

and in some cases by individual teams. Most organizations hire outside firms with legislative and other government contacts as well as more experience in this delicate area to represent their interests. Leagues, unions, and NCAA have

had lobbyists at the federal level for years. On the state level, the increased need to improve government relations has been influenced by the increase in new stadium and arena construction. Needing to finance such costly projects, sport

### **CASE STUDY: Communications Strategies for the Cricket League**

**C**ongratulations! You just graduated with a degree in sport management and landed a job in professional sports. An overseas professional cricket league hired you as its director of international communications. The premise behind your hire is that the United States is populated with numerous expatriates from several cricket-playing countries, and this cricket league wants to tap into that market. League officials want to host matches on U.S. soil and use the Internet to engage current cricket fans in their league and nurture new fans.

The cricket league is relying on you to help choose the three markets in the United States that should host matches, and they want you to generate local publicity to help sell tickets to these events. They are also counting on you to generate national buzz in the United States for the purpose of increasing exposure for the remainder of the cricket season.

You must now develop and implement several strategies and tactics that incorporate traditional media and the Internet to generate publicity for the league.

#### **Questions for Discussion**

1. Determine the three cities in the United States to host the matches during the cricket tour. What can be done in each market to engage local sports fans? How would you locate and communicate with fans from cricket-playing countries living in these markets? Would there be a benefit to engaging in a community-minded project while in each market? If so, what types of projects would you pursue and why? How would you go about gathering information from cricket fans in each local market for future communications purposes?
2. In order to make a national "splash," your bosses want you plan a press conference in New York City upon the cricket team's arrival. Where would you plan the press conference? League officials and the players are unfamiliar with the U.S. sports press. Prepare a background sheet with brief information on some national outlets likely to attend the press conference. What key messages will you craft and share with league officials and players? What kinds of questions will the media likely ask the officials and players? What other national media opportunities might you pursue while the teams are in New York?
3. Upon the conclusion of the series, you must sustain your superb efforts by creating and implementing an ongoing communications program during the cricket season. Relying heavily on the Internet as the main medium of communications, what types of communications elements will your plan include? Consider your main goals to promote merchandise sales, keep fans up to date on scores, player features, standings, and live and on-demand Web viewing of matches and highlights.