

# FINAL PROJECT

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## Introduction

This campaign is for Chicken N Pickle—a unique, indoor/outdoor entertainment complex opening a location in south Lincoln. It features a chef-driven restaurant, multiple pickleball courts and a variety of yard games. The goal of this campaign is to promote this new location and gain local media coverage while establishing brand guidelines and recognition.

This campaign includes research on the target market, the industry and the company, along with creative executions and ideas.

## Situation Analysis

### COMPANY

#### Basics

- **Mission Statement**

- “Chicken N Pickle is a unique, indoor/outdoor entertainment complex whose mission is to provide an atmosphere that fosters fun, friendship, and community for all ages.” (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)
- It is a warm and welcoming environment that brings together people of all ages. People from all over the community can engage in the joy of being human. Good Food. Good Friends. Great Fun.” (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)

- **What is the stated Vision?**

- “Our vision is to become a recognized leader in the transformation of our communities by ensuring that all charitable organizations have the ability to reach those in need. Through fun and fellowship, we are determined to create unifying bonds of goodness that will ripple throughout our communities and lead to a better world. Thank you for joining with us to make a difference in the lives of our local community!” (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)
- There wasn’t a clear vision statement available on their website. The statement above mainly pertains to their philanthropic goals.

- **Why was the organization founded?**

- The founder, Dave Johnson, was inspired by the game after a trip to visit a friend in Phoenix. “[his friend] mentioned the many friendships he had already formed with other pickleballers and that he was on the courts 3 or 4 times a week... Not only were the courts always full of people, they were also full of energy and genuine camaraderie.” (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)

- **Core values?**

- “Our leadership team is driven by our five core values, which include Community, Connection, Integrity, Quality and Authenticity.” (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)

- **Core competencies? Are they known for something?**

- As mentioned in multiple places on their website, they are a “warm and welcoming environment” bringing together different types of people. They have a “casual, chef-driven restaurant and sports bar, pickleball courts and professional instruction, space for live entertainment, a variety of yard games and space to lounge outdoors with (or without) your dog.” (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)
- Not only are they known for their services, but also for their community engagement: *Our Hearts Are Local*. They have
  - **\$139,700** donated through cup sales.
  - **\$289,940** donated through In-Kind donations.
  - **\$107,000** donated through community givebacks.

- **5,108** charitable organizations worked with. (Chicken N Pickle, 2023)
- **Financials**
  - To reserve a court:
    - Mon-Fri 8am-5pm: **\$30** per hour
    - Mon-Fri 5pm -close: **\$40** per hour
    - All day Weekends: **\$45** per hour
    - Outdoor courts: All Day: **\$10** per hour
    - *\*This seems standard for all locations*
  - Event Planning: couldn't find any pricing information for any of their available spaces on their website. Did not contact for information.
  - Curbside Menu: Kansas City
    - Entrees: \$10-\$18
    - Sandwiches/Burgers: \$12-\$15
    - Bowls: \$12
    - Kid's Menu: \$8

I couldn't find steady numbers on their revenue, but [zoominfo](#) suggests it's around **\$81.2 million**.

### Strategy

- **What field does the client believe they are in?**
  - Based on their website and their language, "Chicken N Pickle is a unique, indoor/outdoor **entertainment** complex..." (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)
  - Also, a **recreational** business due to their additional activities such as "a variety of yard games and enough space to kick back and relax with your favorite peeps." (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)
  - You could subcategorize them as a **restaurant** because they're "Known for [their] wood-fired rotisserie chicken, pulled pork and grass-fed beef sandwiches, creative salads and hand-cut fries..." (Chicken N Pickle, 2024)
- **What category?**
  - Indoor/outdoor entertainment
- **What do they perceive are their competitive advantages?**
  - Based on their website, they believe their food and drink selection/quality gives them an advantage over other indoor/outdoor entertainment businesses.
  - In an article done by [Under30CEO](#), "Dave Johnson made sure that his business does not [confine to any norms](#)." (Magsi, 2022) So their unique business model is what has kept them trending.

- **Are there any proprietary research studies available?**
  - I haven't been able to find any research studies available on Chicken N Pickle specifically, but lots of news stories and press releases on upcoming locations and the business itself.
  - [North America Outlook Magazine](#) talks about Chicken N Pickle's "expanding footprint" by listing their expansion history. "In line with Chicken N Pickle's expanding footprint, the company has grown to around **1,200** store-level staff members and **54** home office employees as of March 2023." (Salter, Robinson, 2023)
- **What current and & past advertising and promotional efforts can you find? What were they designed to achieve?**
  - *Summary:* Their advertising when it comes to events and sponsorship varies by location and doesn't match standard brand guidelines. For social media pages and their website everything is similar as far as color scheme, word choice and graphics.
  - When just googling "Chicken N Pickle ads" you get a variety of things. I wanted to look for billboards and paid advertising they would have used instead of what's on their social media pages. This [KMTV article](#) about the Omaha expansion includes a photo of a billboard/large sign advertising the business.
  - This [Houston Chronicle](#) article has a postcard-themed digital ad that keeps with their fun and playful theme.
  - Here's an ad for their [Halloween Pickleball Tournament](#) sponsored by Samuel Adams in Glendale. Interesting design with how they tried to combine their aesthetic with Samuel Adams beer.
  - Similarly, their [Nightmare on Pickleball St.](#) event in San Antonio has a very different look than their Glendale event.

## CATEGORY

### Entertainment & Recreation

- **Identify economic trends.**
  - [IBIS World](#)
    - "The market size, measured by revenue, of the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation industry was \$392.6 bn in 2023." (IBISWorld, 2024)
    - "The market size of the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation industry increased 6.2% in 2023." (IBISWorld, 2024)
  - [Statista](#)
    - "Total revenue is expected to show an annual growth rate (CAGR 2022-2027) of 10.64%, resulting in a projected market volume of US\$53.13bn by 2027." (Statista, 2023)
  - [Camoin Associates](#)

- “As the world recovers from COVID-19, employment is on the path to recovery as well. From 2021-2022, employment increased by over 7%. This is greater than pre-pandemic rates, which were 5.16% from 2016-2019. Employment has not returned to the pre-pandemic figure of 3.1 million, but it is forecasted to reach 3.12 million in 2024 and continue growing, exceeding past employment numbers in the sector (see Figure 2).” (Follansbee, Damiciis, 2023)
- [USA Pickleball](#)
  - “Pickleball grew in 2023 to **8.9 million** players in the US, according to the 2023 Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Single Sport Report on Pickleball.” (USA Pickleball, 2023)
- **What is the health of the category? Growing? Not?**
  - Growing—this is partially due to the increase in in-person activities after the COVID-19 pandemic. (see previous bullets for more statistics)
  - According to USA Pickleball’s [2023 annual report](#), “Pickleball continues to be embraced across the nation at the recreational and competitive level and by players of all levels and backgrounds.” (USA Pickleball, 2023)
- **What type of category is it? Mature, emerging? How might this impact your efforts?**
  - The recreation category is mature, but I think post-pandemic it is evolving into a new type of recreation. The combination of online efforts to get people involved in-person is new after living online for multiple years. There are newer strategies compared to before COVID-19, such as heavier digital ad efforts that push non-digital events.
  - The [Harvard Business Review](#) did an article on how advertising has changed, and they said “Nearly half (**45%**) of companies are now using social channels to sell products and services, and (**61.5%**) of B2C services companies are.” (Moorman, Soli, Seals, 2023) They also say “consumers report experiencing digital fatigue from the number of apps used and screen interactions they use in an average day — a [level](#) that has increased by more than **100%** during the pandemic.” (Moorman, Soli, Seals, 2023)
- **How is the product/service typically marketed within the category? What are the competitors’ usual marketing tactics? Does everyone in the category market alike?**
  - [AMW](#)
    - According to AMW, the “Three Key Entertainment Marketing Strategies” for advertising in the **entertainment** industry are brand integration, celebrity endorsements and interactive campaigns. (AMW, 2023)
    - They go on to say “To attract attention in a crowded market, marketers must continuously explore new avenues for engagement, always staying a step ahead. The strategies marketers employ must follow and lead the change, ensuring that brand awareness is maintained and amplified. This proactive stance in navigating the intricacies of entertainment marketing is what distinguishes thriving brands from the rest.” (AMW, 2023)

- [Spotify](#)
  - “Within the entertainment industry, a brand’s marketing efforts might include digital advertising, sponsorship opportunities, and influencer partnerships. The emergence of streaming entertainment has led to marketplaces becoming more and more crowded, so finding a competitive edge is crucial.” (Spotify, 2023)
- [The Media Ant](#)
  - “Recreation marketing focuses on showcasing the unique features, benefits, and enjoyment associated with recreational offerings to entice target audiences and encourage participation.” (Priyal, 2023)
- **What external factors might impact the category?**
  - According to [Deloitte](#), “The Deloitte forecast continues to assume that the current inflation is ‘transitory’ in the sense that it will dissipate over time. Our baseline forecast shows CPI inflation falling below 3% in 2024. We remain optimistic that today’s households and businesses will likely avoid the unpleasant experiences of long inflation and painful disinflation that their predecessors experienced from 1970 to 1985.” (Bachman, 2023)
  - Furthermore, Deloitte says “US population growth is slowing. While US demographics are better than that of many other developed countries, we will need to continue to adjust to slow labor force growth,<sup>5</sup> tighter labor markets, and the need to pay for care of an aging population.” (Bachman, 2023)
  - [FORBES](#) did a piece comparing pickleball to racquetball (interesting read) and they talk about similar factors between the sports.
    - **“Competing Pro tours:** The Association of Pickleball Professionals and the Professional Pickleball Association are both vying for control of the Pro game. We also have competing international NGBs in the International Federation of Pickleball and the World Pickleball Federation.” (Boss, 2023)
    - **“Star Power Interest:** Pickleball has appeared on the Today show, Major League Pickleball has procured investment from dozens of pro athletes and celebrities, and the internet is filled with stars from the NBA, the NFL, and the ATP playing and enjoying the sport.” (Boss, 2023)
    - Factors such as professional leagues and the sports industry are bound to have an impact on the recreational version of the sport. With pickleball on the rise more consumers are likely to follow trend and try it out for themselves.
  - [Meta](#) has come out with Pickleball One, a “user-friendly interface, you can dive into the game solo or join others, learning the basics and enjoying the depth it offers for every level.” (Meta, 2024) Thinking back to the Wii Sports era of technology most of us grew up on, at home video games such as Pickleball One will create an online environment and fanbase for the sport. This won’t necessarily translate to in-person playing though.

## CONSUMER



- **Begin with relevant trends (societal, lifestyle, etc.)**
  - Wellness trends are high at the start of the year, including the newest leisurely activity. According to the [Cosmopolitan](#) 2024 trend report, “the latest Pinterest Predicts Report, we'll all be going barmy for badminton. The mood board, image and recipe platform says it's seen a **45%** rise in people searching for 'badminton aesthetic' and an **80%** leap in people scouting out a 'badminton outfit'.” (Savin, 2023)
  - “Studies show that nano-influencers, accounts with 1,000-10,000 followers on a social media platform, generate more than twice the engagement of macro-influencers. That’s why, more and more consumer brands, particularly in beauty, fashion and **wellness**, are leveraging nano-influencers.” ([Forbes](#), 2023)
  - According to the [New York Times](#), “Gen X and older millennials who grew up without the internet will cease their nostalgic rhapsodizing about life before cellphones, when people read books on the subway and talked to strangers while waiting in line and made plans that they couldn’t cancel via text. They’ll start abandoning social media and recommitting to being charming and witty and interesting in real life with real people in real spaces.” (Kirsch, 2024)
  - [Explodingtopics.com](#) predicts more Americans adopting a “slow lifestyle,” saying “A slow life is considered one that’s mindful, meaningful, and free of unfulfilling busyness. Individuals following this trend are **intentional with their time** and resources. Notably, slow-life advocates are mindful of the time they spend on tech devices. The hashtag “slowlife” has nearly **5.5 million** posts on Instagram and **555 million** views on TikTok.” (Howarth, 2024)
  - One research study was done on the effects of playing pickleball as an older adult. “The results showed that life satisfaction was significantly different among the following three age groups: 50–59 years, 60–69 years, and ≥70 years. Results of Hotelling’s  $T^2$  test showed a significant difference in social integration between male and female participants. The test also revealed a significant difference in terms of life satisfaction between retired and employed participants. The results suggest that playing pickleball can be an enriching leisure activity for retirees and may help them cope with the transition that retirement typically entails.” ([Ryu, Yang, Hyung Kim, Kim and Heo](#), 2018)
  - A [research study done by PMC](#) said “The search resulted in 63 papers, of which 13 were selected. A total of 90.74% of the population were people over 50 years of age. The results show significant improvements in the different psychological variables measured in pickleball practitioners: personal wellbeing, life satisfaction, depression, stress, happiness, etc., pickleball shows potential as a new tool to work and improve people’s mental health.” (Cerezuela, Lirola, Cangas, 2023)
- **What groups of people are you trying to engage?** For Lincoln, the 18–30-year-olds would be a large demographic and target audience for Chicken N Pickle.
  - **What/who do these people care about?** Having fun, getting an education, experiencing adult life, figuring out “who they are,” etc.
    - This [North Jersey](#) news article suggests that “Young adults said they spend more money on experiences than on paying bills and basic



necessities, according to a recent report by Credit Karma. The report says they do this in part to share their experiences on social media.” (Reed, 2023)

- **Are they engaged with your organization?** There are people interacting with Chicken N Pickle social media pages—[commenting on posts](#) requesting new locations. On Instagram, the hashtag #chickennpickle only has about 6,000 tags, with specific city locations even less. I think there could be more consumer engagement.
- **What is their current level of interest in you and your issues?** Young adults are constantly looking for ways to meet new people, interact with different groups and start new, fun activities. [The Crimson White](#) says “because the game is usually played in doubles format, it’s important to have good communication and collaborate alongside your teammate. Pickleball tournaments are also becoming more common, which allows many people to enjoy the game together while being competitive.” (Talley, 2023)
- **What would make them more engaged and interested?** I think a social media challenge that gets a large audience involved would create interest in pickleball. Maybe a trick shot with the paddle or wiffleball that people could easily recreate would draw attention to the sport, like #trickshot on TikTok.
- **Profile your target audience (demographics, psychographics, attitudes, behavior, barriers, decision process, etc.)**
  - Age range: 18-30 years old.
  - College students, post-grad students, young adults entering the workforce in Lincoln.
    - According to the [2022 Lincoln Vital Signs Report](#), “Since 2015, almost half (43%) of newcomers to Lincoln have been young adults between 18 and 24 years of age, on average. The influx of young people may be attributable to Lincoln’s multiple post-secondary institutions. In 2019, 50% of Lincoln newcomers were 18 to 24 years of age.” (Hoffman, Sloane, Smith, 2022)
  - People looking for new, fun activities to try outside of college organizations or workplace relationships.
  - Possibly a behavioral decision-making group; “focuses on relationships more than the task. It evaluates the feelings of others as part of their decision-making process. Behavior decision-makers have a low tolerance for ambiguity and a social focus as they evaluate solutions.” ([Indeed](#), 2023)
    - These people decide they want to try something new and go out—as a group—and find Chicken N Pickle as an option.
  - This age range would also be interested in keeping up with their health, since they’re young and able to do so.
- **What can you identify about the engagement?**

- **High or low involvement?** This would be a low involvement situation. This is a fun activity to meet new people or bring old friends to. Dinner and pickleball typically is not a high-risk decision.
- **Primarily a rational or emotional decision?** I think this is an emotional decision. People decide they want to get out, be active, drink or eat with others. That's what they **feel** like doing. In a sense it may be rational to reserve a court ahead of time, plan a date, etc. but if Chicken N Pickle is easily able to serve walk-ins, they should capitalize that.
- **Unmet needs?** College club sports can be a hit or miss. The University of Nebraska—Lincoln does have a Pickleball Club but that involves forms, a practice schedule and added planning. If people just want to go play once a month or so, they can walk into Chicken N Pickle and start.

## COMPETITION

- **Who else is providing similar resources and information?**
  - [Tavern on the Square](#) has a game area in the middle of their courtyard where people can drink and play with their friends, or strangers.
  - [The NZone](#) offers different activity types to their customers, typically drinking related games based on their Facebook photos.
  - [Pickleheads](#) shows the available pickleball court locations, many within gyms, YMCAs, racquet clubs and parks.
  - [Craft Axe Throwing](#) has a similar set up to Chicken N Pickle, where you can reserve a section or walk in for a spot. Craft Axe is bring your own alcohol compared to Chicken N Pickle's bar. They also have additional games and event spaces for companies, parties and large group events. This may be their most similar competitor currently.
  - [Prehistoric Putt Lincoln](#) is a themed, indoor putt-putt golf business that also offers party and event rooms if requested.
- **What are they selling? Dissect competitive strategies.** Craft Axe Throwing for example, is providing “an exciting and popular activity that's taking the United States by storm... Our venue offers cold craft brews and multiple TVs throughout, keeping you close to the action at all times. Whether you're planning a social gathering or a corporate event, our expert team can help create a memorable experience for all attendees.” (Craft Axe Throwing, 2024)
  - Companies—such as Craft Axe and Chicken N Pickle—are offering people the place and opportunity to hang out with others and providing them with a popular activity. It's more engaging than say, just going out to a bar with friends. There's a purpose to your evening, a specific event or action.
  - It almost feels like a “lead the horse to water” type strategy; if you provide the opportunity people will come to you.
  - **Identify competitive brand positioning.**

- Craft Axe is using the element of a “dangerous activity” to lure customers in for a fun event theme. A majority of [their reviews](#) come from parties that people hosted there. The appeal is being able to say “I learned how to throw an axe” while also having a fun time. Like Chicken N Pickle, this is an activity that you can learn on the spot at the location.
- **Try to summarize what the competition is doing and why. What can you learn from the competition?**
  - Based on the competition’s social media pages, they’re hosting events catered to or geared toward specific groups of people. For example, [Craft Axe Throwing](#) has ads for “Law Enforcement Appreciation Week,” Veterans, people who need to relieve stress, etc. By trying to connect with their consumers they’re creating a safe environment to hang out in.
  - [The NZone Bar](#) targets different sports fans or drink preferences and creates advertisements for those groups. “College football playoffs,” “Husker Volleyball” or “\$4.50 Tallboys” are different client groups they’re trying to reach.
  - While Chicken N Pickle advertises to different types of people, it may be beneficial to target specific clients based on likes or preferences to at least get them to their business. Once they’ve been, they can then decide when to return.
- **Think about how your client’s brand is positioned in relation to the competition.**
  - Chicken N Pickle has good brand recognition from having 16 other locations already around the U.S. Even if the [Omaha location](#) isn’t opening until 2025, many people have probably heard of the brand from Kansas City goers.
- **How does your budget compare?**
  - Based on Chicken N Pickle’s expansion across the country and philanthropic mission, I would guess our budget is higher than local businesses in the Lincoln area. I was unable to find statistics or budgets from Chicken N Pickle, but they record a lot of their donations, City of Omaha recording they have “more than \$535,000 back into local communities.” ([City of Omaha](#), 2023)

## SUMMARY

Chicken N Pickle is an indoor/outdoor recreation business that gives back to their community. They provide food, drinks and entertainment for people of all ages to participate in. They are categorized as a recreational business but can also be placed under entertainment and food. Their competition in Lincoln is activity businesses like Craft Axe Throwing or The NZone Bar that capitalize on fun group activities inside or outside. Based on the current economic and social trends in America, pickleball is going to continue growing as an activity more than it did in 2023. Their target demographic for Lincoln is 18–30-year-olds who are in town for college or stayed after graduating to pursue a career.

## Target Audience Profile

### Basic Demographics and Behavioral Data

The main target audience for this campaign is 18–25-year-olds in the Lincoln, Nebraska area. They're young adults who either attend the University of Nebraska–Lincoln or stayed around after graduating to pursue their career. This audience is looking for something new to try in the area that's not only fun, but good for their health and affordable.

- College students, post-grad students, young adults entering the workforce in Lincoln.
  - According to the [2022 Lincoln Vital Signs Report](#), “Since 2015, almost half (**43%**) of newcomers to Lincoln have been young adults between 18 and 24 years of age, on average. The influx of young people may be attributable to Lincoln’s multiple post-secondary institutions. In 2019, 50% of Lincoln newcomers were 18 to 24 years of age.” (Hoffman, Sloane, Smith, 2022)
  - But according to the [City of Lincoln](#), “We are also young and educated. Lincoln’s median age is **33** years old, while the national median age is 38.3. Meanwhile, nearly 40% of adults in Lincoln have a bachelor’s degree compared with 35% nationwide.” (City of Lincoln, 2023)
- Lincoln has a population of **292,623** according to [2022 Census Reporter](#) data. This is based on Lancaster County information. \*
  - The median age of Lancaster County is **33.9** years old (Census Reporter, 2022). The population with the highest percentage of people is 20–29-year-olds at **20%** with 10-19 and 30-39 both at **13%** (Census Reporter, 2022).
  - The sex in Lincoln is split evenly between males and females, both at 50% (Census Reporter, 2022).
  - Race and ethnicity in Lincoln are 78% white, 4% black and 9% Hispanic (Census Reporter, 2022).
  - Majority household income for Lancaster County is 40% under \$50,000 (Census Reporter, 2022).
  - With the per capita income being \$37,508 (Census Reporter, 2022).

\*Taking this demographic information into consideration, I do not want to market to one specific type of person in Lincoln. This campaign is aimed at 18–25-year-olds but is not aimed toward specific races, religions, genders, etc.

- According to [LinkedIn](#), “Gen Z shoppers prioritize **Health and wellness**, lean brands, technology, education, and Sales. Gen Z is less likely to splurge on luxury products or brands. Gen Z put value first.” (Kimu, 2023)
- **PESO Purposes:** All PESO media types should be used to connect with this audience group, with Owned and Paid Media being used most. \*\*
  - **Paid Media**—As shown in statistics earlier, they should pay to promote content on platforms like Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat to get more brand recognition and promote location-specific events.

- **Earned Media**—Connecting with local newspapers, TV stations and PR companies to get initial messaging out, focusing on digital platforms. They could also utilize the University of Nebraska–Lincoln athletes (volleyball and basketball) who have a celebrity standing in Lincoln to promote their business.
- **Shared Media**—Interacting with users on Instagram and TikTok will be a great way to create brand awareness. Following trends and searching the geotag “Lincoln” would help find target audiences.
- **Owned Media**—Event and product information on websites, social media trends and posts, blog posts, etc.

**\*\*Social Media Research:**

- According to [Pew Research](#), “Majorities of 18- to 29-year-olds say they use **Instagram** or **Snapchat** and about half say they use TikTok, with those on the younger end of this cohort – ages 18 to 24 – being especially likely to report using Instagram (**76%**), Snapchat (**75%**) or TikTok (55%).” (Anderson, Auxier, 2021)
- Also from [Pew Research](#), “While a somewhat lower share reports using it, **Facebook is also a dominant player in the online landscape**. Most Americans (68%) report using the social media platform. Additionally, **roughly half of U.S. adults (47%) say they use Instagram.**” (Gottfried, 2024)
- Furthermore, “One platform – TikTok – stands out for growth of its user base. A third of U.S. adults (**33%**) say they use the video-based platform, up 12 percentage points from 2021 (**21%**).” (Gottfried, 2024)
- Possibly a behavioral decision-making group; “focuses on relationships more than the task. It evaluates the feelings of others as part of their decision-making process. Behavior decision-makers have a low tolerance for ambiguity and a social focus as they evaluate solutions.” ([Indeed](#), 2023)

## Unique Lifestyle and Psychographic Characteristics

### Physical & Mental Health

- According to [Civic Science](#), “48% of Gen Z adults exercise several times per week, and an additional near a quarter do so several times a month.” (Civic Science, 2022)
  - Further research shows that 29% of respondents said they participate in team sports (Civic Science, 2022).
- Many Gen Z people own a wearable fitness tracker (42%) or plan to buy one in the future (24%) (Civic Science, 2022).
  - This can increase competitiveness and activity tracking within sports or leisure activities.
- According to [Psychiatrist.com](#), “42 percent of Gen Z has received a mental health diagnosis. The most common diagnosis for the younger generation is anxiety, followed by depression, ADHD and PTSD. About 20 percent of Gen Z has been to therapy and 60 percent are on medication to help manage their mental health. Gen Z is worried about the future but also feel they are the generation most capable of talking through their problems.” (Psychiatrist.com, 2022)

## Finances

- According to [USA Today](#), “Gen Z consumers said they'd rather buy less of something, like alcohol and gasoline, than spend too much. In 2023, **36%** of Gen Z respondents opted out of social events in order to save, especially when travel was part of the cost, according to the Harris Poll taken in May.” (Thornton, 2023)
- [Forbes](#) says that the main struggles of Gen Z is financial standing, saying “According to the report, **over 50%** of Gen-Zers said they are ‘extremely worried about not having enough money.’ In light of the economic turmoil, fears of a recession, the ascension of artificial intelligence and corporate downsizings, making a living is a top priority for these young adults.” (Kelly, 2023)

## Entertainment

- [LinkedIn](#) says that Pickleball is more than a game for Gen Z and even Millennials, saying “What sets pickleball apart is not just its unique gameplay but its ability to appeal to a diverse audience. The younger generation, with 19% of US Gen Z online adults and 15% of Millennials, has already succumbed to the charm of this fast-paced, yet easy-to-learn sport.” (Meka, 2023)
- College club sports can be a hit or miss. The University of Nebraska–Lincoln does have a Pickleball Club but that involves forms, a practice schedule and added planning.
- On the [Visit Lincoln](#) website, they advertise both indoor and outdoor activities for those visiting or living in the city. Most are museums—like the Nebraska History Museum, Children’s Museum, or the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia—or outdoor parks—Antelope Park, Adventure Gold Center, 48<sup>th</sup> and Adams Park, etc.
  - No mentions of activities like pickleball or outdoor recreation options.

## Target Profile Name

### The Fresh, Fun-Loving Friend

While this term already exists today, “fun-loving friend” felt like a great way to describe the target market here. The audience is mainly young adults who are looking for new things to do in Lincoln, outside of work or school, that can get a group involved and create a fun environment. These people seek out new opportunities and games to play with their friends or strangers. I added “fresh” because pickleball is relatively new—within the last few years. So, these people are trendy and know what’s hot and what isn’t. They take pride in their suggestions because they know there’s something for everyone at their gathering. Creating a campaign that highlights the “fun” and “fresh” elements of pickleball, eating and yard games will draw in these fun-loving people and their friends. I kept “friend” in the target profile name because that’s what they are to everyone they meet: a friend. They’re kind, attentive and there for you when you need them.

## Creative Brief

### Challenge

Chicken N Pickle is opening a new location in Lincoln after opening an Omaha location recently. Originating in Kansas, the business has likely been heard of in Nebraska, but that doesn't mean this new location will have tons of customers right away. Lincoln already has different game-based gathering businesses, like Craft Axe Throwing or Prehistoric Putt, so they're entering a town with people loyal to their competition. Chicken N Pickle needs to advertise to one of the biggest target audiences in Lincoln: young adults. The goal of this campaign is to create and show consumers that Chicken N Pickle is a place to hang out—or host events—and have some much-needed fun with friends.

### Situation/SWOT Analysis

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken N Pickle has over a dozen locations around the country and originating in a neighboring state (Kansas) increases brand awareness.</li> <li>• They have a consistent, strong brand already that is easily recognizable yet unique between locations.</li> <li>• Pickleball grew in 2023 to <b>8.9 million</b> players in the US. (<a href="#">USA Pickleball</a>, 2023)</li> <li>• Their menu and court reservations are reasonably priced.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target students and locals by creating events catered to that audience (i.e. Nebraska watch parties, UNL partnerships, etc.).</li> <li>• Gen Z and millennials are constantly looking for new things to do with their friends. Being in an expanding town can be an opportunity to create a hangout place.</li> <li>• Partnering with Husker Athletics teams (volleyball, football, tennis) would create a great introduction to the business.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They mainly run on court reservations, so it may be challenging to plan a spontaneous night out with friends if there's no available court space.</li> <li>• With the location being south of Downtown this may affect bar sales at this location to prevent drinking and driving.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since pickleball is their main draw, if the activity loses steam the business could suffer.</li> <li>• With the seasons changing in Nebraska, there may be periods where only indoor courts are used, limiting the number of customers they can host.</li> <li>• Competitors like Craft Axe Throwing, Prehistoric Putt and even the NZone have loyal customers that may not want to stray from their business.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Meta</a> released a pickleball videogame that would allow people to play from the comfort of their homes, giving people the option of staying in.</li> </ul>



## Target Audience

The target audience for the advertisement is young adults ranging from 18–25 years old in the Downtown Lincoln area, specifically near the university and popular businesses. These are people who value their time, [money](#), [mental health](#) and personal wellness. They also spend most of their time on social media platforms like Instagram and trust current trends.

## Insight into the Target Audience

The single most important thing to remember with this audience according to [Forbes](#) is that the main struggles of Gen Z is financial standing. “According to the report, **over 50%** of Gen-Zers said they are ‘extremely worried about not having enough money.’ Considering the economic turmoil, fears of a recession, the ascension of artificial intelligence and corporate downsizings, making a living is a top priority for these young adults.” (Kelly, 2023)

## Unique Selling Proposition

You should play and dine at Chicken N Pickle because it’s the only game-centered restaurant that prioritizes quality food.

## Gap Analysis

The audience currently thinks Chicken N Pickle is just another chain restaurant or weekend attraction trying to gain business. Through this campaign we want them to realize they offer quality food and entertainment for a reasonable price while also contributing to the community through their philanthropic efforts. By supporting Chicken N Pickle, they’re not only having a fun and satisfying time but giving back to the community.

## Strategy

Young adults, you should dine and play at Chicken N Pickle because it’s affordable, good for your health and gives back to the community.

## Advertising/Public Relations Tactics

1. We plan to create a social media plan that caters specifically to the Lincoln target audience and highlights events relevant to Husker fans and Lincoln locals. Keeping consistent with overall brand guides but adding a red flare to attract a UNL audience on Instagram, X (Twitter) and Facebook for the parents of all these students. Featuring their high-quality meals once a week, drink specials and pickleball/game tidbits to keep everyone indulged and interested. Getting collaborations from current popular Husker athletes to draw attention to the business with things like tiny-mic interviews, game recaps and event praise. This audience is very digital so keeping the campaign strong online will be key.
2. An outdoor billboard that matches an Omaha/Lincoln airport ad will draw the attention of people traveling to Lincoln for work or school. Something eye-catching with the brands colors (blue, green and a hint of red) showing Chicken N Pickle is the fun place to be. This can be changed monthly or quarterly to showcase different brand aspects (drinks, games, food, etc.).

3. A sponsored Husker Athletics event in tandem with the start of a new sport season would draw a huge crowd of fans. Perhaps in the summer, before volleyball and football start, a Go Big Red kick-off event exclusive to UNL ticketholders, athletes and anyone lucky enough to get a ticket. Showcasing the facilities, allowing fans to talk to their favorite athletes, and lots of games to compete in against anyone and everyone.

### **Tone of the Campaign**

Adventurous, competitive, dynamic, energetic, family-oriented, friendly, happy, passionate, playful, proud, sporty, trendy.

### **Things to Consider**

Something to keep in mind is that since Chicken N Pickle is a reservation-based attraction for the most part, it may be a one-time location for some groups. If it becomes too much of a hassle to get a spot, people will become uninterested and leave before buying anything.

## News Release



### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: McKenzie Campbell, Communications Director  
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### Nebraska Athletes Plan to Play for Chicken N Pickle Charity Event

LINCOLN, Neb. (Feb. 23, 2024) – Chicken N Pickle, an indoor/outdoor entertainment complex and restaurant for all ages, is celebrating its new Lincoln location by hosting its first annual Our Hearts charity event supported by Husker athletes and coaches from volleyball, football, baseball and tennis teams.

The Our Hearts charity event is being held at the new 40<sup>th</sup> St. and Yankee Hill location on March 23, 2024. Husker athletes and coaches are showing up to support Chicken N Pickle's philanthropic mission and welcome the new location by enjoying the restaurant and playing each other on the new courts.

Husker athletes participating will be paired off in duos to compete for the title of Our Hearts Huskers 2024. Limited tickets are available for public purchase to come and explore the new facility and restaurant or watch their favorite athletes play pickleball for charity. Customers can donate online to cast a vote for their favorite duo, and at the end of the night, the duo with the most money raised wins.

"Being a student athlete at Nebraska has been a blessing and privilege, but it's been hard to find the time to give back to the community," said Cole Evans, a senior Husker Baseball outfielder. "Spending my evening playing pickleball with teammates and supportive fans feels like the best way to give back right now, and I'm excited to participate."

According to Chicken N Pickle, it donated \$289,940 through In-Kind Donations and worked with 5,108 charitable organizations in 2023 alone. Its vision is to help transform communities by ensuring all charitable organizations can reach those in need. Through the In-Kind Request Form on its website, organizations can receive help from Chicken N Pickle with events or donations.

Laura Steel, a Lincoln employee, says "As a fan of Chicken N Pickle, I'm excited to see how the event will turn out! Even if they put me on water duty, I know it's for a good cause."

In addition to donating through votes online, a percentage of restaurant and merchandise profits from the event will go directly to charity. Customers can vote, donate and purchase merchandise on Chicken N Pickle's website.

Chicken N Pickle—founded in 2015—is a unique, indoor/outdoor family entertainment complex that includes a casual, chef-driven restaurant and sports bar, pickleball courts and professional instruction, space for live entertainment, a variety of yard games and space to lounge outdoors with (or without) your dog.

The Lincoln location of Chicken N Pickle is officially open March 16, 2024. For additional information on the Our Hearts charity event, visit [www.chickennpickle.com/husker](http://www.chickennpickle.com/husker).

###

**About Chicken N Pickle:**

Our cultural imperative to our community is to give back, with many philanthropic events and service-oriented endeavors to strengthen our neighborhood and beyond. We love to collaborate and believe in going the extra mile to serve the areas where we live, work and play!

<https://chickennpickle.com/>

## Blog Post

## CHICKEN N PICKLE

## VOL. 5



## THE PERFECT SATURDAY

**Feb. 24, 2024**

With spring right around the corner, we're soaking up the nice weather and sun while we can. As Nebraskans, we know this "false spring" won't last forever. So get your sneakers and keys. We're going to have the "Perfect Saturday" while the weather is nice.

### Dress Comfortably

With all the things you want to get done today, it's best to dress for comfort. Pop on some comfy shoes and socks, your favorite top and pull out that hat you love—with the sun out, you might need it! Don't forget your necessities: keys, wallet and your pickleball paddles. It'd be a shame to forget them... But if you do, we've got you covered with rentable paddles.



### Treat Yourself to a Fun Drink

Since you're already out and about, why not stop by your favorite café or smoothie place for a drink? You'll need something to sip on while walking around the shops or driving to your friend's house for a chat. Plus, they're super cute and social media-worthy. Here's some of our favorites:

- [7Brew](#)
- [Starbucks](#)
- [Scooter's](#)
- [The Mill](#)







### Grab Lunch & Watch Husker Sports

Saturdays are for the Huskers here in Lincoln. So make your way to Chicken N Pickle for some quality food and a Huskers game. Whether you're a softball, baseball or beach volleyball fan—or a chicken or steak consumer—our chef-driven restaurant will have everything you need to enjoy an afternoon of good food, drinks and company. So grab your friends and get to ordering!

### Get on the Courts



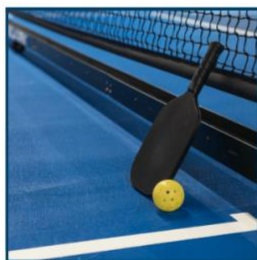
Now that you're full and the Huskers have won, it's time for you to get on the court and play. Reserve an indoor or outdoor court for you and your group to use for an hour—we recommend reserving before you eat in case there's a wait. Make sure your shoes are on tight and your partner is ready because the game's about to start. If you're unfamiliar or unsure of pickleball rules, [get a reminder here](#).

### Enjoy Your Saturday

We know not every weekend looks the same. Sometimes you have to go out of town, make unexpected trips or run errands, but Chicken N Pickle will be here for you when you have that glorious free day and want to spend it having fun.

For more pickleball and food fun, follow us on social media [@chickennpickle](#).

### More Blog Posts



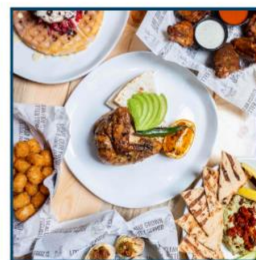
#### Rules Reminder:

Here's the main thing to remember when playing pickleball.



#### Local Celebrity:

How Gracie Swift became the best player in Nebraska.



#### Eats & Treats:

The March menu and our new favorites.

## Advertising Tactics

### Part 1: Tactics

#### Social Media

##### 1. What are you envisioning for this tactic?

I envision the ads to have that fun, colorful, almost child-like feel to them, featuring different doodles to highlight different services or events. Photos showing off the new menu items, new equipment or court decorations could be spiced up using brand-friendly graphics (arrows, squiggles, etc.) that draw your attention to the image. One brand that I love on Instagram is [7Brew Coffee](#), they do a fantastic job promoting items as well as employees and their values.

Video content for Reels or TikTok would follow more trending sounds or challenges. These video platforms [rely on things like hashtags](#), trending audios, and other current, timely details. Being able to feature say, a Husker athlete or coach playing pickleball with a trending audio is more likely to get views and engagement than a quality, thought out scripted ad.

##### 2. Where would the tactic run?

These would run mainly on Meta platforms (Instagram, Facebook and Threads) but could spill over to other platforms (TikTok).

##### 3. Why is this tactic a good choice?

According to [Sprout Social](#), most young adults are on social media, with an estimate of **68.8%** of millennials participating and **35%** of Gen Z using social media more than two hours a day.

- Additionally, [Pew Research](#) says a “Majority of 18- to 29-year-olds say they use **Instagram** or **Snapchat** and about half say they use TikTok, with those on the younger end of this cohort – ages 18 to 24 – being especially likely to report using Instagram (**76%**), Snapchat (**75%**) or TikTok (**55%**).” (Anderson, Auxier, 2021)
- Also from [Pew Research](#), “While a somewhat lower share reports using it, **Facebook is also a dominant player in the online landscape**. Most Americans (68%) report using the social media platform. Additionally, **roughly half of U.S. adults (47%) say they use Instagram**.” (Gottfried, 2024)
- Furthermore, “One platform – TikTok – stands out for growth of its user base. A third of U.S. adults (**33%**) say they use the video-based platform, up 12 percentage points from 2021 (**21%**).” (Gottfried, 2024)

##### 4. How does this tactic align with the strategy mentioned in your creative brief?

Through featuring different menu items, events or popular players, we want to create engaging and consistent content that has viewers wanting more. If they were just constantly promoting events or products, the feed would get boring quickly. Not focusing on just product and involving characters or philanthropy keeps those engaged. The content will show that Chicken N Pickle is a fun place to be that also offers quality food and contributes to the community.

##### 5. Any other details you want to mention that are important?



I considered the social media influencers tactic but felt that with Husker athletics it wouldn't be consistent content that would work long-term.

### **Out of Home Advertising**

#### **1. What are you envisioning for this tactic?**

Imagine very strong imagery with stellar photos of either the food, people playing, or environmental shots. These photos should capture the fun and energy that Chicken N Pickle can offer. Either simple text that says, "Where fun and food meet" or "Join the coop" (taken after [current web branding](#)) that also includes the address. This can be done in simple, white text that they use often, but can be taken further with the use of fun graphics and drawings.

There can also be feature ads that run during important promotional periods to help with their philanthropic efforts. Whether that's a photo from an event, or Chicken N Pickle employees volunteering, something to feature their vision and mission would be nice.

#### **2. Where would the tactic run?**

Any billboards or building sides would be ideal, since they're large and easily noticeable. I'd place these along the drive from Omaha and from downtown to south Lincoln. The [StarTran](#) bus system is large in this city so I think taking advantage of that constant, out of home option would be best.

#### **3. Why is this tactic a good choice?**

While the target audience is more likely to see advertisements on social media or digital platforms, there are a good chunk of students/locals taking the bus or driving in and out of town for travel.

#### **4. How does this tactic align with the strategy mentioned in your creative brief?**

The energy and fun-colors featured in the ads will help get the attention of the target audience, showing them Chicken N Pickle is a fun place to be. Not only do they have quality food, but it's a good form of exercise.

#### **5. Any other details you want to mention that are important?**

I think this could be something that's rotated out every month or even quarter. Using the same spot but changing the photo could continually grab the audience's attention.

## Part 2: Design

*These can be resized to fit bus ads.*



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