

Tactical Marketing Plan for the Brian Bent Memorial Aquatic Complex

July 15, 2010 – Revision 2

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Brian Bent Memorial Aquatic Complex Tactical Marketing Plan

Current Situation

On April 12, 2010 The Coronado Aquatics Facility Task Force approved a business plan for continued operation of the Brian Bent Memorial Aquatic Complex (BBMAC). The success of the business plan is predicated upon compliance of the Cooperative Model between the BBMAC and the Community aquatics center, and the development and implementation of a successful marketing plan.

With the Cooperative Model in place, it is now possible for BBMAC to focus marketing efforts on recruiting competitive swimming and training organizations and away from the local public at large. This allows for a more narrowly targeted plan with the goal of bringing in more rentals from short-term users, primarily from off-island and out-of-state teams and clubs.

BBMAC has experienced some success with recruiting college teams, primarily from Wisconsin, Nevada and Alberta, Canada. This initial success provides a good foundation and implied endorsement for additional college team recruitment efforts. Furthermore, BBMAC has been the host of local and national swimming and water polo competitions.

It is the goal of this document to recommend strategic and targeted marketing efforts that will:

- Create greater awareness of BBMAC among national collegiate swim and water polo coaches, club coaches, and other competitive swim organizations and camps.
- Encourage short term rental of BBMAC among a broader range of teams and clubs, primarily for the winter and spring seasons.
- Position BBMAC as a unique facility for competing and training due to its warm climate, superior pool and facility design, and cross-training opportunities.
- Create a more positive attitude among Coronado community member towards BBMAC and ultimately gain a sense of pride and active local support.
- Create awareness and usage of the therapy/warm water pool among physical and rehabilitation therapists in San Diego County

- Increase summer rentals with local clubs and teams

Target Audiences

It is recommended that a majority of the marketing dollars for FY 2010/11 be spent on generating short-term rentals from untapped markets such as collegiate and professional swim team organizations. A small portion of the budget will be allocated for local marketing efforts (Coronado residents, rehab and physical therapists) primarily in the form of public relations, events and face-to-face meetings. The purpose of local marketing will be to reverse any negative perceptions within the community and develop a better working relationship with local swimming coaches and organizations. Local physical therapists will also be targeted to increase the rental of the warm water/therapy pool.

With this in mind, the target audiences for the marketing tactics outlined are:

Primary:

Collegiate Swim, Water Polo and Masters Coaches –
National college, high school, masters, and club coaches, with the exception of those located in warm weather climates (California, Hawaii, Arizona, Texas and Florida.)

Swim Camp Organizations-

Primarily camps organized through swim.com and Nike.

Secondary:

Coronado residents

San Diego County physical and rehab therapists

Local swim camps and clubs

San Diego Olympic Training Center

Key Messaging

The key message represents the promise made to the targeted consumer; in this case the swim and water polo coaches. A well-crafted message for BBMAC contains information that helps set the aquatic complex apart from its competition. It also gives the prospective user reason to believe why BBMAC can deliver upon its promise. The messaging statement is never used verbatim but is the first thought communicated in all advertising and marketing materials.

The suggested Key Message Statement for BBMAC is:

Located in the desirable and convenient beach community of Coronado, California, the Brian Bent Memorial Aquatic Complex is an Olympic-class swimming and water polo facility; perfect for training and competition for all water sport venues because of the near-perfect climate and the versatility of its world-class pool.

Supporting Messages:

The 50 meter main pool's consistent 7 foot depth, movable bulkhead that can split the pool into two, and versatility to offer either eight long course lanes or 19 short course lanes makes it a perfect facility for any water sport competition or training.

BBMAC's location in Coronado, California is ideal for traveling teams because it offers easy access to one of the best beaches in the country, moderately warm climate year round, walking convenience to lodging and restaurants, cross-training opportunities and close proximity to San Diego attractions.

Brand Personality

The development of a brand personality is an important aspect of a brand's success. Why is it so important for a brand to have a personality? Because a brand personality is a concept that gives life to a brand. As with people, personality is the thing that makes a brand likeable. And when a brand is likeable, more people are willing to support the brand.

One definition of brand personality states:

“Brand personality is the attribution of human personality traits (seriousness, warmth, imagination, etc.) to a brand as a way to achieve differentiation. Usually done through long-term above-the-line advertising and appropriate packaging and graphics.”

Another describes brand personality as:

Brand image or identity expressed in terms of human characteristics. Distinguishing and identifiable characteristics, which offer consistent, enduring and predictable messages and perceptions. What people associate the brand with.”

It is proposed that a brand personality be developed for BBMAC that will bring the brand to life; to make it easily understood and likeable to the prospective user. It is the personality that should be conveyed in the development of the new marketing materials such as the web site, direct mail, brochures and ads.

Recommended brand personality descriptors for BBMAC are:

- **Relaxed** and convenient beach area – ranked 3rd best in U.S. by CNN
- **Olympic-class** aquatic facility
- **Helpful and knowledgeable** staff
- **Fast and versatile** pool configurations and training opportunities
- **Professional** venue for all levels of competition

As new marketing materials are developed, these brand personality descriptors will be communicated through copy voice and visuals. The current BBMAC identity (logo) does not accurately communicate the suggested brand personality and it is recommended that a new logo be created, depending on the financial impact. The cost for a new logo is included in the budget section of the plan but if revisions to existing signage, stationery, etc. are necessary, it may be best to delay the logo change until it's more financially feasible.

Recommended Marketing Tactics by Target Audience

All Audiences

- **Redesign web site**

The current BBMAC web site will be redesigned to appeal more to the traveling short-term rental audience. New site architecture has been suggested (Attachment 1) that strongly promotes the facility and the location. Additional photography will be added and testimonials from visiting college coaches will be featured.

- **New brand identity**

As discussed in the brand personality section, it is recommended a new logo be developed if it proves to be financially feasible. A newly designed logo would communicate the brand attributes such as its warm weather location and state-of-the-art facility.

National Swim and Water Polo Coach Audiences

- **Print Advertising**

There are three publications that reach professional national swim and water polo coaches, organizations and teams. These magazines are associated with

organizations such as ASCA, CSCAA, USMS and USA Water Polo. Advertising in these publications will create a greater awareness of BBMAC with our primary target audience and should stimulate inquiries on short-term rental.

It is recommended that the ads placed in these publications communicate the availability of a convenient travel package for out of town teams. This could include lodging, transportation and discounted or specially priced menu at select restaurants. If possible, it would be highly effective if the BBMAC could offer free lodging for the coach with a minimum night stay or with a minimum number of team members. Any incentive to encourage the first-time renter to plan a trip to BBMAC will make the advertising more effective in the short term.

The three recommended magazines are:

Swimming World Magazine – Official magazine of College Swim Coaches of America, National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association and United States Swim School Association. Printed monthly with 50,000 circulation and pass along of 4.16 readers.

American Swimming Magazine – Official magazine of ASCA, including school, college, YMCA, masters, club, water polo and USS Club coaches. Printed six times a year, *American Swimming Magazine* has a circulation between 25,000 and 30,000.

Skip Shot Magazine – Official magazine of the USA Water Polo organization with a circulation of 25,000 – 30,000. Printed four times a year.

- **Direct Mail/Facility Brochure**

Using the existing team brochure as a guide, it is recommended that a new brochure be designed that can also serve as a direct mail piece. The new piece can be designed as a self-mailer so no envelope is necessary. It is also recommended that a travel package and “free night” offer is included and additional pool photography be used. Rental fees should not be included so as fees change the piece does not become obsolete.

Mailing lists of potential teams and organizations can be developed either internally or purchased. The piece can also be used for web inquires, promotion to US Sports Camps, merchandised at the Community Pool and included in the Visit Coronado packet distributed by the Coronado Visitor Center.

It has been determined that mailing labels from the American Swimming Coaches Association are available for purchase. Approximately 700 coach's names and addresses can be acquired and used for brochure distribution.

- **Public Relations/Feature Article**

The three magazines recommended for ad placement will be targeted for a feature article that centers on BBMAC. The key to pitching feature articles to magazines is to design the story around a human-interest topic. A story could be developed about one of the players or teams training or competing at BBMAC, or it could be the story of Brian Bent and how the community came together to honor the water polo player. With BBMAC staff's guidance, a pitch story will be developed and presented to the appropriate media outlet. One suggestion from BBMAC is to highlight the story of the three Coronado water polo players on the 2008 U.S. Olympic team.

Local Audience – Rehab and Physical Therapists

- **Direct Mail**

The limited usage of the warm water/therapy pool was mentioned several times during the interviews conducted for this project. Therefore it is suggested that we increase awareness of this pool's availability among San Diego rehabilitation specialists and physical therapists. A direct mail post card is recommended that promotes the pool and encourages the therapists to visit the facility. The post card can be oversized so it features pool photography and descriptive copy. Private facility tours and perhaps one free rental can be offered to stimulate trial.

- **Warm Water/Therapy Pool Open House**

Once a post card has been sent to the rehab and physical therapist professionals announcing the availability of the pool, it is recommended that an open house event be held solely for this audience. An invitation can be sent via either mail or email if email addresses are available. It is recommended that BBMAC host the event in early fall and offer light food and refreshments along with facility tours. For greater attendance, a keynote speaker could be arranged for a short talk on a timely topic of interest to these specialists.

Local Audience – Coronado Residents

- **BBMAC Hosted Charity Event**

During the interviews conducted for this project, there were a few comments about the lack of understanding among the local community about the pool's current situation. Comments were made such as, "people think the pool is closed", and "we don't understand why we can't do lap swim at the pool."

When out-of-state teams and schools are renting the pool, it is important that any information or comments they hear about the pool from locals be positive. Therefore it is necessary for BBMAC to initiate communication within the community and keep them apprised of the facility's status. It also seems appropriate to garner additional good will among community members since it may have been compromised over the past year.

BBMAC should consider hosting a local charity fundraising event at the facility. Charity's can be considered such as Special Olympics, YMCA, Coronado PTA or an organization to help fund swim lessons within the San Diego School District.

Hosting a charity event can achieve several positive outcomes. It will create good will towards the BBMAC, bring in visitors that have not been exposed to the facility and offer an opportunity to market the facility and increase public understanding as to its purpose.

Since large events such as this take time to plan and coordinate, it is proposed that an event be targeted for late spring of 2011. BBMAC staff should discuss potential charity partners and begin conversations with these groups as soon as possible.

- **Elite Water Polo Players Event**

The BBMAC marketing team discussed the creation of a water polo event that showcased the best of high school water polo teams. This would be an invitational event where the top teams from the Southern California area are invited to compete among each other. The event could also include a clinic day with top team members from UCLA. If successful, this "best of the best" annual event could branch out into other areas of California or to middle school teams.

Miscellaneous Tactics

Below are marketing recommendations that can be completed by the BBMAC staff. These tasks along with the recommended tactical plan will work together to develop BBMAC as a highly desirable swim and water polo training and competition facility as

well as an important leader in the stewardship of Coronado's societal and economic well being.

- Olympic Training Center: BBMAC needs to develop a relationship with the Center and offer the pool for cross-training their athletes. Partnering with OTC also provides a great public relations opportunity and word-of-mouth marketing among Olympic hopefuls.
- Coronado Visitor Center Web Site: BBMAC should have a greater presence and link on this site. Even though it is not open to the public for swimming, BBMAC should use the site to market upcoming events and competitions that are open to all. It's also likely that out-of-town teams considering travel plans visit the web site.
- Partnership with local restaurants: BBMAC should partner with a few local restaurants to create special-priced menus or discounts for traveling teams.
- ecoronado.com: Revise the link to remove the Coronado High School copy.
- Chamber of Commerce web site: Better description of BBMAC in the visitor/swimming section of the web site.
- Community Outreach: BBMAC should consider staffing an intern as a community outreach coordinator. The intern can attend functions and events to help grow local relationships and increase the user base among local swim and water polo clubs, organizations, camps and other sport teams.

Tactical Plan for BBMAC Proposed Budget

Tactic/Job Number	Description	Estimated Cost
Production		
Newly Designed Web Site BBMAC-1003W	Revise existing web site to reflect new site architecture. Design and programming by Rich V. - \$2,500 Copywriting and project management - \$2,250. Cost reflects credit back to BBMAC of \$1,000.	\$4,750
New BBMAC Logo BBMAC-1002X	Redesigned logo to reflect the new brand personality.	\$500
Print Display Ad BBMAC-1004M	One full-page print ad to run in recommended swim magazines and a second version to run in the water polo magazine. Cost includes materials for all recommend publications	\$2,750
Direct Mail/Facility Brochure BBMAC-1005C	Brochure/self mailer that promotes BBMAC to the potential rental market. Based on a 6 panel – two-fold design. Existing photography will be used. Printing and mailing costs will be estimated separately.	\$2,750
Warm/Therapy Pool Post Card BBMAC-1006C	A post card for direct mail that promotes the therapy pool to local physical and rehab therapists. Post card will be 4-color/2 color. Printing and mailing costs will be estimated separately.	\$950
Production Total		\$11,700
Media		
<i>Swimming World</i>	Official publication of CSCAA, NISCA and USSSA. Full page, 4 color ad - 6 times (6 th issue is free). Includes swimmingworld.com and water polo TV	\$2,250 each \$11,250
<i>American Swimming</i>	Magazine for American Swimming Coaches Assoc. Full page, 4 color ad – 6 times Mailing list purchase – 700 names @ \$0.10 a name	\$730 each \$4,380 + \$70
<i>Skip Shot</i>	USA Water Polo Assoc. Magazine. Full page, 4 color ad – 4 times	\$1,605 each \$6,420
Media Total		\$22,120
Account and Media Management BBMAC-1010G	Monthly fee of \$1,500 for management and supervision of all projects, media negotiation and placement, meetings, correspondences and all efforts related to the marketing efforts of BBMAC. Projected period July – Oct. 2010	\$6,000

Tactic	Description	Estimated Cost
Public Relations		
Feature Article BBMAC-1009P	Pitch and manage feature article to swimming magazines on BBMAC and human-interest story.	\$500-\$750
Rehab and Physical Therapist Open House	Open house event to create awareness and stimulate trial among rehab and physical therapists.	TBD
Community Charity Event	One full page print ad to run in recommended print magazines. Cost includes materials for all recommend publications	TBD
Elite High School Water Polo Event	The “best of the best” water polo competition and clinic.	TBD
Plan Budget Total		\$40,570
Budget Remaining	Remaining budget to fund printing of brochure and post card, mailing costs, list purchases, miscellaneous creative needs, and unknown costs for elite water polo event and therapy pool open house.	\$44,430