

How to make a billion dollars from the next megatrend.

Well, at very least how to use an interesting sporting sponsorship opportunity to change the perception of your brand.

Name a sport that's been around for 500 years. One that has a global following in the millions and that could just be the next trend that captures the imagination of America's rapidly growing population of baby boomers. You know, those older folks (fitter and wealthier than any other senior group in the history of civilization) who have money to spend and time on their hands.

That sport is Lawn Bowls. You know, Lawn Bowls, first made famous by Frankie Drake, the Armada Crusher on the History Channel.

The US Lawn Bowls Association represents that sport in the seriously under-promoted and low awareness US Market (enter you, looking to ride the Silver Tsunami to success and wealth in the USA).

Anyone can be an official sponsor of something that's already past its prime. You're paying for what was, not what could deliver phenomenal growth. Because we're talking potential here, you take a risk that could pay off really big. It's really not much of a risk, and it's actually your involvement that could make that trend take off.

And it's not like we're talking a sport with limited potential, like Log Chopping or Sheep Shearing.

Think curling on grass; challenging, fun to play, accessible, and ageless. It's ideal for TV coverage, but without the need for big slabs of ice and bitter cold. You play on a grass court (rink, actually), with unlimited opportunity for social activity off the green.

Why hasn't lawn bowls made it big in the US?

Simple lack of awareness and lack of promotional sponsors (like you?).

Time to change things. Make your brand cool, be a trend -setter. Time to find out why 20 million people play lawn bowls around the world and only 12,000 in the US.

Sponsor a sport in the US and prove to the world what your Mother always knew. That you are a brilliant marketer who can create a megatrend out of a unique opportunity.

The USLBA has an RFP for you. Take the first step. Email us at craig@mortaragency.com. Don't let someone else get closer to the jack and beat you to it. Become a sponsor of the US Lawn Bowls Association

If you're interested please respond to this RFP by 11/16/2011. If you can't respond by then, contact us anyway, and we'll provide more details.

Overview

United States Lawn Bowls Association (USLBA) is the national governing body for the sport of lawn bowling in the USA and a member of the [World Bowls Ltd.](#) an international sports federation based in Scotland that represents 52 national authorities in 46 member nations, including USA.

This sport is underdeveloped in the U.S. compared with similar international markets, and the USLBA believes there is enormous potential for growth. This is a sport enjoyed by all ages, but the average player age on an international level is primarily in the 50+ range. With the enormous numbers of "baby boomers" now entering the market every year, we believe this "Silver Tsunami" will be actively looking for "low-impact" sports such as Lawn Bowls and offers a substantial market for commercial growth and profit, both for suppliers of goods, and those associated with retirement and the active lifestyle many Americans will be looking to enjoy.

As an all-volunteer, nonprofit 501c6 tax-exempt organization, the USLBA is host to over 95 member clubs across seven geographic divisions in the U.S. that maintain their own regional events and tournament schedules. However, there are an estimated 95 clubs across the country where bowls are played.

The USLBA oversees three major national and international tournaments annually: United States National Championships, The U.S. Open, and the M.A.P International Challenge, as well as the North American Challenge (USA v. Canada) which takes place every two years.

The Southwest and Southeast divisions feature more clubs than other geographic regions, and not all states have clubs. Please visit www.USLBA.org and click on the divisions tab to explore more and learn about individual club locations.

Division Map



The current state of the sport in the US

There are some 95 clubs and approximately 17, 045 active bowlers in the U.S (USLBA due paying members = 2,562, Club members = 5,146, Casual bowlers = 9,337). If we were, through promotion, increased awareness and active marketing to reach level of involvement similar to markets such as Great Britain and Australia, that number could increase to several million. Obviously that's the rosiest of predictions, but we have to start somewhere.

And as stated in Wikipedia: "Bowls is popular...because of its competitiveness, skill and the fact that it is a non-contact sport, the game suits people from teen years through to their nineties."

That's the kind of potential we're looking at.

But we are realistic, that's only going to happen if we actively promote the sport. That's where we believe there is a major win/win opportunity for both the USLBA and potential sponsors.

We will use your the sponsorship dollars to grow the sport and so increase our membership and the value of your sponsorship at the same time.

Membership and Demographics

In most regions, membership in your own club implies membership in your own division and in the USLBA. You have to be a member of USLBA to play in national tournaments.

In most clubs, the annual dues are approx \$100 per year. Total! In some clubs this includes your divisional dues and national dues.

The average age in most clubs is around 65 and membership is about 55/45 men/women. Where clubs have been actively recruiting new members, this median age quickly drops to 55. However, it should be noted that the sport is available to most people in the 14 - 94 age group.

Most bowlers are above the national medians in health and wealth, are well travelled, and are socially friendly. Husband and wife teams are common. In many cases, the lady of the family is the better bowler. There are a significant number of British immigrants and other expats playing the sport in the USA.

The Players

As one of the few sports where young and old, male and female can be equally matched in competition and skill, the USLBA has tabs on some of the more interesting player profiles across a wide generational spectrum.

In every club you can find a member who has played for 20 or more years. In every divisional board you can find complete demographic and tournament and administrative experts. The sport has survived, and is growing in some divisions, despite this almost complete neglect of marketing and membership drives - other than at the individual club levels.

From a pair of tween-aged brothers from Berkeley, an 18-year-old prodigy on the road to joining major ranks, a 32 year old who is the 11th ranked woman in the world, a Midwest pastor-turned-pro, father/son, mother/daughter and husband/wife duos, to everyday seniors citizens who are redefining health and longevity from the health benefits from this "English Tai Chi" well into their 80s and 90s and competing with those half their age. The possibilities are endless.

Players for Team USA (Men and Women) include top-ranked members who compete on the world stage, though they seldom bring home big trophies when faced up against the powerhouse nations of Australia, UK, Canada, etc. It should be noted that while the USLBA

selects and promotes the Team USA members, no USLBA funds go towards their travel expenses- players sponsor themselves.

International players do visit the USA for some of the bigger tournaments, except the United States National Championships, which requires U.S. citizenship.

The Culture

There is a lot of old tradition associated with the sport, and it has been slow to change and adapt. The traditional pomp is often compared to that of the Kentucky Derby. In the USA, for example, most players are still strongly in favor of all whites for tournaments and summer play too, even though the rest of world has switched to colorful uniforms (as has tennis, cricket, etc) and even street clothes.

Generally, each club hosts its own culture and presentation style. Seattle's Jefferson Park club, for example, is diverse in age and socioeconomic status with a casual atmosphere and fun-filled events.

Score is often kept on a blackboard with chalk. Similarly, the club notice board and a simple newsletter (if any) is the main way of communicating with members, though email is becoming a key part of tournament sign ups and news.

There are four levels of possible support

Check the following page for a list of the benefits we can deliver. Choose the one(s) that you like best.

1. A national sponsor of the USLBA
2. A Regional sponsor
3. A local sponsor – say a state or a city
4. Sponsor an event.

1. National

At the most basic level this gives you the right to identify your brand as “An Official Sponsor of the US Lawn Bowls Association.”

For example, it might be possible to become the official sponsor of a particular category, e.g. “The Official Soft Drink of the USLBA.” On the other hand, your preference might be simply to endorse products or service offerings with the USLBA logo. Whatever is most useful for you, can be promoted throughout the U.S. See the following page for other potential benefits.

2. Regional

We are also offering regional sponsorships that might suit your markets or distribution patterns. There are two possibilities here.

1. Current USLBA regions can be identified at: <http://www.uslba.org/clubs.html>, or
2. Define a region that suits your marketing need by state or a group states. The goal of the USLBA is to allow you to propose what is efficient for your company. Benefits of this type of sponsorship are similar to the national sponsorship, only limited by the geographic agreement.

3. City or Market

The same applies to possible sponsorships of large metropolitan market areas such as “Greater Los Angeles” or “Miami and Southern Florida.”

4. Events:

Sponsorship of individual events can be negotiated on a specific basis and enquiries for this type of support should be made to Craig Patterson at craig@mortaragency.com. You can view the 2011 event calendar at:

- <http://www.uslba.org/tournaments.html>
- Whilst we cannot publish future calendars until they are complete, this level of activity represents the important future possibilities.

What can we offer within a sponsorship?

The possible benefits would vary according to the type, level and regional limitations of sponsorships, but these are the possible benefits to your company:

- The right to identify a product as “an official Sponsor of the U.S. Lawn Bowls Association”
- Use of the U.S. lawn Bowls Association logo in advertising/on products
- Advertising on the U.S. Lawn Bowls Association website
- Lawn Bowls tournament sponsorship
- Signage at clubs
- Access to star players

What we want from you

A formal proposal listing:

- A. Tell us about your company or organization. Who are you, what do you do or sell, and what you want to achieve from sponsorship.
- B. What kind of sponsorship you want to purchase.
- C. The period covered by your proposal.
- D. Agreements will be made beginning October 2011 and contracted on an annual basis. So, how many years are you applying for?
- E. The amount you are prepared to pay the USLBA for these promotional benefits

Considerations: The larger the potential sponsorship the higher the priority will be given. A national soft drink sponsorship for example would probably take precedence over a regional proposal.

In the end the goal of the USLBA is to raise money to better organize and effectively promote the sport, so budget size does matter.

Once again multi-year proposals are preferable to single year agreements. We appreciate that one of the major “variables” is the rate of growth The USLBA we will be able to achieve in the U.S. Our current membership is not large in national terms, however we believe the potential is enormous.

The more we grow the better for all parties. So a multi-year proposal will cost more, involve more risk, but equally should offer a geometric progression of potential benefits.

The relationship between sponsors and the USLBA is essentially symbiotic. We both have to do our part, and we both want to succeed.

We don't believe we can grow substantially without marketing efforts, we can't do that without sponsorship, but then the more successful we are, the more beneficial your investment will be. It's as simple as that.

If you are interested in this RFP, but cannot make the September 16 deadline Please contact Craig Patterson at craig@mortaragency.com or call (408) 802-9122