

**Intrapreneurial Business Proposal: Colts Stadium District**

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## **Introduction**

The Indianapolis Colts are essential to our sports culture here in Indy. As fan engagement changes and people expect more from their experiences, we must find new ways to connect beyond just the game. This proposal aims to improve the area surrounding Lucas Oil Stadium, making it more appealing to modern fans and benefiting the community. Our goal is to upgrade the stadium and fan experience, establishing a high standard by analyzing the market, understanding fan needs, and applying innovative ideas.

## **External & Internal Business Environment**

### **External Environment Analysis**

The Colts operate in a highly competitive market, with several professional teams contending for fan attention and sponsorship dollars. As highlighted in Kellison's (2021) analysis of stadium districts, external factors such as urban development trends, community dynamics, and shifting fan preferences play a significant role in shaping success. Like other cities, Indianapolis is increasingly focusing on revitalizing urban cores, aligning with trends seen in the District Detroit development (Rishe, 2016). Also, as highlighted in Patel's (2024) exploration of fan trends, digital engagement has shifted the focus from physical attendance to hybrid digital-physical experiences.

### **Internal Environment Analysis**

Internally, the Colts benefit from substantial brand equity and an established fan base, yet they must remain proactive in maintaining relevance. The team has successfully connected with the community through local initiatives, but there is still room to improve the variety of fan experiences. Data analysis, as explained by Dietz (2024), can help the

organization better understand fan behavior and create experiences that match their needs. Also, since making money is important, improving premium seating and fan zones can increase profits.

## **Strategic Scanning**

### **Opportunities**

The proposal identifies several opportunities for the Colts to enhance their fan engagement and stadium district experience:

1. **Mixed-Use Development:** As seen with the success of Battery Atlanta and District Detroit, incorporating residential, retail, and entertainment spaces can transform the stadium into a year-round destination (Rishe, 2016; Kellison, 2021).
2. **Digital Engagement:** Patel (2024) explored how leveraging AI and AR technologies for personalized fan experiences can deepen engagement.
3. **Community Integration:** Creating safe and welcoming spaces for families and community centers can build pride in the community and attract people from different backgrounds (Hoefler, 2024).

### **Threats**

Challenges include:

- **Competition:** Nearby teams and entertainment options may dilute attendance and sponsorship opportunities.
- **Economic Sensitivity:** McQuaid (2024) highlights that public investment in sports venues often faces scrutiny due to concerns over long-term returns.

- **Technology Adoption:** Smart stadiums can bring many benefits, but they require much money to set up and change how things are currently done (Patel, 2024).

### **Competitive Landscape**

The Colts face competition not just from other NFL teams but also from local attractions. Stadiums like SoFi and Tottenham Hotspur have set benchmarks for innovation, emphasizing the need for continuous improvement to stay competitive (Patel, 2024; Hoefler, 2024).

### **Solving a Need in the Market and Implementing Innovation**

#### **Fan Experience Enhancements**

To address the need for immersive fan experiences, this proposal recommends creating a **family- and pet-friendly lawn area** modeled after Toronto's Maple Leaf Square. The space will feature a large LED screen for away game viewings and public events, integrating the latest AR/VR technology for interactive fan engagement (Maple et al. & Entertainment, 2024). This initiative aligns with trends in "smart stadium" design and community integration.

#### **Community-Focused Solutions**

Beyond game day experiences, the proposal advocates for:

- **Colts Museum & Hall of Fame:** Highlighting team history and engaging fans year-round.
- **Residential and Hotel Developments:** Like Battery Atlanta, these additions will create a dynamic live-work-play environment.

- **Dining and Retail Spaces:** Partner with local businesses to boost economic growth.

### **Implementation Strategies**

Implementing these initiatives requires careful planning and phased execution:

1. **Phase 1:** Launch the lawn area and retrofit existing spaces with AR/VR capabilities during the offseason.
2. **Phase 2:** Develop the museum and integrate dining and retail spaces, ensuring minimal disruption to ongoing operations.
3. **Phase 3:** Expand residential and hotel accommodations, aligning with community needs and urban development plans.

### **Conclusion**

We can become a leader in fan engagement and community involvement with these new initiatives. They create a stimulating stadium area that enhances the fan experience beyond just game day, inspired by successful projects like Battery Atlanta and Maple Leaf Square. By using both data insights and human judgment, the Colts can ensure their plans meet fan needs and support organizational goals. These strategies will help the Colts improve their competitive edge and strengthen their impact on Indianapolis' economy and culture.

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