

The Chakra Super Blasters: Revenue Maximization in League Cricket

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Abstract. This disguised case examines the pricing strategy for home matches of a new cricket league team. It raises issues related to market research and pricing in services. A new champion league cricket team has started up in Chakra, Biloor and – almost nine months in advance of the first game – is planning its first season at home ground. The game dates had already been finalized, but decisions related to pricing of tickets are still pending. The management was trying to understand the results obtained via a detailed survey that will help them in pricing tickets and multi-match passes. The dilemma of the teams marketing director gets complicated as he tries to understand the intricacies of ticket pricing and its linked ancillary issues.

Keywords: pricing, cricket, market research.

It was early morning on September 19, 2018, and Abhishek Gaur already knew that this would be a long tiring day. Gaur, the marketing director for the Super Blasters, a league cricket team in Chakra, Biloor, had already received four telephone calls from local newspaper agency agents seeking his views on the city's only other professional sports team, the Pundits, a premier league Kabaddi² team, that might leave the city next season. Many people in the vicinity read the news article interviewing the general manager of the Pundits in which he said that unless the team sold 400 more tickets in the coming season, the Pundits would be leaving Chakra for another city.

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1. Achint Nigam and Prem Dewani wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality. This research work was done in the seed money project of IIM Lucknow SM-244.
 2. Kabaddi is a contact team sport. Played between 2 teams of seven players, for more information visit <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kabaddi>, accessed on 26th June, 2018

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The Super Blasters had not played a game as they were a new entrant to the Champion League Cricket (CLC) tournaments. They had just set up their offices and practicing academy in Chakra. Owner Mantavya Dewani (a local business tycoon) and President and General Manager Ved Nigam, eagerly anticipated their first season, which was scheduled to start in April 2019. But the news that the Pundits might leave was troubling. The Super Blasters, as well, needed to sell a sufficient number of season tickets for the franchise to survive and grow in Chakra. Gaur had just started preparing Super Blasters ticket offers. He would be keeping the Pundits news in mind as he moved with fixing the prices for the first season tickets – a decision he had to make before mid-December 2018 when the tickets were scheduled to go on sale around Christmas. Gaur was having a stressful time because, despite his experience in the marketing of entertainment services, such as live comedy shows, the sports industry was new to him.

1. The City of Chakra

Chakra is a tier-II city in the state of Biloor. To push the economy, the state government built a cricket stadium in Chakra in 2016 which became operational in 2017 and has hosted two international cricket matches to date. As it is a non-industrial city, the population as per the latest census data was about 50,000 people.³ The city had a couple of government owned industries and offices, and the majority of families living in Chakra made their livelihood from those industries.

The city had decent exposure to sports activities. Domestic matches for games like Kabaddi, Hockey and Badminton had been organized in the past at its various indoor stadiums. For international matches of any sport, the nearest city was Udina – approximately 210 km away. People from Chakra traveled to Udina to watch international matches frequently.

2. Champion League Cricket

The CLC tournament was started in 2010. CLC was an attempt by the cricket governing body to generate additional income and promote cricket as the international matches were not enough in meeting the growing demand for the game in India, nor were they held in large numbers to meet the monetary requirements of the board. The cricket governing body came up with CLC format to be held every year during the off-season of international cricket in April – May. This would allow international players to participate in CLC also, helping CLC to draw more audiences. In the first year the CLC tournament had eight teams. In

3. www.censusindia.gov.in, accessed on 21st June, 2018