**Ball So Hard**

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS PLAN EVENT**

Athletic Agency

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17. **Introduction**

Ball So Hard Inc., is an international sports marketing company. Our company will offer the following services:

* Provide an avenue for Spanish players to gain exposure in the United States
* We will provide video tape highlight footage of player performance
* Maintain player statistics
* Arrange showcase tournaments for players in Spain
* Arrange travel for players to participate in showcase tournaments in the United States
* Connect players with agents to assist with contract negotiations
* Provide translators

Our company will be located in Barcelona, Spain. Barcelona is the second largest city in Spain. This is a smart business opportunity because Barcelona is of the world’s biggest tourist, economic and sports centers. Barcelona is major economic region in Europe. Barcelona has major transportation systems, with a high-speed rail line that links to France and the rest of Europe. This would make travel accessible to players from other European countries.

The target market for our company will be basketball players between the ages of 19-30, who have a desire and the ability to compete in the National Basketball Association (NBA).

We will consult with Kai Wright’s cousin, who Devin Wright, a member of Melilla Baloncesto basketball team in Malaga, Spain. Devin has played professional basketball in his native country Spain for over 10 years. Kai also has two uncles who played professional basketball in Europe and have experience with contracts and player recruitment. His uncle Stan Wright, has experience working with agents to ensure athletes he has coached receive scholarship opportunity and international exposure.

Darryl Middleton will also be a source of information. Mr. Middleton played 25 years in Europe. He is one of the most successful Americans to ever play in Europe. He has a lot of knowledge and experience with European athletes. He is currently the assistant head coach for the number one professional basketball team in Russia.

We will also consult with Ms. Belinda VanNoy, the Chief of Workforce Development Division for the Department of the Army. Ms. VanNoy was previously assigned to the Small Business office as a small business specialist. She has experience with writing grant proposals and business plans. She will be able to provide us with valuable information about federal programs for international startup businesses.

We will use the public library to find resources as well. Paul Roetzer has written several books, one which is titled “The Marketing Agency Blueprint.” We believe this book and books like this will be helpful. We will talk to different high school coaches about how they get information to colleges about their athletes. We will also consult with local AAU, NYBL scouting services.

Ms. VanNoy will be the advisor to get the business up and running. As stated previously, she has a lot of knowledge and experience with small business startups and federal grant money available. Devin Wright will be a part owner. He is currently a professional basketball player in Spain. He has over 10 years experience and has player and agent contacts in Europe.

1. **ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SITUATION**
2. **Economic, Political. And Legal Analysis of Spain**
   * 1. **Describe the trading country’s economic system, economic information important to your proposed business/product/service, the level of foreign investment in that country**

Spain’s has a capitalism and socialism economic system. This is known as a mixed economic system. Spain allows private companies to own business for profit. The Spanish government monitors the profit levels of the companies. They can take control of companies that the government feels is not good for the public.

The population in Spain is 47.8 million people. The labor force is 22.9 million, with an unemployment rate of 26%. The majority of the workforce, 70% are employed in service careers. 24% of the workforce are working in the manufacturing and mining industry. About 5% of the workforce are employed in agricultural careers. The average net salary is $24,293.98 per year. The gross domestic product is 1.389 trillion dollars, per capita $30,100. As of 2014, the inflation rate is 1.8%. The currency used in Spain is the Euro, which is worth more the United States dollar, at $1.27.

Spain has several natural resources available. Iron, coal, zinc and copper are a few of the minerals available in the country. Spain has large agricultural resources. Spain exports wheat, barley and vegetables. They are the largest producer of lemons, strawberries and oranges in Europe. The country is also the largest producer of olive oil.

Spain has a very good communication system. There are over 700 FM radio broadcast stations and 4.2 million internet service providers. Of the 47.8 million people the live in Spain, 30 million of them have internet access. As of 2012, there were 19.22 million main line telephones and over 40 million people have cell phones.

Manufacturing and agriculture are the principal industries. Spain exports $431 billion a year, in goods and services. Many of the products are produce, grains, fish, pharmaceuticals and motor vehicles. The country imports approximately $431 billion per year. Primarily, machinery equipment, medical instruments, consumer goods and chemicals. There is a strong foreign investment in Spain. The export and import with Germany, France, Italy, Portugal, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and China.

* 1. **Describe the trading country’s governmental structure and stability, how the government controls trade and private business**

Spain has a constitutional monarchy. The monarchy is inherited by birth, also known as the King. The King is the head of state and can ratify laws and nominate a person to be the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is the head of the Spanish government. They have the same system of government as the United States. Their system is known as a bicameral system, having to branches of the legislature. The have the Congress of Deputies, made of 350 deputies, elected by the people. The other branch is the Senate, which consists of 259 members. The difference from the US Senate is, of the 259 members, 208 are elected, the remaining are appointed by regional legislatures. There are two major political parties in Spain, the Spanish Socialist Party and the Peoples Party.

There are two local governments in Spain. They are the provinces and municipalities. The municipalities establish and pass local laws that are in compliance with national law. Similar to the US system, each state can enact a law, based on the laws passed by the Congress. Municipalities can create their own local taxes, but provinces cannot. The provinces provide services not available to smaller municipalities. They also ensure the municipalities cooperate with each other. The Spanish government is stable. Due to the high unemployment rate there were protest. In 2012 the government announced several reforms to decrease the unemployment rate, improve essential services and deregulate certain services for private industry, just to name a few.

* 1. **Describe laws and/or governmental agencies that affect your business / product / service**

As stated previously, Spain has favorable trade relationships with several foreign countries. They are a member of the European Community (EC). They must follow all directives given by the EC about exports and imports. The Spanish government places high tariffs on importers that are not EC members. Many items, such as narcotics are prohibited from entry to the country. Other item like explosives, seeds, oil and gold have quotas. All importers must be licensed and importers that do not comply with Spanish labeling and markings on products are prohibited.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is an agency in the US that conducts investigations of unfair labor practices. Many professional athletes have unions and have collective bargaining agreements (CBA). These CBAs will determine working conditions, hours and salary earned. More than half of the states in the US monitor player agents to ensure the agent conducts business on the behalf of the player. The European Union is a politico-economic union made of 28 member states that are mostly located in Europe. This is the agency that will acts as the NLRB does in the US. Although each member state is responsible for sports, the EU will regulate individual player movement within Europe and internationally. The Bosman ruling passed by the EU, allows for player to move to another team at the end of their contract without paying a fee. This ruling banned nationality quotas for sports teams. This will have a positive impact for Ball So Hard, Inc. The top teams in Spain are able to recruit player from all over Europe. Ball So Hard, Inc. will have a large selection of European talent to recruit.

1. **Trade area and cultural analysis** 
   1. **Geographic and demographic information, important customs and traditions, other pertinent cultural information, competitive advantages and disadvantages of the proposed product and/or service**

Barcelona is the capital city of Spain and the second largest city in the country. The city is located on the coast of the Mediterrean Sea. There are over 5 million people living in Barcelona. The majority of the population, over 4 million people live in the urban area. There are 73 neighborhoods in Barcelona. Forty-five of these neighborhoods have a population over 20,000 people per square kilometer.

The official language in Barcelona is Spanish. Although the majority of the residents are Roman Catholic, Barcelona has the largest Jewish community in Spain. There are about 3,500 Jewish people living in Barcelona. The average temperature in Barcelona is 68 degrees. The winters are mild with temperatures ranging from 45-63 degrees. August is the warmest month, with temperatures ranging between 77-88 degrees.

Barcelona is governed by a city council, made up of 41 elected city councilors. The councilors serve a 4 year term. The city has a public school system and several private schools. Many of the private school are run by the Roman Catholic Church. Barcelona has several public universities. The University of Barcelona is well known as a research and teaching university.

Barcelona has a lot of culture. There are several places for live music and theatre. The Gran Teatre del Liceu is a world renowned opera house. Barcelona has been a great market for sports. In 1992, the summer Olympics were held there. The 2013 World Aquatics Championships were held in Barcelona. Over 25 international sports events have been held in Barcelona. Football (soccer) is the major sport in Barcelona, as it is throughout Europe. With the emergence of Spanish players into the National Basketball Association (NBA), basketball has a large following.

* 1. **Market segment analysis target market (age, income level, population estimate, other specific demographic and economic information) customer buying behavior related to the proposed product and or service**

The clients for Ball So Hard, Inc., will be male basketball players, between the ages 19-25. Their economic levels will vary from low-middle income. These athletes will have completed high school and may be pursuing higher education. The athletes will be of various ethnic backgrounds.

The athletes will primarily be from Barcelona and cities throughout Spain. The clients we seek to represent are athletes that are dedicated to playing professional basketball. This will be measured by their performance on and off the court. We seek motivated athletes that are able to compete at the NBA level.

Devin Wright will scout the talent in Spain and refer them to the company. The athletes will purchase our services by attending an information presentation. We will give an overview of our services. A power point presentation will be shown to each perspective client. The client will sign a contract with us for one year. The client will have the option to cancel or renew the contract at the end of the year.

* 1. **Analysis of the potential location—importance and requirements of each trade document required by the U.S.A. and/or Canada and the country of choice**

We selected Barcelona because FC Barcelona Basquet, is the oldest professional basketball club in Spain. It was founded in 1926 and is part of the FC Barcelona sports club. The club competes in Asociacion de Clubes de Baloncesto (ACB) and the Euroleague. FC Barcelona Basquet has won more than half of the last 13 ACB championships. FC Barcelona Bàsquet has played in seven Euroleague finals. They won the championship in 2010. Pau and Marc Gasol, Juan Carlos Navarro and Ricky Rubio are some of the athletes that played for FC Barcelona Basquet, that are presently playing in the NBA. We believe the area has a lot of talented athletes that are able to play at the NBA level, but need exposure.

The European Union will regulate individual player movement in Europe and internationally. The EU will ensure there are no unfair labor practices when dealing with athletes. There are no restrictions on player movement from one team to another or internationally.

1. **PLANNED OPERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUSINESS/PRODUCT/SERVICE**
2. **Proposed organization**
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   1. Details of the product(s)/service(s) to be offered; include potential suppliers, manufacturing plans, inventory policies, if applicable. If the business is a service business, appropriate information about plans to provide the service, including necessary supplies

* Well we don’t have any products, however our service is that we market players from different countries so that they can come to America and play sports.
  1. How the product/supplies will be transported to/from the home country; costs, benefits, risks of the transportation method; documents needed to transport the product/supplies
* We well get our players to America by flying them here
* We select this because it the easiest way for our players to make it to America. It fits the needs because the faster the players get there the more time the coaching staff has to look over the strengths and weaknesses of the players
* We’ll modify our athletes by getting them stronger, faster, and smarter for the sports here in America. This is because if you go out there and shine on the field or the court coaches well see that we took our time and worked with the athlete to prepare him for the occasion
* well our service will be the acquiring of athletes for different countries and train them to get ready for the American style of sports
* Well we will take pictures and video of our athletes of them in action. To show off their skills form that point, as we work with them show how they have improved in their skill sets
* Our service will be transported from the countries we are based in
* The cost of our air fare for the athletes is free and private, the benefits are that they can relax on the plane without any distractions. There aren’t really risk
* The athletes will have a passport, a bill of landing, and also a letter entitling them where they are to be headed.

1. **Proposed strategies** 
   1. Proposed pricing policies, what currency will be used, costs, markups, markdowns, relation to competition, factors that could affect the price of the product
   2. Proposed promotional program, promotional activity(ies), media availability, costs, one-year promotional plan outline

* Our main methods of communications will be the internet, personal promotion activities such as hosting games featuring those players
* We well use radio, television, websites, banners, and billboards
* For publicity we’ll use a press kit, special events, and interviews
* We’ll be sponsored by Nike. Adidas, Under Armor, and other sports associated brands. This will promote our business because if people see we are associated with these companies they will get the sense that we’re a legitimate organization that wants the betterment for our clients and nothing else

1. **PLANNED FINANCING**
2. Projected income statements for first year’s operation (sales, expenses, profit/loss)
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