

UMassAmherst

Isenberg School
of Management

The UMass Practicum Experience

MBA Consulting Projects

April 2020



Mark H. McCormack Department
of Sport Management

What Are ‘Practicum’ Projects?

- **Capstone Experience:** Spring, semester-long industry consulting projects that culminate the dual-degree, MBA/MS education and serve as a curriculum “capstone”
- **Experiential Learning:** High-level, strategic consulting assignments that challenge students to think critically about a business area of importance and deliver managerial recommendations
- **Consulting Simulation:** Group projects in teams of three (3) or four (4) students simulate client consulting work, with each group assigned to a particular client based on interest and segment expertise
- **McCormack Faculty:** All practicum teams are overseen by a faculty advisor who organizes the assignment brief, meets regularly with each team, and manages the group internally

Past Clients

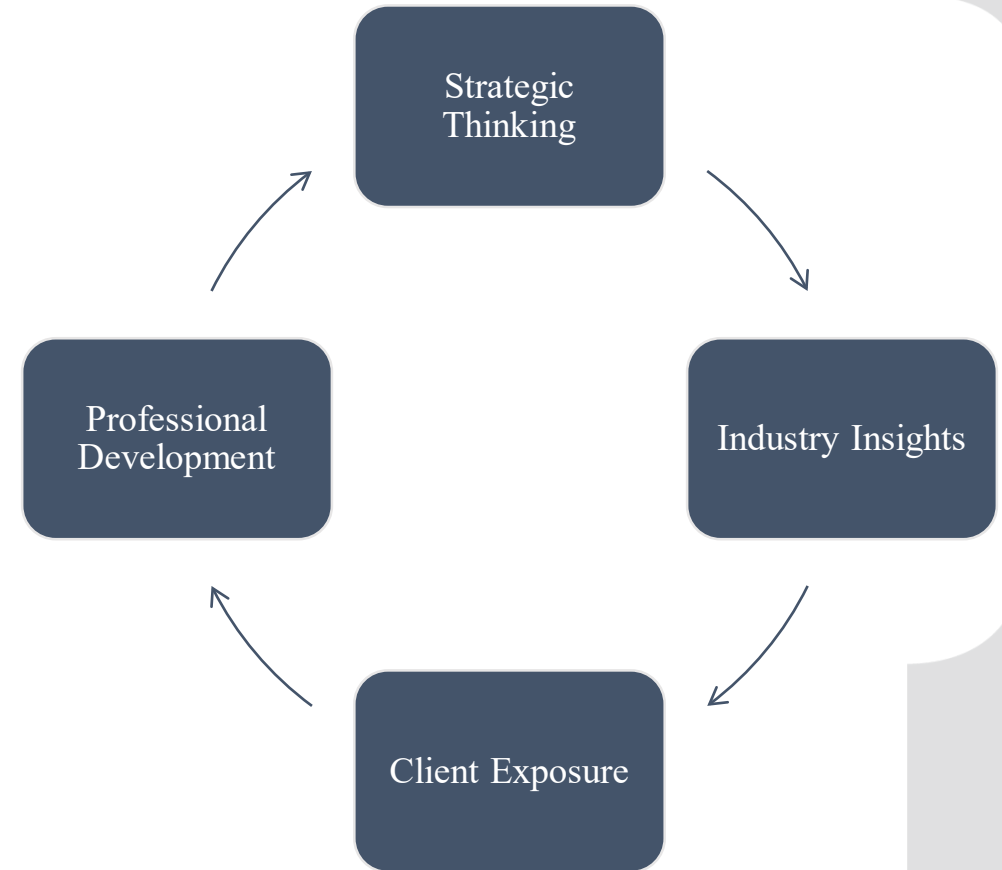


Client Requirements

- **The Brief:** In concert with the McCormack faculty advisor, each client will create a detailed brief that defines a consulting project that is both necessary and significant to the success of the organization, as well as strategically focused
- **Client Lead:** Identification of a dedicated, accessible contact person(s) for the practicum team throughout the duration of the project is critical to student success
- **Grad Program Gift:** A \$2,500 gift to the McCormack Department's Graduate Program will cover relevant hard costs of the project, and/or be funneled into future grad enrichment initiatives

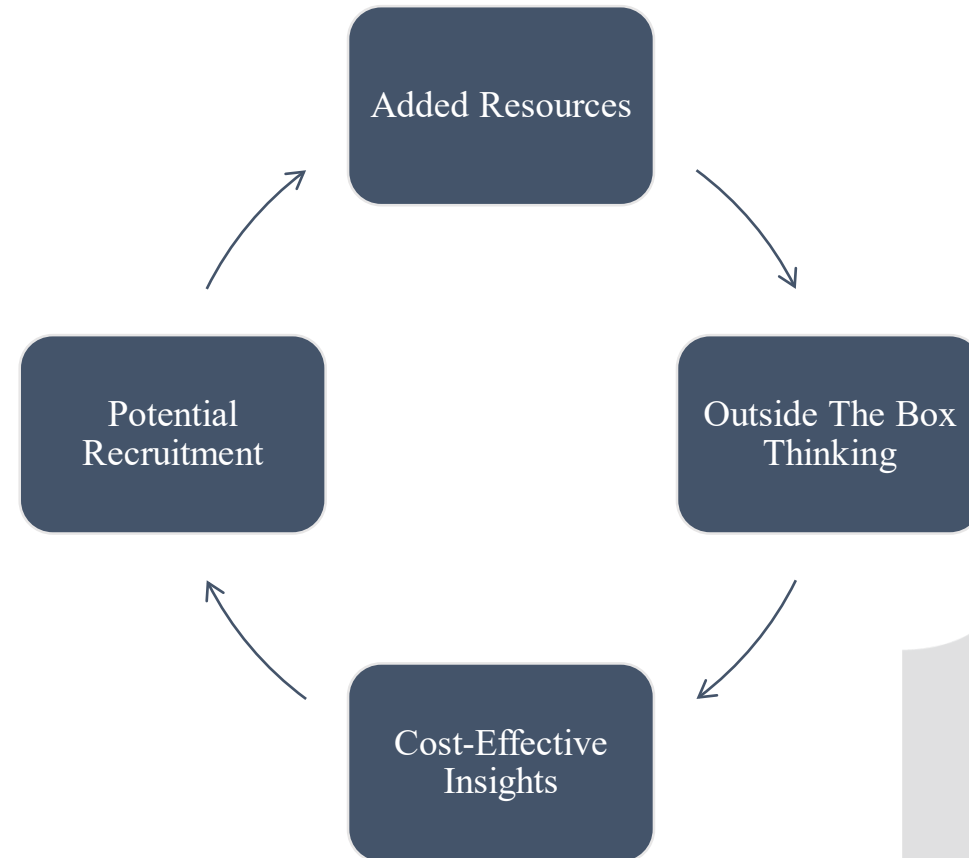
Benefits to McCormack Students

- Students soon to enter the sport business world gain **invaluable exposure** to client-facing work
- **Strategic thinking** simulates real-life consulting work, typical at common landing spots for our graduates (agencies, brands, teams)
- **Professional development skills** can be honed and refined in a formal environment: communication, presentation, data, and critical-thinking skills
- **Exposure to a living, breathing industry challenge** sharpens student acumen and cultivates industry relationships

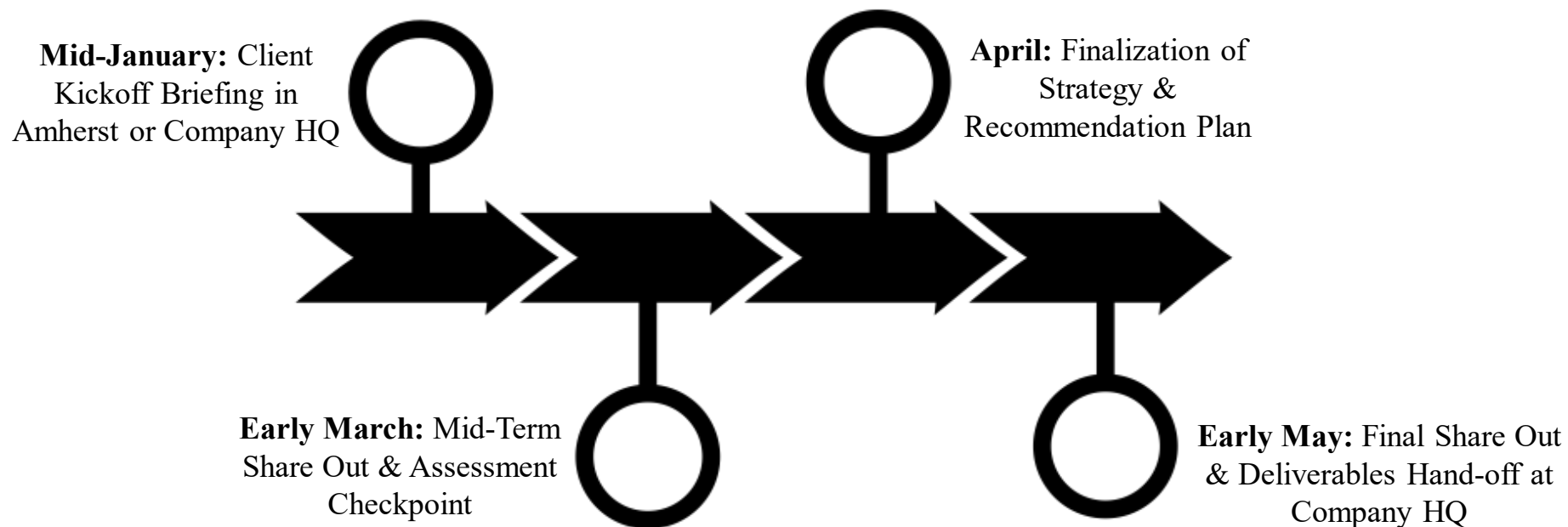


Benefits to Our Clients

- Clients looking to add entry-level and/or internship staff can train and develop future employees from the **#1 ranked master's program in the world**
- MBA students - similar in experience to junior consultants at consulting/professional services firms - provide **full-time resources to an area of need**
- **3-month project term** leads to independent and vibrant recommendations, independent of standard company thinking
- **At minimal cost**, clients gain strategic insights that form actionable recommendations for future decision making



Spring Semester Project Timeline



Spring 2020 Client Testimonials



"The UMASS MBA practicum was not only run like a veteran agency project, but the research, insights and ideas the team brought to the table were presented with turnkey detail. For a young, rapidly growing business like ours, the use of this program as an additional resource allowed us to fast-track the ideation around launching a strategic area of our business. Without the team's help, our limited internal resources would have had difficulty putting the level of time and attention on the project that the UMASS team did. This resulted in a professionally presented, in-depth roll-out plan."

Darren Brown – Head of Marketing, OOFOS



"The UMASS MBA practicum was a tremendous value-add to our day to day business, enhancing the data-driven approach with which we go to market. The work product was outstanding, and gave us a substantial leg-up on our competition. It was a pleasure to work with mature, driven and curious students looking to make an impact in the commercial sports industry."

Peter Luukko – Chairman, Oak View Group Facilities

Our MBA Students at Work!



2016: Mid-Term Check-In to UA Global Events Team at Under Armour Baltimore HQ



2018: Final Presentation at Red Bull Arena



2020: Mid-Term Check-In to USOPC Executive Team in Colorado Springs

Our MBA Students at Work!



2017: Final Presentation to Boston Cannons President & Staff



2017: Final Presentation to '47 Brand Retail & B2B Team

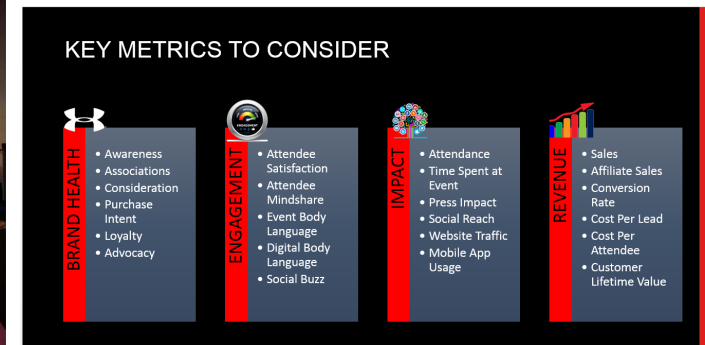
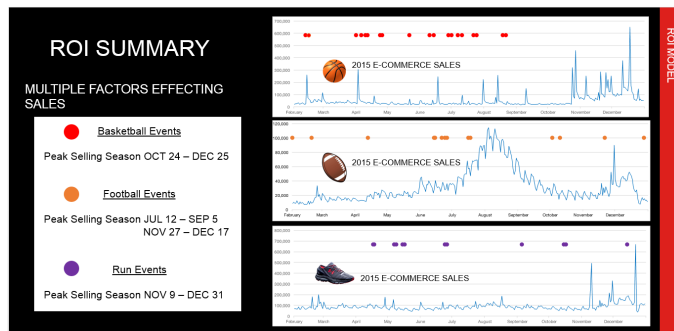


2018: Client Kickoff Briefing at Madison Square Garden

Select Past Project Abstracts

Under Armour

Working hand in hand with Under Armour's Global Events group, students created a ROI and ROO dashboard for internal event measurement, focusing on consumer engagement within the brand's portfolio of national events across the NBA, MLB, Collegiate Athletics, Running/Fitness, and Golf.

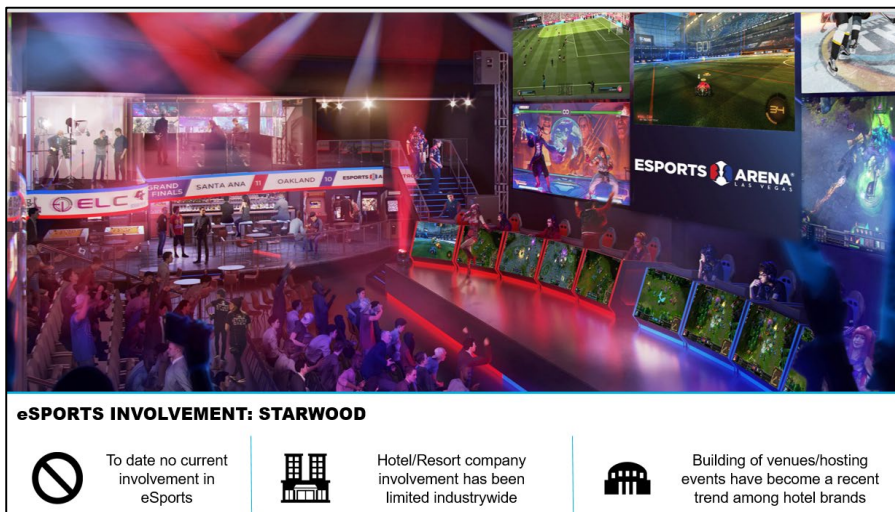


The final deliverable included a measurement path for benchmarking event success, recommendations surrounding consumer tracking efforts, retail-driving tactics for the brand's pillar events, and a "success path" for internal execution and alignment with UA's events, marketing and data science teams.

Madison Square Garden / Counter Logic Gaming

Following the 2017 acquisition by Madison Square Garden of Counter Logic Gaming, Isenberg MBA's dove into the dynamic and fast-moving world of Esports property marketing, reporting to Vice President of Marketing Partnerships Tom Cerasoli ('05 UMass alumnus).

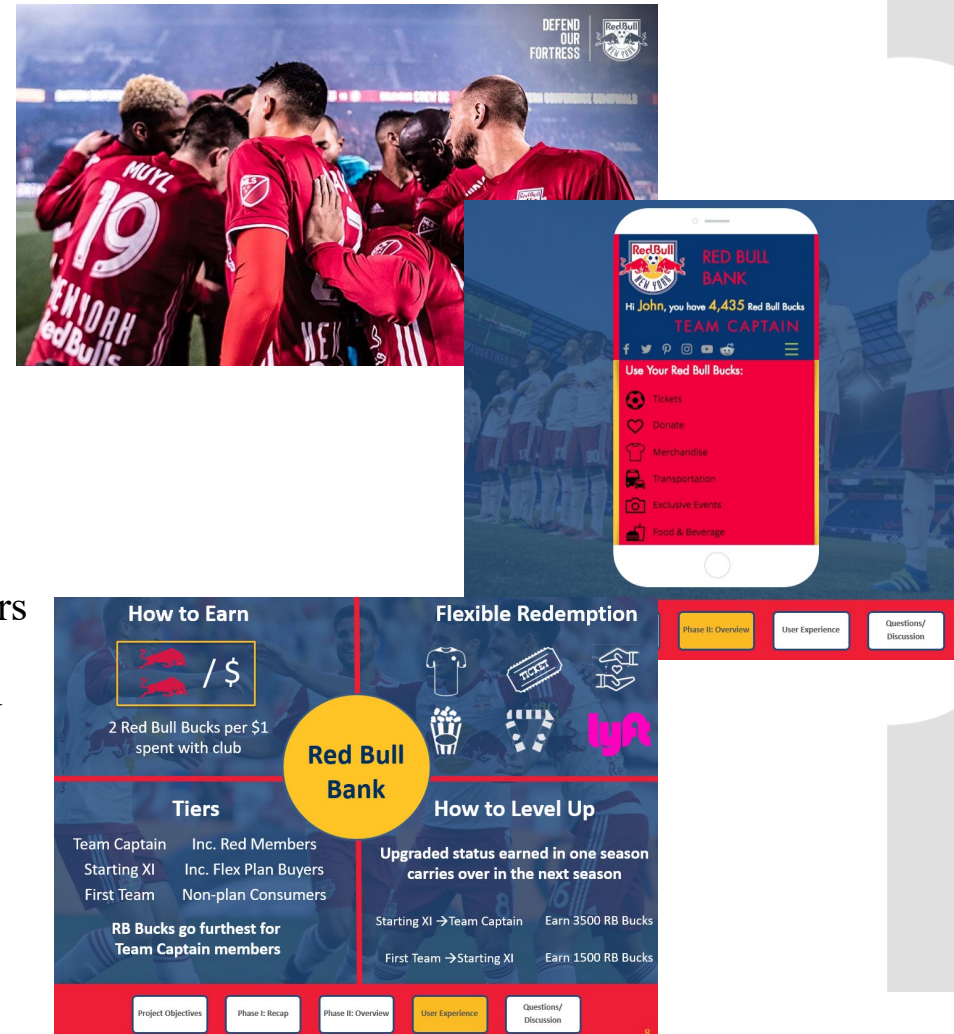
Project deliverables included a full media assessment of the commercial Esports industry, partnership best practices and benchmarking, streaming and social media recommendations for CLG assets, and ideation for future CLG campaign activations. Trips to live Esports events added texture to the project and created value for students.



New York Red Bulls

The New York Red Bulls and CRO Amy Scheer ('86 UMass alumnus) tasked students with creating a digital-first fan product that would increase optionality in the fan experience, and offer greater flexibility and value creation for the team.

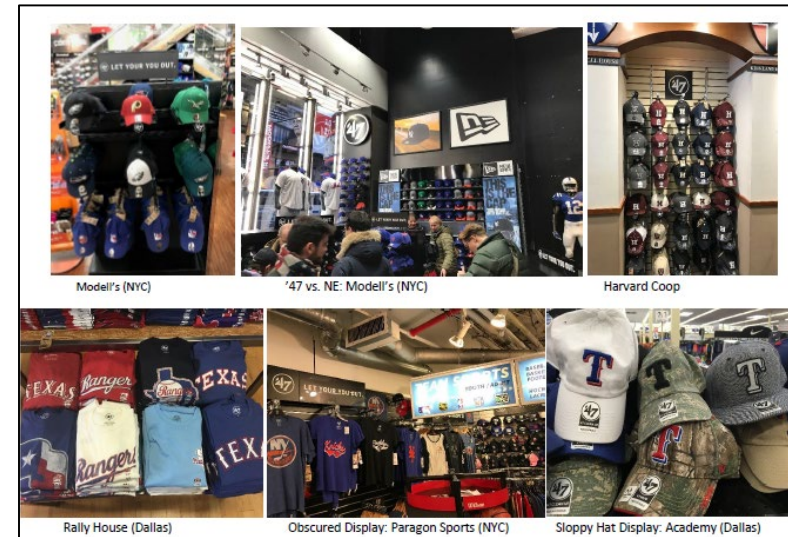
Project deliverables included qualitative fan surveying and focus groups, the creation of a mobile-first fan product tied to core pillars of the club's value proposition, and a modernized fan rewards and exchange portal that optimized flex spending and social creation, while minimizing churn and 'lost value' across all touchpoints of the fan experience.



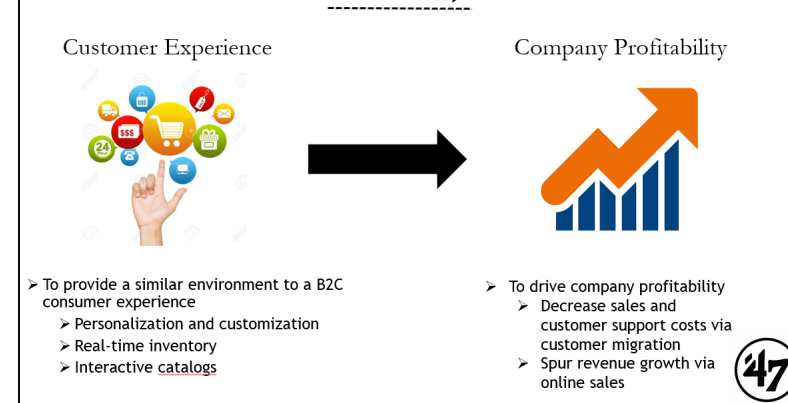
'47 Brand

'47 Brand COO Joe Keane delivered a two-pronged brief, challenging Isenberg MBA students to think critically across both B2B and B2C workflows:

- **B2B:** Develop launch materials to support a new content management system for immediate sales from on-hand inventory. Provide training documents, video tutorials, sales-friendly tools, and measures for success for '47 Brand sales team and partners
- **B2C:** Conduct a competitive analysis of nine (9) direct apparel competitors across key variables such as in-store display strategy, distribution/channel mix, and marketing collaborations



II. Launch Objectives



Bank of America

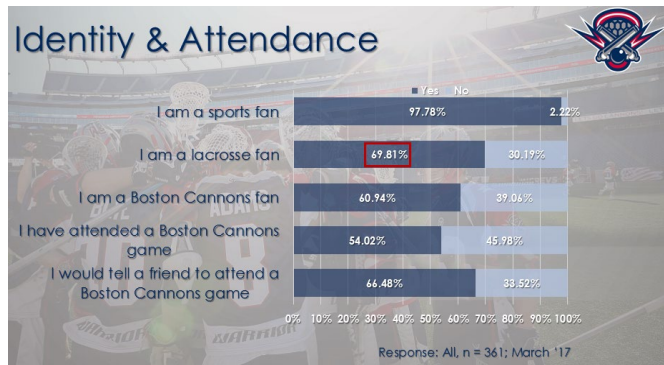
Working directly with BofA Vice President of Sponsorship Marketing Joe Smith ('05 UMass alumnus), students provided strategic recommendations for Bank of America's 2016 #MLBMemoryBank campaign, to increase attribution for the bank and drive awareness of key products and services.



Recommendations leveraged BofA's long standing league partnership deal, as well as customized local partnership assets with select MLB teams / markets. The end deliverable concluded with a team presentation at BofA's Boston headquarters to the Bank's executive team.

Boston Cannons

As a challenger brand in the highly saturated Boston professional sports market, the MLL's Boston Cannons tasked students with addressing organizational needs across a wide variety of fan-focused areas for improvement. Cannons President Ian Frenette challenged students to build primary and secondary research tools, to better understand competitive solutions regarding in-game fan experiences, brand positioning, and future stadium development.



Data-driven recommendations included: amplifying sponsorship communications on key platforms, embracing a family-centric, entertainment-first positioning vis-a-vis the high-cost 'Big 5', and constructing nimble, millennial-focused digital marketing tactics backed by platform-specific insights for increased Cannons relevancy.

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