

The National Football League has developed a dominating presence in the international football community, providing an accessible form of entertainment to dedicated fans and an opportunity for athletes to showcase their immense talent. As the Chief Strategy Officer of Football Operations, I have been provided the opportunity to apply my knowledge of business to the assist with the strategic growth of the league.

The expansion and establishment of new franchises is an essential component of the growth and development of the league. The United States has a broad fan base, where football has been embraced as a part of American culture and a demand for the sport is continues to thrive. The market in the United States has proved to be suitable enough to sustain the financial success of the current franchises, earning \$12 billion in revenue in recent years. However, the greatest area of future growth for the National Football League will occur outside the borders outside the United States. If a demand for American football is developing in other parts of the world, it would be in the best interest of the NFL to develop franchises within those markets. The expansion of the league to establish a permanent franchise in London, England has been identified as a primary option within recent discussions. The NFL has set a target of 6 million avid fans in the United Kingdom before considering the establishment of a franchise, which should be achieved by 2020. The *Wembley Stadium* located in the heart of England provides a suitable home for a future franchise. The stadium has a maximum capacity of 90,000 seats, where it has reached 93% occupancy on average throughout the NFL International Series. Furthermore, past events held at in London have been far more profitable than most franchises, where the tickets sell for approximately 50% more than average. The physical logistics of transporting staff and equipment on a regular basis can be identified as a primary area of concern in this expansion. The model practiced by the University of Hawaii football team has been carefully examined and can be used as a guideline for scheduling, where teams play in blocks. The block period can range from two to four weeks, allowing a team to alternate time spent in London throughout the season. The expansion of the league to London would act as an essential stepping stone to further expansion throughout Europe and Asia in the future.

The sport of football has drawn increasing amounts of attention towards the issue of head safety in sports. The National Football League has greatly progressed in their concern for traumatic brain injury and Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy, CTE. Despite this, there is room for greater improvement within the policy and protocol that are enforced on a regular basis in order to ensure player safety. Over the years, blame for brain injury has been put upon various aspects of the game, including helmets and defensive players. However, these targeted areas are often crucial aspects of the great game of football. In sports, the risk of health is a concept that is always present. It is my

opinion that it is in the best interest of the league to focus primarily on the education of the importance of head safety. The education of players and coaches on how to avoid concussions, make practices safer, and understand proper protocol. A partnership with a medical agency, such as the Emergency Medical Foundation or the Brain Trauma Foundation, would be extremely beneficial to ensure efficiency and effectiveness throughout an awareness campaign. Efforts can be put towards advertising campaigns where the focus of the commercials or prints is to inform audiences about the NFL's direction and values.

The protocol and procedure used by the NFL when determining appropriate consequences for criminal offences committed by athletes has been widely criticized. It has come to the attention of the global community that there is a severe lack of concern for domestic violence and substance abuse. I strongly feel that these are severe violations and offenders must be punished accordingly. Unfortunately, athletes who are found guilty of these acts are often given little to no punishment, where most cases are dropped by prosecutors, no resolution is determined, or the athlete is required to pay a small fine to "compensate" for their wrongdoings. The great mishandling of past cases has caused the NFL to develop a poor reputation in regards criminal offences in the league. I believe that it is in the best interest of the league to develop new policies that establish a sense of responsibility within athletes. The prosecution of criminals, regardless of their participation in the league, is something that must be handled with great care and cannot be abused.