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# Business Plan: Sports Facility in Rochester, Minnesota

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Business Plan

MA in Sport Management

Sports Facility in Rochester, Minnesota

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Capstone I 565, Cohort 605

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### **Abstract**

This capstone project involves the construction of a new sports facility, The Sports Hut, located in Rochester, Minnesota. The mission of The Sport Hut organization is to get kids active at a young age, which allows the opportunity for athletes to thrive in their sport and passions, while providing a place to learn and grow in a healthy environment. Although obesity can be a very complex issue, Miller, Rosenbloom and Silverstein (2004) have discovered that obesity affects more than 30% of children and can be found commonly due to the environment and lifestyle in which they grow up in. It is time to start taking charge of this growing health concern. With a chance to gain a mentor, become a role model for younger athletes, or start taking charge of your own health and body, The Sports Hut will offer the necessary resources. While focusing on youth, it will still have the opportunities for all ages to gain confidence and skills. The facility will be large enough to host all types of events such as baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse and much more. It will offer a workout room with top of the line equipment and staff that is fully educated on fitness and nutrition. With a chance to allow people to change their lifestyle and let athletes reach their highest fitness level, The Sports Hut will be there each step of the way.

### **Chapter One: Introduction**

"Physical exercise is good for the mind, body and spirit. Furthermore, team sports are good for leaning accountability, dedication and leadership; among other traits. Putting it all together by playing a sport is a winning combination," was quoted by Ginsburg (2007). This is a great passage for what the purpose and mission is of The Sports Hut. The Sports Hut will be a for-profit Minnesota corporation located in Rochester, Minnesota. The facility will be a leased building, approximately a 125,000 square foot indoor location for guests to learn and practice their sports skills, emphasizing in softball and baseball. The equipment will be batting cages, pitching areas, team skills area, field turf, soccer goals, a meeting room, workout facility, locker rooms, and equipment rental. The fully insulated, heated facility will offer a comfortable winter training atmosphere. Also, with great summer rates it can also be a summer/rain-out location for practice and games. The adaptable turf surface makes it possible to offer field conditions tailored to specific sports such as softball, lacrosse, football and ultimate Frisbee. The Sports Hut also offers specialized group coaching clinics and one-on-one skills training.

The purpose of the Rochester location is that there are many organizations offering programs for youth of all levels, from beginners all the way up to amateur athletes. Sports team from the area can be found at the four high schools, the community college, and through many of Rochester's recreational sports leagues. The proposed sport facility is designed to provide a safe, clean, top-of-the-line facility for those athletes that want to improve their skills and live a healthy lifestyle. It is important that kids today are learning a healthy way of life early on and sports can help pave that way (Engle, 2005). The benefit that children receive from participating in sports is huge. Engle (2005) argued that sports contribute to psychological well-being by reducing

anxiety and depression and enhancing self-esteem. Kids involved with sports have found that a social environment can promote a spirit of social

To expand on this young target market, this facility will not be just for kids. The field turf is available to athletes of all ages. Also, in addition to the field turf area, there is a weight room and nutritionists available to help athletes to learn the proper techniques in the weight room and answer any questions on how to fuel their bodies. The work out facility will be available to those that wish to choose to become a Sports Hut member. There will be different levels of memberships; the higher the membership, the more access to the facility will be granted.

The Sports Hut mission is to provide a quality indoor sports training environment for both the serious and recreation-minded athlete. The overall goal for The Sports Hut staff will be to promote sports/health fundamentals for those of all ages. The Sports Hut staff will concentrate on providing high quality, elite, competitive training opportunities to youth as a revenue generation strategy.

This paper will focus on the location, the reasoning and benefits of the facility, and the marketing and sales strategy that will keep the business going. The Sports Hut will begin operation in the spring 2014. Within the first year of operation, expect a 25% usage. For the second year, the goal is to project growth to 55%. Operation during the third year is expected to match the community growth rate of 75%.

The keys to success for The Sports Hut would be to have a great location that is easily accessible. In addition to having an accessible site, a staff that provides high quality customer service will be needed. It is necessary that a variety of amenities keep customers busy and coming back. And finally, contracts with skilled instructors will be a large factor in the key to success.

## **Chapter Two: Market Analysis**

### **Why Rochester?**

A vast question when it comes to a market analysis is why the location? So, why Rochester, Minnesota for a new sports facility? There are many explanations for the proposed location, including the potential for growth. Currently, Rochester is Minnesota's third-largest city and the largest city located outside of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan area. According to the City of Rochester (2013), the Rochester Metropolitan area has a population of 209,607. Those that reside in Rochester and the surrounding area are no strangers to the warm summers and cold winters. The city features very four distinct seasons. On average, 30 inches of rainfall and 48 inches of snowfall come per year (City of Rochester, 2013). Spring and fall are transitional seasons but it can never be predicted when the weather may change. Because of the spontaneous weather transformations, trying to be active outside can sometimes be challenging. When the outdoors are not cooperative, it leaves athletes stranded to small gyms or cancelled practices for the day. Minnesota is an environment with unpredictable weather but this does not mean that our athletes and sports teams have to suffer by not having access to indoor sports facilities.

Rochester is no stranger to crowds and accommodating visitors. The City of Rochester (2013) noted that The Mayo Clinic location is the core of the economy as it employs over 30,000 people and draws in over two million visitors. Because of all the travelers, Rochester is equipped with hotels and restaurants. That being said, if people were to choose to come to The Sports Hut from a further distance, they have many options and availability for a comfortable, affordable stay.

Rochester is also giving people more of a reason to come to the city to not only visit, but rather to stay. The University of Minnesota Rochester (2013) campus has an anticipated ultimate

enrollment of 5,000. With that, jobs to support the educational and infrastructural components to support the campus will increase accordingly. With the city growing and the potential of bringing more families to stay, The Sports Hut will be a great choice to provide sport and recreation activities and keeping them active. Currently, the demographics of Rochester seem to be fitting for a facility like The Sports Hut. According to the 2005-2007 American Community survey (City of Rochester, 2013), the median household income was \$57, 957 and the median family income was \$74, 467. These figures are important because our facility will be in a location where families have the resources and income to spend on clinics, trainings, and lessons.

The Sports Hut mission will focus on the young- high school athlete, as this age group can tend to thrive on the offered clinics, trainings and private lessons. Researched by the City of Rochester (2013), Rochester Public Schools enroll 16,300 students in 23 public primary and secondary schools. The city is divided into three public high school districts: John Marshall, Mayo and Century. Private schools include Lourdes and Schaeffer Academy. For higher education, Rochester offers many options including Rochester Community and Technical College, which does offer athletic programs.

Serious athletes come in all different sizes and ages. Even though a big focus of The Sports Hut will be a younger generation, we will also have a focus on the more veteran sports teams in the area. An important organization to look into collaborating with would be the Rochester Giants, which is the city's semi-professional football team. Giants have been around for 10 years and are involved with the Northern Power Football League ("Rochester Giants," 2009). The Sports Hut would give this team not only a great area to run practices but to also manage camps for younger football players. This would be a great way to represent their city in a positive manner.



The Sports Hut facility will have equipment in which softball and baseball programs in the area can highly benefit from. Two local organizations, the Rochester Honkers and Rochester Royals, could both highly benefit from The Sports Hut. The Rochester Honkers are in the Northwoods League, which is made up collegiate baseball players. The Northwoods League offers a high level of competition for the summer months when collegiate athletes can fine tune their athletic skills. Although it is summer time and the off-season, the college athlete needs a place to not only get good swings and cuts in, but possibly a place to work out as well. The Sports Hut could offer both of those. It could be a great opportunity for younger kids to see what hard work, dedication, and focus can do for them. The same could be said for the Rochester Royals. The Royals are Rochester's amateur baseball team that consists of both former and current college and professional athletes. The team is made up of a 25-man roster and has been around since 1924 (Rochester Royals, 2013). These players again are limited to only a summer schedule and if any of them need a place to fine tune their skills, The Sports Hut will be the place.

A facility will not be successful if clients cannot easily get to the location. Thankfully, Rochester is easily accessible with three U.S. highways (U.S. 14, U.S. 52 and U.S. 63) as well as Interstate 90 and State Highway 30 (City of Rochester, 2013). Within Rochester, a combination of skyways and walkways link most of downtown. There is a Public Transit run by Rochester Public Transit and has a shuttle service connecting the Minneapolis- St. Paul International Airport. Yellow Cab, Med City Taxi and Rochester Taxi are the city's taxi companies. This makes Rochester not only easy to get to, but once in the city, going about one's business can be stress-free.

The Sports Hut will stand out because there will be little to no competition within in the service area. The next closest facility with this type of service is The Irish Sports Dome, located in Rosemount, Minnesota. The Irish Sports Dome offers batting cages and field turf, but does not have the work out facility, locker rooms, or nutritionists available as The Sports Hut has proposed. There is also Soccer World located in south Rochester however, it only fulfills soccer needs. The Sports Hut will attract a wide range of target markets because of the diversity of amenities being offered.

Rochester is the perfect location for this facility due to a number of reasons. Rochester provides the large population of people and families that can afford and benefit from a facility of this type. Unpredictable weather with lots of rain, snow, and cold temperatures leave athletes looking for a warm environment to continue training. The city has large school districts and is currently a thriving economy with jobs and higher education systems filling the city. Also, not only can the local sports teams benefit from the facility but they can help groom younger generations. On top of all that, The Sports Hut will be easily accessible. With that being said, Rochester should get ahead of the game and allow athletes to thrive by providing a facility such as The Sports Hut for its constituents.

### **Why a Sports Facility?**

Over the past 30 years, childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and tripled in adolescents, making more than one third of children and adolescents overweight and obese (Lobstein, Baur & Uauy, 2004). Research by Lobstein, Baur and Uauy (2004) discovered that obese youth are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure and are more likely to have pre-diabetes. Some long-term health effects with children and adolescents who are obese are heart disease, type 2 diabetes,

stroke, and several types of cancer. Because of these alarming numbers and statistics, it should surprise no one that as a community, we need to do something about it. Having a facility that allows kids room to grow, run, play and get moving is definitely a benefit.

As Baranowski, Bouchard, Oded and Bricker (2006) have discovered, active children are more likely to mature into physically active adults. Some of the benefits of sport participation for children include improved social and personal skills (including cooperation and leadership), better sleeping habits, reduced risk of obesity, increased cardiovascular fitness. It can also lead to healthy growth of bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons and improved coordination and balance.

Aside from playing sports for physical activity, children can also benefit from sport participation by allowing them to make friends, have fun, learn to be part of a team and play fairly, and help to improve self-esteem (Baranowski, Bouchard, Oded & Bricker, 2006). At The Sports Hut, sports and a fit lifestyle will be taken seriously and will be a competitive atmosphere but safety and a positive attitude will be the main priority. When hosting clinics, trainings, and camps, The Sports Hut's focus will be to make sure children develop good sportsmanship. The Sports Hut will prepare for the parents that might take sports too far or push their kids a little too much, and in an effort to discourage this behavior, signs will be placed around the facility with information for raising an athlete. The signs will include tips and reminders such as the importance of giving kids emotional support and positive feedback, attend some games and talk about them afterwards, have realistic expectations, learn about the sport and support your child's involvement, and ways to help your child with losing, disappointments, and that parents are models for respectful spectator behavior.

**Private Lessons, Are They Worth It?**

Many have heard the phrase "practice makes perfect" and although this phrase is true, the staff at The Sports Hut strongly believe that "perfect practice makes perfect." That being said, The Sports Hut staff members do not want athletes and children learning and developing fundamentals that can lead to injury. Most parents teach their child to the best of his or her abilities, but sometimes lack of knowledge and experiences can lead to bad habits. Luckily, The Sport Huts is here to help with that.

The Sports Hut has the potential to be a prime provider for sports lessons. Parents are always looking to give their children a head start and an advantage over other children in organized sports activities. Sometimes, group coaching is simply not enough to teach children the proper skills and techniques that are required to be an above average athlete (Brennan, 2008). Skills trainers and private coaches are always sought out by eager parents that are looking to provide their child with one-on-one training. Elite leagues for sports are increasing in popularity and in order to participate in these activities, skills training is an absolute requirement for participants.

Children need positive mentors and sometimes a dedicated, skilled coach can be just the person for that. In fact, Brennan (2008) has discovered that children sometimes respond better to an objective coach than to their own parent. When kids have a positive experience with coaches early on, they can continue to seek out and learn from mentors who can help with them in school, jobs or their other interests. Positive mentors and an optimistic outcome can be gained by lessons and clinics (Brennan, 2008), which The Sports Hut will specialize in. It takes countless hours of determination and practice to become a top class athlete in any sport, so it will The Sports Hut's goal to help accelerate a player's learning through individual and small group trainings. The

purpose of the specialized trainings will be to give individual instruction in specific areas, which can be more difficult to teach in a large group setting. Regardless of the sport, the trainers at The Sports Hut will complete a player evaluation to identify the current abilities of the player in a variety of disciplines. Once that is completed, the evaluation can allow our coaching staff to tailor each training session to meet the needs of the individual player. The evaluation will serve as a base model to evaluate and review the player's progress made throughout the program.

Private coaching for young athletes can make a drastic difference in both their development as athletes as well as people (Brennan, 2008). Private lessons can help discover one's potential and help them set and achieve goals. The mentorship can be there to ensure the athlete is getting the help and personal attention they need to reach the next level. Achieving goals and seeing improvement can help boost self-esteem while increasing health and overall fitness (Brennan, 2008). Finally, lessons can help avoid the dreaded training plateau that athletes can sometimes hit.

Additionally, kids are not the only one that can benefit from private coaching. For adults, private coaching can provide that mental break that many of us need from work and the stress that every day life may bring us (Brennan, 2008). With the monotony of most gym work outs, private coaching can be just what a person needs to mix up their work out routine. Enhanced skill could lead to years of healthy living and enjoyed experiences in things such as adult sports leagues or other contests such as marathons, bikes races, triathlons, and other competitions.

At The Sports Hut, youth will be a main focus but adults are not forgotten either. There will be opportunities for both children and adults to learn and gain a healthy lifestyle and not land themselves in an obesity statistic. Our mission is to have clients build relationships with staff and gain mentors, knowledge, tips and training advice. There are also coaches available to

help develop the abilities to strive within your sport or in just achieving overall healthiness.

Whatever your reasons for coming to our facility may be, joining will be already the step in the right direction.

### **Marketing Strategy**

A big reason why The Sports Hut selected Rochester, Minnesota is because it offers such a critical competitive edge. There are very few competitors like it within a close mile radius. The next closest thing in similarity to it is The Irish Dome that is located in Roseville, Minnesota, over 60 miles away. Although there are many workout facilities in the area, none are able to promote to as many markets and fulfill the needs of athletes that need a playing field. The Sports Hut will use its competitive edge, its extreme love of sports and teaching, along with its marketing strategies to be successful.

Marketing for The Sports Hut will differ through the year, depending on the demand for the facility. When the cold winter months hit Minnesota, the weather will bring more people indoors so not as much marketing or advertising will need to be done during that period. However, during late spring and early summer, it will be a priority to make sure we remain in front of our customers.

The start-up marketing for The Sports Hut will focus a lot on social media and the Internet. According to McKinsey Global Institute (2012), there are now reported to be 1.5 billion social media users globally, with at least 70 percent of companies using some form of social media. Because of this popular relationship building technique businesses use, The Sports Hut will have an active account on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep customers and followers updated on news, specials, and to show what customers are currently doing at The Sports Hut. There will also be a website for information such as directions, hours, FAQs, and

ranges of pricing. To help spread the word of our amenities, there will be e-mail notifications and flyers distributed to 100+ high school and college coaches in the target area. As McKinsey Global Institute has discovered, periodical e-mail updates can be a powerful and inexpensive marketing tool. It helps build a relationship with customers and can help create a customer database. There will be advertisements within the participating local businesses as well as the local papers. Finally, there is always the anticipation of customers talking of our business to others and helping spread the name by word-of-mouth.

Marketing throughout the year will vary because of the weather conditions that Minnesota seasons bring. For spring and summer marketing, The Sports Hut will make donations to area youth leagues to help provide equipment and cover fee costs and help sponsor leagues around the area. For summer break and school holidays, there will be specials because the facility will be able to be used more during the day. There will be many promotions on hosting summer programs, clinics, and lessons to help train athletes during the off-seasons. To help keep summers busy, there will be discounted summer passes. It is also important to help support the community so attending league coaches' meetings will be vital to assist in keeping up with regulations and what leagues are looking for.

During the fall and winter months when the facility has potential to be busier, marketing will rely heavily on social media. It is one of the quickest ways to share news, updates, and special deals to followers. Photographs of what The Sports Hut is hosting and what is going on can help show customers the potential of the facility. Marketing throughout local businesses and papers will continue to help share information. Also, to thank those customers that used the facility during the summer months, those members will be available for specials during the winter months.

Although The Sports Hut will have a major edge due to little competition in the local area, it does not mean it will employ an aggressive marketing strategy. It will be imperative that our marketing never slows down. E-mail notifications to leagues and coaches are a great way to gain creditability. The Sports Hut will thrive on the quality of our service, availability, and prices to make the facility one of a kind.



### **Chapter Three: Business Plan**

The Sports Hut has a very large potential market and due to the small number of recreation facilities in Rochester, we feel as though we could become the number one sports and fitness facility very quickly. However, in order for this to be accomplished, the staff must be continuously and actively promoting The Sports Hut through strategic marketing, sales strategies recommended by Helbig (2011), and reasonable pricing. It is also vital that our facility hosts and supports various community events to help create a Sports Hut brand and to get involved with the people that help us grow.

#### **Sales Strategy**

The Sports Hut will direct a lot of sales efforts and funds to the primary customer base. As Helbig (2011) has found that defining the target market is important because we have to know where to focus and start to build momentum. Parents, coaches, players, and athletes will be informed of the facility and services through e-mail, phone calls, and direct contact. The sales efforts during the start-up phase will be beneficial for the customers and then continuous sales efforts will vary depending on the time of year.

For the start-up sales strategy, a variety of different tactics will be used. One tactic will include that the first two hundred customers receive a "The Sports Hut" t-shirt or water bottle. Through this strategy, customers can use or wear these products and help promote the name. There will also be door prizes such as tickets to nearby sporting events, summer passes, and gift cards for local shops for the weekend customers. Finally, all new customers will receive a keychain. The keychain will serve as access to the facility and a daily reminder to our customers of our company brand.

After a customer base is built, the sales strategy will shift a little bit and team up with the marketing strategy. There will be discounted membership packages for families, teams, and clubs. There will be yearly league donations to help build the community outside our facility and to again, help promote our name. It is The Sports Hut duty to deliver and build on what we say we are going to do for the prospect (Helbig, 2011) and sponsoring a healthy lifestyle outside the facility will help with the sales process. In order to keep the facility busy, there will be spring break and school holiday discounts to help keep kids activate on days off. There will be tournaments specials (such as a lower fee rate) to help draw more teams to host in The Sports Hut facility. One of the most unique specials of each year will be free indoor clinics the first two weekends in April when the weather conditions are usually poor and athletes are itching to start spring sports.

When it comes to pricing, The Sports Hut goal will be to provide reasonable pricing for all teams to be able to afford using the facility. For a team to use the facility for a season and practices it will be \$1,500 and a practice schedule will be determined while working with the team. Teams will be able to purchase clinic space and time. A half day clinic, which can include up to 45 people, will cost \$800. Full day clinics will be negotiated. Also, the fields will be available for rent on an hourly basis to members. Rental of a field will cost \$65 per hour during the day and \$85 per hour during the evenings and weekends. Prices and specials may vary depending on the time of the year, weather and how busy the facility is.

Sales in this industry are based on the services and amenities provided by the facility and the goal to find something to fit for each athlete, player, or team. All of the users of our facility must feel like they are getting the best value that is possible out of their money. If they find a facility with equal services but with a better value, The Sports Hut will match it or beat that

value. Through price matching, The Sports Hut will be more successful in member retention. When a customer desires a membership at The Sports Hut, a staff member will be able to sit down with them and explain to them all the options, programs, and amenities available. It is important that a relationship and trust with the member is established.

### **Sales Forecast**

The Sports Hut expects sales to peak in the colder months, so typically October through March, with the possibility of the rest of the year to be a little slower. After a year or two of service, sales growth is anticipated to grow 10% to 20% due to customer base growth. There will be some sales allowed on credit such as sales for businesses or large groups with whom we want to establish a long-term relationship with. The Sports Hut is expecting sales to see an increase because according to Smith (2013), the Indoor Sports Facilities Management industry has rebounded since 2007 and is expected to see steady growth, compared to other industries in the leisure sector. It is a positive that The Sports Hut will focus on the adult generation because Smith (2013) expects the retiring baby-boomer generation to create strong opportunities for indoor sports facilities.

### **Web Plan Summary**

The website for The Sports Hut will be initially developed with few technical resources. Google will be the simple hosting provider and will provide the technical back end information that is needed. The website, logo, and graphics will be continually developed during the first operating year. The home page with all the necessary and critical information such as address, hours, scheduling, and what the facility offers will be up before the start date. Providing information and upcoming events will be the primary focus for the customer base. Maintenance

of the website will be performed and up kept by an administrator employed by The Sports Hut management team.

### **Management Summary**

To keep all things in line, staff members will be hired on experience and qualifications. There will be one full-time manager to oversee the daily operations at The Sports Hut. This person's responsibilities will include managing the staff, ordering inventory, dealing with suppliers, developing and fine tuning the marketing strategies and performing other daily managerial duties.

### **Personnel Plan**

In order to keep the flow of work going at The Sports Hut, a team of well trained and well educated members will make up the personnel. According to Smith (2013), about 59.2% of indoor sports facilities employ less than five people. Because of these numbers, the staff will include one manager, an assistant manager, and two-three other staff members depending on the season and how busy things are. For keeping the building in an orderly fashion, a janitorial service will be contracted to clean the facility. Clinic coaches will be hired, short term, as needed and paid out of clinic receipts. Referees and officials for games will be paid for by the teams. The Sports Hut can assist in finding officials for games and events.

### **Financial Plan**

It is assumed that the start-up capital will be around \$350,000 with a long-term (20 year) bank loan of \$1,500,000. The remainder of the necessary financing will come through our investors. The financial plan depends a lot on important assumptions such as interest rates, tax rates, profit and loss, and projected cash flow. It is also assumed the economy continues to grow strong and the rate of growth for sport facilities will continue.

### **Chapter Four: Conclusion**

In summary, The Sports Hut will truly be a unique asset with significant potential to enhance Rochester's brand nationally. The Sports Hut mission will be determination to help change the dynamics of the children and adolescences as it is vital that we get kids active and moving early in their life. Like Baranowski, Bouchard, Oded and Bricker (2006) have stated, active children are more likely to mature into physically active adults. Miller, Rosenbloom and Silverstein (2004) researched how obesity affects more than a billion people worldwide and that obesity in young adults decrease life expectancy by 5-20 years. The past few decades have brought many lifestyle and environment changes, which had resulted in a decrease in physical activity and an increase in caloric intake. With some households having single parents or both parents working, children are spending less time outside and more time on the computer or watching television than exercising (Miller, Rosenbloom & Silverstein, 2004). Fast food is marketed to children using social media, music, and toys (Miller, Rosenbloom & Silverstein, 2004) but The Sports Hut mission is to change the marketing and focus on what can be beneficial for the human body. Rochester's growing economy will provide the target market needed for us to thrive and succeed on as well as changing the lifestyles of many.

The key to moving forward with the proposed sports facility will be to establish a clear vision and following the detailed marketing analysis and business plan. By establishing strong programs, partnerships, and a commitment to high quality resources (staffing, marketing and communication), The Sports Hut management team believes the financial goals will be met or even exceeded. It is this blend of existing opportunities, unique facility amenities, committed leadership and staff, and a growing market that all points to a future filled with possibilities for

The Sports Hut. It is exciting to be a part of this opportunity to develop with business that has unlimited growth potential.

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