

## History

Founded in 1905, Chelsea Football Club (Chelsea FC) has become a powerhouse in European Soccer. More recently, 2003 saw the Roman Abramovich ownership owner begin. Roman Abramovich, a Russian billionaire, purchased the club for only \$174 million. He oversaw the most successful period of the club's history. Signing club legends Didier Drogba, Eden Hazard, and Frank Lampard. Chelsea would win 19 major trophies during this era, including five Premier League titles, two Uefa Champions League trophies, one Club World Cup, and much more.

In 2022, Abramovich was forced to sell the club due to the Ukraine War and his ties to Russia. The club was sold to Todd Boehly, an American Billionaire, and a consortium of investors for \$4.5 billion in May of 2022. Leading to a new era for the English club.

## <u>Industry</u>

Chelsea FC is an English soccer club, located in London, UK. Chelsea's main performances are played in the English Premier League. This is the first division league for 20 clubs all across the United Kingdom. Depending on where the team finishes in the season before next, Chelsea could partake in another competition.

If Chelsea finishes between first and fourth place, they will participate in the Uefa Champions League. A tournament-style competition where all the best clubs from Europe come to compete. This competition draws in millions of viewers. Most recent data from the 2020/21 final, which included Chelsea, drew in 48.7 million viewers worldwide.

If Chelsea were to finish in fifth or sixth place, it would play in the Europa League the following season. This includes teams from Europe that finished their season in similar positions. Lastly, if Chelsea finished seventh, it would participate in the Europa Conference League the following year. These competitions, while less popular, draw in high amounts of viewers. The finals drew in 4 million and 3.3 million viewers, respectfully.

#### Situational Analysis

# Industry (cont.)

Breakdown of Potential Competitions Chelsea Can Participate In Each Season



Premier League League Play 20 teams 38 Games (Aug-May)



UEFA Champions League Knockout Tournament 36 teams 13 Games (through final) (Sept - May)



UEFA Europa League Knockout Tournament 32 teams 13 Games (through final) (Sept - May)



UEFA Conference Legaue Knockout Tournament Play 32 teams 13 Games (Sept-May)



FIFA Club World Cup
Knockout Tournament Play
7 teams
2 Games
(January)
\*Winner of the UEFA Champions Legave

Qualifies for this tournament



FA Cup
Knockout Tournament Play
All Registered Clubs\*
7 Games\*\*
(All Year)
\*Includes all registered clubs

in England, including local clubs in the 20th tier

\* \* Premier Legaue teams enter late



## Culture

Chelsea FC drives itself through the support from fans. In London, Chelsea is statistically, the second biggest club in the city behind Arsenal FC. Chelsea, and its fans, not only support the first team but those around them. Chelsea has invested heavily in its academy teams to help prepare for the future. Most recently, some of the biggest names in the league have pushed through. These names include Mason Mount, Reece James, and Armando Broja all getting regular minutes this season, who have all been at the club since they were younger than 10 years old.

Elsewhere, Chelsea FC, based in Fulham, West London, focuses as much off the pitch as it does on it. Chelsea prides itself in the work the club does with its "Chelsea Foundation." With the most recent report coming from the 2020/21 season, Chelsea boasts 806,031 participants in its program. Specifically, Chelsea saw 28,456 partnerships in youth-driven initiatives through its "Kicks Programme." The club also had 5,678 participants in its "Disability Programme" which highlights its mission of inclusivity among supporters.

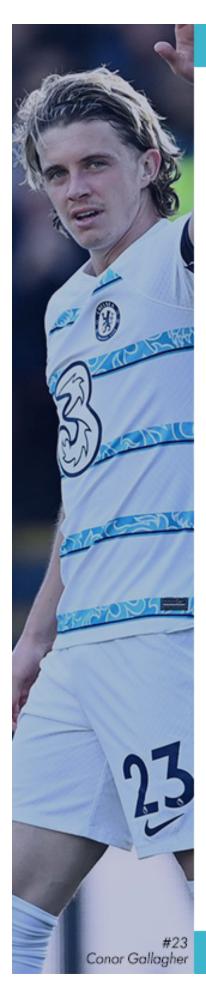
## Competition

Chelsea FC, while based in London, faces competition elsewhere in the UK. In London, Chelsea faces competition from city rivals Arsenal FC, Tottenham Hotspur, Fulham FC, West Ham, & Crystal Palace. Chelsea, however, is superior when it comes to shirt sales. This is a key indicator of fan support as fans will be wearing these jerseys at their leisure.

With our plan to expand Chelsea in the United States, the club faces a different type of competition. In the states, Chelsea will face competition from the "Big Six" clubs in England. Arsenal, Tottenham, Liverpool FC, Manchester United, and Manchester City. These are the other massive clubs in England that have the most support or at least the support that is comparable to that of Chelsea.

In the states, we will have competition from NFL, MLB, and NBA organizations. Football, baseball, and basketball are the top three most-viewed sports in America, with soccer coming in 5th behind hockey. This is also due to Chelsea having no real representation in the US, outside of soccer fans who are aware of leagues abroad. Though, the Champions League final pulls in more viewers than the Super bowl. With the right exposure, we can improve Chelsea's value in the US market.





### **Products**

Chelsea FC, as mentioned earlier, is the second most successful London-based club behind Arsenal FC in terms of trophies. Though, in the 2021/22 season, Chelsea was the best selling club in jersey sales in London, and third best in the UK only behind club giants Liverpool FC & Manchester United with 1.3 million shirts sold according to Statista.

Along with jerseys, the club also sell other merchandise. In the Chelsea FC Official store/website, fans can buy an array of products ranging from practice tops, hoodies, and winter jackets. The club has maximized its hold on branding in London with its "Chelsea Megastore" attached to its home stadium, Stamford Bridge.

### Consumers

Chelsea FC Supporters invest time and money to support the club. There is a market for the club in both the UK. Chelsea aims to gather the attention of fans of all ages. Soccer is a space for you to travel to games and watch alone, travel with friends, family, partners, etc. With the different competitions that Chelsea participate in yearly, there are many opportunities for consumers to be involved.

With club merchandise, consumers aim to buy products that are branded with club imagery. Like sports in the US, representing your club outside of the stadium shows how invested you are with the team. The younger audience, ages 10-21, are most involved with wearing club branding in the forms of player jerseys and any type of clothing they can get to show how much of a fan they are,

In terms of being involved with the club, there are opportunities in London that can be adapted to US culture. For the youthful audience, ages 5-18, there are youth programs, known as "Club Academies" in England, where they could play for the club. The youth prefer to play for these teams because of the connections they have supporting the first team that plays in the Premier League. By doing this, Chelsea's brand is exposed to children early on creating new fans, while also being exposed to family and friends of older status who may not be familiar with the club and want to get involved to support their children.

# SWOT Analysis

## Strengths

- Location
- Dominance in the UK-London Market
- Jersey Sales

## Weaknesses

- Recent position in the League
- Transition of ownership/ unfilled positions in the Club hierarchy

# **Opportunities**

- Brand exposure in USA
- Potential for US-based
   Chelsea Youth Academies
- Potential players from the US to bring to England to play in the English league
- Easily scout players in a foreign country

## Threats

- "Big Six" teams in England
- NFL, MLB, & NBA in USA
- Other youth academies in USA











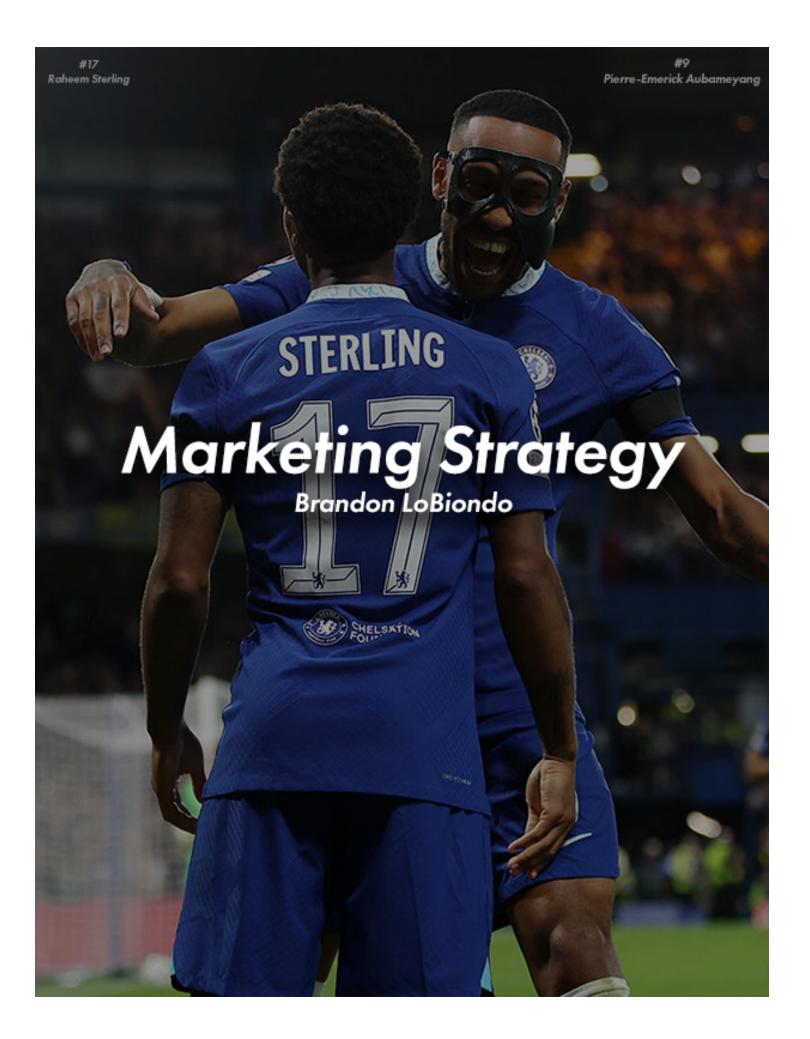












## **STRATEGY**

#### Request for Proposal

Chelsea FC is looking for a full-service ad agency to increase brand awareness and attract younger players to stimulate life long fans/interest of European football in the United States.

Chelsea FC has done well to take the next steps in developing its brand awareness in the United States following the successful purchase of the club by American Todd Boehly. The success of Christian Pulisic, an American, playing for the club has also increased the potential for entering a bigger market.

Chelsea FC has continued its dramatic growth over the last few years with the success in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League, competitions facing Europe's elite clubs. The Clubs triumphant win in the FIFA Club World Cup in January 2022 has also helped build recognition around the world as the tournament included clubs from each continent.

The US is oversaturated with different sports including the NFL, NBA, and MLB. Along with the MLS, Chelsea has shown in Europe that they can compete with the elite, something we could see in the US.

The purpose of our work will be to target a younger audience, of all genders, between 10-21 year olds who compete and watch soccer. The agency wants to begin building US-based youth academies across the country. More research will be conducted to conclude where these academies will be placed but will help bring awareness to the club while providing high-quality coaching and competition to athletes who support the club, as introducing the club to young audiences can help build that bond for life-long support. This will also provide the club with potential players to bring overseas to the first team.

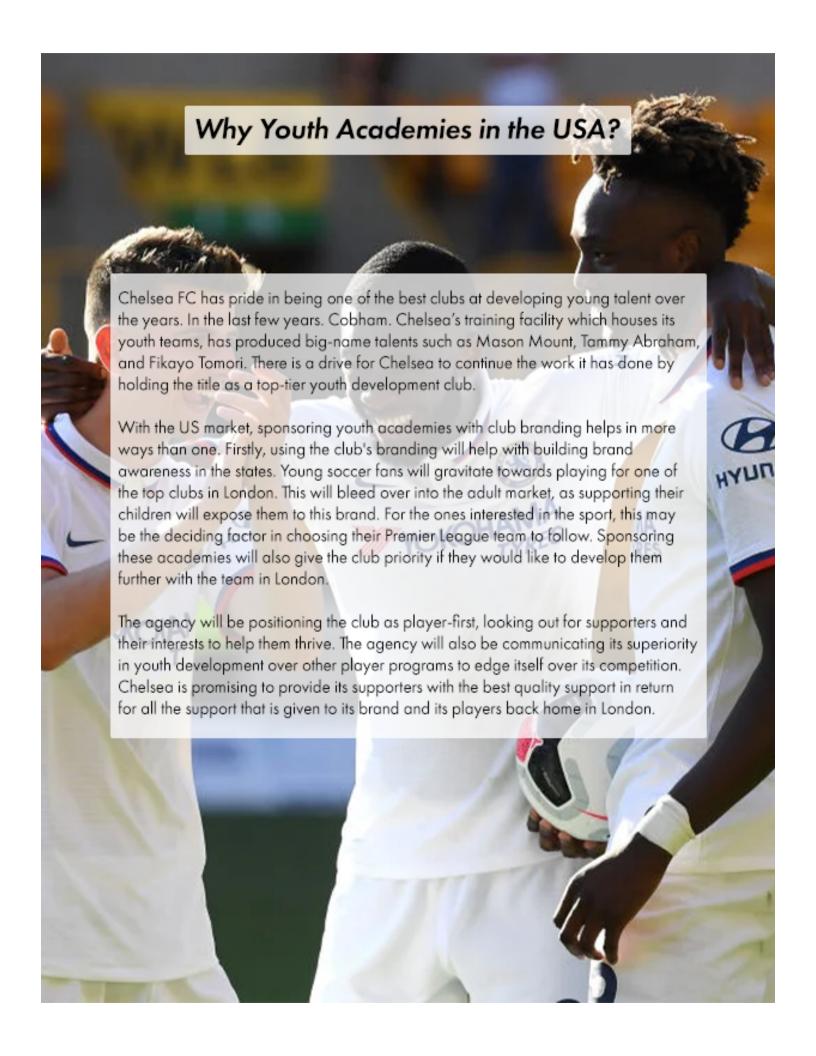
The agency has developed an Integrated Marketing Communication plan that will consist of traditional media, as well as emerging media. With the use of social media, we will be able to target a more specific audience that enjoys soccer to promote the club and its brand.

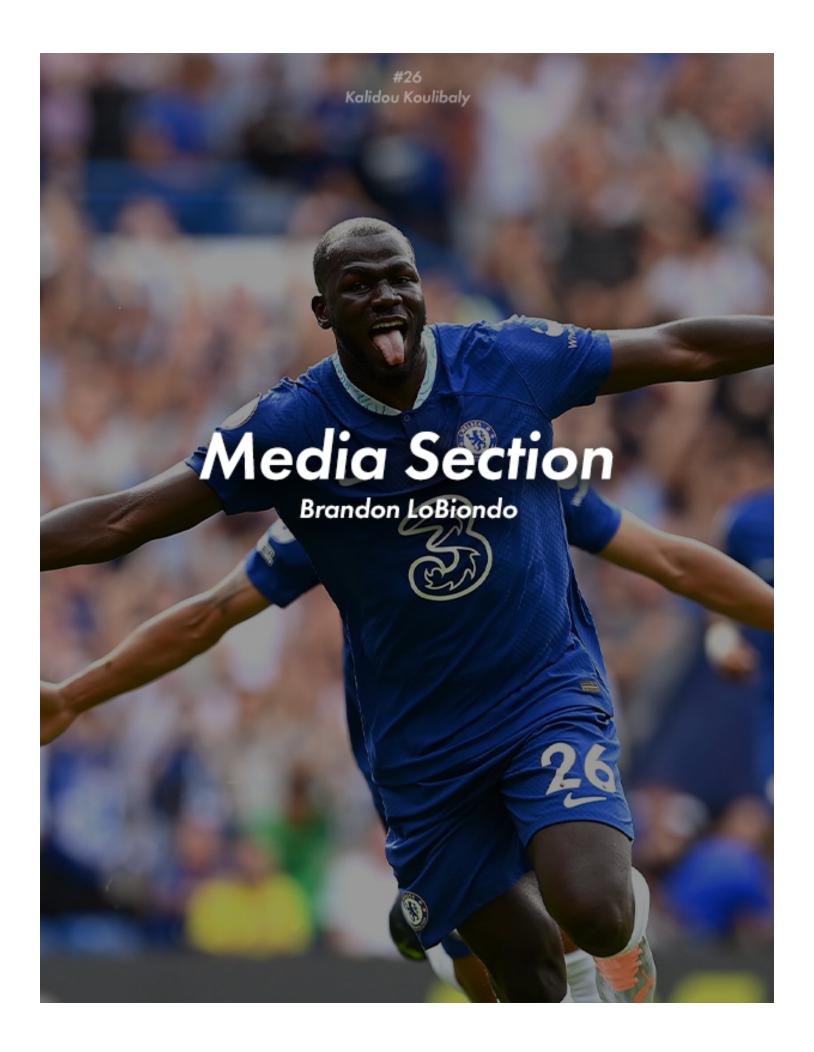
Advertising and promotional pieces, including players and club gear, will be used to promote the brand. These pieces will be placed through social media and TV. While the main target is between 10-21 year-olds, this may help affect older audiences as well.

Through media campaigns and the introduction of youth academies in the US, Chelsea FC is poised to continue its success in growing its brand. This strategy will ensure the club that it will excel in the US market

## **OBJECTIVES**

- 1. Build awareness of the Chelsea FC brand to expand the club outside of Europe into the US.
- Build youth academies across the US to expose the brand to young audiences while providing them with high-quality coaching and growth.
- Increase engagement across all social media platforms across the club's US-based accounts like Chelsea FC USA.





## Media Strategy

Chelsea Football Club's media department has taken the research conducted by the ad agency to determine the most effective ways to reach its target audience. Using these platforms will give Chelsea a competitive edge over other soccer clubs in the US. This media campaign will use traditional and emerging social media to connect with its younger audience, while also utilizing out-of-home advertising and television advertising to raise awareness of the brand in the US market among players between the ages of 10-21.

The media strategy is going to be targeted toward players with a passion for the sport. US-based Chelsea academies will put a spotlight on the sport in the US. To shine that spotlight on both the club and the players, this strategy will use all media platforms to target consumers where they consume media every day. This will give the agency maximum engagement that contributes to building a positive perception of the club

The Club is going to target the areas where the club is building youth academies. These geographic locations were researched measuring the popularity of the sport to more effectively gain attention. Los Angeles, New York City, San Diego, and Dallas will be the cities where the agency will launch its "Chelsea FC US Academy" campaign. As soccer thrives outside of these four cities, the agency is recommending to the club place advertisements on various sport-related television stations around the country. Chelsea Football Club will maximize its potential for growth by taking into account the personal interest of other states in the US. Positioning the club as one of the best at developing young talent in other states will demonstrate the club's ambition to expand across the country with more academies in the future.



#### Media Action Plan

# Television 🚞

Chelsea FC broadcasts its game in the US through different television channels. While they are shown on various channels, they are all owned by NBC. NBC also houses other sports, such as NFL and Golf. The agency recognizes an older generation is familiar with Television as the main way of consuming media. TV ads will allow the agency to develop advertisements for both the Academies and the Club's brand to an older audience. By using Chelsea's personality as the best club in England as the theme of its ads, the club can build a connection with consumers who may be searching for a soccer team to follow.

# Streaming Services 🖵

Chelsea appears on various streaming services, both for live games and reruns. Chelsea sees themselves appear on Peacock by NBC, ESPN/ESPN+, and Paramount+. These streaming platforms allow consumers to easily access the team from anywhere with a stable Wi-Fi connection. Creating advertisements for these platforms gives the club more versatility, as its placement here is surrounded by other sports. Chelsea's ad placement on these platforms can reinforce the club's identity while also highlighting the advancements it is making in a new market.

# Out-of-Home Advertising 🚞

Chelsea has established goals to attract a younger audience by building youth academies. Many of these players travel to play in games, sometimes even out of their home state.

The agency recommends Billboards being placed on high-volume roadways for teams/families traveling. These billboards should be simple, exposing the brand and its players to gain the attention of consumers. These roads can also be traveled so often that they see it more than once, becoming familiar with the branding and having a feeling to learn more.

The agency also recommends creating posters for different locations. Posters can be placed in airports in the four cities chosen with academies to highlight the work the club is doing. The club can also place posters at high-level tournaments, such as MLS NextPro or State Championships, to advertise its dedication to building a strong player base while exposing its brand to new consumers.





# Social & Emerging Media

Social media is always changing. Whether its the platform itself or the trends that people enjoy. The ad agency recommends the Club builds its presence on social and emerging media. Each social media platform is different and requires different attention. By building its online presence, the club can position itself and ads more effectively to consumers.

### Twitter

The agency recommends building the image of the club on Twitter. While Twitter also allows users to upload images, allows the club to post text-only tweets, The the agency recommends engaging with fans to build a repport with new and existing consumers. Through various examples (i.e., Wendy's), it has been proven that engaging with the community builds value.

Upon building repport, placing advertisements on the official Chelsea account can incentivize people to check out what the club is offering. This helps build the brand awareness of the club by gaining the attention of new consumers.

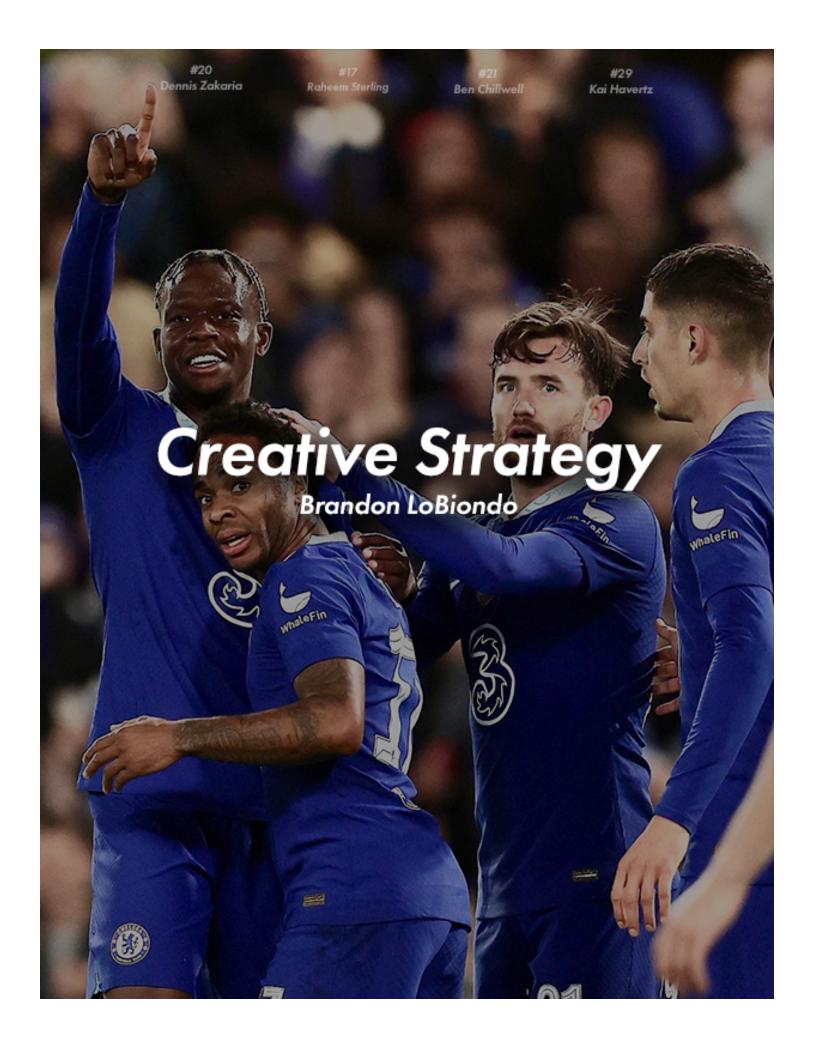
### Instagram

The agency recommends using Instagram to promote the youth academies to its consumers. Instagram is a photo-heavy platform. Sharing photos of what these academies look like in conjunction with the teams playing for these US-based teams can help spread the message of Chelsea being in the US. This can raise engagement and impressions of the official team account and help to continue the growth of the brand.

### YouTube

The agency recommends using YouTube to promote all things Chelsea. YouTube gives freedom into posting long-form video content. The media team will be able to organize interviews, challenges with the players, highlights, and more to help build awareness of the club all over the world.

The club will also be able to use this to stream games from its US-based academies. By streaming these games, the club is taking another step into exposing its program to new players in the US. The club could also offer registration/try-out information in the video description to monitor how many people register interest in joining the club in the United States.



## **Creative Brief**

#### Objective

The agency will be building the brand awareness for Chelsea Football Club. We will be building youth academies for younger audiences to play for while supporting the club and its efforts to building its brand in the US.

#### Audience

The target audience for this campaign will be youth soccer players between the ages of 10-21. This group of players will be familiar with soccer culture in the UKand will have some knowledge of how the game is different than in the US. While targeting the youth population, brand awareness will bleed into an older market, as parents will become aware of the club. Which, in turn, may produce more supporters for the club.

#### Where

This campaign will be occurring in the United States.

We will be constructing youth soccer academies with Chelsea FC's branding across the country.

Future research will be done by the club to decipher which states would best benefit from having an academy. This will also be based on the state rankings of its teams. The only academy that is confirmed is for Hershey, PA. This is a tribute to Chelsea's American player Christian Pulisic who is doing more to give back to his hometown and his families

community.

#### When

The club will begin research for youth academies across the country in January of 2023. This will give the club adamant time to conduct research and finalize construction plans. The goal is to have five academies finished throughout the country by August 2023, coinciding with the beginning of the Premier League season in the United Kingdom.

### Why

Chelsea FC has seen an increase in youth participation in soccer, along with an increase in interest in the sport. Building youth academies in the US allows the club to expand its brand awareness to the US while also falling into older generations that may be supporting these players. The US soccer marketplace is also expanding, with interest growing year by year. By entering this market, the club will be able to position itself as one of the leading organizations looking to be involved with US culture.

#### How

Chelsea Football Club is working closely with the ad agency to develop a creative strategy for getting the message out to the US market. The agency will be promoting the club and its brand through traditional and non-traditional media, along with out-of-home advertising. This campaign will target specific social media advertising, as the youth population is more familiar with these platforms. The advertisements will be interactive and will feature players from the first team to promote its efforts in involving the US market. The campaign will encourage community engagement by using various platforms such as Instagram, Twitter,

# **Creative Strategy**

The goal of the agency's campaign is to increase brand awareness and to attract a younger audience to the club in the US market. With the idea of a creative campaign through different forms of media and club assets, the agency has developed an advertising campaign that will bring awareness to the club from an entirely new audience through enrolling the youth in new clubs across America.

The agency has developed different forms of advertising that show of Chelsea FC and its history. It is essential to show the audience what Chelsea has accomplished in Europe, as doing the same in the US would be enticing for youth players to join the club. The creative strategy that has been developed will use existing branding from Chelsea to build awareness in a way that captures the attnetion of the youth and, by consequence, their families.

The campaign will demonstrate that not only does the club care about the US market, but that they have been the best at developing young talent over the years. We will be using players from the first team, including American Christian Pulisic, to show how valuable these players are to a club that is in a different country. The key takeaway from these advertisments will be that this is a club devoted to being the best, while also producing the best. With this message, the club will undoubtedtly grow its brand awarenss throughout the US. The agency will also do this by holding events in cities with academies being built.



# Creative Strategy (Examples)



### YouTube/Video Thumbnail

YouTube/video in which American Chelsea FC player Christian Pulisic talks about the importance of growing the sport in America. Pulisic will also position the club as the best in developing young talent, encouraging US players to see the value in joining an academy with Chelsea Football Club.

\*Interview will be sized for all social media platforms (i.e., Twitter, Snapchat, etc.)
and transcribed to post on websites and used for quotes

Photos For Position Only (FPO)

# Creative Strategy (Examples)

#### KEEP THE BLUE FLAG FLYING HIGH

Chelsea Football Club is coming to the USA
Bringing with it the BEST academy in European football

Follow in the footsteps of academy produced players like Mason Mount and Reece James and take YOUR game to another level

Join our US-Based Chelsea FC Academy NOW!

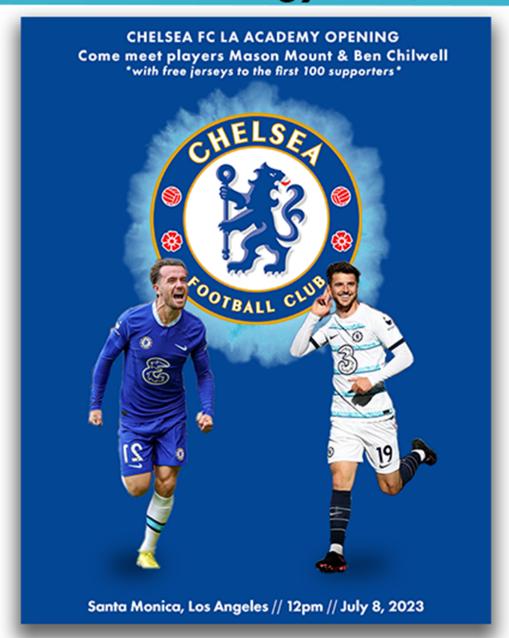


### **Promotional Poster**

This is a draft of a promotional poster that will be displayed in print and e-magazines promoting the newly developed youth academies across the US.

\*Poster will be sized for all social media platforms (i.e., Twitter, Snapchat, etc.)

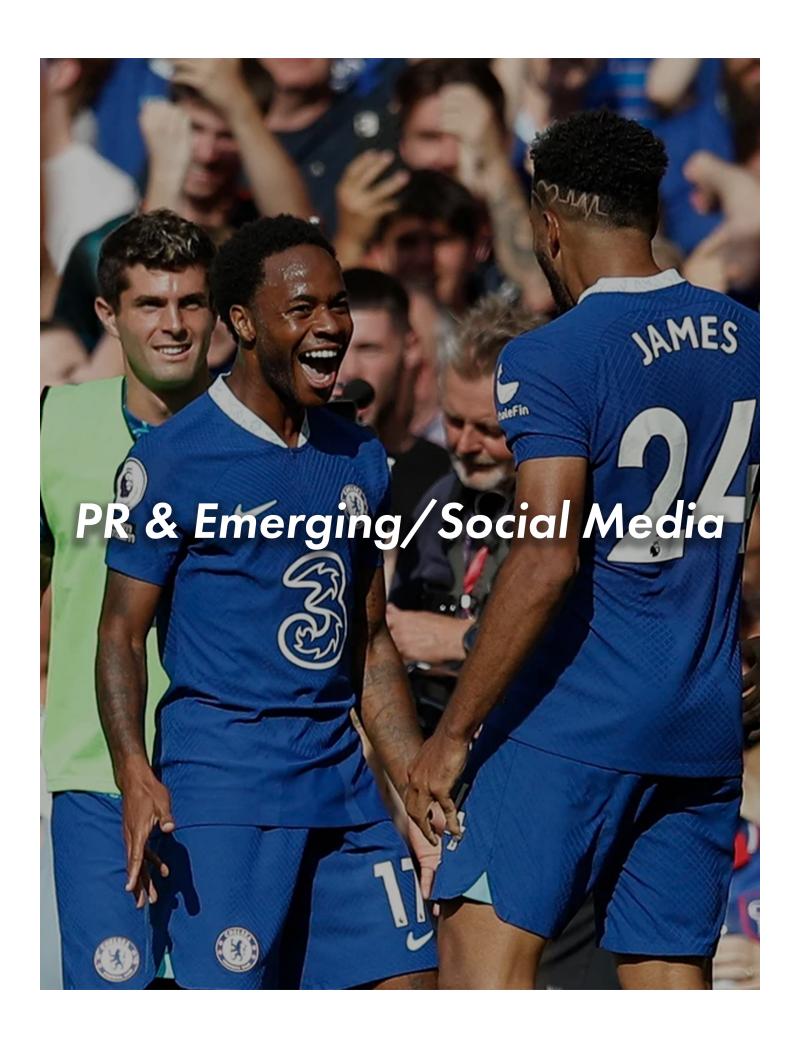
# Creative Strategy (Examples)



### **Event Poster**

This is a draft of an event poster. The agency will organize an event that promotes the new academy coming to LA. Including players Mason Mount & Ben Chilwell (as celebrities) helps attract existing and new audiences, which helps build the clubs brand awareness by offering free jerseys to the first 100 supporters.

\*Poster will be sized for all social media platforms (i.e., Twitter, Snapchat, etc.)



## PR STRATEGY

The agency is looking to support Chelsea Football Club's launch of youth academies across the United States by developing a comprehensive public relations strategy that grabs the attention of potential consumers. The focus of the PR campaign will showcase the potential for player growth among aspiring players in the US. Along with showcasing youth talent, the club is also looking to expose the club's brand to new audiences in the target demographic while demonstrating the club's success overseas in the UK while highlighting the club's values.

This plan is comprised of the objectives in place by the agency, influential endorsements which could include players from the first team and the values of the brand. The objectives of the agency are to shape perceptions about the club while also being able to monitor if the campaign is reaching the right audience. Through the right endorsements, such as players or the club's existing sponsors, the club will be able to highlight its values to its target demographic with celebrities. This will get people to turn out to these events and will inadvertently lead them to get to know the club. Lastly, the club's values are also important in driving this campaign. The agency wants to highlight the club's commitment to being the best in Europe along with the work it does off the pitch. Through its charitable work through the Chelsea Foundation and Rainbow Laces, the agency wants to show that the club does more than kick a ball on a pitch for 90 minutes a week.

By implementing this plan, Chelsea FC will be able to expand its brand into a new market while also creating talent for the future of the club.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Increase engagement and impressions across all social media channels
 Inform youth players about new youth acadmies across the US

#### PR ACTION PLAN

#### LA Opening Event

Chelsea FC will be hosting an event to celebrate the launch of the first academy opening up. This will be taking place in Los Angeles in 2023. Along with the opening of the facilities and fields, there will be players present to help pull a crowd.

These players will be there to hype up the event while also getting to know some of the players and their families. Consequentially, the players will also get to meet people in the area. The conversations the players have will be positive about the club, as they are valued players for them. This event will also be taking place in the off-season when most players will be taking the time to vacation in the United States. This will make it easier to coordinate the event with the players, ensuring a positive crowd turnout.

Along with the players, the agency also suggests holding contests at the events. One of the events is this launch will be the club giving away 100 jerseys to the first 100 people that come to the event. This can be another driving factor in getting people to come out and support the club.

The club's branding will be everywhere so people will begin to associate the brand with a logo. This is going to help build the brand awareness of the club as much as it is going to build the academy's popularity.

#### Promotional Pieces

The agency will be working with the club's creative department to create materials for promotional pieces. The agency wants to create promotional posters and banners to raise awareness of the club's new youth academies across the US.

These promotional pieces will use assets from both the club and the new facilities being built. This will be used to highlight the efforts that the club is making to be the best at developing youth talent.

Some of the pieces will be representing pro players from the London Academy, such as Mason Mount and/or Reece James, to show how strong the club's development is. The agency also advises using players from the US academy to correctly show what these academies are like.

This will contribute to building the club's brand awareness while showcasing the club's talent to youth players across the US. These promotional pieces will also be used in conjunction to advertising registration for the academy. We will include info on the pieces that give the audience more ways to get information.



### PR ACTION PLAN (cont.)

## Player Interviews/Testimonials

Chelsea FC will be utilizing its existing assets and players to help promote its work in the US. Players are held in the same, or sometimes even a higher, regard than celebrities in the US. Using players from the club to talk about the club and the new youth academies in the US can be beneficial in taking Chelsea to the new market.

The agency recommends using Christian Pulisic (pictured) as the face of the youth academy pieces, as he is from Hershey, PA. Christian has time and time again talked about the importance of bringing this level of soccer to the United States. getting more interviews and testimonials from him can help influence the US market, especially youth players. The 2022 Qatar World Cup can also be beneficial to his image as the country will be watching him play for the US.

Aside from Christian Pulisic, the agency recommends using other youth academy players. Using names that are still currently in the academy but making a name for themselves, such as Lewis Hall and Omari Hutchinson, could give interesting insight into the club's work with youth players. On top of them, the club can use graduates for the first team Mason Mount, Reece James, Conor Gallagher, and more to talk about the club and how great the club has been in preparing them for the future. The agency also recommends organizing videos with challenges that highlight the US with the potential of them going viral.



All of this helps build the brand awareness of the club. With the difference between talking of the academy and the incorporation of making the players complete challenges, there are different ways in which these clips can go viral. If these pieces go viral, engagement and impressions of the club go up and it reaches a new audience.

### SOCIAL/EMERGING MEDIA STRATEGY

The agency encourages Chelsea Football Club to launch a strategy utilizing Instagram,
Twitter and YouTube to reach its target market in the US. We also recommend Chelsea FC continues
its use of the "Fifth Stand App." Which is the official app of the club to maintain the
retention of its fanbase.



Chelsea FC's presence on Instagram is going to be influential in spreading the club's academies in the US. With the ability to share multiple photos, the agency has advised the club to send photographers out to the academies to snap pictures of how people are getting along. These pics can also be used for other creative pieces.

The hashtag #ChelseaReady from the agency will be used on these posts. This hashtag will help monitor the people involved with youth academies. The club can also monitor how many impressions it is getting as well.

The club will also be able to share pictures of game days with the first team, while also sharing other promotional pieces that can be found on other websites.



Twitter

Chelsea FC's presence on Twitter is going to be influential. The agency has laid out a plan for the club to be active with its followers.

The agency has advised the club to respond to followers with real information, as well as friendly banter. Allowing banter creates a bond with its community, something that helps with going viral and keeping people's retention.

When tweeting about the club, the agency has created the hashtag #ChelseaReady to promote to academy teams. Using this hashtag will allow the club to monitor the market and people getting involved with the Academy. The spread of the hashtag is also effective in spreading the club's brand.

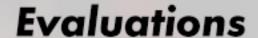


YouTube

Chelsea FC's presence on YouTube will be key in expanding brand awareness. YouTube will allow the club to upload long-form content. This is going to be done through first-team highlights, interviews, and more.

Specifically to the youth academies in the US. The agency recommends building a new channel to stream those games, conduct interviews with the players, and more. More will be thought up through the club's creative team.

The view count and like/dislike ratio will be used to measure the engagement of these videos. YouTube's algorithm will also be beneficial as it will share the club with other soccer fans. By representing the club, the brand will easily be able to make its way to new consumers.



- 1. Measuring engagement across social media accounts and Chelsea FC's official website through impressions and hashtag usage.
- 2. Measuring participation in US-based Chelsea FC academies across the country.
- 3. Measuring followers and views on the new Chelsea FC Academy YouTube Channel.

Brandon LoBiondo

Professor Blair

#### **Plansbook Sources:**

#### Situational Analysis

Chelsea FC Annual report: <a href="https://www.chelseafc.com/en/chelsea-foundation-annual-report">https://www.chelseafc.com/en/chelsea-foundation-annual-report</a>

20/21 UCL final audience: <a href="https://www.statista.com/statistics/714290/uefa-champions-league-">https://www.statista.com/statistics/714290/uefa-champions-league-</a>

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