

Focus

COUNTDOWN TO SHOWTIME

Team approach

Planners for the All-Star Game and Super Bowl create a playbook to ensure a win for Detroit

BY JENNETTE SMITH
CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

Local planners for the upcoming baseball All-Star Game and 2006 Super Bowl are working not only with top decision-makers at the National Football League and Major League Baseball, but also with each other.

Volunteer planning and some combined marketing spending are ways the events are linked as downtown Detroit prepares to host the two top-drawer games.



Sherer

Susan Sherer, executive director of the Super Bowl XL Host Committee, said a group of about 2,000 Super Bowl volunteers will be on hand during the All-Star Game in July. For example, volunteers will be stationed at hotels to direct visitors.

That will provide important practice, she said. Ultimately the Super Bowl expects to recruit 9,000 to 10,000 local volunteers.

The Super Bowl is a larger-scale event. Its estimated economic impact in metro Detroit in February 2006 is \$302 million. The All-Star Game's estimated impact in July is \$50 million.

Still, there are areas of overlap surrounding some hard costs of hosting both events, Sherer said. For instance, the Super Bowl and All-Star Game will issue a joint request for proposals for street pole banners.

Using the same vendor is expected to save money through economies

of scale, said Michael Janssen, senior vice president-operations for the Super Bowl Host Committee. The All-Star Game needs 600 to 800 banners, while the Super Bowl expects to hang 1,500 to 2,000, he said.

Both events also are participating in a marketing campaign being run by the Tourism Economic Development Council pegged largely on both sporting events.

Jim Townsend, executive director of the council, said a regional marketing campaign will launch Jan. 26 that seeks to

change the negative self-image Detroiters have. It has an initial budget of \$100,000 but is seeking corporate support for expansion in 2005.

"These sporting events are a very unusual,

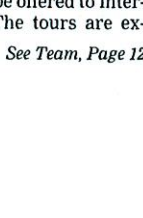
once-in-a-generation opportunity," he said. "What this campaign is focused on is changing the self-talk and focusing it on the hopeful, optimistic things."

The campaign will include tactics such as advertising, a Web site, and familiarization tours, Townsend said. In a new twist, the tours will be offered to interested locals. The tours are ex-

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Townsend



Courting the dollars:

Sponsorship, marketing activity heats up

Sponsorship and marketing efforts are well under way for both the All-Star Game and Super Bowl, planners for the events report.

■ Last month, the Super Bowl XL Host Committee announced \$6.3 million in support from General Motors Corp., DaimlerChrysler AG and Ford Motor Co. Sponsorships for the Super Bowl are 85 percent to 90 percent sold. Other local sponsors include Michigan.org, DTE Energy Co., Comerica Inc., Lear Corp., AAA Michigan Delphi Corp., Visteon Corp., Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network.

■ The All-Star Game, meanwhile, has secured sponsorships from the same national companies that are Major League Baseball supporters, but a push to find local corporate support for the All-Star FanFest event is beginning.

John Brody, senior vice president of corporate sales and marketing for MLB, said there were no local marketing budget minimums or number of sponsors targeted. The league plans to hire a local marketing company to publicize FanFest. Tickets will go on sale early this year for the event, which begins July 8.

■ The Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau and Travel Michigan are planning to offer packages for visitors to attend the All-Star Game and related events in July, said Larry Alexander,

president and CEO of the convention bureau. It is awaiting MLB decisions on how many tickets to events it will be able to include. The convention bureau also will have a large booth at the 2005 Super Bowl in Jacksonville, Fla., to market Detroit to media and others.

■ As part of the Motown Winter Blast, a Detroit Sports Bowl will allow local companies to compete in sports challenges and to win Super Bowl tickets. Sports Bowl and other smaller-scale sponsorships are available for \$5,000 to \$125,000, Tavi Fulkerson, The Fulkerson Group said.

—Jennette Smith



Raising funds for fun

Tavi Fulkerson raises the corporate dollars behind Detroit's leading sports and public events. A look at how she does it, Page 13.

FOCUS: COUNTDOWN TO SHOWTIME

Team: Joint planning, marketing efforts should score points

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pected to launch in March or April and interested people will be able to sign up online.

The program also goes in tandem with efforts of the council to provide local service workers customer service training to sharpen hospitality skills. The contractor for the training is Detroit-based **Clarke Performance Consulting**. That program started in November with taxi drivers. Detroit advertising, marketing and public-relations firm **Lovio George Inc.** is working on the new advertising program.

The application of teamwork when it makes sense arose out of a group that meets periodically called the Big 6. This group has representatives from six major sporting events being held in Detroit, from the **Ryder Cup** this past September through **NCAA** men's basketball Final Four in 2009.

"We talk about all kinds of things. ... How can we get common messages out there? How do we

TEAMWORK

Planners for the **2005 All-Star Game** and **2006 Super Bowl** have been working together to make sure both events run seamlessly. Efforts include:

■ About 2,000 Super Bowl volunteers also will work the All-Star game.

■ Committees for the two events will issue joint requests for proposals where it makes sense.

■ A joint regional marketing campaign is to launch Jan. 26.

reach out collectively?" Sherer said.

Larry Alexander, president and CEO of the **Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau**, said there is a striking lack of "turf wars" when it comes to planning both big events.

"Everybody wants to be sure we look good," he said. "Hosting these big events and having all the players at the table just helps us con-

tinue to build on that for the future. I have already had conversations with the NFL about another Super Bowl bid."

Organizers for both events understand how important it is to strive for excellence on common concerns such as improving the customer-service mindset of local hospitality and service workers, said Michael Dietz, president of Dietz Trott Sports Entertainment in Bingham Farms. And the Ryder Cup provided a great, timely case study for others to learn from about corporate hospitality possibilities executed correctly, Dietz said.

"Together they are much stronger and I think they know that," he said. Dietz was an assistant vice chairman in Ryder Cup planning and represents Fifth Avenue Downtown at Comerica Park in All-Star and Super Bowl planning.

Jeremy Rubin, national accounts sales manager at the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, said a big key to that city's success in hosting sporting events was its Atlanta Sports Council, a coalition of sports-related organizations that includes professional and college teams, venues and broadcast outlets that is affiliated with the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Atlanta, which hosted both the Super Bowl and MLB All-Star Game in

2000, was site of the 1996 Summer Olympics and has hosted numerous NCAA and NBA events.

Gary Stokan, Atlanta Sports Council president, said that Super Bowl preparations helped create working relationships between government, hotels, hospitality venues, teams, corporate leaders, the chamber of commerce, convention bureau and his sports council that last beyond the event.

"You can't put a price on how this helps a city in the future," Stokan said. And each event gives a city more experience and the ability to showcase the metro area and its special features to attract more events, he said.

"The marketing, PR, advertising and pride and working together built is priceless," Stokan said.

Roger Penske, chairman of the Super Bowl Host Committee, said he believes the teamwork established for the planning of both Detroit events will have lasting benefits. For example, the All-Star Game will likely need to use space at Ford Field and the Super Bowl will need space at Comerica Park. Long-term, that sort of relationship-building can only be beneficial, said Penske, chairman of Penske Corp.

Michael Healy, 2005 All-Star Week liaison and vice president of civic relations and event logistics for Ilitch Holdings Inc., said the Big 6 meetings and efforts of the convention bureau and others are making a huge difference.

"We're all working toward the same goal," Healy said.

Stokan said that hosting events such as the Super Bowl and All-Star Game can bring long-range and sometimes unexpected benefits to cities such as Detroit.

A great example of the special-event "aftershock" is coming as Atlanta prepares to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Summer Olympics in 2006, he said. "Great things popped up all around Centennial Park: hotels, lofts, new office space we didn't have before and some benefits we're only realizing now, 10 years later."

Volunteer practice is the most useful and practical part of having multiple sports events in a short-time frame, say other host cities. Detroit also may be fortunate to have the smaller of the events first.

"The Super Bowl is far more demanding than the All-Star Game," said Jordy Tollett, president and CEO of the Greater Houston Convention & Visitors Bureau. Houston hosted both events in 2004. Its Super Bowl experience provided "some lessons learned and lessons used" about logistics for the All-Star Game. Tollett called the Super Bowl a "monster" in terms of planning compared with the All-Star Game.

Both events benefit, however, by having experienced NFL and MLB leaders at the helm, he said.

"They are both extremely professional and competent," Tollett said. "For the most part they know what the endgame takes to be successful."

Practice through the All-Star Game and other lead-up events

NFL reaches out

The Super Bowl XL Host Committee and National Football League are to announce details of an emerging-business program to encourage more minority- and women-owned businesses to participate in the Super Bowl.

Part of the program includes the creation of a resource guide that the host committee, NFL, sponsors and NFL clients can use when selecting vendors. Also, through the emerging-business program, the NFL provides training on topics such as how to solicit sports-related business.

In addition, the host committee will announce in February details and a location for a Youth Education Town in Detroit. The \$2 million center offers after-school programs and job development.

Both are examples of NFL programs offered to Super Bowl host cities.

—Jennette Smith

Penske, Ilitch to speak

Roger Penske and Christopher Ilitch are scheduled to make presentations about the Super Bowl and All-Star Game at the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau annual meeting Jan. 26.

Penske is chairman of the Super Bowl XL Host Committee and Penske Corp. Ilitch is president and CEO of Ilitch Holdings Inc.

The meeting and an industry trade show will be held at the Ford Motor Co. Conference and Event Center in Dearborn. For more details or to register, e-mail jmiller@visitdetroit.com.

such as the Motown Winter Blast in January are critical to getting logistics down pat for the Super Bowl, Sherer said. This experience augments what host committee and city leaders learn from traveling to other host cities such as the group heading to Jacksonville, Fla., for the 2005 Super Bowl.

"I think the practice is more valuable than any observation we can make," Sherer said.

Cities also begin to greet preliminary visitors and reap financial benefits from hosting events even earlier than they may think, Houston's Tollett said.

"There is economic impact taking place right now in Detroit," he said. "People are coming to the city, looking at routes. This is where corporations and individuals want to shine in front of clients and peers."

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Robert Ankeny contributed to this report.

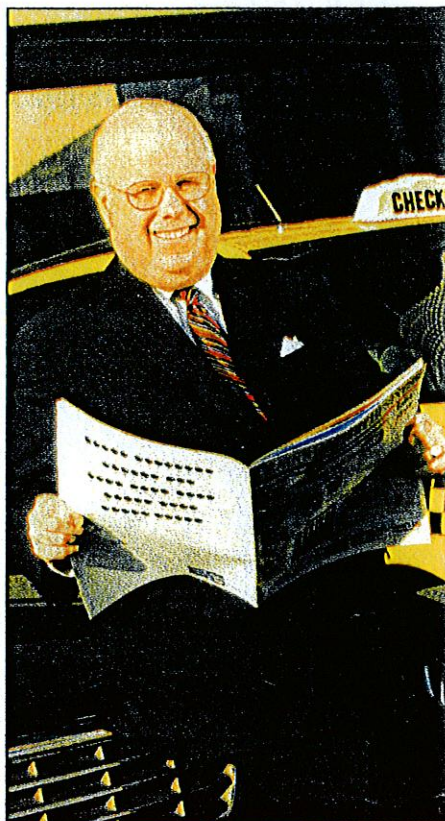


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