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Delta Airlines

Communications Plan

PREL 9131

Deepni Pradeep

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Organizational Overview

Delta Air Lines is one of the major airlines in the United States and is considered a legacy carrier. It is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia and operates over 5,400 flights daily, serving 325 destinations in 52 countries on six continents. The airline is a founding member of the SkyTeam airline alliance and has approximately 90,000 employees as of the end of 2022. Atlanta is its largest hub in terms of total passengers and departures. Delta is ranked second among the world's largest airlines in terms of passengers carried, passenger miles flown, and fleet size. It is also ranked first in revenue for commercially owned airline companies and brand value. Delta provides a world-class customer experience and aims to tailor every trip to each customer. The airline expects to serve nearly 200 million customers this year with a focus on safety, reliability, and industry-leading customer service innovation. Delta operates significant hubs and key markets in various cities worldwide, including Amsterdam, Boston, Detroit, London-Heathrow, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York-JFK and LaGuardia, Paris-Charles de Gaulle, Salt Lake City, Seattle, Seoul-Incheon, and Tokyo.

Product/Service Description

Product Description

The 2024 National Hockey League (NHL) All-Star Game is an upcoming exhibition ice hockey tournament held on Feb 2 and 3 at Scotiabank Arena in Toronto, Ontario. This event is traditionally held during the National Hockey League (NHL) regular season and features many of the league's star players competing against each other. The game serves as a fundraiser for the players' pension fund, and the winning team is awarded \$1,000,000 to donate to a charity of their choice.



Service Description

Delta Airlines will advertise/campaign across the North American demographic for the all-expenses-paid trip package for the National Hockey League All-Star Game held on Feb 2 and 3, 2024.



Situation Analysis (SWOT)

Strengths

1. A large fleet: Delta Airlines has the largest fleet compared to other airlines worldwide, with 1,200 aircraft as of the end of 2021.
2. Modern fleet: The company has made efforts to improve operational efficiency by introducing new aircraft that are approximately 25% more energy-efficient than older flights. Delta Airlines is known for its modern approach and adherence to the latest industry standards.
3. Substantial brand value: Delta Airlines benefits from a strong brand value which attracts and retains customers. Their reputable brand value instills confidence and trustworthiness among its customers. In 2022, Delta Airlines ranked 'the most valuable airline in the world' by brand directory.
4. Excellent customer service: Delta Airlines plays a significant role in customer service and employee satisfaction. Their primary focus is on customer support, operational efficiency, and gender equality, contributing significantly to its status.
5. Alliances: Delta Airlines values partnerships and has established the SkyTeam alliance, which serves a vast customer base. Additionally, the company has codeshare agreements with other airlines to help expand Delta's reach and facilitate customers with more options for travel.
6. Numerous routes: Delta Airlines has global brand recognition. The company operates 4000 flights daily and serves 275 destinations worldwide. The extensive network and frequent flights help it to be a convenient choice for travelers.
7. Large customer base: It has a large customer base service transporting 200 million passengers and around 2.2 billion tons of cargo annually.
8. Strong financial position: Delta manages its finances well, with a steady cash flow and a cash conversion cycle that provides liquidity. They generated an average of \$3.6 billion in free cash flows each year from 2015 to 2019 and returned 75% of that cash to investors, giving good returns on their spending.
9. Industry-leading unit profitability: Before COVID-19, Delta Airlines had high unit profitability.



Weaknesses

1. Relies on one market: Delta Airlines heavily depends on the North American market, making up 82% of its revenue. This overreliance on a single market can be vulnerable significantly if economic conditions change.
2. Higher attrition rate: Delta has a higher employee turnover rate than the industry average. Hence, they must spend more money on training new employees, which could have been used for other aspects of the business.
3. Aircraft concerns: Delta has had issues with one of its aircraft engines, the Airbus A220. The problems led to regulatory guidelines for inspecting these planes. Since Delta operates many of these aircraft, they must find ways to reduce the associated risks.

Opportunities

1. Leverage social media: Customers can be reached and engaged through various social media platforms. Social media usage helps gather valuable feedback that the traditional market cannot provide.
2. Target millennials: Millennials spend a lot on airline services. Delta has an excellent scope to tailor its services to this demographic.
3. Provide maintenance services: Delta's maintenance division can expand to offer maintenance to other airlines, tapping into the growing global aircraft maintenance market.
4. Harness new technologies: Delta should adapt to emerging technologies to improve customer experience and loyalty as the airline industry evolves in the digital age.

Threats

1. Increased regulations: Delta Airlines has to follow new and changing rules, which can make them spend more money and face possible business problems. For instance, they were fined \$50k by the US Department of Transportation for discriminatory conduct in 2020.
2. Stiff competition: Delta faces intense competition, requiring them to stay within their marketing budget and lose potential customers.
3. Geopolitical risks and rising fuel prices: Events like the Russian-Ukraine war have forced Delta to change flight routes, cut ties with airlines like Aeroflot, and increase ticket prices. Rising fuel prices due to geopolitical instability also add pressure to their operations.



Research Summary

Primary

1. **Customer Surveys:** Conduct surveys on the current and potential customers to understand their interest in attending an 'all-expense paid All-Star game' in Toronto, which helps Delta understand the demand and preference for this service.
2. **Focus Groups:** Delta can organize a focus group for in-depth insights with frequent travelers and sports enthusiasts to know what the consumers expect in the package.
3. **Influencer and Partner Feedback:** Delta Airlines collaborates with other companies like the SkyTeam alliance, from which it can gather feedback as they can provide valuable information on the effectiveness of the campaign and also they can nominate a Brand Ambassador for the event.

Secondary

1. **Previous research results or supplemental research areas:** For secondary research on the market size, growth rates and consumer behavior, we must analyze the existing market research reports on industries like aviation and sports tourism.
Example: Delta can monitor their marketing and social media analysis with a partnership event it delivered to AMB Sports and Entertainment in 2022.
2. **Competitor research:** Studying similar marketing strategies that have been conducted before by airlines of sports events helps understand the strategies of the marketing and successful approaches to it.
Example: Qatar Airways strategies conducted before and during the FIFA World Cup.
3. **Media stories in newspapers, online journals and research sites:** News articles and blogs help understand the trends and developments in the airline and sports sector, especially what was done for previous All-Star games.
4. **Social Media Monitoring:** Analyzing the social media presence of previous games campaigned by Delta Airlines gives an understanding of public perspective and sentimental analysis by going through their impressions and comments.
5. **Government and Regulatory information:** Delta Airlines should familiarize itself with government laws and policies to ensure it can legally serve its intended audience.



Objectives and Goals

Objective 1: Increase sales in the all-expenses-paid trip package.

Goal: Sell a specific number of all-expenses-paid trip packages through Delta Airlines promotions.

Measurement: Track and achieve a target number of package sales with regular stats on the sale.

Objective 2: Boost Online Engagement

Goal: Promote the Package through social media and other digital platforms.

Measurement: Social media metrics and impressions on the campaigns

Objective 3: Return on Investment

Goal: Target a positive return on investment

Measurement: We can calculate the ROI by reducing the invested amount from the total sale of the package.

Objective 4: Customer Satisfaction

Goal: Give a memorable experience with Delta's package

Measurement: Collect post-event surveys aiming for a high customer service score.

Objective 5: Gain Positive Media Coverage

Goal: Secure positive media coverage in both traditional and digital outlets.

Measurement: By keeping track of media mentions and interviews, you can target the overall tone of media coverage.

Objective 6: Maintain a strong partnership.

Goal: Strengthen the partnership with the NHL, which conducts the All-Star games in 2024.

Measurement: Assess the level of mutual involvement by the partner.



Target Audience

Delta Airlines is targeting demographics located mainly in the **United States and Canada**. The 'All-expenses paid package' is for **all age groups** with a minimum **income of CA\$60,000**.

1. **Family dynamics:** Family members who are loyal fans of NHL games aged between 40-55 years. They share their passion for sports with their families, often attending events together. They would appreciate to attend the All-Star games as a family outing.
2. **Friends group:** Individuals aged 25 to 39 years are looking for the best opportunities to hang out and enjoy sports events together. The All-Stars game is their next go-to, seeking entertainment and social experience. This group also enjoys an active social life and enjoys attending events together.
3. **Business Travelers:** Business professionals who are above 18 years of age often travel for work. They engage in leisure sports gatherings with their colleagues or associates from partnering companies. All-stars games act as a recreational activity for networking opportunities for them.
4. **Sport Enthusiast:** The broad group of sports enthusiasts includes NHL, basketball fans or other sports events. They will attend All-Star games to witness the top athletic performance.
5. **Professional NHL teams:** Mandatory NHL teams, previous players, and active players to actively support the team. Their presence adds to the excitement and authenticity of the All-Stars game to keep up the sport at a professional level.
6. **Player and athlete team:** Demographics who enjoy playing other sports come in support and entertainment to see the NHL- the best game.
7. **Baby boomers & Millennials:** The demography loyal to the game has been coming to basketball events since they were young.



Key Messages

"Delta Airlines: Bringing the World's Best Together at the 2024 All-Star Game in Toronto!"

Strategy and Tactics

1. Leverage Social Media Presence:
 - a. Utilize Delta's earned and owned social media platforms for organic promotional posts, encouraging followers to share their excitement with other social media account users around them.
 - b. Posts must include promotional videos, countdowns, and interactive content relevant to the event.
 - c. Delta must promote the NHL All-Star event as collab content to help give and get the reach of both the accounts' followers.
 - d. Posts must also Promote the all-expense package for the game.
 - e. A unique hashtag helps funnel the posts into high traffic digitally.
2. Engage Influencers and Brand Ambassadors
 - a. Partner with sports influencers (mega and micro-influencers), NHL players, and other Canadian best players who support the All-Star to promote the game and the Delta package. They can offer a discount code specially made for them so that it helps us analyze the conversion.
 - b. Collab content with the NBA can significantly boost the campaign's reach.
3. Digital Advertising:
 - a. Using paid advertisements on various social media platforms can help reach a more significant portion of the target audience, especially considering their age and online traffic patterns.
 - b. According to the target audience's algorithm, Google ads help reach the right audience, like sports enthusiasts, travelers and basketball fans.

4. Marketing:

- a. They are sending out newsletters through email marketing and email campaigns about the package and letting them know the package's highlights and the comfort of not being worried about stay or transport to commute.
- b. They are setting up booths in malls and other high footprint locations like Square One, Edmonton Mall, Heritage Classic and Bon Miles to spread the campaign to the public who visit the mall and get them to sign up for the packages traditionally and give them freebies like a miniature model of the delta airline itself or a jersey for the All-stars games or All-Star travel package.
- c. Banner Ads on popular locations have QR codes and sign-ups linking to the campaign website.
- d. Billboards that can be collaborated with the NHL All-Star games and take a little space on their billboard to advertise our package as well.
- e. Radio and television broadcast of the campaign is another strategy to market our product.

5. Publication:

- a. The PR department of Delta can reach out to local and internationally known media for coverage of the story of Delta Airlines' collaboration with NHL All-Star games and a small paragraph on the promotion of the all-expense paid package.
- b. Publish on the sports magazines and travel magazines.
- c. Video asset creation of Delta X NHL All-Stars aired on Delta flights and throughout airports where we have a significant presence.

Timeline

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. Oct - Nov 3 | - Pre-planning, communication, and content creation |
| 2. Nov 3 to Dec 3 | - Digital advertising and manufacturing of all the planned products |
| 3. Dec 3 to Jan 3 | - Traditional advertising in malls and other locations and media advertisements. |
| 4. Jan 3 to Feb 3 | - Promotions and advertisements |
| 5. Feb 6 onwards | - Feedback surveys |



Budget

The budget for hosting a massive campaign for the all-expense paid package is a complex process that involves various expenses and investments. Hence, an overview of the possible investment and expenses are as follows:

1) All-expense paid package per person:

- a. To and for flight expenses
- b. Three meals and five snacks and beverages per day * number of nights
- c. Five stars hotel expenses for all days
- d. All Stars game ticket fair for all days

2) Complimentary giveaways:

- a. Jerseys
- b. Travel toiletries
- c. Souvenirs
- d. Delta Airlines privileges

3) Content Creation Expenses:

- a. Production company expenses
- b. Design and creative services
- c. Image and brochure printing expenses
- d. Billboard shares expenses
- e. Banner printing expenses
- f. Fact sheets for the marketing in booths in malls
- g. Miniature delta planes expenses
- h. Jersey design and manufacturing expenses
- i. Travel kit expenses

4) Rentals:

- a. Spaces in Malls for setting up booth rental expenses
- b. Banner displaying rental in different locations

- 5) Marketing and Promotion:
 - a. Social media paid advertising expenses
 - b. Email marketing
 - c. Google Ads
 - d. Radio and television services
 - e. Media coverage publication expenses
- 6) Salary:
 - a. Influencers salary
 - b. Brand Ambassador salary
 - c. Salespeople salary
- 7) Miscellaneous Expenses:
 - a. NBA Partnership fees
 - b. Logistics and transportation expenses

Evaluation and Measurement

The Key performance indicators are as follows:

1. **All expenses paid package sales:** Track the number of “all-expense paid packages” sold through Delta Airlines promotions.
2. **Website Analytics:** Measure of website traffic and online conversions.
3. **Social Media Analytics:** Monitor the growth of followers, subscribers, likes, shares and comments earned after the campaign.
4. **Feedback surveys:** Measure all the feedback from the customer satisfaction and experience during and after the events.
5. **Brand Ambassador and Influencer conversions:** The measure of package purchased with the influencer and brand ambassador discount code.
6. **Media coverage:** The measure of the campaign’s reach and impact through traditional and digital coverage.
7. **Return of Investment:** Calculate the total sale of packages from the total investment.

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