



Case Study

IIM Partners With
to:



Identify and Understand Their Consumer Targets

Situation

Chicago Fire Soccer Club is a Major League Soccer club based in Toyota Park in Bridgeview, IL. Currently, attendance is lagging, especially in single ticket sales. The team needs information about targeting the market to attract more attendees to games.

Challenge

To help Chicago Fire understand the different segments of the Chicagoland sports market, to identify which segments to target, and how to appeal to them

Research Solution

In-person Focus Groups with ticket holders and self-identified soccer fans



Online quantitative survey with soccer fans and ticket holders

- Evaluated entertainment choices and how soccer fits those choices
- Developed an understanding of what consumers want to get out of attending a sporting event
- Uncovered perceptions of soccer in general and specifically Chicago Fire Soccer

- Profile and quantify the target customer segments for the Chicago Fire
- Develop growth targets for each segment
- Identify the most relevant brand position and key messages
- Give Chicago Fire a roadmap to the Chicagoland soccer market, with clear target segments, and marketing and product strategies to appeal to them



Results & Outcomes:

- 1 By leveraging infographics to bring insights to life for each segment, *Insights in Marketing* easily disseminated the results from the research, ensuring adoption throughout the Chicago Fire Chicago organization.
- 2 Based on research results, Chicago Fire marketing team is employing various marketing tactics that best align with each recommended target.
- 3 Chicago Fire management is currently revising marketing communications and sales presentations to appeal specifically to the target segments and is preparing to launch a new advertising campaign based on the insights from this research.

Key insight #1 | Consumer awareness levels for the Chicago Fire are strong, greater than 80%. However, a large gap between Chicago Fire awareness and consideration for attending a Chicago Fire match exists. Identifying compelling reasons to attend a Chicago Fire match represents a substantial opportunity for increasing attendance.

Key insight #2 | Most soccer fans are casual fans. Targeting casual fans requires a completely different game plan and product offering than needed to appeal to the avid fan.

Key insight #3 | Key target segments for Chicago Fire are those who love the sport or who love the entertainment and the social value of the sport. This is potentially 13% of Chicagoland's 8.5M residents. Love of the sport is the key motivator for Chicago Fire attendance and delivering a fun, exciting, engaging fan experience — from tailgating to in-stadium — is paramount to building attendance.

Key Recommendations:

- In addition to the avid fans, Chicago Fire Soccer should appeal to the more casual fan by creating a superior experience in game attendance.
- Targeted messaging will help casual soccer fans identify and choose Chicago Fire Soccer events. The core message for all high priority segments is about the experience of being at a Chicago Fire match: the fun atmosphere of the game, pre-game activities, and enjoying the match with other fans.
- The key message will be tailored to speak to specific segments. Messaging for avid fans will focus on their love of soccer. For the casual fan seeking a social experience, messages will communicate the exciting party-like atmosphere for the segments

Client Impact

“Insights in Marketing helped us better understand which segments have the highest potential for the team. The insights they identified are invaluable to the team and we are actively using those insights in sales presentations and marketing communications.”

Chicago Fire