

Minor League Baseball Season Ticket Renewals: An In-Depth Interview Analysis of Fans

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Abstract

Minor League Baseball is a multi-million dollar enterprise responsible for thousands of employment opportunities. Each summer, players, managers and coaches, team administrators, and local residents serving as temporary employees benefit from the games played in minor league baseball facilities around the United States. In 2012, the organization known as Minor League Baseball consisted of 15 leagues and 176 individual organizations, and for the 8th consecutive year, over 41,000,000 people attended regular season minor league baseball games (<http://www.milb.com/news/article.jsp>).

Various studies have attempted to predict or determine the factors that lead fans to attend minor league baseball games. The majority of these studies focus on the single-game consumer who purchases tickets for individual games at his or her convenience. Scant research attention has been paid to season ticket holders in minor league baseball. As season ticket holders purchase a set number of ballpark seats for a guaranteed number of games prior to the start of a season, they represent one of the most important sources of revenue generated by a minor league baseball franchise.

The present study utilizes in-depth interview of a total of 22 season ticket holders from two different Minor League Baseball teams. Ten extended telephone interviews were conducted with season ticket holders of a Triple A level minor league baseball franchise, and twelve in-person interviews were conducted with season ticket holders of a Single A level minor league baseball franchise. All participants in the study had purchased season tickets for a minimum of 3 consecutive years.

Interview transcripts were reviewed and examined to determine if patterns or themes emerged in terms of the motivating forces behind season ticket renewals for minor league baseball fans. The analysis of the in-depth interviews suggests multiple themes as motivation for renewing season ticket purchases at the minor league level. The motivating forces most commonly seen were based on family involvement, low-cost entertainment, and tradition.

References

(http://www.milb.com/news/article.jsp?ymd=20120912&content_id=38308618&fext=.jsp&vkey=pr_milb)