

Jackson Bachewich
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Section 2
Public Relations and Communication Management 1

MEMO

To: True North Sports + Entertainment

cc: Hannah Pratt

From: Jackson Bachewich
Creative Communication student
Jacksonbachewich34@gmail.com

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Re: Winnipeg Jets Attendance Research Project and Recommendations

Red River College Polytechnic students conducted a research survey on the Winnipeg Jets attendance last week. Based on our secondary research and survey feedback from participants in and outside of Winnipeg, we recommend True North Sports + Entertainment lower ticket and concession prices to make games more affordable for individuals and families with an average income. We also recommend making the in-game experience more engaging through fan interaction.

The Challenge

The 2023-24 Winnipeg Jets are experiencing an [all-time low in attendance](#). The Winnipeg Jets have sold 3,000 less season tickets since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, with businesses only holding 15 per cent of season tickets. Compared to other Canadian markets, businesses own 45 to 85 per cent of season tickets.

Based on secondary research, we found the average Winnipeg Jets ticket is \$162.00. This is close to the league average however, we also found [the Consumer Price Index](#) in Manitoba has increased 3.4 per cent over the last year which is tied for the third highest increase among Canadian provinces, while the [average individual income](#) ranks 10th among all provinces and last among provinces with a NHL team. Ticket prices on top of expensive concessions, merchandise, and the increased cost of living make it difficult for individuals and families with an average income to go to multiple Jets games per year.

In an effort to find feedback from fans, our secondary research brought us to many reddit threads full of unhappy Jets fans. Their main issues were the in-game experience, and the overall cost. According to fans, for a regular season game, the arena atmosphere is "uninteresting," and some fans feel disregarded by the team. Based on our findings from secondary research we conducted a 12-question survey and collected 63 responses.

Survey Results

Results from the survey show the price to go to a regular season Winnipeg Jets game is excessive. According to the survey findings, 66.7 per cent of respondents acknowledged cost influences their decision to attend Winnipeg Jets games. Comments from the survey specifically focus on concession, ticket, and merchandise prices.

Other comments from the open-ended response at the end of the survey say the game day experience is “poor.” People feel there is not enough value or incentive to go to games for the price they pay.

Call to Action

Based on our findings from our secondary research and survey, we found the main reason for the Winnipeg Jets attendance issues is cost and fan experience. True North Sports + Entertainment should consider the following recommendations to improve attendance:

Reduce ticket, concession, and merchandise prices.

- Offer more family pack deals.
- Offer bulk ticket packages over a variety of games for a cheaper price.
- Have concession/merchandise discounts with purchase of tickets.
- Offer special event or family discount games.

Enhance the game day experience and fan engagement.

- Have more promotional nights with giveaways.
- Appeal to new markets and audiences.
- Create more value for fans to justify the expensive costs.
- Add in game entertainment.

Winnipeg Jets Attendance Research Summary

This research project, conducted in November 2023 investigated the reasons behind the record-low attendance during the 2023/24 Winnipeg Jets season.

Primary Research

Between November 21st and November 27th, our research team conducted an online survey on the Winnipeg Jets attendance. We sought responses from a variety of ages and strived for a diverse representation of the different locations both within and outside of Winnipeg.

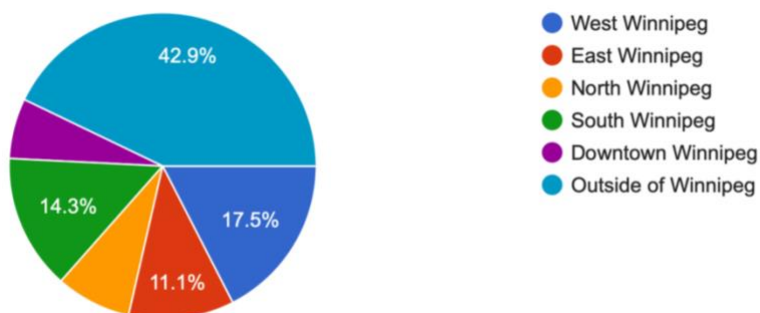
Total Responses: 63

Ages:

18-27: 29 (46%)
28-46: 15 (23.8%)
47-67: 15 (23.8%)
68-77: 4 (6.3%)
78+: 0 (0%)

Question 1: Where in Manitoba do you live?

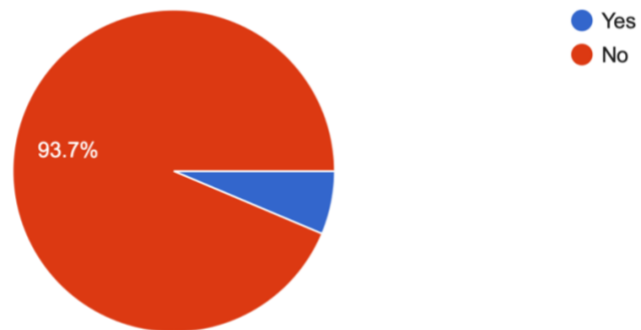
West Winnipeg: 11 (17.5%)
East Winnipeg: 7 (11.1%)
North Winnipeg: 5 (7.9%)
South Winnipeg: 9 (14.3%)
Downtown Winnipeg: 4 (6.3%)
Outside of Winnipeg: 27 (42.9%)



Question 2: Are you a Winnipeg Jets season ticket holder?

Yes: 4 (6.3%)

No: 59 (93.7%)



Question 3: On average how many Winnipeg Jets games do you attend a year?

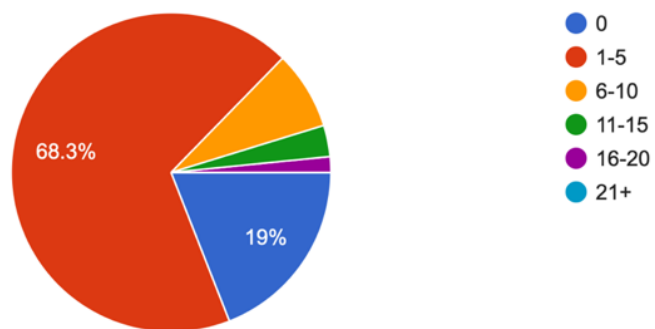
0: 12 (19%)

1-5: 43 (68.3%)

6-10: 5 (7.9%)

11-15: 2 (3.2%)

16-20: 1 (1.6%)



Question 4: What impacts your decision to go to Winnipeg Jets games? (Select all that apply)

Team performance: 19 (30.2%)

Cost: 42 (66.7%)

In game experience: 15 (23.8%)

Safety: 3 (4.8%)

Transportation: 8 (12.7%)

Time: 21 (33.3%)

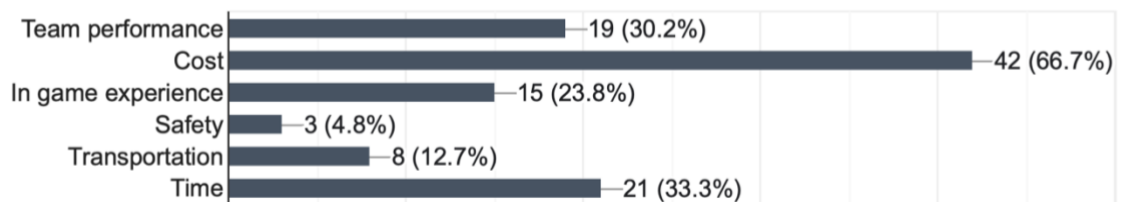
Other:

The team they are playing: 7 (11%)

Weather 2 (3%)

Free tickets 3 (4.7%)

Other answers with 1 response: On a trip, hard to get tickets, day of the week.



Question 5: How do you get to jets games?

Car/Carpool: 51 (81%)

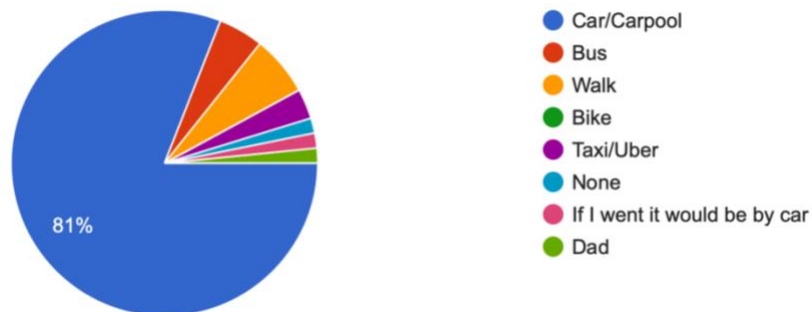
Bus: 3 (4.8%)

Walk: 4 (6.2%)

Bike: 0 (0%)

Taxi/Uber: 2 (3.2%)

Other: 3 (4.8%)



Question 6: How do you feel about parking at Winnipeg Jets games? (Select all that apply)

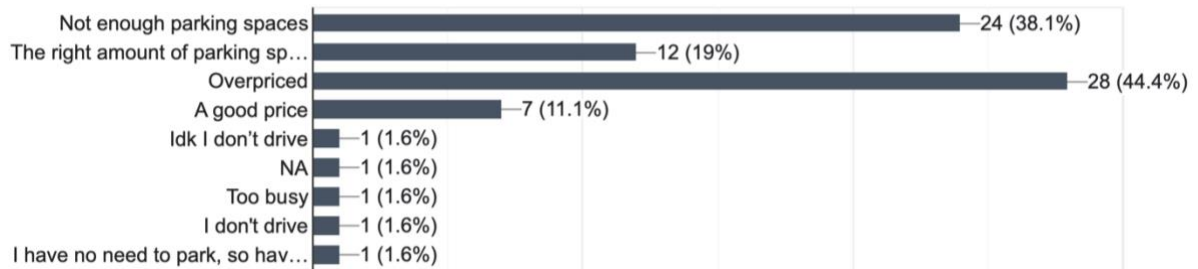
Not enough parking spaces: 24 (38.1%)

Good amount of parking spaces: 12 (19%)

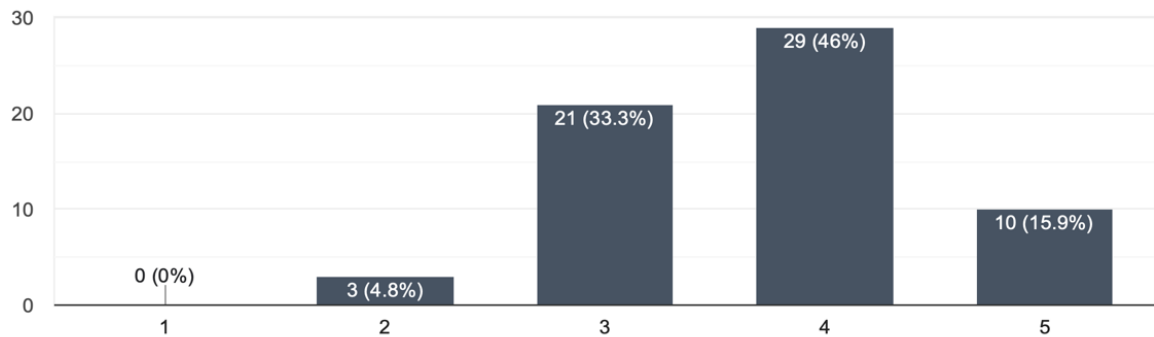
Overpriced: 28 (44.4%)

Fair Priced: 7 (11.1%)

N/A: 5 (7.9%)



Question 7: On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you rate your game day experience at a Winnipeg Jets game?



Question 8: What is your household income range?

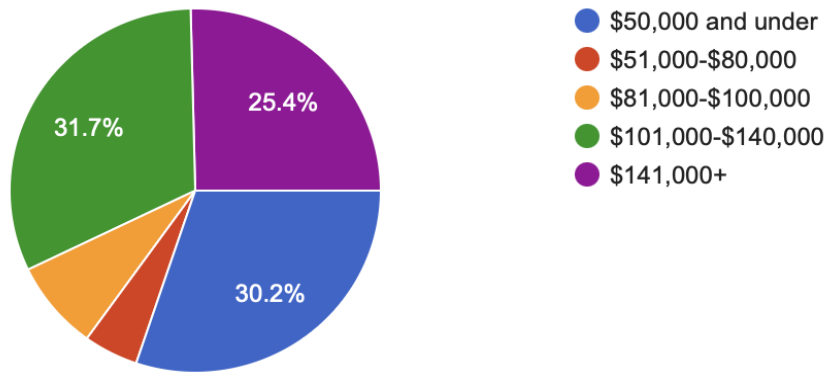
\$50,000 and under: 19 (30.2%)

\$51,000-\$80,000: 3 (4.8%)

\$81,000-\$100,000: 5 (7.9%)

\$101,000-\$140,000: 20 (31.7%)

\$141,000+: 16 (25.4%)



Question 9: In the last year, how much have you spent per regular season game? Including concessions, parking, tickets, and merchandise.

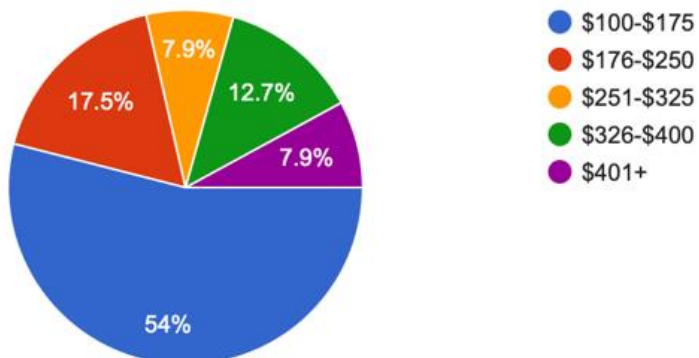
\$100-\$175: 34 (54%)

\$176-\$250: 11 (17.5%)

\$251-\$325: 5 (7.9%)

\$326-\$400: 8 (12.7%)

\$401+: 5 (7.9%)



Question 10: Is there anything you would like to add?

Most commented:

- Concessions and merchandise are overpriced.
- Cost of tickets are “ridiculous.”
- A family with an average income can only afford to go to one or two games a year.
- There is no incentive for the fans to go to games.
- The Winnipeg Jets do not create enough value to justify the cost to go to a game.

Secondary Research

TSN, “Winnipeg Jets’ Mark Chipman addresses team’s low attendance, big picture focus in Winnipeg,” TSN.ca Staff. Oct. 26, 2023. Accessed at: <https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/winnipeg-jets-mark-chipman-addresses-team-s-low-attendance-big-picture-focus-in-winnipeg-1.2026324> on Nov. 28, 2023.

This article includes an interview between, TSN Hockey Insider Darren Dreger and Jets and Truth North Sports & Entertainment executive chairman Mark Chipman. It compares season and regular tickets before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Chipman says before the pandemic, many season tickets were bought by groups of people. These groups fell apart after the pandemic.

Winnipeg Sun, “FRIESEN: No shortage of fan feedback on Winnipeg Jets crowd collapse,” Paul Friesen. Oct. 20, 2023. Accessed at: <https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/friesen-no-shortage-of-fan-feedback-on-winnipeg-jets-crowd-collapse> on Nov. 28, 2023.

This article lists main reasons the Winnipeg Jets are facing low attendance based on exchanges with fans online. The main reasons are:

1. Bad customer service
2. Quality of product not matching the price tag
3. Downtown safety

CBC News, “Empty seats at Winnipeg Jets games no reason to panic, chamber of commerce head says,” Judy Owen. Oct. 26, 2023. Accessed at: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-jets-attendance-chamber-1.7009396#:~:text=Manitoba%20Chambers%20of%20Commerce%20president,as%20pressures%20due%20to%20inflation> on Nov. 28, 2023.

The Winnipeg Jets recently experienced their lowest attendance since their return to the city, excluding the pandemic. Co-owner Mark Chipman said only 15% of season tickets were purchased by businesses, and 3,000 fewer season tickets have been sold since the pandemic began.

Winnipeg Sun, "Friesen: Jets players have noticed feeble Winnipeg crowds," Paul Friesen. Oct. 18, 2023. Accessed at: <https://winnipegssun.com/sports/friesen-jets-players-have-noticed-feeble-winnipeg-crowds> on Nov. 27, 2023.

This article says the Winnipeg Jets started experienced a dip in crowd numbers last season. The Winnipeg Jets used to have a season ticket base of 13,000 with 8,000 on the waitlist, but that has now changed to 10,000 with no waitlist. The author Paul Friesen also talks with Jets player Kyle Connor. Friesen says the Winnipeg Jets have been asking the media what they're hearing from fans, and Friesen lists:

- Ticket prices too high
- Beer prices too high
- Inflation and pandemic exacerbating high prices
- Poor performance by the Winnipeg Jets
- Lack of love/disregard of loyal fans

Reddit, "How to improve attendance numbers?" u/wpgspinsters. Nov. 20, 2022. Accessed at: https://www.reddit.com/r/winnipegjets/comments/z9a1h4/how_to_improve_attendance_numbers/ on Nov. 12, 2023.

This reddit thread in the r/WinnipegJets subreddit asks what improvements or changes people who are not season seat holders would like to see and has 190 comments. Repeated issues or improvements include:

- Lowering the cost of concessions
- Lowering the price of tickets
- Lower parking costs
- Inflation/the economy
- Let fans leave during intermission/allow re-entry
- Poor game experience

Reddit, "Jets tickets/attendance," u/wpgspinsters. March 3, 2023. Accessed at: https://www.reddit.com/r/winnipegjets/comments/11hlkct/jets_ticketsattendance/ on Nov. 27, 2023.

This reddit thread in the r/WinnipegJets subreddit has 73 comments from fans. They are discussing their issues with season tickets which include:

- Poor performance
- Poor game experience
- Difficulty selling tickets to the games they can't attend due to being undercut by the Winnipeg Jets discounted tickets
- Yearly increase of season ticket prices

Government of Manitoba. "Consumer Price Index – May 2023." Published on June. 27, 2023. Accessed at: https://www.gov.mb.ca/mbs/publications/mbs201_cpi_2023_m05.pdf on Nov. 28, 2023.

This Consumer Price Index (CPI) provides an overview of the monthly and yearly changes in the CPI in Manitoba.

WOWA (World of Web Analysis). "Average Income in Canada." Last updated: Nov. 27, 2023. Accessed at: <https://wowa.ca/average-income-canada> on Nov. 28, 2023.

This webpage provides information on the average income in Canada, exploring different aspects influencing income levels such as occupation, location, and other relevant facts. It provides both individual and family income.