, sponsors have their audience to consider when a crisis hits and negative association with an unfavorable entity may lead sponsors to reevaluating its current sponsorship.

5. **Media Members** - The media will be given a press release regarding the incident, and a press conference will be held in which they can ask questions. This stakeholder group is very important because they have a lot of influence in how people consume sports media. From Bleacher Report to ESPN, sports content is being produced every day, and any crisis will hit airwaves across the country. Providing media members with a press release and media advisory beforehand about the press conference gives us the opportunity to decide what information is given, and how the crisis management is perceived. This also buys us time to figure out any remaining details on how to handle the incident. Once the media puts out information, we can craft more personal communications with other stakeholders. It is preferred the media breaks this story as we want them to, as opposed to a fan, athlete, or other stakeholder breaking the story via social media.

Activation of Crisis Management Team (CMT)

In the event of an emergency crisis, any member of the CMT can activate the team by notifying one or more of its member. Upon activation of the CMT, the remaining team members will be notified of the crisis in the most expedient manner possible. The CMT will meet at the primary command center. If this location is not operational, the secondary location will be utilized. The CMT will meet to discuss strategies for managing the specific crisis at hand. Other meetings will be called as necessary until the crisis is resolved.

COMMAND CENTER LOCATIONS

1. Primary Command Center Location

This location is where the CMT meets when a crisis is present, and a meeting needs to be held. Our primary command center location will be team headquarters and will remain the central meeting location for all crisis training and activation matters.

2. Secondary Command Center Location In the event that the primary command center is not available, the secondary command center location will be used. Our secondary command center location is the general counsel for this team, Foley and Lardner, located at 777 East Wisconsin Avenue; Milwaukee, WI 53202

Crisis Communication Drafts:

Press release- We will keep press releases short, we did not want to disclose too much information. It is important we gather all information accurately prior to distributing to the media. This gives the CMT spokesperson the opportunity to practice their responses. It is important we put out the date, time, and location of the press conference. That will be where the media can ask questions the press

release did not address. It will be electronically distributed to relevant media outlets. We will run this past the NHL league office to ensure it is ready for distribution.

News conference- Our spokesperson will speak truthfully and will be prepared for difficult questions. They will answer questions to the best of their knowledge, avoiding “no comment” and speculation. A news conference will include a quote service to ensure accurate reporting of our message. There will be a media advisory sent beforehand, and reminders to pertinent media members. Bios of important personnel will be distributed. Media kits will be delivered to news outlets not in attendance, stories and photos will be posted on university website and social media platforms.

Social media/Hotline- There will also be monitoring of activity on Facebook and Twitter accounts, where the team can share our messages in a short period of time. The team will post our message and key points on our website, where we will also have an interactive blog. This will create an open environment, where concerned individuals can connect directly with a P.R. member. This will help create a warm, transparent atmosphere. The members of this team will also oversee the team’s hotline after information is provided about a crisis and next steps for the organization.

Email- Emails will be sent to our employees on the same day, giving them a small amount of information on the crisis, mostly meant to inform them of basic facts without speculating too much. External partners, donors, and season ticket holders will all receive personalized emails after the press conference. It is important the email is sent after the conference, as to avoid any stakeholder leaking the news without our consent and messages. These emails may include a quote service of the news conference if applicable but will address their stakeholder group specifically. It is an opportunity to let them know how we handle the crisis and the effect it

will have on them, and an apology for the crisis occurring. It can also thank them for their continued support.

Media Tracking – There will also be someone on staff that will be tracking all media coverage about a crisis via Critical Mention, a platform designed to track everything from social media, broadcast interviews and online news stories. “Google Alerts” will also be set up as a backup to this platform to ensure all media coverage is compiled. During the first 3 or 4 days of a crisis a coverage report will be sent to executives to then strategize next steps, comments and talking points based off media coverage and social media hits. Monitoring media coverage on this crisis will be vital, as what is said in the digital space can last forever and it must be forwarded immediately. If there is inaccurate information about this crisis after disseminating a press release or video via Facebook Live, we will contact media outlets to ensure they are reporting accurately from given facts.

Sentiment will be utilized in the crisis communication plan to determine if/when the crisis has passed. Surveys and social media data will be collected to assess the sentiment among external and internal stakeholders. Sentiment will be compared during several tent poles - breaking news of allegations, the resignation of an employee, press release/crisis communication and other platforms. We intend to see positive lifts in sentiment regarding any situation that appears;

- a. Surveys will be sent to season ticket holders (included in personalized emails) and internally to employees through email with the following question
 - What is your current attitude towards the organization following this recent crisis (Scale responses from very positive to very negative)

- How strongly do you agree with the following statement: I find this organization trustworthy? (Scale responses from strongly agree to strongly disagree)
 - How strongly do you agree with the following statement: The crisis surrounding this team, player, coach will have a long term negative impact on this organization (Scale responses from strongly agree to strongly disagree)?
- b. Social media sentiment will be collected by a third party utilizing social scraping technology. Keywords will be used to analyze whether sentiment is positive or negative, and how strong or emotional those sentiments are.
 - c. Engagement among this team’s social media tools will also be collected. In addition to responses to the official Facebook and Twitter posts, questions/comments/concerns written in the interactive blog will be collected for analysis.
2. We will also be tracking impressions and media coverage - but will be utilizing them differently than that of the original communication plan. As we would need to determine when the “end” of the crisis is, we will be monitoring if/when social media impressions and radio and television media coverage any crisis decreases to insignificant levels where the scandal is no longer “top of mind” among stakeholders.

This crisis communications and risk audit plan is to be proactive in our media outreach, stakeholder communication and to ensure information stays within the organization before informing media members of what has happened. Using a mix of traditional and digital public relations tools will be the most effective way to generate goodwill in community after a crisis, ensure that facts are presented to key stakeholders and that a crisis is handled in an appropriate manner.

Conclusion:

Milwaukee is a unique town with two major sport franchises with the need for another one. Hockey culture and teams permeate this state and Wisconsin continues to have one of the highest youth participation rates in the country. Youth hockey in general is also on the rise, and this makes this proposal even more viable because of this sustainable business model that would last with this new generation of fans. There is an appetite for other sports and especially ice hockey in Wisconsin, and a high level of fan interest as the environment plays a major role in how it influences and encourages participation. This sports market also has shown to have loyal fans even if a team is not playing their best on the field, court or ice, something important for an expansion team that may not see immediate success, something initial investors of potential NHL Milwaukee team was concerned about. There are a multitude of expansion teams who have popped up in the Midwest including the Minnesota Wild and Columbus Blue Jackets that have provided a framework and reasoning as to why Milwaukee should be next. Likewise, this team would not have to worry about building a new arena, as the Milwaukee Bucks did just that and made it hockey-friendly for NCAA and high school games. There are a bevy of stakeholders that would benefit from this NHL team's existence, including the Water Council, Summerfest and a host of local colleges in town who could partner with this organization to generate goodwill. Overall, the culture, weather and strong sports market illustrate the need for NHL hockey in Milwaukee and the promise it could have if brought to the city and state of Wisconsin.

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