

**A STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT ENTITY
MORESPORTS**

by

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Abstract

MoreSports offers valuable and accessible sports programming to children in east side Vancouver; its focus is on inclusion in a fun, non-competitive environment. Functioning as a not-for-profit (although not a legal entity), this organization brings together stakeholders within each community, including institutions such as the Vancouver School Board and Vancouver Park Board, to pool their resources towards program provision. Through its hub-based collaborative partnerships, MoreSports fills service gaps in current sport and recreation opportunities for children. Additionally, it provides leadership development and volunteer coaching opportunities to neighbourhood youth to help build local community capacity. This paper analyzes the organization and its external environment, providing recommendations that will allow further growth and expansion, so that more involvement and participation is possible. Conclusions include attaining official and continued support from current stakeholders and additional sponsorship from outside sources.

Keywords: MoreSports; sport; inclusion; not-for-profit; partnership; youth engagement; participation

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this to Paul for his continued support and encouragement throughout the entire process. His willingness to listen and provide feedback from another perspective was invaluable to this work and my sanity during the MBA program.

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1: Introduction

1.1 The MoreSports Concept and Programs

MoreSports is a collaborative community initiative and partnership whose mandate is to provide “sustainable sport and physical activity opportunities for children and families living in Vancouver”¹. While it functions as a not-for-profit in purpose and practice, it is not a registered charity or legal entity (for reasons discussed later). Currently operating out of seven distinct hubs (English Bay, Inner City, Hastings, East Central, Midtown, Middle Fraserview, and East Fraserview), MoreSports offers a range of sport programming to children in surrounding communities. It targets children who would not traditionally participate in organized sport (e.g. girls, ethnic minorities, etc.) and strives to remove barriers such as cost, transportation, lack of physical infrastructure, lack of age appropriate activities, and fear or mistrust of the competitive sports system². Additionally, to overcome the lack of trained coaches and volunteers in many communities, it aims to build capacity by offering coaching, leadership, and skill development courses to community youth (through its YELL program) and then provides these youth with volunteer coaching opportunities as part of its community sports program model. By doing so, it aspires to promote the value of sport, active living, leadership, and community involvement to younger generations.

¹ MoreSports. (2009) About MoreSports. <http://www.moresports.org/about/>

² MoreSports. (2009). MoreSports Snapshot Spring 2009.

In order to provide its inclusive and sustainable programs, MoreSports actively engages in partnerships with local recreational organizations (community centres and neighbourhood houses), schools, government agencies, sports organizations, not-for-profit organizations, and private businesses within Vancouver. MoreSports believes that sustainable sports program delivery and community capacity building is possible through the active involvement of all stakeholders and the creative use of their shared resources.

1.2 The Goal of this Paper

With the increasing prevalence of overweight and obese children and adolescents in Canada³, access to inclusive sports and physical activity programming can provide a potential solution to this health predicament. Further, the need for affordable activity for BC's families and children is paramount in struggling economic times with increasing unemployment rates⁴ and median household incomes⁵ below the national average. Additionally, with escalating gang violence in Vancouver, youth engagement and involvement in community sport volunteerism may provide the necessary positive experiences for youth to make better life choices and feel less marginalized; it also aids in making them more employable in the future. Due to these external factors, MoreSports has a unique opportunity to increase participation in its programs and share its knowledge with others who wish to take the concept and implement it within additional communities. Nonetheless, in order to satisfy the potential demand, MoreSports requires continued support from stakeholders, funding from external sources, and/or a way to

³ Shields, M. (2004). Measured Obesity: Overweight Canadian Children and Adolescents.

⁴ CBC News. (2009). Unemployment Rate climbs to 6.7% in BC

⁵ Statistics Canada. (2009). Median Total Income, by family type, by province and territory 2002-2006

streamline its operations and reduce its costs. The goal of this paper is to provide practical suggestions to MoreSports to increase its chance for sustained success and expansion. This paper will explore how MoreSports can improve its operations to increase its competitive advantage while also better communicating its value proposition to potential stakeholders and/or funders. It will analyze both the internal issues and the external environment in order to do so. From this examination, this paper will provide MoreSports with recommendations for its future business strategy and planning.

2: The MoreSports Organization

2.1 History and Rationale for Existence

2.1.1 History 1999-2009⁶

In 1999, Carole Brown, Community Recreation Coordinator of Ray-Cam Cooperative Centre, and Bob Gilson, then Executive Director of TradeWorks Training Society, along with a few other community-minded individuals created the original concept that would later develop into MoreSports. The discussion began around the lack of available sport and recreational activities for children in Vancouver's inner city neighbourhoods along with the lack of job opportunities for the at-risk community youth. Further, the current users of inner city area sports fields were not members of inner city neighbourhoods, but instead were often from other parts of the city where available activities were not lacking. Additionally, the inner city community lacked natural leaders who could step into coaching/program delivery roles. Moreover, while organizations such as KidSport provided grants for low-income families to participate in sport, its charity model required that families register through a different process than the regular registrant. They were required to fill out additional paperwork to gain funding approval prior to registration. This was often exclusionary and stigmatized those who needed to go that route. As such, the group developed East Van Soccer to address the issues. After applying and being approved for a Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) grant through TradeWorks to fund the project, 12 identified at-risk youth were hired and

⁶ Based on personal communications with Dick Woldring, June 30, 2009 and Carole Brown, July 8, 2009

trained as recreation sport leaders to coach soccer to children in inner city Vancouver (which included three neighbourhoods: Downtown East Side, Strathcona, and Grandview-Woodlands) over a six month period. Apart from taking National Coaching Certificate Programs (NCCP), the youth went through mentorship and leadership programs as well as resume writing and job skills training. Alan Churchyard, also hired through the grant, facilitated the delivery of the training programs; his involvement with BC Soccer made soccer the logical choice for the first grant proposal. After the completion of their training, the youth leaders went into a few inner city elementary school Physical Education classes and offered “School Days” programs, providing activities that worked on progressive skill development to teach the students soccer. (These “School Days” programs continue to be offered today.) The encouraging response illustrated that additional programs were required, so East Van Soccer expanded outside of classroom time to afterschool and Saturdays to meet the demand. This evolution continued for the next three years with the funding of four additional HRDC grants in six month cycles. Ray-Cam Cooperative Centre provided employment to youth leaders in the interim as HRDC was slow to process and to approve grants. In 2002, the name MoreSports was coined.

However, in 2002, funding from HRDC was interrupted for seven months due to an ongoing scandal about the agency’s handling of funds; this funding interruption caused MoreSports to be unable to retain the services of Churchyard. Due to this interruption along with other concerns about the viability of the HRDC grants and lack of fit between the grant requirements/restrictions and the MoreSports concept, the group searched for other funders. Based on a past funding relationship with Ray-Cam

Cooperative Centre, Brown approached the McConnell Foundation for MoreSports funding. Despite the foundation’s general focus on social issues and not sport, the MoreSports capacity building and inclusion model fell within the foundation’s purview of social change support. In 2003, MoreSports received three years of funding from the McConnell Foundation to continue its efforts and work on a wider scale. With this funding, MoreSports hired external contractors to assess and document the organization and produce a Social Context report to delineate its importance in the competitive landscape. Additionally, 25-30 stakeholders participated in a two-day values discussion and visioning workshop facilitated by an external party, Sport BC; together they created a document outlining the MoreSports vision, mission, and values, which continue to guide the partnership today. See Table 1 below:

Table 1. MoreSports stated Vision, Mission, and Values⁷

Vision	Every child in the city, regardless of social or economic background or special needs, will regularly participate in a sport and develop a life-long love of being active.		
Mission	To create sustainable community sport programs, in Vancouver Inner-City neighbourhoods, so that all children and youth have an opportunity to develop fundamental life skills and a love of sport.		
Values	Participation	Organizational	Operating
	Fun Welcoming Social Enabling Educational Mentoring Wellness	Community Engagement Neighbourhood Centred Family Based Volunteerism Inclusive Innovative Sustaining	Partnerships Systematic Integrity Collaborative Trust Accountable Respect

⁷ MoreSports Rationale, Mandate, Values, Goals and Objectives. 2004.

Other neighbourhoods were beginning to acknowledge the value of the MoreSports model; with the efforts of a few key people, the Midtown hub (in the Mount Pleasant and Little Mountain neighbourhoods) formed and became operational.

In Fall 2004, MoreSports hired Dick Woldring as an external consultant charged with further analyzing and coordinating operations. By this time, MoreSports received additional funding from the newly named Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and operated in three independent areas or hubs, Inner City, Hastings and Midtown. The hubs also added basketball to their programs, offering the sport during the fall and winter seasons, while soccer programming continued in the spring season. (MoreSports realized that it could not compete with the soccer clubs, which ran September to March, or get the necessary access to fields in any season other than spring). Additional sports were also included on a lesser basis in individual hubs and included hockey, flag football, softball and ultimate.⁸

In late 2004, the board of directors at TradeWorks changed and promptly removed Gilson from his Executive Director position. As a result, the relationship between MoreSports and TradeWorks soured. This created additional complications with the MoreSports programming grants that TradeWorks administered. This jolt caused the remaining stakeholders to refocus their efforts and reorganize into the operational structure that they remain in today (which will be described in section 2.2 below).

In 2005, MoreSports further capitalized on the restructuring of the Vancouver School Board (VSB) community school system, which coordinated additional literacy, physical activity, and social responsibility programming to Vancouver elementary school

⁸ MoreSports History and Overview November 2004.

students. While community school staff originally worked in individual elementary schools and provided service to only those students, the VSB shifted to a community team model; staff members, placed in secondary schools, were charged with providing programming to each of their feeder elementary schools. As such, the new Community School Teams, which generally consisted of one teacher, one youth worker, one Coordinator, and one Programmer, were established within the VSB school structure to provide the mandated programming and services. Due to a parallel mandate to provide physical activity programs, MoreSports proposed to help fund sport programs in VSB facilities through a more formal partnership with the Community School Teams. MoreSports would top-up part-time Community School Programmers' and activity workers' salaries to expand offerings, reach more children, and increase participation while under the MoreSports banner. As a result, MoreSports expanded to six operating hubs almost immediately (adding East Central, English Bay, and East Fraserview) with the seventh hub (Middle Fraserview) becoming operational in 2006. Moreover, many hubs further focused on program development by continuing to provide other sports and physical activities that were of interest to the community. This included non-traditional activities such as the Acrix program, which included gymnastics, juggling, and other activities. To date, 20 different sports programs have been offered (at least once), including badminton, volleyball, snowboarding, field hockey, etc.⁹

Participation increased dramatically, from a few hundred children to approximately 3800 children within four years of its founding in 1999¹⁰, and MoreSports realized it needed to address the shortage of trained leaders to provide programming as

⁹ MoreSports Snapshot Spring 2009.

¹⁰ MoreSports. (2004). MoreSports History and Overview November 2004.

registration increased. Unlike minor league sports organizations, which relied on parent volunteers, MoreSports decided to recruit and train secondary school students to provide the necessary services and developed the Youth Engage Learn Lead (YELL) program. The Community School Teams had access to a large pool of students who generally were available afterschool and on weekends to deliver programming. This program was funded through the support of the McConnell and Diamond Foundations. Piloted in one school in different training formats (three day intensives, six Saturdays in a row, modules throughout the year in leadership classes), YELL was implemented in seven secondary schools in its second year of existence. YELL served multiple purposes: it engaged community youth who might otherwise become marginalized; it provided these youth with volunteer opportunities, which were mandatory for secondary school graduation; it fulfilled the requirement of MoreSports for trained leaders; it built community capacity by training individuals from the community. The process was mutually beneficial to all involved. Approximately 1800 youth have been trained since its inception, providing up to 30,000 volunteer hours. Eleven secondary schools are now involved.

In 2007, MoreSports formed its constitution and bylaws to be recognized as a not-for-profit by governmental funding bodies despite still not being a registered charitable organization. As such, it was able to apply for Direct Access Gaming monies through the provincial government. Some MoreSports hubs continued to receive support through the fundraising efforts of individual stakeholders (e.g. Bell Canada provided money to the Midtown Hub for its soccer program). By 2008, MoreSports had gained attention from other communities in BC, like Burnaby, and various sports organizations in eastern

Canada¹¹. Additionally, MoreSports received funding from the Vancouver Olympic Committee (VANOC) based on VANOC's required commitment to Inner City Inclusivity; MoreSports was one of the only organizations funded through this due to its proven results. In 2009, the City of Burnaby and the Burnaby School Board adopted the MoreSports concept and put it into practice in inner city areas; they currently operate as a separate, independent chapter of MoreSports.

Despite moving forward in many areas, MoreSports has yet to achieve official and documented support from its two largest stakeholders, the VSB and Vancouver Park Board (VPB). Its hope is to sign official Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between MoreSports and each of these institutions. This has been unattainable to this point due to MoreSports lack of legal status, (a deliberate choice explained later). Nonetheless, this issue could be remedied if another organization adopted MoreSports as one of its programs.

2.1.2 Rationale for Existence

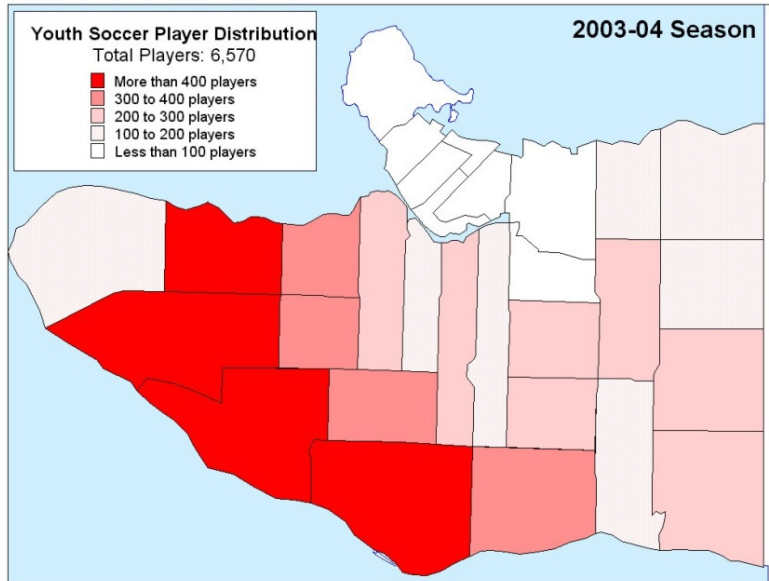
As mentioned previously, the original purpose of MoreSports was to address a notable gap in service and opportunities for the children and youth in inner city Vancouver. The organization began providing programming to this area, which was the most lacking in service and had the highest population of low-income families. However, it soon became apparent that reduced participation existed elsewhere in the city, hence, MoreSports' decision to expand into other neighbourhoods.

A 2003 study on youth soccer player distribution in Vancouver found that participation levels varied greatly across the city, with east side neighbourhoods having

¹¹ Zacharias, Yvonne. (2008). When the going gets tough.

markedly less participation than in the more affluent west side of the city (see figure 1 below). MoreSports realized that a large number of children and youth could benefit from its services and programming, and not just the populations in inner city neighbourhoods.

Figure 1. 2003-04 Vancouver Youth Soccer Player Distribution¹²



Further, in a community asset mapping project done by Clyde Hertzman et al. at UBC, the overall physical health and well-being of children within Vancouver was observed to be distinctly lower in inner city and east side communities¹³. This resulted largely from a lack of childhood participation in physical activity.

A contributing factor to this discrepancy amongst Vancouver communities was that minor league sports organizations and clubs were based out of certain parts of the city, generally the west side, even if they used fields throughout the city. With most of the activities taking place on the west side (i.e. practices, most games), participants from

¹² MoreSports Presentation 2008

¹³ Hertzman et al. (2002). Early Development in Vancouver: Report on Community Asset Mapping Project.

east side communities were required to travel to play. Transportation was an issue for many families. Additionally, club fees were too costly for many Vancouver families and required upfront payment and commitment. For low-income families to access these programs, they needed to approach charitable organizations, such as KidSport, and apply for a subsidy before they could register. Minor league clubs also largely held a competitive focus in regards to sport which proved intimidating for some potential participants who were not as skilled and/or did not buy into a “win at all costs” attitude. Lastly, families who were unfamiliar with the minor league system tended to not get involved. As a result, many children who were interested in sport were not participating due to the barriers to enrolment within the minor league sports system.

The lack of community sports development and capacity building done by most recreational institutions (e.g. community centres and neighbourhood houses) in the areas with low participation further contributed to the discrepancy. For example, community centres offered sports programming infrequently or only on a seasonal basis when appropriate instructors/contractors were available. If an instructor could no longer provide his/her services, the program disappeared. Outside organizations, such as Nike Canada, sponsored short-term low-cost (or no-cost) programs in community centres, providing high-level coaches in return for positive PR and marketing opportunities¹⁴. However, after the program duration, children were left with no instructor, despite wanting to continue, and were discouraged from registering in similar programs in the future to avoid the resulting disappointment. The same outcome occurred when programs were cancelled based on low registration. Additionally, most programs were based on a

¹⁴ Personal communication with Carole Brown.

fee-for-service model where the cost and quality of these programs varied greatly, as did customer registration and satisfaction. Lastly, community centre sport programs generally did not reach those who were not already participating in recreational activities. Apart from cost-prohibitive barriers, a lack of understanding for the value of sport in childhood development limited community registration.

However, barriers existed throughout the city. Research by Kimberley Schonert-Riechl in 2007 demonstrated a gap between those interested in being physically active and those who were actually participating in sport and physical activities across the Lower Mainland (and not just in lower-income communities). 49% of the children interviewed in her research wished to be involved in physical activity yet only 10% were¹⁵.

MoreSports was founded to target those who were not participating in sport due to barriers to access. As these barriers continue to be apparent today, MoreSports' rationale for existence and expansion remains. Core values of inclusivity and accessibility shape its offerings. Moreover, its connection to children at the ground level through its relationship with the VSB make it able to reach those not currently being serviced by the minor league sports system or recreational institutions. Further, MoreSports provides sports skill development, much like some of the minor league sports organizations; however, this development is beginner-focused and promotes sport in a fun, friendly, and non-competitive environment. In addition, in order to build community capacity, MoreSports concentrates on life skills development in community youth through volunteerism. It hopes to train these youth to become the future leaders and champions of their

¹⁵ Schonert-Riechl, K. (2007) Middle Childhood Inside and Out [Powerpoint]

communities. Additionally, by involving and engaging youth, MoreSports provides youth with positive ways to interact with and contribute to their communities; it gives these youth networks for socialization, support, and future employment, making them less vulnerable to becoming involved in crime and other negative activities¹⁶. Lastly, by training youth volunteers to deliver programming, MoreSports is able to use its resources more efficiently and effectively; instead of hiring one staff member to coach ten children, it can hire one staff member to supervise ten volunteers, who in turn can coach a total of 100 children.

2.2 Organizational Structure¹⁷

As mentioned previously, MoreSports is a partnership between multiple stakeholders (to be explored fully in section 2.3); however, it is not a stand-alone registered not-for-profit organization. The reason behind its avoidance of acquiring stand-alone legal status is to allow participation from its stakeholders from the VSB and VPB. Both the VSB and VPB do not allow their staff to serve on boards of organizations that request and require VSB or VPB resources; this is to avoid conflict of interest issues. Instead, the MoreSports' partnership requires both a complex and unique organizational structure. With the involvement of many stakeholders, each stakeholder undertakes a range and variety of duties and responsibilities within various aspects of the organization's activities, from strategic planning to operations. These duties can include serving on a committee, providing staff time devoted to MoreSports, supplying facility space for programs, applying for funding on MoreSports behalf, performing

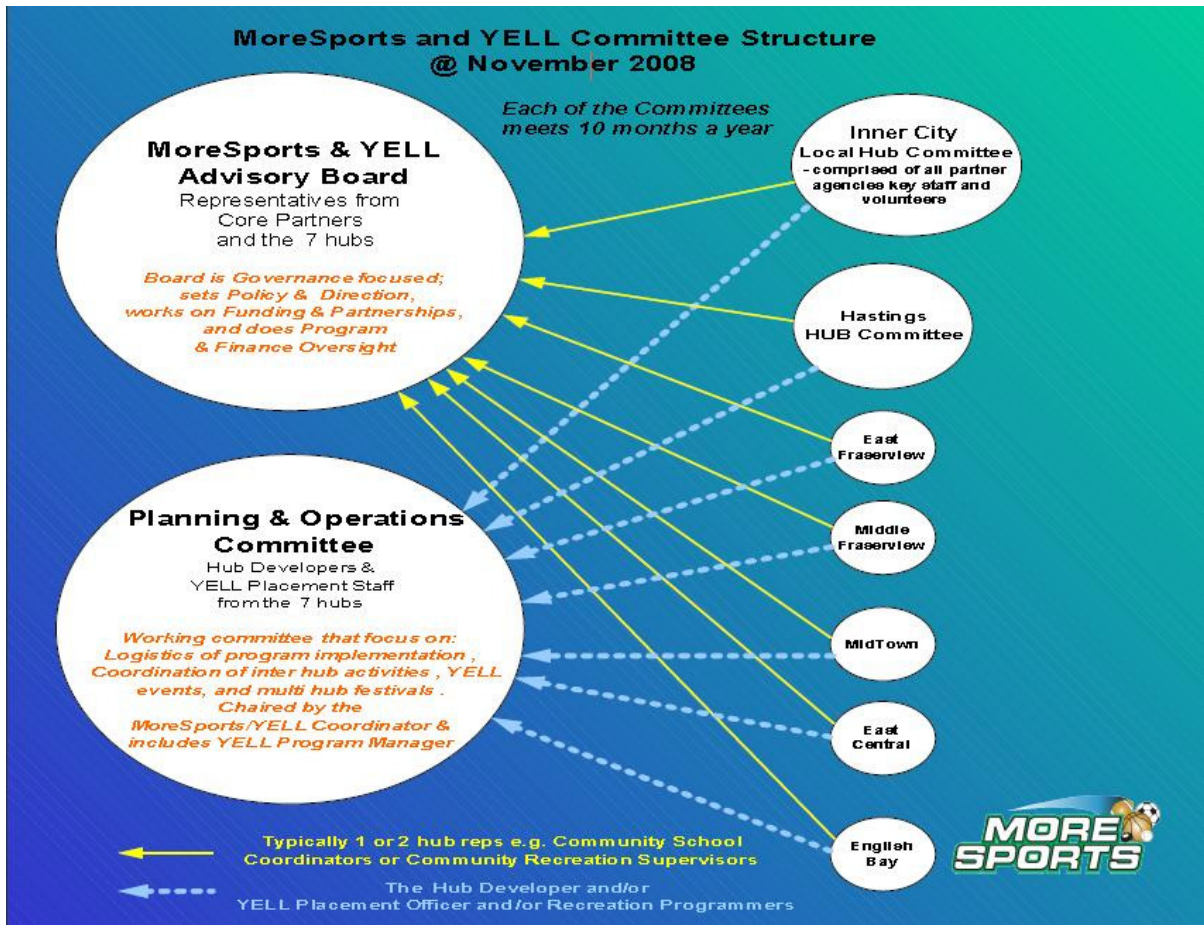
¹⁶ MoreSports History and Overview November 2004.

¹⁷ Personal communications with Dick Woldring and Carole Brown

administrative tasks such as promotions or book-keeping, and/or executing other duties. For example, while MoreSports functions as a not-for-profit organization, it often relies upon the not-for-profit stakeholders within its partnership for the full benefits of not-for-profit status. Further, MoreSports only employs a limited number of administrative staff and contractors and relies greatly on the efforts and resources of its many partners.

The organizational focus is on collaboration and cooperation. It attempts to avoid a hierarchical structure by having integrative committees and independent hubs (see figure 2 below). Each hub has its own committee made up of the participating stakeholders. One to two members of each hub committee serve(s) on the MoreSports Advisory Board. Another one to two members of each hub committee also serve(s) on the Planning and Operations committee. No single committee supervises another; instead, they each work together in different contexts and on different issues within the operation. To complicate roles further, the activities of parallel stakeholders often differ between hubs. This is due to the decentralized structure of the MoreSports Hub Development system. While the advisory board oversees the strategic planning and policy direction of MoreSports and the Planning and Operations committee addresses implementation logistics and inter-hub programming and activities, each hub acts individually, making its own decisions on hub programming and general daily operations.

Figure 2. MoreSports Organization Structure¹⁸



2.2.1 Administration

MoreSports currently employs/contracts out to a small number of people to serve as its staff team. Dick Woldring is the MoreSports (and YELL) Coordinator. He provides general administration to MoreSports' initiatives, coordinates operational procedures of each of the hubs, and organizes MoreSports-wide events and festivals. Through his involvement with the Advisory Board, Planning and Operations Committee, and Hub Committees, he facilitates consistency between all levels of the organization. Woldring has had continuing short-term contracts since 2004; he is a contractor, not an employee of

¹⁸ MoreSports. (2008). MoreSports Presentation 2008.

the organization. The reasoning for this includes the organization's inability to receive long term sustained funding. MoreSports employs another part-time YELL Coordinator; however, it is currently reviewing the need for this position. MoreSports also directly funds the two part-time Inner City Hub positions; these two employees have a partial reporting function to the MoreSports Coordinator despite no other hub having the same obligation.

Additional staff supplied by MoreSports include a newly hired executive assistant to the MoreSports Coordinator, an accountant to consolidate the financial statements from each of the hubs, and a web designer to oversee the MoreSports website. (In regards to the website, however, each hub is responsible for submitting their own content.) In the past, MoreSports also held a position for a Marketing and Media staff member, but never replaced her when she left the organization.

2.2.2 Advisory Board

As demonstrated in figure 2, the Advisory Board focuses on governance and policy issues. It oversees the organization's direction and is responsible for ensuring that operations stay true to the created MoreSports vision, mission, and values. Further, it exists to seek out new opportunities to connect stakeholders, preventing them from working in narrow-minded silo-based systems. It encourages its members to challenge ineffectual and exclusionary practices within their own institutions and organizations. Lastly, it is responsible for the overall budget and consolidated financials of the MoreSports hubs; it decides how to approach and coordinate collaborative fundraising activities.

Currently, 18 members sit on the Advisory Board: 14 members also serve on one of the seven hub committees, two members are from the community at large (one is a Vancouver business owner, while the other works for a local not-for-profit organization), one member is a VSB representative, and the final member is a VPB representative. However, anyone is welcome to participate. As such, the Advisory Board maintains its connection with the hubs, with the community, and with key staff members and management in the VSB (namely the Community School Coordinators) and the VPB (generally Recreation Supervisors). While the MoreSports Coordinator attends all Advisory Board meetings and may provide input on issues, he is not a member of the Board and is not involved in their final decision-making process.

2.2.3 Planning and Operations Committee

Also illustrated in figure 2, the Planning and Operations Committee concentrates on logistical issues within MoreSports' program delivery and implementation. Members discuss the successes and challenges of ongoing offerings and share information on the development of new pilot programs and their viability across hubs, thereby facilitating the transfer of knowledge between hubs. In addition, the committee works on planning and coordinating inter-hub activities, events, and MoreSports-wide festivals. The focus is more detailed and operations-based than the Advisory Board. The Planning and Operations Committee, however, does not supervise programming that occurs in each hub nor dictate what programs the hubs offer. Those decisions occur within the hub committees themselves.

The committee consists of members from each hub, which often includes the Hub Developer, YELL Placement Officer, and sometimes community centre Recreation

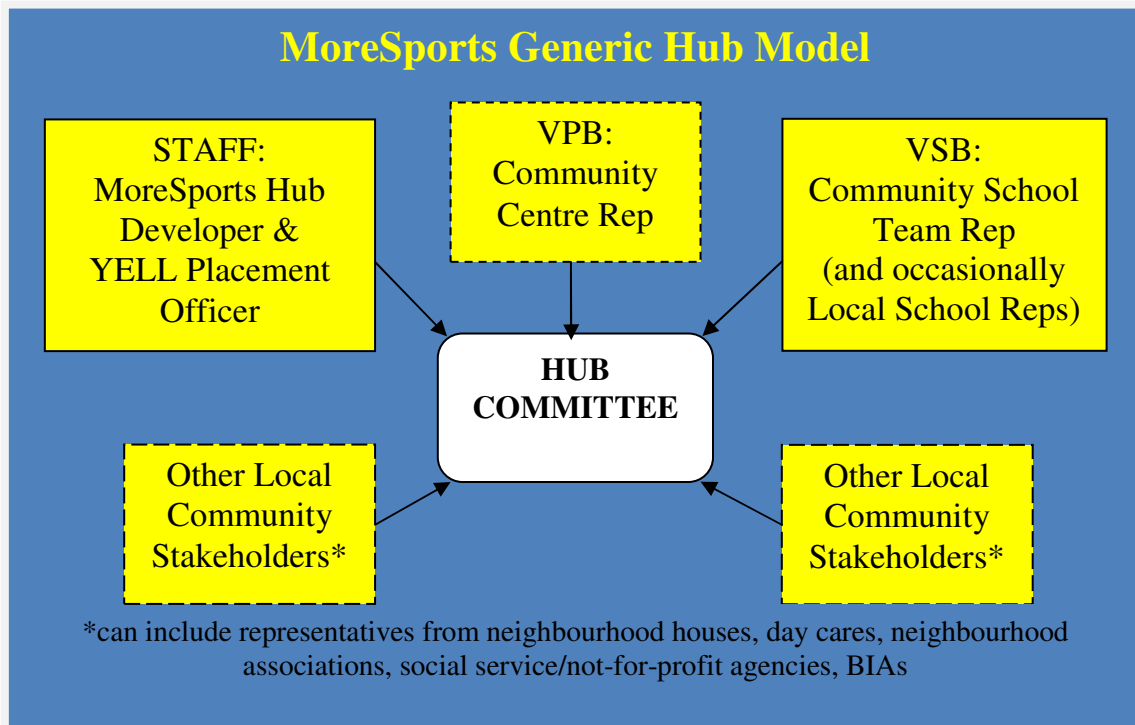
Programmers and/or Community Youth Workers. The MoreSports Coordinator chairs each committee meeting and in the past was the chief organizer for inter-hub MoreSports festivals and events. However, his role is changing as Hub Developers and YELL Placement Officers gain the organizational skills through their involvement in continued event planning and management. This is another example of how MoreSports is building capacity within communities as many of Hub Developers and YELL Placement Officers work in the communities where they live or were raised.

2.2.4 Hub Committees and Program Delivery

As mentioned above, each of the seven hubs is responsible for its own operations and program delivery. Each hub committee is charged with identifying, discussing, and finding solutions for local issues, which can differ greatly hub to hub. Hence, decision-making power in regards to programming and delivery methods resides amongst the hub committee members. Yet, each committee must honour the MoreSports vision and implement its programming based on the core values.

Apart from distinct differences in local issues, the members of each hub committee can also differ depending on which agencies and organizations participate (i.e., are stakeholders) in that hub's activities. Key people (staff and/or volunteers) from these stakeholder organizations comprise the hub committee. The MoreSports Coordinator also attends as many individual hub committee meetings as possible. Figure 3 below illustrates MoreSports generic hub model.

Figure 3. MoreSports Generic Hub Model



Please note that solid lines surround some hub committee stakeholders, while dotted lines border others. This illustrates the variation in participation from hub to hub.

Nonetheless, each hub currently has a part-time Hub Developer and part-time YELL Placement Officer or in some cases a key person who functions as both. The program administration and delivery supervision is the responsibility of the Hub Developer. Similarly, youth recruitment for the YELL program and the placement of these youth in volunteer opportunities are the duties of the YELL Placement Officer. To complicate the organizational structure further, MoreSports employs neither the Hub Developer nor the Placement Officer, despite each working on behalf of MoreSports initiatives and programming. Instead, the VSB or the local neighbourhood associations (not-for-profit entities) fund each position. Occasionally, both use their combined budgets to fund these positions. However, budget cuts and financial changes can affect the

funding put towards these positions and require creative resource use or reduced staff time dedicated to these positions. Hence, difficulty with staff retention plagues this structure as employees who gain experience and skills seek more stable full time employment. However, MoreSports Coordinator, Woldring, believes that this is not necessarily a negative, since that staff member will bring an understanding of MoreSports to his/her new employer and provide the connection for a potential new supporter; MoreSports is then also able to train another person to provide programming based on its collaborative and inclusive values¹⁹.

Each hub receives a specified amount of funding for its Hub Developer position and YELL programs, if they administer them. While hubs receive similar levels of funding from the central MoreSports pool, levels of service and quality of program delivery can also differ depending on the hub personnel. In one case, a considerable amount of time passed prior to MoreSports seeing any results from hub funding. Further, participation levels vary greatly between hubs and programs. Additional funding can be provided by MoreSports to hubs who wish to develop new pilot programs on top of their regular offerings. However, hubs are encouraged through the Advisory Board to seek out their own funding, given that it does not compete with other MoreSports efforts.

2.3 Stakeholders & Suppliers

MoreSports requires an actively engaged web of stakeholders to offer its programming successfully. The stakeholders below represent the organization's current supporters and suppliers. However, as mentioned above, the level of stakeholder support amongst similar stakeholders can differ between hubs depending on the personalities and

¹⁹ Personal communication with Dick Woldring.

leadership within each community and/or organization. As such, each major stakeholder group is analyzed separately.

2.3.1 Vancouver School Board and VSB Schools

The Vancouver School Board is an integral stakeholder in the MoreSports partnership. Having access to almost all Vancouver children and youth ages 6-18, the VSB can reach potential participants and volunteers more effectively and efficiently, many who would not normally be reached if MoreSports were to only market through general sport, recreation and/or volunteer recruitment systems. With the reorganization of the Community School Team staff into the secondary schools to serve feeder elementary schools (as mentioned previously), both the ease in recruiting youth volunteers and the system to promote sport programs to children vastly improved. Currently, eleven secondary schools are involved in the YELL program with many of their feeder elementary schools participating in MoreSports programming (leaving eight secondary schools who do not participate). Moreover, due to the similarity in mandates between MoreSports and the Community School Teams, many of the VSB staff dedicate a large portion of their time towards MoreSports program administration and hub development. While the Community School Team receives some central MoreSports funding resources in order to do so, MoreSports guarantees an ongoing and recognizable staff presence in the school. In some cases, the school provides accounting management services to MoreSports and processes registrations. This mutually beneficial partnership allows MoreSports to increase its target audience, while the Community School Team can better meet its mandate to provide enriching activities for its students. Further, VSB secondary students can get the necessary volunteer hours and experiences needed to graduate,

without the school staff spending numerous hours attempting to find them suitable opportunities.

Additionally, the VSB provides valuable facility space for programs. Since the majority of programs take place during non-school hours (afterschool and weekends), gym space is often available for programs. However, challenges exist in attaining approval for facility use. Hence, VSB facility use is often inconsistent across the city; this can be due to bureaucracy at VSB's central booking and/or a lack of support by the school's administration. Again, support differs based on the personalities within each school. Despite demonstrated support from VSB senior management, MoreSports still does not have a formally signed MOU with the VSB. Without this, the partnership will likely to continue to be dissimilar within different communities.

2.3.2 Vancouver Park Board and VPB Community Centres

The Vancouver Park Board represents another crucial stakeholder and supplier in the MoreSports community sports model. Being an institution whose responsibility is to provide recreational services to Vancouver citizens, its involvement is both obvious and appropriate. Further, having ownership of the necessary sports infrastructure (in community centres and community fields), VPB participation in MoreSports is paramount. As another point of interest, the VPB's most recent Strategic Plan states its desire to develop broader participation and make recreation universally accessible²⁰. However, the structure of its fee-for-service programming creates barriers for many. Further, the same strategic document states how it plans to expand community

²⁰ Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. (2005). Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan 2005-2010.

partnerships and advance partnership agreements. Its involvement and support of MoreSports can satisfy both of these strategic directions. Nonetheless, MoreSports is still clearly east side centric. As such, the VPB has chosen to expand the stakeholders at the table (i.e. include more communities, minor league sports organizations, etc.) and has independently formed a citywide Vancouver Sport Strategy committee to address making sustainable partnerships and participation through sport. Resources for the Vancouver Sport Strategy, at this point, have largely been spent on staff coordination and not program support.

Additionally, MoreSports does not have a formally signed MOU with the VPB despite active involvement on the part of some of the VPB's employees; however, these employees choose to be involved and can only engage in MoreSports work as a side project on top of their regular duties. Acceptance and understanding of the MoreSports concept and programs differs greatly amongst VPB staff throughout the city and within the VPB hierarchy. While the VPB provides free field space for MoreSports programming, participation from community centres (including level of staff contribution) varies greatly depending on the leadership at each site. While most of the hubs partner with at least one community centre within the areas they operate, some community centres have declined from participation in MoreSports entirely and offer programs that are in direct competition. Reasons for opting out include a belief that MoreSports programs will take away from their own programming and be a financial burden to the centre because of MoreSports "pay-what-you-can" model. Additionally, some staff are uninterested or unable to make the time or the effort necessary to be involved in the partnership and committee requirements. Lastly, others are not confident

in the quality of service that the youth volunteer coaches can provide and prefer not to attach their name to MoreSports programs.

Amongst participating centres, some provide staff support to hub developers and supply administrative services such as payroll, promotions, and registration for programming, when others may only offer one of the above services. The lack of a formal agreement has created huge disparities from community to community and has left the partnership decision up to local leadership. Further, no central VPB resources have been committed to MoreSports.

Despite the VPB generally being on the supplier side of the supply chain with MoreSports, the opposite is also true. Many MoreSports volunteers gain valuable experience and then become both volunteers and employees within the recreation system. Further, some of the hub staff members are lost to VPB employment after building their skills, knowledge, and abilities through MoreSports experiences. With shortages of staff, especially with previous experiences in recreation, throughout the VPB system, MoreSports could provide the VPB with a mentorship program and succession planning for future recreation leaders.

2.3.3 Community and Provincial Not-for-Profit Organizations

Another important stakeholder group in the MoreSports model includes a number of not-for-profit organizations. The majority of these consist of neighbourhood associations, who in partnership with the VPB jointly operate their local community centre. While their involvement differs greatly (like every other stakeholder), associations provide a variety of resources and services to MoreSports. These generally include funding towards staffing, equipment, financial account management, and grant

application. Despite having similar functions within the community, the by-laws and practices of each association can be drastically different. As such, their relationships with MoreSports and the manner in which they may deal with comparable tasks are diverse. For example, depending on the association, MoreSports staff may be paid as employees or contractors. As such, one staff member may receive a percentage in lieu of benefits, but have various employer costs taken off each payment, while another is paid on a straight rate per hour basis. Moreover, staff rates for equivalent positions are not uniform across the city. This inequity can cause confusion or even frustration. (However, this may be changing in the near future to a standardized pay rate, based on VPB staffing pay rates.) Other community not-for-profit organizations that support the programs include local neighbourhood houses, resource centres, and community groups who help promote and refer participants. However, their roles are minimal as compared to other community stakeholders.

Certain provincial not-for-profit organizations also play an important role in the MoreSports partnership. Sport BC has been involved with MoreSports since its inception, mentoring it through its development. The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association supports the YELL program by greatly reducing the registration fees for the youth who participate in High Five training. (High Five is an accredited leadership development program for those working in the area of children's sport and recreation²¹). As MoreSports provides the programs to youth for free, the BCRPA only charges MoreSports the cost of the course materials. Other provincial not-for-profits have made similar arrangements with MoreSports, including BC Soccer for NCCP Level 1 training.

²¹ High Five website: <http://www.highfive.org/Default.aspx>

As the number of sports programs offered increases, MoreSports hope to solidify similar arrangements with the specific provincial sports organizations (PSOs).

Additionally, MoreSports has found support and operational funds through various foundations. Repeat funders include The J.W. McConnell Foundation and the Vancouver Foundation, both who focus on building and improving communities. The Diamond Foundation provided one cycle of funding for the YELL program pilot. This financial support has been integral to MoreSports' growth strategy. As such, it will need to continue exploring and targeting appropriate grants available through the 9000+ registered Canadian foundations²².

2.3.4 Government

Governmental awareness of issues such as childhood obesity, healthy and active living, and positive youth engagement has increased in recent years. Due to the basis on which MoreSports operates, all levels of government have the potential and perhaps mandate to be stakeholders. As such, each level of government has supported MoreSports at some point, but each level has done so through very different mechanisms. The Vancouver Park Board represents support from a municipal level. On a federal level, involvement from government has been limited to the HRDC/HRSDC grants for which MoreSports no longer applies.

Most of the current involvement has been at a provincial level through departments of the BC Government or arms-length government funded organizations. In regards to direct government involvement, the Ministry of Housing and Development funds MoreSports through gaming money grants known as Direct Access grants.

²² Philanthropic Foundations Canada. http://www.pfc.ca/cms_en/page1087.cfm

However, depending on the number and merits of applications received by the Ministry, funding amounts are unpredictable. MoreSports cannot rely on receiving the funds requested in its applications. Nonetheless, MoreSports has been able to capitalize on new funding available due to the coming 2010 Vancouver Winter Games. As a sports-based program that includes inner city engagement, MoreSports easily satisfies the funding requirements of these Olympic initiatives. Government funded 2010 Legacies Now currently provides financial support to MoreSports through its BC Sports Participation Program, whose aim is to increase sports participation in community and school-based sports²³; MoreSports caters and delivers to this exact mandate. Additionally, MoreSports receives funding through VANOC as part of its Inner City Inclusivity Agreement. Based on VANOC's requirements, MoreSports was one of the only organizations to receive funding because of its proven results. However, consistent and sustained funding from any level of government has not been forthcoming. While government initiatives such as Active Communities Vancouver, Act Now BC, and the federally supported ParticipACTION have brought awareness to the importance of sport and physical activity, continuous involvement and monetary resources have not been supplied to MoreSports despite MoreSports' active approach towards finding solutions. However, occasionally MoreSports will use information from public relations materials to help communicate their value and purpose.

2.3.5 Private Business

MoreSports' dealings with private business currently tend to resemble supplier relationships versus the aforementioned stakeholder partnerships. To date, no corporate

²³ 2010 Legacies Now. (n.d.). BC Sport Participation Program.
http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/bc_sport_participation/

sponsor has funded MoreSports, as an organizational entity. While businesses such as Bell Canada and Telus have provided grants to neighbourhood associations in order to implement MoreSports programming, MoreSports, itself, has not received any ongoing corporate sponsorship. Certain inter-hub special events and festivals have been funded under the MoreSports banner, but sponsorship has been limited to the event only. While strategy and decisions in regards to grant applications are centralized through the efforts of the Advisory Board, finding corporate sponsorship has generally been the responsibility of the hub committees. While this makes operational sense due to each hubs' access to/relationships with stakeholders with registered not-for-profit status, it does not necessarily make strategic sense for MoreSports to de-centralize the pursuit for sponsorship acquisition. However, MoreSports Coordinator, Woldring, is hesitant to approach corporate sponsors due to a perception of "selling out" to companies who want their "names plastered everywhere" to only disappear after a bad financial year²⁴. As such, MoreSports' involvements with most businesses are supplier-customer based.

MoreSports' main purchasing needs include participant t-shirts (supplied to each child in each program as a part of the registration), sports equipment, and various printing jobs. As programs expand and participation increases, the variety and volume of purchases increases. Some local businesses have realized this and aligned themselves with MoreSports as its central suppliers. One example includes a small locally operated retailer, Abbie's Sports Shop, which provides the majority of MoreSports' t-shirt supply (over \$15,000 worth of expenses in previous years²⁵) and some of its equipment. Originally supplying t-shirts to one hub at just above cost, most hubs now purchase all

²⁴ Personal communication with Dick Woldring.

²⁵ MoreSports. (2008). Consolidated Financial Reports.

their t-shirts from Abbie's due to the price break the company provides in return for placing its logo on all the shirts. Hubs developers are encouraged to seek out local businesses willing to provide supplies or services at lower rates based on repeat business. However, while making such arrangements are welcomed, they are not demanded, creating inconsistencies in approaches between hubs. Further, with each hub working independently, buyer power and leverage is reduced. Hence, involvement from private business is often minimal.

2.4 Participants (Customers)

Due to its efforts to reduce barriers to participation, MoreSports offers programming for a variety of participants not always reached by the organized recreation and sports systems. With 56,000 students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in the VSB school system²⁶, MoreSports is making concerted efforts to introduce sport and encourage volunteerism to the masses. Those who do get involved may do so for different reasons. This section will explore and examine the main motivations behind the participants of MoreSports.

2.4.1 Sport and Physical Activity Program Participants

Within the last year, MoreSports has promoted sport to approximately 20,000 elementary school children through the School Days program and registered 4,732 children (the majority aged 6 to 12) in physical activities²⁷; many of these children would not otherwise be participating in sport for a variety of reasons. The consolidated statistics recorded by the hubs show an increase in participation over the past four years; please

²⁶ Vancouver School Board. (n.d.) Home Page. <http://www.vsb.bc.ca/default.htm>

²⁷ MoreSports. (2008). MoreSports Statistics Report – All Hubs, All Sports 2008.

note that statistics were not readily recorded prior to 2005 (see table 2 below). By introducing sport at the school level and then following that up with easy-to-access non-competitive programming, MoreSports has attracted many participants new to sport and encouraged others more comfortable with fun, recreation-based activities to register in MoreSports programs.

Table 2. Participant statistics from 2005-2008²⁸

Type of Participant	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
School Days Promotions	4,469	3,387	13,187	19,588
Various Sports Programs	2,181	3,460	3,633	4,732
Volunteer Coaches	136	334	426	677

2.4.1.1 The Low-Cost Participant

MoreSports prices its programs at very reasonable rates. Due to social inequities across the neighbourhoods it services, fees differ between communities based on an assumed ability to pay. For example, a ten-week Mini-Soccer program may cost \$40 in the Mount Pleasant area, but only \$10 for participants registering in Strathcona. Additionally, MoreSports' flexible pay-what-you-can policy removes cost barriers to participation for those who cannot pay the fee set for the community. Low-income participants can pay what is within their means. Families with more than one child are able to register the entire family while only paying the equivalent of one spot if that is all they are able to manage. This eliminates the need for families to choose which child will participate and/or not participate at all to not play favourites. Moreover, participants can

²⁸ MoreSports statistics reports 2005-2008

still be registered without paying any fees and are not required to fill out any additional paperwork or request a subsidy in advance in order to register. As such, MoreSports gives “all kids a chance to play”²⁹. Registration includes a t-shirt, use of communal equipment (with the exception of soccer cleats), and for the hub-wide sports, the chance to play in and attend inter-hub festivals (tournaments) where transportation is available and snacks are provided. These additions are another draw for low-income families to participate.

2.4.1.2 The Non-Traditional Participant

By gaining access to children through physical education classes in the School Days programs, MoreSports has the opportunity to introduce sport to the non-traditional participant – children who would not necessarily seek out sport due to gender and/or cultural barriers. Also, by offering a variety of programming suited to the neighbourhood, it hopes to attract the participant who does not participate due to lack of interest in mainstream sport. In regards to gender, roughly only 36% of participants in all of MoreSports registered programs are female³⁰. This is below the average of 45% of girls aged 5-14 that participate in organized sport nationally (according to a Statistics Canada report)³¹. However, this may be related to the fact that Vancouver’s participation rate of all children in organized sport ranks 4% below the total national average³². Still efforts are being made to increase participation from girls, such as introducing programs that cater more towards them (i.e. dance). Additionally, MoreSports also hopes to better reach immigrant families, whose children are also less likely to participate in sport. While MoreSports does not currently document the cultural background of its participants

²⁹ MoreSports slogan

³⁰ Based on 2005-2008 MoreSports statistics reports.

³¹ Clark, W. (2008). Kids’ Sports. Canadian Social Trends.

³² Ibid.

through statistics, it does post the personality profiles of some of its participants on its website; the cultural diversity is notable. In regards to both issues, Woldring comments that he has seen a change in attitude from the South-Asian and Muslim parents in regards to having their daughters participate in sport³³. In order to reach other non-traditional non-mainstream sport participants, MoreSports has offered snowboarding and is starting to develop an accredited skateboarding program with the help of the Vancouver Skateboarding Coalition.

2.4.1.3 The Recreational Participant

Nowadays with news headlines about overly intense parents involved in minor league sports and commercials aimed at drawing attention to the problems with this, MoreSports provides a non-competitive solution for some families. In order to create such an environment, MoreSports programs do not focus on winning and/or losing; in fact, scores are not kept at anytime during a program/game. Instead, the focus is on fun and playing as a team. Furthermore, rather than organize tournaments, MoreSports coordinates festivals where activities outside of the sport itself, such as carnival games and family entertainment, are prominent.

2.4.1.4 Participant Development and Graduation

Some of MoreSports' participants later become participants in the competitive stream. As some of the newer participants to sport become more familiar with the system and develop their skills, they join some of the minor league sports organizations and clubs. Despite losing participants to other service providers, MoreSports views this as a

³³ Personal Communication with Dick Woldring, June 30, 2009.

success. Additionally, since MoreSports' resources are limited, participant graduation allows the organization to target new populations who have not readily accessed sport. Despite participant movement into other forms of sport, MoreSports participation continues to increase, with local clubs also reaping the benefit of participant influxes from the MoreSports system.

2.4.2 Volunteer Coaches and Youth Leaders

One other key participant group in the MoreSports model includes the several hundred youth who register in leadership training and volunteer coach. Last year, MoreSports engaged 677 youth to volunteer coach after providing them with leadership training³⁴. With the majority of these youth in grades 10 to 12 in VSB secondary schools, some are already familiar with the MoreSports programs, being past participants. Additionally, as all are recruited through the YELL Placement Officer who is connected to the school, many are at least aware of the potential training and volunteer opportunities through MoreSports. As mentioned previously, since the beginning of the YELL program approximately 1,800 VSB students have participated and provided over 30,000 hours of volunteer service to communities within Vancouver, many of whom would not have otherwise been involved in volunteerism. Another note of interest includes the fact that over 60% of the YELL participants are female; this is well above the national coaching average of 29.5%³⁵. As such, these young women can help encourage and mentor younger girls to get involved in sport, perhaps reducing the gender bias in sport.

³⁴ MoreSports Statistics Reports – All Sports and All Hubs 2009.

³⁵ Coaching Association of Canada. (2008). NCCP Gender Comparison Stats.

Because of BC secondary school graduation requirements to perform volunteer hours, many youth are motivated to get involved. Moreover, as all coaching and leadership training courses are provided at no cost, others see participation as an easy and inexpensive way to gain valuable skills and experience for future job searches. From the perspective of MoreSports, it can develop its own volunteer work force and guarantee itself a continuous source of trained coaches and leaders who are generally available when programming is offered (i.e. afterschool, weekends). While not all YELL participants become MoreSports coaches, many still volunteer within the community and build capacity in other areas. MoreSports sees this as a way for its partners who offer other services to benefit. While MoreSports still welcomes parent volunteers, there are not enough to provide service to all the children who wish to participate in physical activity. As such, its YELL program provides MoreSports with a key success factor for program delivery. Moreover, to date, some of the best volunteers are now paid staff in the MoreSports system or have been employed by collaborating organizations and are continuing to give back to the community through sport. With this resource of trained volunteers, MoreSports could eventually become a supplier to some minor league sports organizations. While connections like this have not yet been substantiated, VSB schools in communities not serviced by MoreSports programming are showing interest in the YELL program. As a result, additional MoreSports programs are being created in those areas to give the newly trained volunteers an arena to use their skills and gain experiences.

Currently, a gap in MoreSports service still remains for youth in grade 8 and 9. Children in kindergarten to grade 7 can participate in a variety of sports programming.

While sport programming does exist for the grade 8-9 age group, it is limited. Further, as leadership training and volunteer opportunities are catered for youth in grades 10-12, grade 8s and 9s can fall by the wayside. MoreSports is looking into age appropriate leadership training for youth in grades 8 and 9 to ensure that participation in MoreSports can occur at any time in the school system.

2.5 Financials

Along with its complex organizational structure, MoreSports' financial reporting also has its own intricacies. Each hub tracks its financials independently based on the reporting requirements of the organization hosting the hub account (and sometimes by the preferences of accountant in charge). MoreSports does not audit the financials given to them by the hub, but instead relies on the internal auditing process that each host organization performs individually. On a quarterly basis, each hub must submit its financials to the MoreSports Coordinator who then passes off the information for the contracted accountant to consolidate. As such, consolidated financial reporting lags behind by anywhere from two to three months. To further complicate the process, many of the hosting organizations run on different fiscal years (i.e. MoreSports has an April-March fiscal year; one neighbourhood association has a September-August fiscal year; another neighbourhood association has a January-December fiscal year); accounting can get tricky if longer-term projects are funded by money from different organizations. Additionally, with the increasing interest in the YELL program from VSB secondary schools, the VSB has asked that all YELL program accounts be administered by the school and tracked separately from the MoreSports accounting. MoreSports is now adjusting accordingly.

Despite these complications, MoreSports illustrates a continued ability to operate within its available resources and raise the funds necessary to expand its programming (see three-year comparison in Table 3.) However, much of the fundraising is not sustainable and is from a variety of sources who will not fund programs indefinitely; hence confirmed and continued support through community contributions is necessary. Otherwise, a strategic fundraising / sponsorship plan is necessary.

Table 3. MoreSports consolidated statement of operations 2006-2008³⁶

Statement of Operations	2006	2007	2008
Revenues			
Grants	57,918	57,918	36,743
Registration	50,777	59,093	57,084
Fundraising	19,923	20,323	271,174
Community Contrib.	64,000	108,232	*reported above
General	1,303	4,301	4,672
TOTAL	193,921	249,867	369,673
Expenses			
Advertising, etc.	997	1,602	16,285
Consulting	60,372	83,272	201,116
Staff	51,761	72,328	*reported above
Admin/Misc	11,455	36,748	5,556
Equipment	10,838	10,916	12,547
GST	4,502	5,988	6,998
Supplies	24,925	33,252	83,573
Training	3,973	4,519	23,695
TOTAL	168,823	248,625	349,770
Surplus/Deficit	25,098	1,242*	19,903

* Please note that in 2007, there was a 13-week long civic strike that affected all Vancouver Park Board staff and facilities. This may have influenced the bottom line.

³⁶ MoreSports. (2006-2008). MoreSports consolidated financial reports

2.6 Current Strategy – Low-Cost Niche Strategy

MoreSports’ current strategy is a low-cost niche strategy. Due to the combination of the often-conflicting strategies, MoreSports has an interesting challenge of what aspects of each to use. Figure 4 (below) demonstrates where MoreSports lies in different areas on the generic strategy grid. This section will discuss how MoreSports uses each area to its advantage and where strategic fit could be improved.

Figure 4. MoreSports Strategic Grid

Generic Strategy	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> Cost-Based Low Cost/Adequate Quality Differentiation High Quality/Adequate Cost </div>											
	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10
Product Strategy	Rapid Follower											Innovative
R & D Expenses	Low R&D											High R&D
Structure	Centralized											De-centralized
Decision Making	Less Autonomy											Autonomy
Manu- facturing	Economies of Scale											Economies of Scope/ Flexible
Labour	Mass Production											Highly Skilled/ Flexible
Marketing	Comparative Push											High-Cost Pioneering/Pull
Risk Profile	Low-Risk											High Risk
Capital Structure	Leveraged											Conservative

2.6.1 Low-Cost Strategic Aspects

In regards to its low-cost approach, MoreSports keeps the prices of its programs low in order to ensure that low-income families can still participate; it also provides

adequate quality for cost to those who may not necessarily be low-income, but are price-sensitive for other reasons. Hence, this part of the strategy is based on its potential participants and not on the pricing of other providers within the industry. In order to provide its programming at low costs, MoreSports does its best to use resources creatively, such as maximizing staff usage by having staff responsible for the supervision of volunteers instead of just the delivery of programs. Further, it spends little on marketing; with the exception of its website and the children's t-shirts (which both also serve functional purposes), MoreSports marketing materials are limited. It also has not put large investments into research and development of its own leadership programs; instead, MoreSports appropriates programs that are already in existence and have good records of accomplishment. Additionally, although it is reliant on funding from outside sources, it maintains a low-risk profile with the resources it does acquire, in that it only provides programs and services that are within its financial means.

2.6.2 Niche Strategy Aspects

In relation to its niche strategy, MoreSports places itself in a different space from others in the industry. It differentiates itself from minor league sport organizations by promoting a fun, non-competitive environment that requires only minimal commitment from families. Additionally, unlike most minor league clubs, MoreSports offers a variety of sports to children within each community. To differentiate itself from recreational providers, like community centres, it maintains the minor league sports' skills development and team approach to participation and teaching sport. It does not differentiate on quality, but instead on style; hence appealing to specific population segments. Fitting with a differentiation strategy, MoreSports has a decentralized structure

allowing it to cater to community needs. Further, hubs are autonomous in their decision-making processes to be able to better react and adapt to changes in their external environments.

2.6.3 Strategic Fit

In some ways, MoreSports is using strategy to its advantage, while in other cases it could improve its position. To begin with the positives, MoreSports effectively keeps costs down in the correct areas such as labour and program research and development. Also, to be flexible to change and differences between communities, MoreSports correctly leaves many decisions up to the de-centralized hubs. However, this clearly comes at a cost. While it saves money on marketing, MoreSports also struggles to attain buy-in within certain areas of the city or with certain stakeholders. It also needs to differentiate itself in the minds of stakeholders and sponsors and could use appropriate material for those purposes. Moreover, it may also be worthwhile for MoreSports to spend some time on grant and sponsorship research. Additionally because of its de-centralized structure, MoreSports loses some of its potential buyer power. In relation to de-centralization, while its staff structure is set up to enjoy economies of scale, decisions often lead to offering a wide scope of programming to satisfy participants. In some cases, program participation is extremely low; however, programs continue to run so that no child is turned away from activity. Criteria need to be set to balance the two contrary directions.

3: External Environment and Industry

3.1 Overview and Market Trends

As mentioned in previous sections, the role of sport and physical activity in the development of healthy children and communities continues to draw increasing attention. A number of public relations and education initiatives are prevalent in today's media. However, fewer participants are being served than wish to be due to a variety of barriers. Based on a report by Statistics Canada, participation in organized sport is on the decrease³⁷. Nonetheless, people were not spending any less time on physical activity³⁸. This demonstrates that MoreSports is properly positioned to attract those that are not participating in organized sport, but continue to be active (or wish to be active). However, while MoreSports operates within its own niche, overlaps still occur between its programming, minor league sport, and recreational programs, with the latter two essentially being the substitutes to MoreSports.

Also relevant to the industry is the level and availability of funding with many not-for profit organizations relying on outside financial support. With over 161,000 registered charities and non-for-profit organizations in Canada (BC has 20,270)³⁹ and many others who do not have legal charitable status, competition for resources is immense. Each must vie for government support, corporate sponsorship,

³⁷ Clark, W. (2008). Kids' Sports. Canadian Social Trends.

³⁸ Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. (2009). Indicators of Well-Being in Canada: Leisure - Active Leisure Time.

³⁹ Imagine Canada. (2009). Non-Profit Library Commons.

foundation/charity grants, and individual donations. While MoreSports' pool of competitors is much smaller than the national figures, many social development entities, sports organizations and recreational agencies rely heavily on funding, especially from government support.

3.2 Other Providers of Sports Programs

While other providers do not supply the same type of programming as MoreSports, these substitutes do represent potential competition for a family's recreation dollars, which on average is \$4577 per year⁴⁰, as well as a family's time. As such, it is important to analyze each substitute individually.

3.2.1 Community Centre Programs

With 23 civically-run community centres throughout Vancouver, a vast number of different recreational and sport programs are available to those interested in being physically active. While some community centres choose to complement MoreSports program offerings (i.e. in scheduling, in age groups targeted, and/or in type of program), others directly target similar participants. Additional facilities like the Langara Family YMCA and Jewish Community Centre also represent another player in the industry with available children's sports programming. Like MoreSports, many of these facilities offer basketball, soccer, badminton and volleyball programs to children in the community. However, price, style, and quality vary drastically between program and facility. For example, local community centre programs range from less than \$3 per session to \$11 per

⁴⁰ Statistics Canada. (2008). Average household expenditures, by province and territory 2007

equivalent duration⁴¹. Moreover, offerings range from co-ed to girls/boys only and recreational drop-in with minimal instruction to high performance skills training. Many community centre (and comparable facility) programs take place throughout the week, which can provide added convenience to busy families. Nonetheless, participation in Vancouver Park Board sports and physical activity programs for children has decreased over the past few years. Over 11,000 children ages 6-15 participated in these programs in 2006, while just over 3,000 participants have participated to date in 2009; despite greater registration in summer and fall seasons, the VPB will still likely fall short of previous years' participant numbers⁴². This may be due to the expansion of MoreSports.

However, the Vancouver Park Board receives guaranteed governmental resources to operate its community centres each year. Additionally, many of the neighbourhood associations who jointly operate the centres have the ability to collect substantial revenues from program fees in other areas to support operation. Nevertheless, many of these associations also apply for government and foundation grants to supplement the community centre's offerings; as not-for-profit entities, many are extremely successful in receiving funding.

3.2.2 Minor League Sports

Minor league sport organizations also capture a large part of the Vancouver market, giving children the opportunity to play any number of sports, including but not limited to hockey, soccer, baseball, football, and basketball. Many of these leagues are well established and well attended. However, they require a greater upfront investment in

⁴¹ Vancouver Park Board Register Online - https://pbregister.vancouver.ca/safari_activitybrowse.htm

⁴² Vancouver Park Board Registration Statistics 2006-2009.

regards to money and time. Participants must pay the entire season's fees upfront. Even the least expensive sport to play, soccer, collects leagues fees in the range of \$75 to \$260⁴³. Hockey league fees can cost up to \$800, before equipment and tournaments⁴⁴. While some leagues offer their own subsidies, most others direct families to KidSport BC, which administers participant grants through an application process. Apart from fees, parents are expected to volunteer their time for the league/child's team. Leagues depend on this source for volunteers. Some clubs have even gone so far as to charge a fee to parents who are unable to volunteer. This punishes the single-parent families who struggle with costs and may not be able to take the time away from their work to volunteer. In addition, participants are expected to attend all practices and games and demonstrate a higher level of commitment than recreational programs. This can also be challenging for parents with busy work schedules and limited access to transportation. Furthermore, some of the adults who coach minor league sports have extremely competitive mindsets. As such, they often coach best to the elite athletes on their teams, but not necessarily the majority of players. Some of these reasons in combination may explain the decline in participation in organized sport.

In general, minor league sports organizations use registration fees to run their operations. Fundraising events and initiatives also help to support the clubs. Additionally, most leagues are also supported by the provincial sport organization under which they fall. The PSOs are in turn supported by not-for-profits, such as Sport BC, which receive funding from the BC Government and corporate organizations. Additionally, some

⁴³ Collected from various Vancouver based soccer club websites.

⁴⁴ Vancouver Thunderbirds website: <http://www.vancouverbirds.ca/Text/1233167266718-1415/pC/1198257542077-4849/>

leagues are able to attain support from professional sport clubs. Hence, minor league sports also contend for external funding.

4: Similar Organizations in other areas

While the MoreSports community school model (concept and practices) is somewhat unique, other organizations which strive to deliver sport while also building community capacity also exist to offer programming in the developing world; most operate under the newly framed banner of “Sport for Development”, the concept that sport plays a great role in healthy childhood development and community capacity building. Other examples of partnerships that engage youth in leadership training and volunteerism also exist. This section will highlight an example organization in each of the sport development and leadership building framework from which MoreSports can learn.

4.1 Sport Development - Right to Play⁴⁵

Founded in 1992 (as Lillehammer’s Winter Games legacy “Olympic Aid”), Right to Play is an international humanitarian organization that enters disadvantaged areas of the world and trains community leaders to become coaches to deliver sport programs to children. Its program delivery method is very similar to MoreSports in that the majority of its workforce is volunteer-based. Through its programs, it aims to build local capacity in four main areas: education and child development, health promotion and disease prevention, conflict resolution and peace education, and community development. Operating in 23 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and South America, Right to Play engages international athletes to inspire children, raise awareness, and promote funding opportunities. A number of governments and United Nations agencies support

⁴⁵ Right to Play website. <http://rtpca.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=aboutRTP>

Right to Play. It is also receives financial support from private corporate business and donations from many individuals around the world. Moreover, Right to Play is also involved in governmental policy development through the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group to advance the cause further.

While it has a much broader mandate than MoreSports, Right to Play's ability to connect stakeholders and solicit involvement is impressive. This may be due to its role in formation of policy. If MoreSports were to become actively involved in the policy making of both its major stakeholders, the VSB and VPB, it could avoid having to react to situations and take advantage of its flexibility. Additionally, Right to Play is extremely successful in receiving attention and attaining funding from government, corporate, and philanthropic sources (both foundations and private individuals). This is likely because of its engagement of international athletes, which results in media exposure and increased participation from inspired children; both are recognized as contributing to the ability to raise funds⁴⁶.

4.2 Leadership Development – The Boys & Girls Clubs of Indianapolis⁴⁷

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Indianapolis (BGCI) offers core programming to encourage character and leadership development in local youth. With programs such as its Keystone Club and Torch Club, BGCI successfully focuses on youth-led community service provision (through a variety of programs) and leadership skills development. The organization works with local schools, youth agencies, and churches in order to recognize

⁴⁶ Berrett, T. & Slack, T. (2001). A Framework for the Analysis of Strategic Approaches Employed by Non-profit Sports Organisations in Seeking Corporate Sponsorship.

⁴⁷ Character and Leadership Development. Boys & Girls Clubs of Indianapolis website. <http://www.bgcindy.org/index.php/?characterleadershipdevelopment>

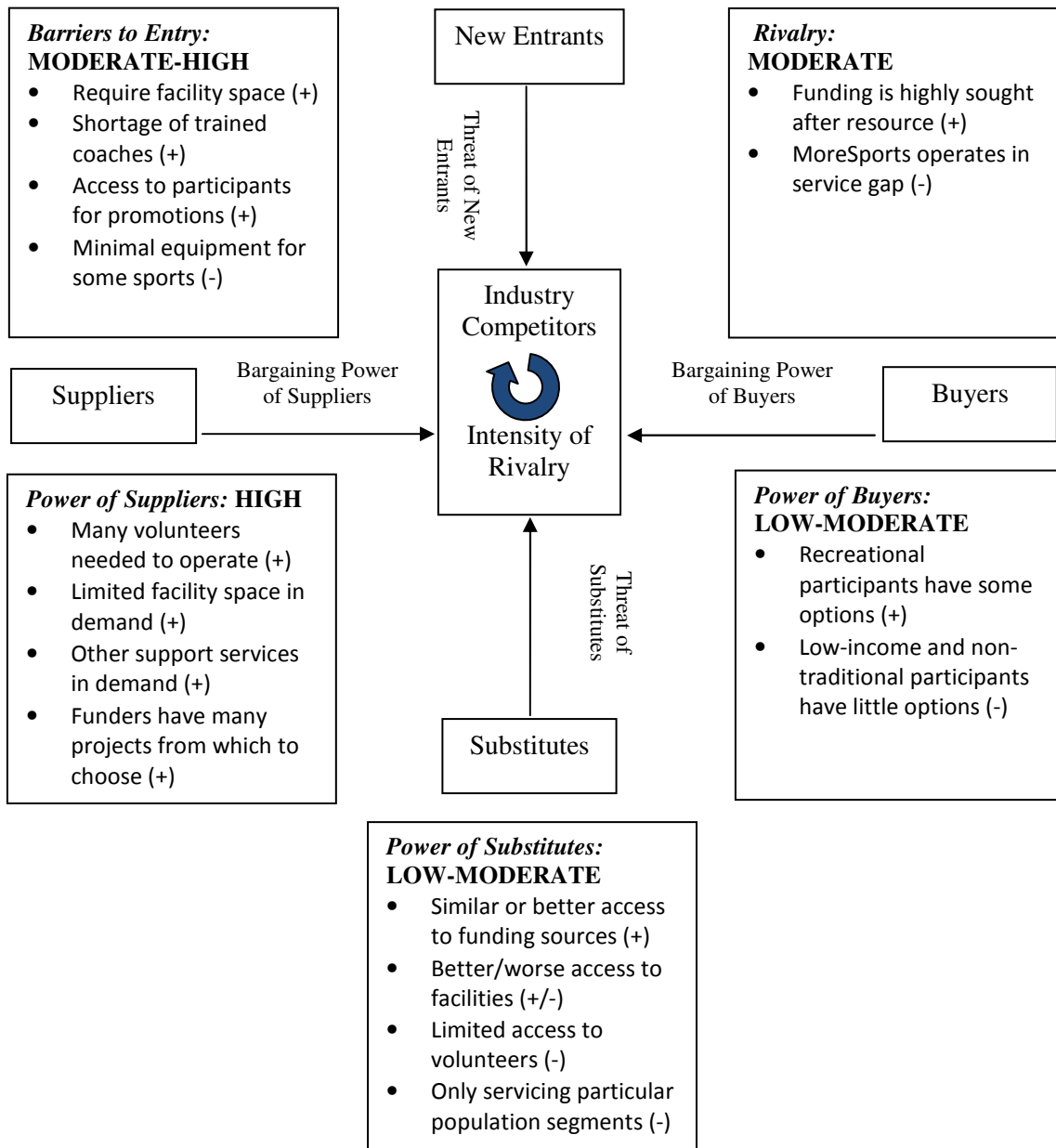
and honour youth that are making a difference in their communities. Further, it works with the Readers Digest Foundation to sponsor its Youth of the Year awards; winners are rewarded scholarships and are enrolled in a national competition. One of the key success factors of these programs includes that they are youth-led, by elected youth officers. This gains immediate buy-in from youth. Currently, MoreSports has very little youth involvement at a planning and strategy level. Further, with a Youth of the Year program, there is further incentive to participate and perform at one's best ability. However, BGCI would not be able to offer such a program without a corporate sponsor. This type of program with corporate involvement is something that MoreSports could consider.

5: Analysis and Recommendations

5.1 Industry Analysis

To best analyze MoreSports' position, an examination of the industry through Porter's Five Forces is warranted. Below in figure 5 is an illustration of MoreSports' industry in Porter's Five Forces model.

Figure 5. Porter's Five Forces Model: MoreSports



As demonstrated in the figure above, MoreSports' main challenges within its industry revolve around supplier power and competition for funding resources. Barriers to entry are relatively high considering the necessary infrastructure (people and facilities) required to offer and market programming. In relation to this, supplier power is high. Stakeholders, like the VSB and the VPB, have access to facilities and the ability to

provide support services, such as administration, account management, and registration. In order to mitigate these negative effects, MoreSports forms collaborative partnerships with many of its key suppliers. As a result, it has been able to better develop its relationships with participants and volunteers, creating sustainable sources of each. This is one of its key success factors. However, MoreSports has no control over some of its suppliers, mainly funding organizations. Because of the vast number of grant and sponsorship applications that many of these funding organizations receive, they also have a great deal of power. Their limited amounts of funding dollars also contribute to the rivalry amongst industry players. As MoreSports purposely operates within a service gap, “competition” largely comes from substitutes. Each substitute has a mixture of advantages and shortcomings in comparison to MoreSports. However, because they generally target to different segments, substitute power is at most moderate. This is due to the limited buying power of many MoreSports participants due to low-income or lack of familiarity with the sports system. MoreSports ability to capture this part of the market is another one of its key success factors. Table 4 below outlines the key success factors of the industry and compares MoreSports to its substitutes.

Table 4. Comparison of Industry Key Success Factors

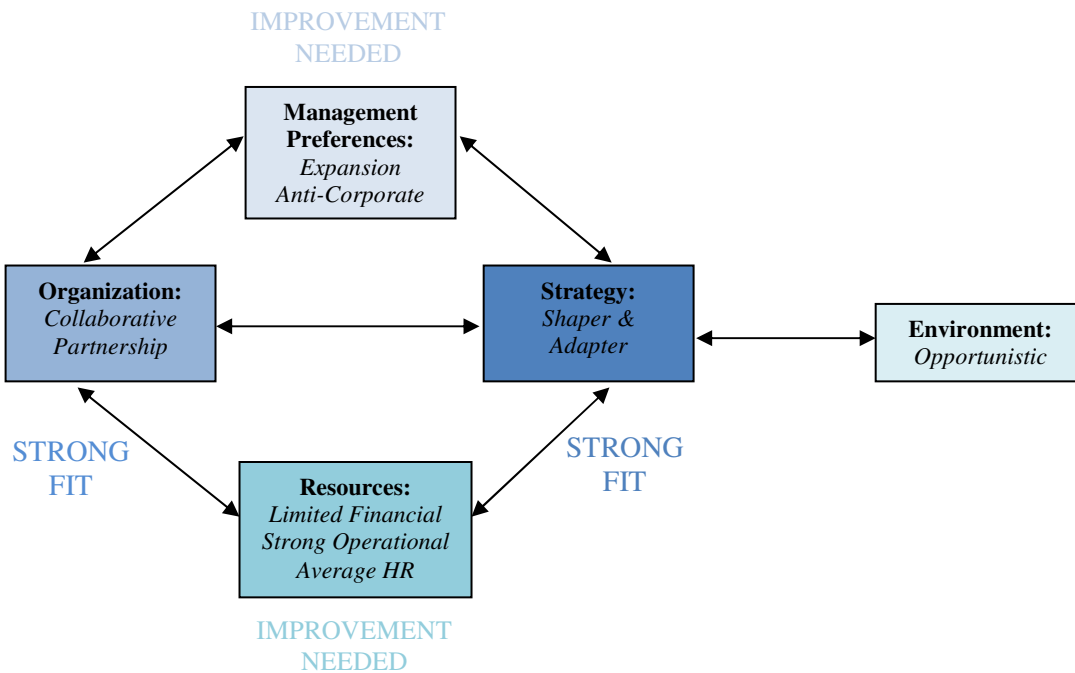
Key Success Factor	MoreSports	Community Centre Sports	Minor League Organizations	Opportunity/Threat
Facility Access	+	+	+/-	Opportunity
Participant Access	+	-	-	Opportunity
Volunteer Recruitment	+	-	-	Opportunity
Funding Resources	+/-	+	+/-	Threat
Competitive Quality	-	-	+	Threat
Competitive Price	+	+/-	-	Opportunity
Operational Costs	+	-	+	Opportunity

In order to better succeed and expand in the industry, MoreSports only needs to develop two key success factors – its funding resources and the quality of its programming. As MoreSports is continuing to focus on the development and training of its volunteer base, one can assume that the quality of its programming will increase over time. However, it is not clear whether it can find sustainable funding resources.

5.2 Internal Analysis

MoreSports needs to ensure that its future directions meet its internal capabilities, but not necessarily just its management preferences. Based on MoreSports' desire to expand and attain sustained funding, along with realizing benefits with improved service quality, Figure 6 illustrates its internal position.

Figure 6. Diamond-E of MoreSports Internal Fit with Suggested Direction



MoreSports currently has a combination of a shaper and adapter strategy. MoreSports’ program delivery and collaborative service model is innovative within a Canadian context. This has partly allowed MoreSports to carve out its current niche. However, in regards to its volunteer training, MoreSports uses programs already adopted by other organizations. This is preferable since MoreSports can ensure the quality of the programs, having already been tested by others. However, MoreSports also often finds itself reacting to its external environment. By incorporating more of a shaper strategy, it may be able to be more pro-active. This would especially be useful in regards to policy development and lobbying its partner institutions. While Dick Woldring sits on the Vancouver Sport Strategy Committee, participating in additional activities similar to this could be worthwhile for expansion. Additionally, a pro-active, innovative strategy towards fundraising could prove useful.

Furthermore, MoreSports suffers from a lack of sustainable financial resources. The grants it currently receives will not continue indefinitely. As such, MoreSports needs to consider a new approach to attaining funding. This could be through guaranteed financial support from its current partners or through other fundraising and sponsorship opportunities. In addition, it will require additional funding if it wishes to expand. Nonetheless, MoreSports does have valuable operational and human resources through its partners. With free access to facilities and partners who provide equipment, MoreSports is in a good position with its operational resources. In regards to its human resources, staff loss, while a concern, is likely unavoidable. However, its constant development of new volunteers and leaders, also provide a source for new hires. Yet as new staff members learn the job, quality of service may not be maintained. This may also be the case with further expansion and dilution of veteran staff. By expanding its training to include younger volunteers (grade 8s and 9s), MoreSports may be able to ensure that older volunteers are sufficiently prepared to succeed staff when they are lost.

In regards to the organizational structure, system, and culture, MoreSports' focus on non-hierarchical collaborative partnerships allows stakeholders a sense of equality and ownership over the programs. As such, continual growth through additional and/or solidified partnerships would be fitting. Moreover, as corporate sponsorships are merely an extension of partnership, MoreSports should consider moving in this direction. As noted earlier in this paper, it would also be beneficial if MoreSports can find an entity through which it can attain legal status, so that it can sign official MOU with the VSB and VPB. Therefore, MoreSports should approach entities that can satisfy this need if policy around this requirement cannot be changed through lobbying. It would not make

sense for MoreSports to attain legal status on its own in exchange for the loss of partners at the Advisory Board level.

Lastly, management is clearly interested in future expansion, geographically and in program offerings. While this complements the opportunities it has in the external environment, MoreSports needs to be wary of spreading itself too thin prior to receiving additional resources. However, it is also hesitant about seeking corporate sponsorship. This seems counter-intuitive. While monetizing its website with advertisements may not fit with its strategy, other sponsorship opportunities are certainly available. Regardless, a complete fundraising plan is important for MoreSports' future.

5.3 Recommendations

While MoreSports is currently successful on many fronts, changes can always be made in order to improve operations, service delivery, and resource base. Based on the above external and internal analyses, this author makes the following recommendations:

Organizational Structure

- Centralize all funding strategies through the Advisory Committee, including all grant proposals, requests for formalized financial support from major partners, corporate sponsorship and private business partnerships.
- Outline hub committee responsibilities, requirements, and expected results from funding by developing a best-practices document and providing education through the Planning and Operations Committee; it will assist in chapter addition and hub expansion.

- Set criteria for the range of programs offered and the required registration necessary to run a program. (Program offerings can still be relatively high with individual program registration at lower levels, but it has to make best use of volunteer resources.)
- Devote some staff resources to fundraising/sponsorship; the same staff member could also perform communications tasks to increase media exposure.

Stakeholder Involvement

- Lobby VSB and VPB to change policy (or make an exception) in regards to the participation of its staff members on the boards of stand-alone legal entities who partner with these institutions, so that a signed MOU (and the improved consistency between communities that results) is possible; OR
- Continue lobbying other agencies to make MoreSports one of its programs, providing MoreSports with legal status.
- Encourage VPB to view YELL volunteer training as part of their recreation staff succession planning and convince them to commit resources to it.
- If a private business partnership is formed and that partnership benefits MoreSports to act centrally (i.e. buy in bulk), hubs must agree to supporting the partnership.
- Explore corporate sponsorship and private citizen donation possibilities; develop a fundraising plan that includes the creation of the necessary marketing materials for stakeholder and sponsorship persuasion.

- Invite minor league sports organizations to become partners of MoreSports; children and volunteer coaches who wish to move into more competitive streams can do so more easily and vice versa; additionally, minor league clubs can recycle used equipment.
- Continue to develop relationships with provincial sport organizations to provide a variety of coaching programs to volunteers; make arrangements to receive discounted registration fees.

Participants

- Request involvement from local well-known athletes at “School Days” programs to help inspire more children to play.
- Further develop the volunteer training program to include more youth input.
- Develop programs for the Grade 8 and 9 gap to ensure entry into MoreSports at any age and promote the development of higher quality leaders at a younger age.
- Implement an incentive/awards program for volunteers to encourage high level performance.

Please note these recommendations are not in order of importance, just in order of comparative relevance.

6: Conclusion

As MoreSports provides programming for segments of the population that are not currently being served, it is a crucial player in the industry. To help address the issues of childhood obesity and physical well-being, programs need to be available that provide all children with the chance to participate in physical activity while also removing as many barriers to participation as possible. The current sports and recreation system is not enough. However, without the guarantee of continued support from stakeholders and funders, MoreSports will not be able to continue providing programs to under-served populations. As such, MoreSports needs to focus on these two main challenges first in order to solidify its position within the industry; once completed, MoreSports will be able to expand to its capacity and better provide other municipalities with the framework to do the same in their communities.

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