

IT'S COMING...

MASSANUTTEN
Mini-Putt Golf Course

Marketing Campaign - Grand Opening
Spring 2002



Marketing Campaign
Grand Opening - Spring 2003
MKTG 380, S.1

Created by;
Christina Olson
Tim Price
Rachael Pierson

I. Environmental Analysis

A. The Marketing Environment

1. *Competitive Forces*

Our major competitors as of today, include The Bull Pen (another local mini golf and family fun center), along with other family entertainment venues such as movie theatres, bowling, Skatetown, and outdoor recreation. Their strengths include customer time convenience, along with the indoor element of some, allowing them to attract customers year-round. Their weaknesses are evident in that they cannot match the gorgeous outdoor surroundings and the attraction of a brand new source of entertainment.

Major future competitors include only superior family entertainment options, such as Regal Cinemas, and other outdoor activities, closer to the Harrisonburg area.

If the marketing mix is changed, we would expect a response, but a small one at that. The Bull Pen may expand on its current course, or remodel it entirely. Other family entertainment venues will most likely remain the same, without a direct threat to their local market.

2. *Economic Forces*

The general economic condition of the region is questionable at this time. As the national economy is recovering from a recession, consumers seem hesitant to spend a good portion of their income on family entertainment. Most recently, an Avian Influenza epidemic has consumed local poultry farms, which will destroy the main source of income for many families in the area. Therefore, we feel that the economy is not in a favorable position to spend their discretionary income freely, but Massanutten Mini Golf remains a low price venue, that should remain a favorable option.

The structure of the family entertainment industry in the Harrisonburg is not so big as to cause a problem to business. We feel there is still a sufficient need for more entertainment options, especially those that combine outdoor recreation with a favorite family game.

The buying power of consumers in our target market is reasonably strong. Considering the large family influence of the Harrisonburg population, with a per capita income of approximately \$23,262, mini golf is an affordable way to spend time with the family on a nice summer night.

During the summer months, evenings, and weekends, our product will be consumed more, now that the prime season is in. Families want to go out together, and now that the kids are out of school this is much more reasonable. Massanutten Resort visitors are in the area now as well, flooding Massanutten Mini Golf with plenty of kids and families looking for more entertainment options.

Specifically considering that Massanutten Mini Golf is privately owned and operated, ***Political, Legal & Regulatory, and Technological Forces are not significant.***

3. *Sociocultural Forces*

Our society's demographics and values are changing, in part due to the events of September 11th. Spending time with loved ones has become more important than ever before. Putt-Putt Golfing is an activity frequently done with the family. This new course offers a place for parents and children, as well as teenagers and the elderly to spend time together.

The general attitude that society has of our service is fun family entertainment. Putt-Putt golfing is supposed to be enjoyable and reasonably priced.

The ethical issues that affect our company are reasonable pricing. Ethical rules for the "MassaPuttin tournament" are also important in establishing ethics from the beginning.

II. Target Market(s)

A. Identification: Harrisonburg

Demographic characteristics

- Sex: 19,171 / 21,297 (M/F) as of 2000
- Age: 15-24 yrs (largest segment of the population)
- Income: Avg-22, 072 Combined: 43,000
- Race: 85% Caucasian, 9% Hispanic, 5% African American

Geographic characteristics

- Location: Harrisonburg area (rural)
- Climate: temperate
- Density: 40,000 (minus 15,000 JMU population)

Psychographic characteristics

The population of Harrisonburg (not including the JMU students) tends to be made up of families, teenagers and there is a large population of teenagers as well. Therefore, they value time spent with friends and family. Judging by the results of our survey, most people said they spent anywhere from 2-10 hours a week for family leisure time. Eighty percent of people surveyed said they would be interested in a new mini-golf course at Massanutten.

Product-usage characteristics

Most people tend to go mini-golfing during the evenings or weekends, which is usually the easiest times for families to spend time together. The benefits of mini-golf are entertainment, recreation and family leisure time.

B. Needs Analysis

The current needs of our target market include recreation, low prices and improvement of available mini-golf options. Other needs include family entertainment and convenience.

Our service offers recreation, low prices, family entertainment and improvement extremely well. Convenience would be the only need that might not always be fulfilled depending on the distance from the Massanutten resort.

Our competitors offer family entertainment, however our company improves on the details such as price, atmosphere and facilities.

In the near future, the needs of our target market will include new recreational activities and reasonable pricing. As time goes on the market may need something more than what our course offers. Additions to the course could help to serve these needs.

III. SWOT Analysis

A. Strengths

There is no real competition in the same market as the golf course. This strength allows the company to concentrate on other operations instead of strategies to counteract competition.

The course is very appealing to the eye. It has beautiful scenery and a great natural atmosphere. This strength allows it to meet the needs of its target market by drawing more people in to play at the course; it also may attract tourist that come to visit the area.

The company's pricing strategy is really good, because it cost the same as the older, less attractive golf course. This strength meets the need of our target market because the company already knows people are willing to pay the price they are charging for the golf course.

B. Weaknesses

A weakness the course possesses is the location. It is not conveniently located for the Harrisonburg population. The Massanutten managers for the course can use this to assist the company in meeting the needs of this target market. They will need to find features to make the course seem worth the trip to Massanutten.

Mini golfing is a seasonal event and weather will play a big role in the businesses revenues. There is really no way around this weakness, the managers will have to hope that it does well enough on the fair weather days to compensate for the rainy ones.

Mini golf is a recreational activity, and Massanutten may have to assume liability if there are any injuries. This weakness is probably one that the course will not have a huge problem with, but it will make the customers feel safe in case of an accident.

C. Opportunities

A great opportunity presents itself because the game of mini golf targets a younger market. The opportunity serves the need of our market because it gives kids and their adult companions new opportunities for recreation. Some actions Massanutten must take are to advertise to kids and make family deals more prevalent.

The course definitely has the opportunity to move into other target markets such as the JMU population, and the Stanton population. An action they must take to make this opportunity a reality is to advertise to these other target markets.

D. Threats

The possibility that other recreational events may gain some of the golf courses customers is very probable. Customers may choose bowling, movies, or other recreational events instead of mini golfing. This threat is related to the needs of our target market because these other options may steal some of the course's customers. The company must develop good marketing strategies to make the course more desirable and accent the positives.

Tourism to Massanutten may be down and this will decrease the number of people that will come to play golf at the mini course. Massanutten must keep the course running / operating during times of slow tourism. Keeping tourism up with advertising will be a key component to keeping the course running during a decline in tourism to Massanutten.

IV. Current Marketing Objectives and Performance

A. Marketing Objectives

1: *To gain recognition, awareness and differentiation of our Mini-Golf course*

We plan to meet this goal within the first year with our intro phase of marketing. After our first year we will use continual advertising to continue to create awareness of the course. This objective takes advantage of local media outlets and sponsorship opportunities. To gain the target market's attention we hope to create awareness and differentiate our course from the current competition. This objective is consistent with our mission of financial success and a growing customer base.

2: *To grab and maintain a favorable image in our target market's mind*

The outcome of this objective is to be viewed socially responsible and as a positive part of the community. This community values family and ethics which we will try to embody in our corporate image. This objective takes advantage of a strength or opportunity of a safe, fun family activity in the natural surroundings of the area.

B. Future Performance Speculation

Because of the lack of competitors in our direct mini-golf market, we have a stronghold on the market. However, we are a small part of the family entertainment sector (movies, roller-skating, bowling, hiking, biking and other recreational activities).

Our performance will be crucial in the success of our company. We will only be open during the summer and extending into the fall during which we will need to accrue most profit. Our success depends on our continual effort to meet our customers and the community's needs.

IV. Marketing Mix

A. Product Strategies:

To sell the Massanutten Mini Golf experience to customers seeking the ultimate family entertainment. We plan to boast of the new design, aesthetic quality, and large, naturally decorated greens with a touch of an extreme sport-feel in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

B. Pricing Strategies:

Based on the quality value playing experience, pricing is as follows; \$5.00 for children, \$6.00 for adults, and a special rate (a quantity discount) of "buy 5 get the 6th one FREE!" There will be also be a special coupon pricing offer of "Buy one get one FREE" for the Grand Opening weekend only. (This coupon is to be distributed in the Harrisonburg City schools and in half page ads in the Newspaper media outlets. This set price is a great deal, and is still lower than most other family entertainment options in the Shenandoah Valley.

C. Promotion Strategies:

Awareness of an obvious differentiation is key to our promotion event and activities. The highlight of our marketing campaign is the First Annual MassaPuttin' Mini Golf Tournament, featuring JMU

Athletes teamed up with the Harrisonburg City Boys & Girls Club. We will publicize of the new course, and the grand opening event through many media outlets including TV commercials, radio spots, newspaper ads and coupons, promotional gifts, fliers, posters, and news releases.

This marketing mix gives us a competitive advantage in our target market because we are taking an active role in the community, and developing a socially responsible business image. We are also filling the void- where others don't advertise, we will.

This competitive advantage is sustainable, through a continuous upkeep of the advertising plan for years to come. The promotional golf tournament event is intended to be held annually, keeping the socially responsible image alive. Not readily accessible to the target market, Massanutten Mini Golf is located out of the way, therefore the awareness through advertising is a vital marketing activity that should be continuous.

VI. Marketing Implementation

A. Activities, Responsibility, and Timetable for Completion

1. Product Activities

Activity 1: Completion of the course & delivery of supplies (golf clubs and balls)

Person Responsible: Carter Miller, President of MPOA (Massanutten Property Owners Association), the MPOA Board, Harris Mini Golf Construction Co.

Target Completion Date: April 20, 2002 (but for the purposes of this marketing plan, two weeks later)

2. Pricing Activities

Activity 1: "Buy one get one FREE!"

Person Responsible: Management & Sales Assistant

Target Completion Date: the month prior to Grand Opening

3. Promotion Activities

Activity 1 Budget: Promotional Materials - \$386.55

Total = \$386.55

Activity 2 Budget: Radio - \$2,520
Mall Billboards - \$1,000
DNR Newspaper Ads - \$3,831
TV 3 - \$2,550
Flyers - \$1,300

Total = \$11,201

Promotional Activities

The Massanutten Property Owners Association will ensure that employees are motivated to implement the following marketing activities by managers supervising employees and making

sure they are on task. Also the organization will provide a good personal ambiance for the employees to work. Finally, deadlines and expectations will be set to give employees a general timeline about what needs to be accomplished.

The MPOA will ensure that all marketing activities are coordinated with other functional areas within the firm by providing the Massanutten trade name on site.

Activity 1: We will be holding the 1st Annual MassaPuttin' Mini Golf Tournament. It will be held on April 20, 2002 for the Grand Opening of the course. We will be teaming JMU Athletes and kids from Harrisonburg's Boys and Girls Club for a round of golf. People responsible for this event are the marketing staff and the MPOA.

Activity 2: We will need to have media publicity and promotion for the duration of the course. People responsible for promoting the course will include: Marketing Staff, MPOA, and the Media department. The target dates for this project will be March 20th, 2002 until the course shuts down.

B. Monitoring Procedures

Marketing activities will be monitored for success by surveys filled out by customers on completion of the course (for the first two months of advertising and operation). At the close of the season, shopping mall intercept surveys will be taken in Valley Mall, Harrisonburg.

A formal marketing audit will be performed after one complete season, in October 2002, to measure the efficiency of the marketing activities performed.