

Lesson 10.2 – What are Game Operations?



Game Operations

The game operations process begins in the creative minds of sports marketing professionals before any games are played

Game Operations:

Refers to the planning, organization and execution of game production, presentation, entertainment and promotion

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Game Operations

What is the role of game entertainment in sports business?

The show actually starts hours before the game when the events that will take place are scripted out and shared with anyone who will be a part of the process, whether it is a mascot skit, a promotion during a break in the action or pre-game announcements read by the public address announcer

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Game Operations

Elements of game entertainment could include:

- National Anthem & Color Guard
- Pre-Game Groups & Activities



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Game Operations

Elements of game entertainment could include:

- Half Time Entertainment
- Execution of Promotions



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Elements of game entertainment could include:

- Dance & Stunt Team Integration
- Mascot Coordination



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Elements of game entertainment could include:

- Managing any additional entertainment such as in-arena blimps



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Game Operations

The Game Day Staff

To execute and implement each element of the game operations plan, an organization typically has a game day staff in place.

The Boston Red Sox staff features a General Manager of in-game entertainment who is responsible for overseeing a crew that includes a DJ to run the music, seven people to edit the replays and type out the graphics that appear on the video scoreboard, two additional people who control an additional video board and four people running video cameras around the park.

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The Game Day Staff

Software programs like “Sound Director” and Total Sports Entertainment’s “Game Time Pro” make it easier for teams to manage game operations and entertainment.



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Game Operations

What is the role of game entertainment in sports business?

- 1) To enhance the experience for the fans while keeping them involved in the event throughout the course of the entire game
- 2) To create additional opportunities to generate revenue by adding valuable inventory to include as part of sponsorship packages. It also helps generate revenue by helping to sell more tickets

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The Importance of Game Operations

A successful game operations plan can help the organization achieve its goals

- Driving ticket sales
- Increasing sponsorship sales opportunities
 - Generating publicity
 - Assisting in customer service
- Enhancing the overall event experience

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Game Operations

- Game attractiveness refers to the customer's perception of the event as a whole
- Game attractiveness is a situational factor that varies from game to game and week to week

Game Attractiveness:

Refers to the customer's perception of the event as a whole

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Game Operations

Variables that contribute to game attractiveness could include:

- Highly visible star athletes (Bryce Harper, Aaron Rodgers, Skylar Diggins etc.)
- Team record / opponent record
- Opening day
- Give-aways

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Game Operations

Variables that contribute to game attractiveness could include:

- Presence of mascots, dance teams and cheerleaders
- Prominent half time entertainment (Blues Brothers & the Extreme Dunk Team)
- Post-game concerts

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Game Attractiveness



The Extreme Dunk Team (above) and Oklahoma City Thunder mascot "Rumble" (right)



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Game Attractiveness

According to a SportsBusiness Journal survey, all but 20 of the 122 teams in the NFL, NBA, NHL and MLB have at least one mascot character, collectively they have a total of 166 characters (racing sausages, pierogies and big-headed retired players) while the 106 affiliated Minor League Baseball clubs that responded reported 192 mascot characters.



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Game Attractiveness



*The Luv-A-Bulls
Chicago Bulls Dance
Team*



*A Goodyear Blimp at the
University of Oklahoma*

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Game Attractiveness



*The **Blues Brothers Act** entertains throughout the game or event by performing Blues Brothers songs and skits live (No lip-synching), while adding high-energy dance steps.*

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Game Attractiveness



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Variables that contribute to game attractiveness could include:

- Quality of concessions
- Traditions (seventh inning stretch etc.)
- Detroit Red Wings “octopus toss”
- Hockey “hat tricks” tossing of hats onto ice
- Kissing the bricks at the Brickyard 400
- “Lambeau Leap” at Packer games
- Chants at soccer matches

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Concessions

Many teams have introduced outlandish concessions items as a way to increase game attractiveness (and generate publicity), including the Washington Nationals (8 pound "Strasburger"), the Charlotte Motor Speedway (deep-fried cupcakes, funnel cakes topped with chocolate sauce and chopped bacon), the Texas Rangers ("The Champion," a \$26 hot dog weighing in at 2 pounds) and several minor league teams like the Camden RiverSharks offering "Krispy Kreme" burgers.



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Concessions

In preparation for their final season at Turner Field, the Atlanta Braves catering department unveiled a number of new menu items. The highlight was their "Burgerizza," a 20-oz. all-beef patty, covered with five slices of cheese, crispy bacon, and served between two 8-inch pepperoni pizzas.



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Concessions

For the 2015 MLB campaign, the Arizona Diamondbacks introduced the “[Churro Dog](#),” a “sweet” new take on ballpark desserts consisting of a warm cinnamon churro inside a Long John chocolate-glazed donut, topped with frozen yogurt, caramel and chocolate sauces.



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Concessions

Nachos on a stick found their place among the new menu items offered at Milwaukee Brewers home games for the 2015 season (officially called "[Inside the Park Nachos](#)", consisting of deep fried taco meat with a Doritos crust on a stick, topped with cheese sauce and sour cream and served with a side of salsa).



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Concessions

Among the new concessions items introduced in 2017 were apple pie nachos, a funnel cake chicken sandwich, a 16" brisket mac and cheese grilled cheese, and a bacon wrapped pretzel baguette

Click [here](#) to see the list of 24 crazy concession ideas



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Concessions

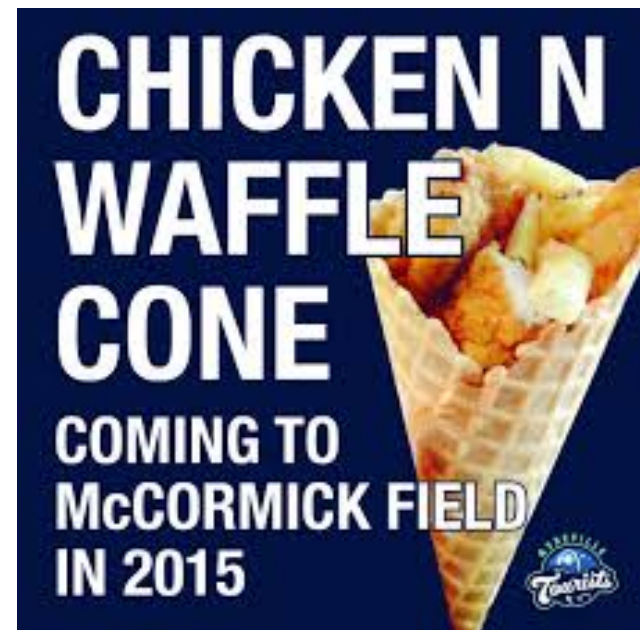
Offering quirky concessions offerings help sports teams at all levels generate publicity for the franchise.



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Concessions

McCormick Field in North Carolina (home of the [Asheville Tourists](#)) offered a concessions item featuring fried chicken and french fries in a waffle cone, smothered with a choice of maple syrup or nacho cheese.



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Concessions

As part of their "Halfway to Halloween" promotion, the Fresno Grizzlies served up the "Frankenslice", a pizza with full hot dogs baked into the crust.



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Concessions

Minor League Baseball held a “#FoodFight” competition online and on Twitter, allowing fans to vote for their favorite ballpark concessions items



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Concessions

This year's winner was Round Rock Express' "Lava Rock Fire and Ice", a beef tenderloin and shrimp dish cooked on actual lava rock, which edged out the New Hampshire Fisher Cats' "Squealer" sandwich

Click [here](#) to see a complete list of the contest entries



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Concessions

Broadway shows have caught on to the concession crave – Sweet Hospitality Group works with theatres to offer patrons unique food and drink depending on the show

Click [here](#) to read how Sweet Hospitality Group has re-invented theatre's concessions sales strategy from inc.com



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Traditions



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Traditions

In 2014, the team unveiled a statue at Lambeau Field, commemorating the tradition.



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Traditions



Click [here](#) for a brief video highlighting some of the chants performed at Portland Timbers' games by their loyal group of supporters, the Timbers Army.

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Traditions



PGA Tour stars Jordan Speith and Zach Johnson threw out the first pitches for the Texas Rangers and Chicago Cubs, respectively, in 2015 and made a \$5,000 wager on who would throw the best pitch (with the money going to charity). ESPN's SportsCenter was responsible for crowning the champion (Speith).

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LESSON 10.2 REVIEW (ANSWERS)

Game Operations & Entertainment

1) Define the term game operations

Refers to the planning, organization and execution of game production, presentation, entertainment and promotion

2) Identify five elements of game entertainment

Game entertainment could include a number of activities, including the National Anthem, pre-game groups, half-time entertainment, game promotions, dance and stunt teams, mascots, blimps etc.

LESSON 10.2 REVIEW (ANSWERS)

3) Explain what is meant by “game attractiveness” and how it influences game attendance

Game attractiveness refers to the planning, organization and execution of game production, presentation, entertainment and promotion. It can influence game attendance primarily because it adds entertainment value to the event itself.

LESSON 10.2 REVIEW (ANSWERS)

4) Explain why game operations are important to a sports organization

Successful game operations can help the organization achieve its goals by helping to drive ticket sales, increasing sponsorship sales opportunities, generating publicity, assisting customer service efforts while enhancing the overall event experience, regardless of the game's outcome. Game operations also provide game attractiveness.