

"DQ Shoot From the Blue"

A Sponsorship Activation Strategy

Presented By:
Brian Gainor
December 10, 2006

*“While **conventional sponsorships** build awareness and imagery by embedding brands into the sports, arts, entertainment, and causes customers love, **inspired sponsorships** galvanize behavior, unleashing the potential of the medium to enrich lives by providing access or enhancements that would otherwise not be possible.”*
- Inspiration, IEG 23rd Annual Sponsorship Conference

THE CONCEPT

Drive awareness for a Dairy Queen partnership by featuring a “DQ Shoot From the Blue”, promotion, providing local Dairy Queen franchisees with an opportunity to promote their variant Blizzard blends and increase traffic and sales in their establishments.

Contest Option:

A select fan will have the option of shooting a Blizzard from the nearest blue line to win free Blizzards for a month (one Blizzard per day for 30 days) or shoot from the farthest blue line with the intent of securing Blizzard discount coupons for all those in attendance or a select section. With this option in mind, teams can create a more interactive atmosphere for the audience.

With fans shooting blizzards across the ice with the intent of scoring, teams need to ensure that each blizzard (with a blend chosen by Dairy Queen retailers) is extremely frozen to avoid spillage onto the ice as preparation continues for the next period. With each Blizzard shot and scored in the net, fans will receive a \$1 discount on that select Blizzard at their local Dairy Queen establishment. Thus, if the shooter shoots three Blizzards into the net, fans will receive \$3 off that select Blizzard the following day. Fans will receive the redeemable discount by turning in their ticket stub at the local retail establishment.

RECOMMENDED PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

The “DQ Shoot From the Blue” will be held at every Sunday home game, providing Dairy Queen the rights to refer to the contests as Dairy Queen “Sundaes with the (insert team name)”. This will provide local Dairy Queen franchisees with ownership of the promotion and create a strengthened partnership between the two parties (leading to more sponsorship dollars). Holding the promotion on Sundays will also enable Dairy Queen to roll out the promotion of selected Blizzard items on the first day of the week. The promotion can last the duration of the season.

RETAIL ACTIVATION STRATEGY

“Sponsors are often looking for their own exclusivity, but one thing I learned from retailers is that it’s just as important to make things exclusive and proprietary to them.”
- Ralph Santana, VP Pepsi

In a collaborated partnership, Dairy Queen and the partnering property can create a specialty blizzard to be sold in local Dairy Queen establishments. The blizzard can be

sold in four limited edition souvenir cups at selected retail locations. Each cup will resemble those sold in the arena setting with decals of the team and the Dairy Queen logo on alternate sides of the façade. Fans will be encouraged at each home contest to purchase the blizzards as well as the limited edition cups. The proceeds from the promotional cups will be split between Dairy Queen and the partnering organization, with limited proceeds going to a selected local charity.

THE PROMOTIONAL LAUNCH

The partnering organization and Dairy Queen can launch the promotional blizzard item using a unique marketing strategy that will combine the “DQ Shoot From the Blue” with a celebrity appearance. Between the intermission of the second and third period, Queen, notorious for their song “We Will Rock You” can make an undisclosed appearance to perform the promotion. A red carpet will be rolled out from the south end of the arena to the farthest Blue Line, where the band can enter the rink and have the opportunity to shoot the new Blizzard product into the distant net. With a darkened setting, the team will introduce Queen with a spotlight and begin playing the “We Will Rock You” anthem, encouraging fan participation. One member of Queen would then have three attempts to convert the score for fans to receive the free promotional Blizzard. Fans would be given a coupon for a free blizzard, redeemable at all local DQ establishments, as they leave the arena. The coupon would include a bar code, which would allow Dairy Queen to track the number of individuals who redeemed their coupon for a Blizzard item, assisting them in tracking the number of direct traffic from the arena promotion.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Teams should be aware that the Dairy Queen product team might wish that the Blizzard product not be shot across the ice (as it could have a detrimental effect to the fan’s perception that the Blizzard item is extremely frozen or is used destructively). Thus, teams would need to consider an alternative promotion where the variant Blizzard blends can be promoted. For example, teams could choose a contestant to shoot three pucks with a similar activation strategy to that listed above with game attendees (consumers) receiving the opportunity to redeem their ticket stub for a discount on the selected blizzard at their local Dairy Queen establishments. However to note, the promotion’s unique sense lies in the fact that fans would have the opportunity to see the Blizzard item be implemented in a real-life hockey setting, creating excitement and viral marketing possibilities in the arena setting.
2. Because local Dairy Queen franchisees have traditionally favored signage in their sponsorship partnerships, they may be reluctant to be included in a promotional plan similar to the “DQ Shoot From the Blue” concept. However, if teams are able to demonstrate the opportunities for activation in the retail setting, complemented by increased brand awareness created through the promotion, teams and Dairy Queen franchisees can form a fruitful partnership.