Business of Tennis: Practical Application.

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ABSTRACT
Promotion of tennis from a business point of view involves taking the proper principles of business into consideration and then implementing into a practical situation. Club and federation are involved in the promotion of tennis business. Practical examples are given that will help both entities in the promotion of tennis.

INTRODUCTION
The theoretical side of the business of tennis has been explained in detail in the first part of this article, we think it would only be fitting that we give some practical examples. The focus has been on two entities namely clubs and federations. Therefore we will focus our feedback in these two sections. Please don’t forget the planning, leading, organizing and controlling involved in each example to ensure the success in each project. We would presume that through the information provided you have started and completed the planning process and are now looking at the implementation process.

CLUB
Each club would like to increase their member numbers in all levels of players. The more tennis players they have the more money they can make. Therefore we would like to sub divide this section into three parts namely beginner, intermediate, and advanced players.

Beginner
Please keep in mind that beginner tennis players can be of all ages. Each person has their own reasons/motivations for playing/starting tennis. If you are looking at increasing your junior numbers the best place to start are the schools. That is where one can market and promote a large amount of prospective client in one go. If the school has their own tennis courts it would make sense to position one of your club coaches at the school. This would make it more convenient for your program to flourish and then the parents would only have to pick up their child after tennis practice, they can stay on after school finishes. When trying to identify the schools to approach it would be recommended to choose schools that have close proximity to your club. This would better facilitate the transportation of the children from the school to the club. If the club has access to a mini-bus one could consider providing this service to ensure the children’s attendance at tennis sessions. However, please make sure you have the approval of the parents (signed indemnity forms) and adequate insurance in case of an accident. The best way to promote the club is to first make contact with the headmaster/sports coordinator of the school. Organize a meeting where you are able to give background on your club and your intentions. Ask the headmaster’s permission to conduct a small speech at one of their assemblies. Ideally the tennis director and your best player should conduct the assembly speech talking not only about the club but also the benefits of playing tennis. Pamphlets giving all concise information about the club and programs available should be given to all students of the school on their way out of the assembly hall. In addition to the assembly speech a tennis promotion can be conducted during one of the school breaks. Even if the school does not have tennis courts this promotion can be done on any flat surface. Another option is that most schools have regular newsletters or even websites that a club can advertise/promote their coaching program/club.

With the current promotion of the Play and Stay Campaign a club has the technical tools to target beginner/starter adults. This could also be done through the schools newsletter/website as all parents of each school receive this form of correspondence. Local businesses can also be approached promoting the health aspects of playing tennis and the access to equipment that can facilitate an easier approach to learning tennis i.e. Play tennis concept. It would also be recommended to put if available posters or promotional material at notice boards at shopping malls, grocery shops, and churches, or any areas where a lot of adults congregate.

Another option is to look into hiring a shop at your local shopping mall. This can work two fold in terms of promoting your club and all your programs. But also you can use it as a baby sitting option where for a fee the children can play tennis.
(using red ball and red racket) while the parents do shopping in the mall.

Intermediate players

For intermediate players the same techniques can be used as beginners. However, with intermediate players one could use additional means of promoting at all formats of competitions. All schools tournaments, national/provincial sanctioned tournaments, and leagues. Naturally all intermediate players would assume take part in some form of competition. The best way to promote your club is to host any form of competition. Therefore the prospective client has a good insight into the club. In order to make this easier for the prospective client it would make sense to have a bulletin board visible at the club for the players to gather more information. To create better awareness of the club at the same time of hosting the competition, entries to the tournament could only be done through the club’s website. Therefore the each participant if interested can gain more information about the club and the programs being offered.

Advanced players

From a business point of view working with advanced players is not that profitable as most of them would like discount in return for promoting the club they practice at. As mentioned before by giving deals to your best players in turn they can help you promote the club at the schools and in local competitions. With advanced players the best way to maximize the exposure is make sure they have the club signage on their clothing when playing competitions outside the club. One could also make an incentive scheme that the more players they make come to the club further discounts can be given to the player for training or sponsorship to play higher graded tournaments.

FEDERATION

Like in the example of the club we will divide our feedback according to the level of players. It should be said that the federation should act as a non-profit organization. However, by working as a business this would add a lot of professionalism to the federation and generate more funds to improve current program or start new ones.

Beginners players

It is in the best interest of the federation to have a participation program that looks at getting more children involved in the game of tennis. Through the establishment of the proper structures this can be achieved. There are two possible ways the federation can profit from conducting a participation program. The first way is through increasing the numbers of children playing tennis the federation could charge a licence/membership fee. This membership fee is a source of income for the federation that will enable them to expand the program, or be channelled in different directions. In return the players could get discounts at tennis sporting shops, free subscriptions to federation newsletter, and also be allowed to play federation sanctioned tournaments. The other way is by creating a database of all players which for certain companies (for example Banks) could be valuable information/exposure. By being a sponsor of the program the company in return would get exposure and availability to a data base to advertise/promote their product.

Intermediate/Advanced players

We have combined intermediate and advanced players for the federation business promotion part as they are very similar. Ideally this part of development of players should be sanctioned out to clubs and academies. If the federation wanted to get involved then it should be more on the high performance side and also if the federation has their own tennis facility. Should a federation have its own facility and want to generate income to cover the maintenance and provide resources to conduct federation projects this could be done through offering a coaching program and through membership system of the federation. As mentioned before through a membership license scheme the federation can obtain funds. Through paying a certain fee the federation can offer a service in return like discounts at tennis stores, playing federation sanctioned tournament etc. The coaching program can be marketed in the same way as what was mentioned for the club program. The program and aims are very similar.

Coaches’ education

It would make sense that each Federation would have a coaches’ education program, to ensure the development and quality of tennis coaches in their country. Much the same as with the player licence scheme the federation can generate funds through a coaches’ membership system. In return for paying a certain fee each coach in return could benefit from getting sanctioned to be a tennis coach, discounts with tennis manufactures, receiving updates of events through newsletters, and coaches education material. Additional monies can also be obtained through holding courses both certification, and non certification courses.
CONCLUSION

In conclusion we hope you find this information valuable and able to increase your tennis business. As mentioned before it is imperative that you do the planning first. This will help in the implementation and success of your tennis marketing/promotion schemes.