



Project Brief

Prepared for: JRMC 7015

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PROJECT PITCH

In the modern climate of collegiate athletics, recruiting is everything. The most competitive programs across the country compete to attract student-athletes to their school. Major division one athletic departments invest millions each year toward recruiting. To say the recruiting space is highly competitive would be an understatement. Unlike other highly competitive markets collegiate recruiting is not done as efficiently as one might think.

Coaches and their staff spend hours upon hours vying for recruit attention. Sending mail, reaching out via phone calls and texts, planning and hosting campus visits, visiting the recruits in person are all just a few ways schools reach out to potential student athletes with one goal; to stand out in a sea of competition with other schools. Meanwhile the recruits are overwhelmed by a constant flood of messages, print material, phone calls etc from dozens of coaches across the country. The moral of the story is this: by and large, the recruiting process is overwhelming for everyone involved.

The University of Georgia Gymnastics program is no different. Coaches spend an unimaginable amount of time on recruiting. Despite this and a history of on the floor dominance, it has become increasingly hard for Georgia to stand out on the recruiting trail thanks to recent surges from competitors like LSU and Alabama. It is safe to say gymnastics recruiting in the Southeastern Conference has never been more competitive.

That being said, the recruits themselves aren't necessarily benefiting from this. In fact quite the opposite. These potential student athletes are suffering from "information fatigue". Each school is flooding them with different information 24/7. Sifting through it all is overwhelming and time consuming.

Our product, the Georgia Gymnastics Recruiting Website aims to solve the aforementioned problem for both the Georgia Gymnastics Program and the Athletes they recruit. The goal

of the Georgia Gymnastics website being to make the recruiting process easier on all parties involved by streamlining information sharing in a digestible and non-overwhelming manner. More specifically, The Georgia Gymnastics Website contains the pertinent information that recruits want to see in a digestible, user friendly, and well designed way. The website includes creative videos, testimonials, academic information and other such promotional items. The website also helps streamline the communication process by allowing the recruits to reach out to the program directly. There are few websites like it across collegiate athletics and it helps Georgia Gymnastics stand out amongst their competitors.

DEFINITION, JUSTIFICATION + EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

Part 1- Product Definition

Purpose statement:

To provide the University of Georgia Gymnastics program with a unique tool that simplifies the recruiting process and allows them to stand out among their competition.

This product is extremely unique to the recruiting space as very few similar products exist in the country. It is a creative way to solve multiple problems facing the different stakeholders involved in collegiate athletics recruiting.

Part 2- Problem Solution and Overview

Problem statement: The College Athletics recruiting space is so flooded with information that it has become overwhelming for recruits to manage and virtually impossible for college coaches to find a way to stand out. In fact, 80% of student athletes surveyed responded that they agreed or strongly that the recruiting process was overwhelming. There are currently 81 collegiate gymnastics programs competing in the NCAA. When interviewed, Georgia Gymnastics assistant coach Jason Vonk described the challenges he faces on the recruiting

trail “The top gymnasts are being targeted by everyone in the country and it can be hard to grab and hold their attention.”

Meanwhile, coaches are spending hour upon hours every day trying to get information about their program in front of recruits. For collegiate athletics staff’s recruiting is a 24/7 battle for them.

This product will provide organization and intentionality to a collegiate recruiting space that desperately needs it. By organizing recruiting information and content in a website, this product simplifies the information overload that recruits experience. In doing so, this unique product helps Georgia Gymnastics stand out amongst the schools they are recruiting against and helps give coaches back precious time in their days.

Part 3- Comprehensive Research Report

The Georgia Gymnastics Recruiting website has been inspired by research and observation to the overall collegiate recruiting space. Certain products such as professional sports websites and college academic websites inspire the design of the product. In fact, the NFL has a template based system for all 32 of its teams meaning that all of their websites are set up the same way. The MLB has a similar yet busier format for its team’s websites. These websites feature a clean look with strong team specific branding. These websites house all kinds of different media and rely on a well designed nav bar to organize them all. As for the college academic space, schools like Clemson, Notre Dame and Biola University stand out as schools with the most well designed websites. This product draws inspiration from these sites in different ways. The only team with a similar Gymnastics specific website is LSU. LSU is one of Georgia’s biggest rivals in gymnastics so it is vital that this product is far superior to the one at LSU.

While research is hard to find online this specific niche problem due to the nature of colleges wanting to play recruiting close to the vest, interviews and surveys can give insight into the process. Assistant coach Jason Vonk explained in an interview that the challenges lie in the amount of information sent out to recruits. “We probably recruit or at least evaluate at some level nearly 200 kids each class, of that 200 we send a variety of promotional and informational stuff to about 50 gymnasts. I know these kids get sick of the recruiting process and can get overwhelmed or even annoyed by the amount of mail, texts calls etc from all the different schools that want their attention.” When asked what a solution might be Jason kept things pretty simple “You don’t want to reinvent the wheel but it would be nice if we could supplement what we are already doing with something that maybe other schools aren’t.”

Meanwhile the survey results found that the recruiting process is overwhelming to student athletes and could definitely be better organized. The survey also showed that athletes want more transparency in the recruiting process, and want to hear more from the athletes on the team and less from coaches. Another less surprising note from the surveyed athletes is that they overwhelmingly want more information presented in an easier way in the recruiting process (93.3% Agreed or strongly Agreed). All this information was taken into consideration when designing this product.

Part 4- The Client

It should come as no surprise that the client for the Georgia Gymnastics recruiting website is Georgia Gymnastics. Georgia Gymnastics is one of the top Gymnastics programs in the country and is historically the most dominant team in the NCAA with 10 National Championships (more than any other school). Like most other programs, Georgia recruits the top gymnast in the country. Hundreds of athletes are evaluated by the Georgia coaching staff each year. This provides a challenge from a logistical standpoint. It also is a challenge to find a way to get UGA Gymnastics to stand out amongst recruits as it is for every other school. This product was designed using the input of the Georgia Gymnastics coaches, staff and team.

Part 5- The Tech

The product is a website. A website is perfect because it can house so many different types of media. For example, it has videos from coaches, and current student-athletes, hype videos, info graphics and other promotional material, forms and documents, pictures, presentations, etc. The possibilities are endless. In fact, anything the coaches want to share from specific gymnastics talking points to overall information about financial aid and the university can fit online. A website is also a familiar product for the recruits and will be designed with ease and usability in mind. The website also has the ability to take information in as well as sharing it. One of the most important parts of this website is the recruiting form. This allows student athletes to reach out directly to coaches and pass their information along. This allows the recruits to actually start the recruiting process at times and invite the coaching staff to evaluate them further. Depending on the coaches preference the website could feature a login portal for active recruits.

Part 6-Features

This product has no shortage of features. To start the website has a hype video on the home page that draws the recruits in. This is meant to be exciting and eye catching. The website also features dynamic photography and motion graphics, again with the goal of standing out to

recruits. Next the website contains a page about the history of the program. As mentioned above, Georgia Gymnastics has been the most historically dominant team in the collegiate gymnastics history so it important to flex this on the website. The website also contains academic information on the University of Georgia. We want this academic information to be easily digestible and not overwhelming so we used motion graphics and charts to make this page more friendly to the eye. This is the kind of information most of the recruits want to see (according to the survey). The website starts to get more exciting on the facility page. We tried to use as many different types of media as possible to show all the different facilities the Gymdogs have access to. This page contains, motion graphics, photos, videos and even a tour from one of the athletes on the team. are several features that the Gymnastics recruiting website has. The website also features testimonials from current student athletes. This is something that the student athletes surveyed said they wanted to see more of in the recruiting process. These testimonials are presented in a through eye catching graphics.

One thing that was important to the client was that this product opened up a two-way communication line. Thats why the contact information page had to be so well designed. Of course, this product is not complete without the intake form which allows the recruits to reach out directly to the coaches. These pages are critical to accomplishing the aforementioned goal of creating two way communication between coaches and recruits, The website will also feature hype videos and graphics that aim to make prospective student athletes excited about the opportunity to become a GymDog.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE REPORT

Market Justification

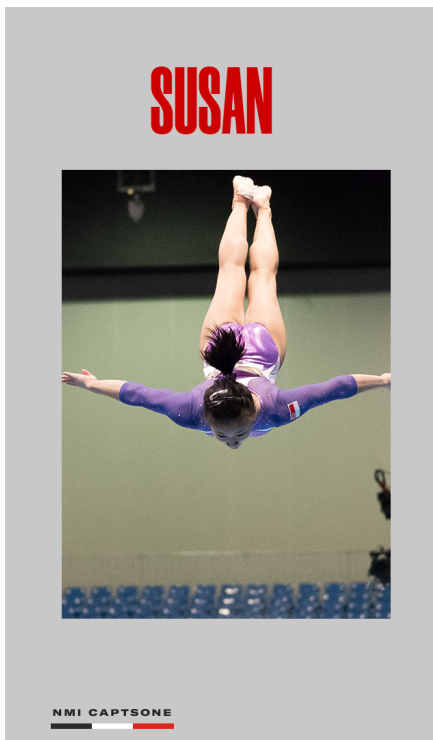
Despite the competitive nature and over saturation of the collegiate recruiting space. It is not as efficient of a process as one might think. As addressed above, this product helps make the world of collegiate recruiting more efficient for both the coaches and the athletes. Doing so helps give Georgia a competitive advantage. This product would organize Georgia's information in a way that other schools don't. It would help coaches get into contact with potential recruits and it would stand out amid a sea of every other school doing the same old things (print material, calls texts etc.) While recruits are overwhelmed by the recruiting process with other

schools, at Georgia it is a breeze. This is something that assistant coach Jason Vonk said he strives for “At UGA we want to partner with the recruits to find the best place for them, each year we refine the process to make it easier on both sides.”

Consumer Research

This is a niche market for obvious reasons. A very small percentage of the world is recruited to be a collegiate student athlete at Georgia. This group is all female and ranges between the ages of 13-18 (according to the coaching staff and survey.) Most of the recruits are middle class to upper-middle class due to the expensive nature of doing the sport at such high level. At a program as big as Georgia, recruits come from all over the country meaning that one area can't really be zoned in on.

User Personas



Demographic Information

- Sex: Female
- Age: 15
- School: Homeschooled
- Hometown: Houston, Texas

Psychological Factors

Goals: To Win Championships and compete in the Olympics.

Motivations: To dominate athletically.

Expectations: To come to a school with elite coaches and facilities.

Needs: To manage the hectic recruiting process.

Pain Points: Tons of coaches reaching out and too much information being thrown at them at one time.

Quote

“My sport is my life. Right now all im focused on is going to the place that allows me to compete at the highest level. Its hard to sort through the clutter and pick the place thats best for me.

How the product helps

The recruiting website wil help Susan organize an otherwise cluttered recruiting experience. She will be able to see all that Georgia offers in one place.

JACK OZMER
JRM 7013
SEPTEMBER 07, 2022

HALLIE



NMI CAPSTONE

Demographic Information

- Sex: Female
- Age: 17
- School: Eastside Public
- Hometown: Marietta, Georgia

Psychological Factors

Goals: To get noticed by college coaches.

Motivations: To earn a college scholarship.

Expectations: To be able to find info about schools and coaches.

Needs: To be able to easily reach out to coaches.

Pain Points: Not able to get their name out there.

Quote

"I think if I were able to get my name and competition videos in front of coaches they would see that I am worthy of a scholarship and a place on their team."

How the product helps

The recruiting website will feature a form intake section that the coaches can check as well as contact information for coaches.

JACK OZMER
JRM 7013
SEPTEMBER 07, 2022

Product Comparison

While the recruiting market itself is oversaturated, the market for recruiting specific websites is not. The only program that was found to have something similar is the LSU Tigers. Their website, <http://www.lsugym.com> is pretty impressive although it is unclear whether or not it is a specific recruiting website. The Georgia Gymnastics recruiting website is different as it has more recruit specific information and is more in-depth. Our website also offers recruits the opportunity to put their name in a form and take initiative to reach out to coaches. This is something that current Gymdog, Nhyla Bryant said was important when she was interviewed saying: "I actually took the initiative and started to reach out to the schools I thought I might want to go to." The bottom line is this, the Georgia Gymnastics Recruiting site is made specifically for recruits, not fans.

Competitor Research

As mentioned above, the product that most closely resembles the Georgia Gymnastics recruiting website is that of the LSU Gymnastics sight, <http://www.lsugym.com>. This site covers all the basic information on LSU gymnastics including arena info, facility info, camp info, team history etc. There is no way to tell how popular the site is or if it is generating any revenue.

The site has a very crisp design and an impressive video on the home page. The site has several well designed pages and a very easy to manage navigation bar. Inspiration can definitely be drawn from this site and the bar has been set very high. That being said, LSU is not Georgia's only competitor. Alabama, Florida Auburn and others are also vying for the same recruits that UGA is. Unlike Georgia and LSU, these teams do not have any specific gymnastics related website much less a Gymnastics recruiting website. This should give Georgia Gymnastics a huge advantage when recruiting against these schools and as anyone will tell you, recruiting translates to success.