

Competing for Participants

Attracting Today's Students to Your Intramural Sports Program

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Learning Outcomes

Assess the available involvement opportunities and extracurricular interests of today's college students.

Identify and evaluate the intended and unintended effects that common IM program policies and procedures have on participation.

Propose and consider alternate methods for IM program administration that facilitate participation.



Session Overview

Product and Process
Effects on Administrators, Captains, Participants

Materials
Presentation Outline
Program Survey
Outline, Survey, & Slides Available Online at fsu.campusrec.com/nirsa



The Intramural Sports Experience

Valuable for Student Development
Teamwork, Leadership Skills
Personal Wellness, Time Management

Attractive to the Entire Community
Athletes & Competitors
Recreational Participants
General Student Body



Influences on Our Program

The Competition
On Campus, Off Campus, At Home

Participant Expectations
Competition, Convenience, Camaraderie
Effectively Assessing Our Participants

Program Requirements
Safety, Organization, Student Learning



Our Product

The Intramural Sports Experience
Mainly Athletic Endeavors
Organized, Structured Activities

Base Level: Why Choose to Participate?
At Least Minimal Interest in Activity
Or, Brought Along by a Friend



Expanding Our Product

Expand Availability of Current Offerings
 Multiple Leagues (Men's, Women's, Co-Rec)
 Multiple Divisions (Competitive, Recreational)
 New Locations or Playing Dates

Diversify Your Offerings
 New Sports
 New Special Events




Improving Our Product

Better Officiating
 Improved Game Experience

League & Playoff Structure
 Improved Game Competitiveness


Good Sportsmanship
 Improved Game Atmosphere




Difficult to Influence

Competing on Location
 Often Unchangeable
 Day, Time, & Space Limitations
 Parking

Competing on Price
 Often Unchangeable
 Free Programs (Bonus Advantage!)

Our Competition

Other Sports Leagues
 Rarely in Competition with City Parks & Rec

Other Recreational Opportunities
 Fitness, Outdoor Adventures, Pick-Up Games

Other Leisure Activities
 Movies, Concerts, Student Organizations,
 Athletic Events, Partying, Gaming, Socializing




Assess Expectations

Get a Broad Sample
 Ask All Types of Participants:
 Team Captains, Regular Players, One-Timers

Ask the Right Questions
 Ask WHY
 Program Satisfaction
 Learning Outcome Based Questions




Assessment Efforts

Why Did You Choose to Play in Our League?

Win the Championship T-Shirt	30%
Enjoy Sport / Organized League	50%
Hang Out with Friends / Meet People	14%
Exercise	6%

Total of 1,393 Respondents to General Participant Survey for Various Sports at Florida State University 2009-2013




Assessment Efforts

Why Did You Choose to Play in Our League?

Win the Championship T-Shirt	27%
Enjoy Sport / Organized League	50%
Hang Out with Friends / Meet People	9%
Exercise	14%


Total of 1,183 Respondents to General Participant Survey for Various Sports at UT-San Antonio 2011-2014




Captain & Participant Assessment

Team Captain Experience
 Team Registration, Captains Exam
 Are Their Questions Getting Answered?
 When Do They Work the Hardest for Their Team?

Participant Experience
 General Satisfaction
 Hassles or Hurdles to Participation






How Far Will They Go?

Competitive Participants
 Most Willing to Navigate Processes

Recreational Participants
 Less Willing to Jump through Hoops



General Student Body
 Need Path of Least Resistance

Product vs. Process



Product Neutral
 Assuming All Choices are Possible

Making the Process Easy
 Reducing the Hurdles to Participation:
 Registration, Pre-Participation Requirements,
 Player Registration (Rosters), Game Check-In
 Equipment/Uniform Requirements

The Variables

Payment Required
 Time Specific Events
 Registration Required
 Pre-Event Requirements
 Equipment / Uniform Required
 Proof of ID Required
 Depends on Others
 Depends on Friends

Comparisons with Our Competition

IM Sports

Some	Payment Required
Yes	Time Specific Events
Yes	Registration Required
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required
Yes	Proof of ID Required
Yes	Depends on Others
Yes	Depends on Friends




Comparisons with Our Competition

IM Sports		Going to Class
Some	Payment Required	Yes
Yes	Time Specific Events	Yes
Yes	Registration Required	Yes
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements	No
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required	Yes
Yes	Proof of ID Required	No
Yes	Depends on Others	No
Yes	Depends on Friends	No



NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

Comparisons with Our Competition

IM Sports		Gym Workout
Some	Payment Required	Some
Yes	Time Specific Events	No
Yes	Registration Required	No
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements	No
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required	No
Yes	Proof of ID Required	Yes
Yes	Depends on Others	No
Yes	Depends on Friends	No



NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

Comparisons with Our Competition

IM Sports		Adventure Trip
Some	Payment Required	Some
Yes	Time Specific Events	Yes
Yes	Registration Required	Yes
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements	Some
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required	Some
Yes	Proof of ID Required	Some
Yes	Depends on Others	No
Yes	Depends on Friends	No



NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

Comparisons with Our Competition

IM Sports		Pick-Up Games
Some	Payment Required	No
Yes	Time Specific Events	No
Yes	Registration Required	No
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements	No
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required	Yes
Yes	Proof of ID Required	No
Yes	Depends on Others	Some
Yes	Depends on Friends	Some



NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

Comparisons with Our Competition

IM Sports		Movies
Some	Payment Required	Yes
Yes	Time Specific Events	Yes
Yes	Registration Required	Yes
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements	No
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required	No
Yes	Proof of ID Required	Some
Yes	Depends on Others	No
Yes	Depends on Friends	No



NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

Comparisons with Our Competition

IM Sports		Video Games
Some	Payment Required	No
Yes	Time Specific Events	No
Yes	Registration Required	No
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements	No
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required	Yes
Yes	Proof of ID Required	No
Yes	Depends on Others	No
Yes	Depends on Friends	Some



NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

Comparisons with Our Competition



IM Sports		Bar Scene
Some	Payment Required	Yes
Yes	Time Specific Events	No
Yes	Registration Required	No
Yes	Pre-Event Requirements	No
Some	Equipment / Uniform Required	No
Yes	Proof of ID Required	Yes
Yes	Depends on Others	No
Yes	Depends on Friends	Some




Eliminating the Hurdles

Making Participation Easy
 Bonus for Your "Regulars"
 Enticing for Prospective Participants

Happy Customers
 Enhanced Participant Experience
 Word of Mouth Advertising

The Convenience Factor

Getting in the League
 Team Registration
 Pre-Event Requirements (Captains)

Getting on the Team
 Roster Management, Free Agents

Getting in the Game
 Team Schedules
 Game Site Check-In
 Uniforms & Participant Equipment




Team Registration

Registration Locations
 In Office
 Online, Anytime
 At the Event Site

Registration Periods
 All Open at Once
 Aligned with Sport Seasons
 Time of Day




Pre-Event Requirements

Team Captains
 In-Person Meetings, Attendance Options
 Online Exams, Completion Options

Roster Management
 With Registration and/or Throughout Season
 In Office, Online, or At Game Site
 Additions and Deletions, Roster Locks




Roster Management

By the Numbers
 63% Require Roster at Registration
 (48% Large, 58% Midsize, 82% Small Schools)
 75% Permit Additions at Game Site
 39% Permit Deletions at Game Site
 70% Permit Changes Until Start of Playoffs

** Statistics from a Survey of 82 Intramural Sports Professionals at 2009 NIRSA National Conference*




Game Site Check-In

Team Schedules
Online or Posted for All, Distributed to Few

ID Requirements
School-Issued or Government-Issued Photo ID



Procedures & Variations
Staff Compares Photo ID to Roster
Any Photo ID Accepted if Already on Roster
Signing of Participant Waiver at Game Site




Game Site Check-In

By the Numbers
77% Require School ID to Check In
(82% Large, 78% Midsize, 72% Small Schools)
11% Accept Any Photo ID to Check In
13% Electronically Verify ID at Check In
51% Match IDs to Printed Roster at Check In

** Statistics from a Survey of 82 Intramural Sports Professionals at 2009 NIRSA National Conference*

Uniforms & Player Equipment

Player Uniforms
Similar Color, Numbered?
Program Supplied, Checkout
Participant Supplied

Other Equipment
Personal Safety Equipment
Necessary Sports Equipment (Flags, Gloves)
Checkout or Sell?




Uniforms & Player Equipment

By the Numbers
30% Require Teams to Provide Own Similar Colored Jerseys
18% Require Teams to Provide Own Numbered Jerseys
80% Provide or Check Out Uniforms / Jerseys
27% Require Personal Safety Equipment in Select Sports
35% Provide or Check Out Safety Equipment

** Statistics from a Survey of 82 Intramural Sports Professionals at 2009 NIRSA National Conference*




Effects on Program Perception

Participant Eligibility
Restrictions on Pro, Varsity, Club Athletes

League Structure
A Place for Multiple Talent & Interest Levels

Team & Participant Sportsmanship
Creating a Respectful Atmosphere for Competition




Participant Eligibility


Special Participant Groups
Professional Athletes
Current Varsity Athletes
Varsity Practice Squad Members
Former Varsity Athletes
Varsity Coaches
Sport Club Players




Participant Eligibility

Possible Restrictions
 Prohibit from Participating
 Limit Number on a Team
 Require Participation in Specific League

Issue Detection
 Active Administrative Monitoring
 Team Appeals / Eligibility Protests




Participant Eligibility

By the Numbers
 61% Prohibit Current / Former Pro Athletes
 49% Prohibit Current Varsity Athletes in Similar Sports
 49% Restrict Former Varsity Athletes in Similar Sports to a Limited Number per Team
 35% Have No Policy for Varsity Practice Squad Members
 57% Have No Policy for Varsity Coaches / Administrators
 60% Restrict Sport Club Players to a Limited Number per Team

* Statistics from a Survey of 82 Intramural Sports Professionals at 2009 NIRSA National Conference




League & Playoff Structure

League & Division Availability
 Skill-Level, Interest-Level Divisions

Regular Season Scheduling
 Specific or Variable Playing Day & Time
 Instant Scheduling at Registration

Playoff Qualification & Scheduling
 All Teams or Limited Number Teams
 Seeding or Selection




Sportsmanship

The Benefits
 Sportsmanlike Environment Enhances Retention – Teams & Staff

Education & Enforcement
 Remind Captains, Post Signage
 Players, Coaches, Spectators
 Pregame, In-Game, Postgame
 Throughout Facility




Sportsmanship

By the Numbers
 87% Utilize a Rating System for Sportsmanship
 78% Include Mandatory Deductions for Unsportsmanlike Penalties
 80% Include Mandatory Deductions for Ejections
 55% Include Positive Behaviors That Can Enhance Team's Rating

* Statistics from a Survey of 46 Intramural Sports Professionals at 2008 NIRSA Intramural Symposium




Creating a Welcoming Environment

The Convenience Factor
 Eliminate Hurdles to Participation
 Making It Easy to Play Yields More "Fringe" Participants

Finding The Right Balance
 Some Hurdles Required for Various Reasons
 Balancing Program's Desire for Participants with Risk Management, Administrative & Legal Issues




Additional Discussion

Final Thoughts

Additional Questions or Examples

Review the Research

Survey Results Available by June
Emailed to Participants (Opt-In)
or Look for on NIRSA Listserv



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Your Intramural Sports Program

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Session Materials

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