Buffalo Wild Wings
Marketing Plan

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Recreation Administration 135
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Executive Summary

The following is a marketing plan written for Buffalo Wild Wings in Fresno, California. It evaluates the companies marketing strategies and recommends new strategies to try. In Chapter 1 you will find an introduction of the organization, along with their mission statement. You will also find information on Sammy Franco, the main contact I used from the organization to compile this information.

In Chapter 2 you will find an analysis of Buffalo Wild Wings external environment and competitors. BWW’s two main competitors are Doghouse Grill and Hooters. You will also find a Competitive Grid analyzing the difference between these companies. I also analyzed BWW’s strengths and weaknesses using a SWOT analysis.

In Chapter 3 I discuss the different market research techniques used. I analyze the market segmentation and target markets as well. You will also find an explanation of why customers should choose BWW over competitors.

Chapter 4 discusses the BWW’s goals and objectives when is comes to marketing. Franco explains that their main marketing goal is to reach Fresno State students and the surrounding community. I also explain why Buffalo Wild Wings is in the growth stage of the product life cycle.

Chapter 5 is all about branding. There is an example of their logo and I analyze and critique the brand and logo. I also analyze how BWW builds their brand equity. Fracno explains the channels of distribution and how the product finally reaches the customer. I also discussed social buying. I do not think it would be beneficial to this organization.

In Chapter 6 you will find human services and customer service tactics that BWW uses. I also analyze their Internet presence both on their website and on social media. I feel that their website it great but their social media presence needs some work.

Chapter 7 is all about publicity, sales, and promotions. I analyze BWW advertising tactics and looked at a few of their recent ads. I also discuss their sales and merchandising. In the appendix you will find a sample press release I wrote.

Chapter 8 is my conclusions and recommendations. I summarize all of my suggestions throughout the plan and how they could be applied. I also summarize my opinion of all their tactics discussed in previous chapters.
Chapter 1
Introduction to Organization

Introduction

Buffalo Wild Wings or BWW is a local restaurant right across from Fresno State. It is part of a national chain of restaurants specializing in chicken wings. This site in Fresno opened almost 2 years ago. With 16 different sauces and 5 different dry rubs to choose from Buffalo Wild Wings goes above and beyond the standard chicken wings.

I chose to do my marketing plan on Buffalo Wild Wings because, even with their close proximity to Fresno State they lack marketing specific to Fresno State students. On the other hand as a national organization and a local restaurant, BWW does utilize some very unique marketing tactics that I and the rest of the class could learn from. I also currently work there, so I can see their marketing strategies first hand. It also means that I have easy accessibility to the managers.

Agency Contacts

My main contact is my manager Sammy Franco. He is one of 8 managers and is the main manager in charge of marketing, including but not limited to donating to local organizations and placing advertisements locally. He is mainly responsible for the market of the local Fresno restaurant. The national Buffalo Wild Wings is responsible for all
national marketing. Sammy is in charge of the marketing budget and makes all final decisions when it comes to marketing for the Fresno restaurant.

**Understanding the Organization**

Buffalo Wild Wings is all about the customers and that is reflected in their mission statement. The following is an image of the mission statement along with BWW’s core values and philosophies. The mission statement it’s self is specifically to “WOW people every day.”

---

**OUR MISSION IS TO WOW PEOPLE EVERY DAY**

**WE ARE GUEST-DRIVEN**
We will WOW our guests every day by achieving the highest level of satisfaction with an extraordinary focus on friendly service, food, fun and value.

**WE ARE TEAM-FOCUSED**
We will WOW our team members by providing the same respect, positive encouragement and fair treatment within the organization that we expect Team Members to share externally with every guest.

**WE ARE COMMUNITY-CONNECTED**
We will WOW the communities where we do business by practicing good citizenship and helping to make these communities better places to live.

**WE ARE DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE**
We will WOW our franchisees and stakeholders with outstanding, industry-leading financial results and operational performance.
Chapter 2
Organizational Assessment

External Environment

Buffalo Wild Wings is the center of an urban area hit hard by the economic crisis. With this crisis, people are just not eating out at restaurants as often as they used to, and restaurants are having to get creative and try new techniques to draw a crowd.

BWW is taking many steps to combat the economic downfall. Twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays, they feature $0.60 wings. Tuesdays are for traditional wings, while Thursdays feature boneless wings. These prices are equivalent to about 40% off the full price. This is the largest effort to combat the economic crisis affecting their clientele. They are also utilizing such marketing strategies as passing out coupons for 6 free wings or $5.00 off or using those as incentives to participate in quality control surveys.

BWW is utilizing technology to make their guests’ dining experience interactive. In addition to 68 TVs dedicated to sports, BWW dedicates several TVs so guests can enjoy playing poker or trivia using Buzztimer play boards. These are something that other restaurants don’t have that guests really seem to enjoy. A guest can watch their favorite team, enjoy wings and beer, while also playing poker or trivia all at once. To go one step farther there is also a BWW Buzztimer app available on both Iphones and Androids. You can play the trivia and poker without even needing a Buzztimer.
Competition

BWW 2 main competitors are Doghouse Grill and Hooters. Doghouse Grill is right across the street and therefore attracts much of the same clientele. Hooters has a very similar menu with the main focus being wings. They both also provide sports centered television. The following is a competitive grid for Buffalo wild wings analyzing their competition.

**Competitive Grid for Buffalo Wild Wings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Promotions</th>
<th>Prices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BWW</td>
<td>Near Fresno State, across from Save Mart Center</td>
<td>National chain, 68 TVs, 16 different sauces, 30 beers on tap, known for wings. Sports centered.</td>
<td>Somewhat new to the area. Only promotes wings.</td>
<td>National ads focusing on beer and sports. Wing special days. Coupons handed out at every Fresno state event. Blazin’ challenge</td>
<td>Wings from $6-40 for 6-50 wings. Approximately $10 for salads, burgers, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doghouse</td>
<td>Near Fresno State, across from Save Mart Center</td>
<td>Known for tri-tip, Local tradition. Sports centered.</td>
<td>No national brand recognition.</td>
<td>Relies on local word of mouth for advertising.</td>
<td>$7-10 for all burgers, salads and sandwiches. $2-4 for fries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ideas to Borrow**

Hooters offers a lot more options aside from wings. BWW does offer other options but they are limited. Hooters not only offers burgers, sandwiches and salads but also soups, chili and seafood.

Buffalo Wild Wings should offer more options to reach a wider audience. They should offer items such as soups and seafood to accommodate guests who don’t prefer
wings or the other options currently offered. These items attract a different audience than wings and burgers. Also by offering chili, this gives sports fans another option to enjoy while watching their favorite team.

**Program/Facility Analysis**

Buffalo Wild Wings mainly focuses on wings, both traditional and boneless. Along with the wings they offer 16 different sauces and 5 dry rubs you can have them spun in. The sauces range from the mildest with Sweet BBQ to the spiciest Blazin’. All wings are served with ranch, blue cheese, carrots and celery. As sides they also offer a variety of choices including fries, onion rings, and buffalo chips. In addition to wings, BWW offers salads, burgers and wraps all of which you put you favorite sauce on.

Buffalo Wild Wings also focuses on sports only television. With 68 TVs, there is never a shortage of games to watch. BWW plays all NFL games on Sundays and opens early to accommodate early games.

**SWOT analysis**

A SWOT analysis is an analysis of an organizations strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Buffalo Wild Wings has several strengths. It has national brand recognition, is sports focused, and offers 30 different beers and 68 TVs.

BWW also has several weaknesses. It is relatively new to the area so it has not established local brand recognition. It also only promotes wings.
BWW is located near Fresno State and that provides many opportunities to promote to students and the community. They take advantage of these opportunities by promoting and passing out coupons at Fresno State football games. They also sponsor many campus organizations and events. They could take advantage of their proximity to the Save Mart Center and promote more there.

Doghouse Grill is a threat to BWW. Doghouse is a local tradition and is known as the place to go before or after football games or events at the Save Mart Center.

**Situation or Feasibility Analysis**

Buffalo Wild Wings could expand to sponsoring events at the Save Mart Center. With such close proximity it would direct customers over to BWW after the event. A feasibility analysis would be necessary. You would first need to find out if they have any prior food contracts that would limit promotions. Then establish which events would be best to sponsor and how many events per month would be sponsored.
Chapter 3
Marketing Research, Segmentation, and Competitive Differentiation

Market Research

Buffalo Wild Wings main form of market research is offering surveys to every other customer. As incentive for taking the survey, BWW offers $5 off the next purchase. There are limitations, you must take the survey within 48 hours and the next purchase must be within 14 days.

This is an effective way to achieve market research, however there are other options. Human observation would be another way to achieve market research. This would be much simpler because the customer wouldn’t have to do anything and the data would be qualitative.

Market Segmentation

A market segmentation analyzes the target customers for an organization by specific categories such as geography, demographics, psychographics, and purpose of trip. For BWW the geography targeted is the area surrounding Fresno State and the Fresno and Clovis community. The demographics targeted are families, mid – 20s females, males,
and children. The psychographics targeted are sports fans, video gamers and trivia fans. And finally the purpose of their trip is to enjoy wings, beer, and sports.

**Target Markets**

Sports Fans are the main clientele for Buffalo Wild Wings. With 68 TVs playing all sports, there is always a game to watch and always a TV in their line of sight.

Marketing specific major games would be the best way to reach this target market. If they are looking to watch a specific game, they need to know that it will be played at Buffalo Wild Wings. There are also several different types of video games throughout the restaurant targeting the video gamer demographic. With the Buzztimers, they target trivia fans.

**Competitive Differentiation**

Buffalo Wild Wings goes above and beyond competitors in the categories of Wings, Beer, and Sports. With over 30 beers, 16 sauces and 68 TVs this offers customers many options for the beer they want to drink, wings to eat, and games to watch.

BWW could capitalize on this more then they do. In their ad they feature beer, wings and sports but they should explain why their beer, wings, and sports are better than the competitors.
Chapter 4
Marketing Goals and Objectives

Organizational Goals

Buffalo Wild Wings has several goals. A short-term goal is to open another BWW across town. A long-term goal is to make BWW a Fresno staple when it comes to watching sports. They want to have brand recognition within the community.

Marketing and Sales Objectives

Product: To bring in more customers during the off times or seasons. Draw more customers in the 2-5 time slot and bring in more customers during the summer when there are not very many sports options.

Price: Promote happy hours and Wing Special days, and cut costs on inventory.

Place: Increase awareness among the Fresno State Community. Identify other target markets that could be beneficial

Promotional Mix:

- Advertising: Stay with in budget set up by headquarters, reach target markets in Fresno
• Personal Selling: Identify 2 more venues other than Fresno State to sponsor and promote.

• Public Relations/ Publicity: Send out press releases and get on Fresno Bees community calendar when showing big games.

• Promotion: Hand out free wings with purchase cards and $5 off coupons at several different venues.

• Merchandise/ Packaging: Sell merchandise such as T-shirts and hats in store. Continue selling sauces in store.

**Product Life Cycle**

BWW is in the Growth Stage. They are trying to grow and open new stores not just in California but also all along the West Coast. They are also adding new items to the menu to try out every couple of months and getting rid of items that are not selling.
Chapter 5
Branding, Channels of Distribution and Social Buying

Brand Name and Mark

On a summer night in 1981, Jim Disbrow and Scott Lowery were spending a night of drinking in Kent, Ohio. When they became hungry, they went looking for Buffalo, New York style chicken wings. They couldn’t find any and went home without eating.

The next morning, they came up with the idea to open a restaurant specializing in Buffalo style chicken wings. A year later in 1982, they opened up Buffalo Wild Wings & Weck on Ohio State University’s campus and was called BW3. Weck is a Kaiser roll with cornstarch slurry and caraway seeds that sandwiches and burgers were served on. Once it became a franchise, Weck was no longer used so it was dropped from the name. The restaurant became simply Buffalo Wild Wings, shortened to BWW or B-dubbs.
The following is an example of the logo that is used on all company materials.

Buffalo Wild Wings Company Logo

**Brand Name and Brand Mark Critique**

The name and logo correctly identify the brand of the restaurant. The logo with the buffalo with wings is very literal and the subtext of “Bar and Grill” explains the atmosphere. However I do not understand the shooting stars on the logo. That is something that could be changed. The slogan “Wings – Beer – Sports” should also be incorporated.
**Brand Equity**

Brand equity is a way for organizations to measure the value of the company, logo, and brand name. It also evaluates the perception of the company.

Buffalo Wild Wings makes a large effort to build brand equity nationally. According to Franco Buffalo Wild Wings builds their brand by advertising on national television and national sports magazines. The brand name and logo are featured on everything from t-shirts to menus. In several Buffalo Wild Wings there is also a store that sells products such as shot glasses, mugs, and sweatshirts with the BWW logo on it.

**Channels of Distribution**

Buffalo Wild Wings products including wings, chicken, burgers, vegetables, and sauces originate from local Buffalo Wild Wings distributors. The products are delivered to the local restaurants where they are cooked and served by servers to the guests. This is a direct channel of distribution, because BWW national headquarters takes complete control of where their product is coming from.

The distributors as well as the retailers take title of the product in this situation. The distributor is the equivalent of a wholesaler in that all Buffalo Wild Wings purchase their inventory from them. The restaurants or retailers then distribute them to the customer.
Social Buying

Social buying is a new phenomenon in the recent years. Social buying means that companies offer discounts through specific websites and the websites receive a piece of the profit. Sites such as Groupon and Living Social are social buying sites.

Buffalo Wild Wings has no experience with social buying. They go the traditional route when it comes to promoting discounts. One of their methods is Buffalo Circle. Once a guest signs up to join Buffalo Circle, they receive emails regarding discounts and promotions.

Social buying is not something that would benefit Buffalo Wild Wings. Although it may be beneficial to the consumer, it is not nearly as beneficial for the company. Buffalo Wild Wings may not benefit from offering deals on their product, because there are several weekly deals that are already promoted such as $0.60 wing Tuesdays and Thursdays. And the company would like lose out on more than they would earn.
Chapter 6
Human Resources, Customer Service, and Internet Presence

Human Resources

When the Buffalo Wild Wings in Fresno opened they had open interviews to hire most of their staff. Two years after opening, they are always accepting applications. All employees, or team members as they are called, must go through an interview and orientation before beginning training. The training process is six days long, including a shadow shift. New Team Members are trained by Wing Certified Trainers or WCTs. WCTs must go through their own extensive training process in order to become a trainer. The New Team Member training process consists of activities, quizzes, and shadowing.

Outstanding employees are recognized through incentives such as employee of the month. There are also regular competitions with the winning Team Members receiving prizes such as gift cards. An example of a competition could be whoever sells the most appetizers or desserts.

Customer Service
Buffalo Wild Wings is always striving to improve customer service. Franco explained that the main tool to evaluate customer service is through the GEM program. GEM means Guest Management Experience. It is a way to measure the guest’s satisfaction after a visit. The main resource for GEM is through surveys provided on their receipts. Guests can also compliment or complain about a Team Member online using Hot Alerts for bad service and WOW Alerts for excellent service.

There are also regular mystery shoppers, who evaluate service as well as product that score the restaurant. They need average a specific score or they will receive a penalty. Mystery Shoppers may even reward the Team Member. In addition, Team Members are held to standards required by BWW. Managers often time team member to ensure that they are greeting guests in the correct amount of time or the food is delivered fast enough.

As part of their training process customer service is addressed. They are told in how many seconds they must acknowledge a guest, what to say when seating a guest and greeting a table, and how all tables and food should look.

Complaints or incidents are almost entirely handled by a manager. Team Members are trained to LIFT when there is a problem according to Franco. LIFT means to Listen to the complaint, Inform managers, Fix the problem, and Thank the guest.

Buffalo Wild Wings does not really foster employee empowerment. Employees do not have the ability to apply discounts or fix problems without manager approval. This is something that could be applied to BWW to provide the guests with better service. At times it is inconvenient for Team Members to have to go find a manager to approve everything.
**Internet Presence – Website**

Buffalo Wild Wings national website is the first one to come up on the Google search. It is a very easy to navigate website. Menu bar at the top offers information on the three aspects of BWW: Wings, Beer, and Sports. It is also interactive. Under the wings tab there is an interactive spectrum of the 16 sauces and 5 dry rubs, mild to spicy. Under the beer tap, you can interactively click on domestic, imported, or craft. And find descriptions of all the available beers. You can also find details on how BWW pours the “perfect beer”. Lastly it is very clear where you can find a location close to you. The location finder is right on the menu bar and all that is necessary is to type in a zip code, city, or state. You can even use your current location and not have to type in anything. It definitely attracts revisits, especially to keep up with limited time specials or sauces. Also on the bottom of every page there is an opportunity to sign up with Buffalo Circle to receive emails regarding promotions.

**Internet Presence – Social Media**

Buffalo Wild Wings (national) has both a Facebook and Twitter. They have a pretty strong Facebook page with nearly 10,000 likes and almost 60,000 check-ins. Their twitter page however should be a little more interactive. The pictures they post do make the food look very appealing but they are not as prominent as they are on Facebook.

I think that BWW is utilizing the two social media outlets that would most benefit them. And they are using Facebook to its full potential, but could be a little more interactive on Twitter. For the local restaurant I think they could really benefit from at
least a Facebook page. I recommend that they begin utilizing social media to attract more local customers.
Chapter 7
The Promotional Mix

Advertising

Buffalo Wild Wings nationally has several advertising objectives, mainly to attract guests to their local BWW. However locally the Fresno store has other specific objectives. They want to draw more Fresno State students and attendees of Save Mart Center events. They also want to spread the reach of Buffalo Wild Wings into north Fresno. They advertise through print, in magazines and online, and TV and radio commercials.

All advertisements go through the national headquarters. They use an ad agency to create all print ads and commercials.

BWW already hands out discount cards at all major Fresno State events and at some Save Mart Center events. However it would be beneficial to buy ad space on Fresno State’s campus and inside the Save Mart Center. They could also buy ad space in the Fresno State Football stadium.

Sales Promotion and Merchandising

Buffalo Wild Wings has many promotion strategies and objectives. They tend to focus most of their promotions on Fresno State and the surrounding area. They hand out
thousands of six free wing coupons at Fresno State football games and major community events such as the “Big Fresno Fair”.

BWW has “points of purchase” all throughout the restaurant. This is how they promote their wing specials and drink specials. “Points of Purchase” are poster and flyers posted all over the restaurant to promote specific things. They are inserted into the menus and on the table caddies and there are many posters throughout the restaurant to promote different things. Some examples of what is promoted are $0.60 wings on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and $3 tall drafts in happy hour.

They do a good job of Sales Promotions. The local BWW does not do much with merchandising but nationally they are very good at it. Some stores even have merchandise stores in their restaurants.

Publicity

The local BWW does not do very much of their own publicity. The national headquarters is in charge of publicity and all press releases come from them. They write press releases for events such as a Hunter Hayes live performance in October. If BWW is sponsoring an event for another organization. They take on most of the publicity for it. The KISS Country radio station and Fresno minor league team regularly host events with BWW and take on the publicity themselves. In the Appendix you will find a sample press release for the upcoming Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl.
Chapter 8
Marketing Activities Timetable and Budget, Conclusions, Observations and Recommendations

Marketing Activities Timetable and Budget

The following is a table showing upcoming marketing activities, when they are to be completed and the budget for them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Assigned Too</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresno State Athletics</td>
<td>Handing out 6-free wing coupons at Fresno State sporting events</td>
<td>Sammy Franco</td>
<td>Throughout the year</td>
<td>$50,000 over the year to cover the free wings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raider Nation</td>
<td>Sponsor local Raiders fan club to watch Raiders game at BWW</td>
<td>Sammy Franco</td>
<td>Throughout Football season when Raiders play</td>
<td>$500 per Raiders football game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno State Vintage Days</td>
<td>Sponsor an on-campus wing eating competition in the week prior. Sponsor by providing food for volunteers throughout the weekend</td>
<td>Sammy Franco</td>
<td>3rd week in April</td>
<td>$2,000 sponsorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMA and UFC Fights</td>
<td>Sponsor, promote and sell tickets for local MMA and UFC fights.</td>
<td>Sammy Franco</td>
<td>Throughout the year</td>
<td>$10,000 sponsorship and ticket sales.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions, Observations and Recommendations

National Buffalo Wild Wings headquarters seems to be mainly in charge of marketing for the Fresno Restaurant. It would be very beneficial for the local BWW to take control of much of their own marketing. They have the ability to make decisions on things such as sponsoring on providing a donation. However almost everything else goes through district managers up to national headquarters. They do not have the ability to produce their own advertisements or publicity. The Fresno BWW should take on more responsibility for their marketing.

Marketing Recommendations

- BWW should offer a more options such as chili. They do offer options other than wings, however they are limited to salads and burgers. Adding chili to the menu would reach the sports fan demographic, especially in the winter.
- BWW should capitalize more on their strengths such as the 16 sauces and 68 TVs. These are things that competitors don’t have.
- The local BWW should utilize social media to promote their specific events.
- The local BWW should take over some of their publicity. Creating advertisements and sending out press releases.
- The Fresno BWW should open a merchandise store like other BWWs around the country.
- The local BWW should buy ad space in the local arenas such as the Save Mart Center and the Fresno State football stadium.
Appendix

Chapter 7 Press Release .......................................................... Page i-ii
For Immediate Release

Sammy Franco
Buffalo Wild Wings – 284
3065 E. Shaw Ave.
Fresno, CA 93710
(559) 348 – 9080

December 29th will bring the first ever Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl. With football season in full swing, the local Buffalo Wild Wings is busier than ever. Football season has traditionally been Buffalo Wild Wings busiest time of the year. Whether it’s college, professional or fantasy, Buffalo Wild Wings is the place to gather to watch all the gridiron action on any of the restaurants’ many big-screen televisions.

“Football fans know that there’s no better place to share in game day excitement than Buffalo Wild Wings,” said Sally Smith, Buffalo Wild Wings CEO. “There’s a reason this is our busiest time of year: the energy and camaraderie rivals the stadium atmosphere and together with hot wings and cold beer – it’s an unbeatable combination.”

Earlier this summer, Buffalo Wild Wings announced that in addition to being the place to watch college bowl games, the company will be hosting a bowl game as the title sponsor of the Valley of the Sun Bowl. The Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl matches the third selection from the Big 12 Conference and the third or fourth pick from the Big Ten Conference, and will take place on Dec. 29 in Tempe, Ariz.

Billed as a bowl game for the fans, Buffalo Wild Wings hopes to bring the Buffalo Wild Wings experience to Sun Devil Stadium. “We’re always looking for new
and exciting ways to interact with our guests,” Benning said. “This bowl game gives us that opportunity in a big way.”

About Buffalo Wild Wings

Buffalo Wild Wings, Inc., founded in 1982 and headquartered in Minneapolis, is a growing owner, operator and franchisor of Buffalo Wild Wings® restaurants featuring a variety of boldly flavored, made-to-order menu items including its namesake Buffalo, New York-style chicken wings. The Buffalo Wild Wings menu specializes in 20 mouth-watering signature sauces and seasonings with flavor sensations ranging from Sweet BBQ™ to Blazin’®. Guests enjoy a welcoming neighborhood atmosphere that includes an extensive multi-media system for watching their favorite sporting events. Buffalo Wild Wings is the recipient of hundreds of "Best Wings" and "Best Sports Bar" awards from across the country. There are currently more than 840 Buffalo Wild Wings locations across 48 states in the United States, as well as in Canada.

To stay up-to-date on all the latest events and offers for sports fans and wing lovers, like Buffalo Wild Wings on Facebook, follow @BWWings on Twitter and visit www.BuffaloWildWings.com.