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# Pettit National Ice Center Public Skate Participation Survey

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PETTIT NATIONAL ICE CENTER PUBLIC SKATE PARTICIPATION SURVEY

By

Andrew Christopher Brown, B.A.

A Professional Project submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School,  
Marquette University,  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master in Leadership Studies

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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ABSTRACT  
PETTIT NATIONAL ICE CENTER PUBLIC SKATE PARTICIPATION SURVEY

Andrew Christopher Brown, B.A.

Marquette University, 2014

This research project seeks to identify areas that the Pettit National Ice Center can address in order to increase customer satisfaction, thereby transforming infrequent users into repeat clientele. One hundred-fifty individuals were surveyed utilizing a mixed methods approach which produced qualitative and quantitative results for analysis. Key recommendations for the Pettit National Ice Center include providing improved customer service, improving the appearance and quality of equipment inside the facility, increasing its online presence, and identifying potential revenue generators.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Andrew Christopher Brown, B.A.

I honestly do not know which is tougher – writing a professional project or finding the words to thank those that made it all possible. There are so many people I need to thank but I fear that list may be longer than this project. I have tried to find the words to express everything I wish to convey, but after some reflection, I found that others have said it better than I ever could.

“You can’t live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.” - John Wooden

To Dr. Jay Caulfield and Dr. Paul McInerny – Thank you for providing me with this opportunity. I may never be able to repay you for the experience you gave me, but please know that it is people like you that make Marquette truly special.

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” - Maya Angelou

To my family and friends – Without whom none of my success would be possible. You have loved me for everything I am and everything I not, but always made me feel worthy of your love.

“The greatest gift anyone can give another person: believing in them.” - Jim Valvano

To Michaela – Thank you for never giving up on me. Your constant belief in me gives me the confidence I always seemed to lack before you. I am truly humbled by your presence in my life.

“All our dreams can come true...if we have the courage to pursue them.” - Walt Disney

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## **Introduction**

This research project seeks to identify areas that the Pettit National Ice Center can address in order to increase customer satisfaction, thereby transforming infrequent users into repeat clientele. Mixed methods approach will be utilized in a pretest-posttest research design, intended to produce qualitative and quantitative results for analysis.

## **History of the Pettit National Ice Center**

The Pettit National Ice Center, located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is a United States Olympic Training Site for short and long track speed skaters. Named for Jane Bradley Pettit, the late Milwaukee philanthropist whose generous contributions provided the primary private funding for the construction and initial operation, the Pettit Center officially opened its doors to Olympians and the general public on December 31, 1992. Since then, the Pettit National Ice Center sees nearly 400,000 annual visitors looking to skate recreationally, play hockey, run on the indoor track, view an international event, attend a meeting in the Hall of Fame Room, or just stop by to experience the Olympic spirit present at the Pettit every day (PNIC, 2009a).

The Olympic legacy runs deep in Southeastern Wisconsin, well before the Pettit Center even opened its doors. From 1967 to 1991, the outdoor Wisconsin Olympic Ice Rink was home to many skaters with Olympic aspirations. Built on the site of the former outdoor rink just in time for speed skaters to prepare for the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway (PNIC, 2009b), the Pettit Center has brought that Olympic legacy indoors to a state-of-the-art facility. Operating as one of only a handful of indoor ovals in the world, the 3,000-seat center houses a 400-meter indoor speed skating oval and two Olympic-size ice rinks used for hockey, figure skating, short track speed skating, wheelchair hockey and more (PNIC, 2009c).

The Pettit National Ice Center, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, supports the development and health benefits of skating among people of all ages and abilities. The mission of the Pettit Center is to:

Actively promote to the general public, young and old, the mental and physical rewards of recreational skating. Designated (**as**) an Olympic Training Site and one of only 12 indoor Olympic Ovals in the world; the Center also helps prepare amateur athletes for local, regional, national and international competition in speed skating. (2009c)

### **Literature Review**

There are four major categories in which the Pettit National Ice Center can seek to advance its Olympic legacy and grow its brand: improving customer service; the appearance of the facility; increasing its online presence; and looking to incorporate merchandise. This study furthers Matthew Dawson's (2013) original independent research for the Pettit Center, which was seeking to increase the knowledge base of public skate participants, specifically attempting to understand the reasoning behind why these individuals choose to come to the Pettit National Ice Center. Dawson's data collection centered on four distinct criteria – brand attitudes, satisfaction, purchasing factors and demographics (2013, pp. 6-7). The brand attitudes and purchasing factors play an important role in the eyes of customers especially when they “are proud to have the facility [Pettit National Ice Center] in Milwaukee” and also have Olympic expectations because of its legacy (Dawson, 2013, p. 22).

In order to retain its Olympic stature, the Pettit National Ice Center undergoes intense scrutiny from the United States Olympic Committee to ensure that it is continuing to “provide



resources, services and facilities for athletes and National Governing Bodies, while providing an elite athlete training environment that positively impacts performance” (U.S.O.C., 2014). As one of only 15 designated US Olympic Training Sites in the country, it is imperative that the Pettit Center not only retains its designation but also flourishes in order to continue making a difference in the communities of Southeastern Wisconsin. According to the US Olympic and Paralympic Training Site Designation Plan, what has made existing Training Sites so successful, in addition to some other key areas, are a world-class facility, exceptional customer service and community support (2014).

When Dawson (2013) began looking at the brand attitudes of the Pettit Center in the eyes of the customers, it was a realization that the Pettit National Ice Center is itself a brand name, which has been a staple in Southeastern Wisconsin communities for over 22 years. But the Pettit National Ice Center is much more than just itself, it speaks to the Olympic legacy that it was built on top of; the Pettit Center is as much a part of the Olympics and has a duty to further the Olympic expectations that have been set for it. To measure the added value a brand contributes to a product or service several conceptual frameworks have been developed and referred to as “brand equity” (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Aaker (1991) first focused on customers when evaluating a brand by viewing brand equity as a synopsis of advantages and disadvantages that a customer relates to a brand or symbol and subsequently drives the value of a product or service. Drawing on Aaker’s conceptual framework, Keller saw brand knowledge as the brand equity’s central factor consisting of two dimensions, brand awareness and brand image (1993).

Brand awareness can be differentiated into active (brand recall) and passive (brand recognition) brand awareness. Brand image is defined “as perceptions about a brand as reflected

by brand associations held in consumer memory” (Keller, 1993, p. 3). Conceptually, Keller (1993) distinguishes between

- (a) attributes, which are certain product and non-product-related characteristics that are noticeable during purchase or use;
- (b) benefits are the functional, emotional or experiential values consumers attach to the product or service attributes; and
- (c) attitudes are the overall evaluations of a brand and are dependent on the attributes and benefits of the brand.

The equity that the Pettit National Ice Center has built up over the last 22 years, in addition to the legacy of the outdoor Wisconsin Olympic Ice Rink that it was built on top of, can be described simply by calling it “Olympic.” Built as a state-of-the-art facility for speed skaters in 1992, the expectations of the Pettit Center have always hinged on being “Olympic.” However as time has passed and the entire facility can no longer be considered state-of-the-art, the expectations have not wavered. The Pettit National Ice Center, fairly or unfairly, will always be judged against its Olympic purpose.

A professional and customer-orientated brand management is imperative for the long-term success of a brand. “While (athletic) success may be fleeting, a focus on commitment to customers is not” (Gladden, Irwin & Sutton, 2001, p. 301). A study of brand equity in the National Hockey League, National Basketball Association, and Major League Baseball, for instance, viewed success and brand equity as separate constructs and analyzed their impact on merchandise revenues (Gladden and Milne, 1999). They found that both athletic success and brand equity had significant positive effects on merchandise revenues. As a result, the brand allows economic performance figures to exist somewhat independently of athletic success.

With Olympic-sized customer expectations and a facility that questionably offers the state-of-the-art value it once claimed, the long-term success of the Pettit Center needs to be guarded. Although the long-term health of any sport facility is directly affected by the quality of the sporting event, it is also dependent on the quality of the spectator experience (Sheard, 2001). Lee, Lee, Seo, and Green (2012) found that satisfaction with the stadium experience had a positive, direct impact on customer's intention to revisit the facility in the future (pp. 500-501). While the stadium experience is necessary to improve revisit rates among customers, the ability to update and keep up with the flow to technology is another important aspect to the facility. Several topics Greenberg (2004) addresses are the inclusion of museums or Hall of Fame rooms to preserve one's history, updating facility media technology and offering new amenities that make certain that the sports facility is fan and family friendly. "HDTV and digital technology, the Internet and interactive technology will not only have an impact on how sports facilities look, but how they operate" (Greenberg, 2004, p. 107).

The Olympic expectations of the Pettit National Ice Center do not stop with its appearance. Exceptional customer service is one of the basic building blocks of brand management. Ensuring that fans and supporters are enjoying themselves as much as possible while taking in the splendors of the stadium is the only aspect that a facility can control. Facilities have little to no control over the quality of the product that takes the court or the ice, but they are responsible for presenting the event in the best form possible.

This is especially true for the Pettit Center as it truly is a tourist attraction, bringing in more than 400,000 visitors annually. Most of these visitors are not Olympic athletes nor are they aspiring for anything greater than skating around the Oval without falling. These are interactive fans that choose to come to sporting events or sporting facilities for entertainment and

interaction, but mostly for fun (Bouchet *et al.*, 2011; Bourgeon & Bouchet, 2001; Holt, 1995). A considerable body of research in the broader marketing literature has focused on the nature of satisfaction and its relations to service quality and the future intentions of customers (Brady & Robertson, 2001). Other factors that have shown to influence the satisfaction that a customer experiences with a service include affective or emotional attachments with the service (Mahony & Moorman, 1999). This emotional aspect of customer experiences rings especially true at the Pettit Center, as people cite *tradition* as why they come to skate at the Pettit Center, even if only once a year. Murray and Howat (2002) found “service quality is a direct antecedent of satisfaction and that satisfaction is a strong antecedent of customer’s future intentions in a sports and leisure context” (p. 39). From a managerial perspective, these findings show that managers should monitor service quality perceptions of customers, as maintaining and increasing customer satisfaction is a crucial success factor in managing modern, multi-functional stadiums (Höck, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2010).

Customer service no longer exists just within the constraints of the physical structure of organizations or sports facilities. In today’s technological world, the online presence is selling an organization’s services and products well before a customer steps onto its grounds. Lee & Kozar (2006) demonstrated a positive relationship between website performance and business performance by showing that the ranking of the most preferred website was matched with that of the highest performing websites. This shows that the website which was easiest to use, navigate and had the most relevant information was coming from the company that was performing best. High quality organizations understand the importance of getting their information to the public and do so with a high quality online presence. Luo, Ba, & Zhang (2012) discuss how online customer service quality can mitigate the negative impacts of low retailer visibility and high

product uncertainty in online markets, while also showing that quality website design helps to reduce the impact of product uncertainty (pp. 1140-1141). What this is saying is that the effectiveness of an organization's online merchandise shop, with additional quality customer service representatives ensuring a safe, secure and enjoyable online shopping experience, play an important role in determining whether a customer will continue to consume your product.

In addition to the rise of online shopping in the last decade, social media has become an invaluable asset to an organization's online presence. Although the marketing literature has emphasized the importance of communication strategies in computer-mediated environments, research on social media has not kept pace (Varadarajan & Yadav, 2009). The Pettit Center's online presence is not just to establish itself as a potential destination for those unfamiliar with the organization, but to continue to market the preexisting relationships it has with its customers. Defined by Morgan and Hunt (1994) as "...all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges" (p. 22), relationship marketing refers to developing long-term relationships with organizational stakeholders. Bee and Kahle (2006) created a theoretical framework in which compliance, identification, and internalization guide attitude change in sport consumers, that has been found to lead to favorable financial outcomes for sport organizations (Palmatier, 2008). According to Pronshinske, Groza & Walker (2012), social media posts signaling authenticity and user engagement have the greatest impact on attracting and maintaining an online fan base. Simply creating an account on various social media is not enough to fully realize relationship marketing benefits. Rather organizations should have a social media plan with clear strategies not only to reach new audiences but also to develop relationships with current stakeholders (Pronshinske *et al.*, 2012).

Once these relationships are realized between the organization and its fans, the word-of-mouth phenomenon is able to proliferate online through users “retweeting,” “hashtaging” or sharing stories through Facebook or other social media sites. Organizations must be careful however, as negative word-of-mouth has a greater impact on consumers than positive word-of-mouth (Shreffler & Ross, 2013), which could be detrimental to an organization like the Pettit National Ice Center in reaffirming its commitment to their Olympic legacy.

In order to look at how the Pettit National Ice Center can focus on retaining and building upon its Olympic legacy, thoughtful consideration must be done in the areas of facility upgrades, improving customer service quality and increasing its online presence.

### **Survey Methodology**

Utilizing a mixed methods approach to data collection, the original survey methodology of this research project involved a pretest-posttest analysis. The two-part survey was broken down to a seventeen question pretest and an eight question posttest questionnaire. Unfortunately due to capacity with the Pettit National Ice Center, the practicality of the two-part survey was short lived and revisions to the methodology were necessary. A lack of accessibility to participants for the post-test survey required a greater reliance on the pretest than originally intended. After careful consultation with Mr. Dean, the original pretest-posttest assessment was revised to accommodate the most prominent data collection from both surveys combined into a final working participation survey.

Of the original twenty-five question paper survey, five questions were never realized on any iteration of the surveys involved in data collection. Two questions from the original pretest were excluded halfway through the research, following the consultation with Randy Dean, Executive Director of the Pettit National Ice Center, in favor of two questions being included

from the original posttest survey. The questions were both open- and close-ended, designed to generate both qualitative and quantitative feedback. One hundred fifty respondents were surveyed in this study over the course of a twelve-week period between November 28, 2013 and February 22, 2014.

The survey was divided into four major sections to gain a better understanding of the clientele utilizing the Pettit National Ice Center to participate in public skating:

1. Basic demographics – Questions asked included gender, residential zip code, and frequency of visitation to the Pettit National Ice Center, other ice-skating location preferences and why they chose to visit.
2. Importance of current Pettit National Ice Center services – Asked participants general knowledge questions about the Pettit National Ice Center services and to have each participant rate its relative importance in their overall Pettit National Ice Center experience.
3. Areas in which Pettit National Ice Center can improve – Questions focused on quality of the facility, food, customer service and programs Pettit National Ice Center offers.
4. Likelihood of return to Pettit National Ice Center

### **Findings**

1. How often do you skate at the Pettit National Ice Center in a typical year?
  - 80 (54%) respondents identified themselves as first-time Pettit National Ice Center skaters.
  - 50 (33%) respondents said they come 1 – 4 times a year.
  - 20 (13%) respondents come 5 or more times per year.

2. Do you skate at other ice rinks? If yes, which rink(s)?
  - A majority of respondents (61%, 91 responses) claimed the Pettit National Ice Center as their skating rink of choice.
  - A total of 59 (39%) Pettit National Ice Center users responded that they use other facilities in addition to the Pettit. The most identified rinks besides the Pettit National Ice Center:
    - Slice of Ice in Red Arrow Park – 13
    - Outdoor Ponds/Lakes – 8
    - Eble Ice Arena – 7 & Naga-Waukeee Ice Arena – 7
3. Why did you come to the Pettit Center today? Circle all that apply.
  - The most prominent responses to why individuals came to the Pettit National Ice Center were:
    - Friends and/or Family wanted to skate – 75 users (50%)
    - Skating is fun – 33 users (22%)
    - I like the Oval – 15 users (10%)
    - Great exercise – 14 users (9%)
    - Other prominent responses not indicated as original options:
      - Hours – 11 users (7%)
      - Tradition – 10 users (6%)
4. On a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high), rate the importance of your skating ability in your experience here:
  - 116 respondents that their skating ability is of low or neutral importance to their experience (77%).



5. On a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high), rate the importance of skating with friends and/or family in your experience here:
  - 85% of all respondents stated that skating with friends and/or family was of high importance to their experience, a total of 128.
6. On a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high), rate the importance of food and music in your experience here:
  - 75 respondents (50%) rated food and music of low importance.
  - 28 respondents (19%) rated food and music of neutral importance.
  - 47 respondents (31%) rated food and music of high importance.
7. On a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high), rate the importance of admission prices in your experience here:
  - 70 users reported the price of admission to be of high importance (47%).
  - 68 users reported the price of admission to be of neutral importance (45%).
  - 12 users reported the price of admission to be of low importance (8%).
8. How many are in your group today? Are you here with friends or family?
  - 95% of respondents claimed that they came as a part of a group
    - Group of 2 – 3: 37% (28 users)
    - Group of 4 – 5: 32% (24 users)
    - Group of 6 or more: 25% (19 users)
  - 5% came to skate by themselves (4 users)
  - 31 responded that they came with Friends, whereas 37 responded they came with Family.

9. Do you know that Olympic Speed Skaters train here at the Pettit National Ice Center? Is this important to you, rated on a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high)?

- Low importance was reported on 56 surveys, or 37%.
- Neutral importance was reported on 20, or 13% of the surveys.
- High importance was reported on 74 surveys, roughly 50%.

10. Do you know that the Pettit National Ice Center has a new running track? Is this important to you, rated on a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high)?

- 79 responded that the Pettit's new running track was of little importance to them (53%).
- 19 said it was neither important nor unimportant (12%).
- 52 users (35%) responded the new running track was very important to them.

11. Do you know that you can host birthday parties and corporate events at the Pettit National Ice Center? Is this important to you, rated on a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high)?

- The importance of parties and corporate events were across the board in this category, low and high being reported on 56 and 57 surveys (37% and 38%) respectively, with Neutral showing up on 37 surveys (25%).

12. Do you know about the Pettit National Ice Center's online presence: [www.thepettit.com](http://www.thepettit.com), Facebook and Twitter? Is this important to you, rated on a scale of 1 (low) – 5 (high)?

- 78% of all respondents replied that the Pettit National Ice Center's online presence was of high importance (117 users).
- 21 (14%) responded with low importance and 12 (8%) responded as neutral.

13. On a scale of 1 (poor) – 5 (excellent), rate the appearance of the Pettit National Ice Center:

- 128 (85%) responded that the appearance was good or excellent.
- 20 (13%) responded with the appearance as neutral.

14. On a scale of 1 (poor) – 5 (excellent), rate the menu and quality of concessions:

- 110 respondents (73%) said that they were unable to adequately answer the question, as they do not frequent the concession stand.
- Of those that were able to speak to the menu and quality of concessions, 24 respondents (16%) rated it as good or excellent.

15. On a scale of 1 (poor) – 5 (excellent), rate the quality of customer service you received at the front desk, rentals, and the concessions:

- 128 users rated the customer service they received as good or excellent (85%).

16. What services or programs that we do not currently offer would you like to see at the Pettit National Ice Center?

- The most prominent answers users reported in this opened question focused on:
  - Assistance with Beginners – 16
  - Pricing options/discounts – 15
  - Better signage – 12.

17. Would you consider purchasing Pettit merchandise, e.g. sweatshirts, T-shirts, hats, or other items, if available?

- Yes – 53
- No – 22

18. Rated on a scale of 1 (very unlikely) – 5 (very likely), do you see yourself skating at the Pettit National Ice Center more often?

- 62 (85%) said that they saw themselves skating at the Pettit National Ice Center more often.

19. For demographic purposes only, what is your zip code?

- 53150 – (10)
- 53211 – (8)
- 53154 – (7) & 53090 – (7)
- 53005 – (6)
- 53132 – (5)

## **Observations**

### **Groups**

One of the most surprising aspects of this research was the overwhelming evidence showing that groups are absolutely vital to the success and wellbeing of the Pettit National Ice Center. Ninety-five percent (95%) of respondents reported that they came as a part of a larger group, eighty-five percent (85%) stated that skating with friends and/or family was of high importance to their experience and half (50%) of the those that responded claimed that one of the reasons they came to the Pettit was because friends and family wanted to skate. This not only confirms Dawson's previous research that showed 70% of those surveyed came with groups of friends or families, but also shows a significant increase in the response rate at 95% (Dawson, 2013). Although the importance of hosting birthday parties and corporate events were relatively equal across the board, this much is true: the value of groups utilizing the Pettit National Ice Center cannot be understated or trivialized.

**Skating ability**

Of the 150 responses recorded, 116 (77%) reported that their individual skating ability rated as low or neutral. This is interesting to note because this is in stark contrast to the 31% that identified themselves as a beginner in Dawson's original research (2013, p. 7). However when the beginner level is combined with the intermediate level, which Dawson accounted for 81% of respondents, that is more in line with the 77% found in this research. What the evidence is saying from Dawson's original research, as well as this case, is that the customers coming to skate at the Pettit National Ice Center are not scared off by their inexperience or inability to skate, but rather they are making a conscious decision to spend time with others engaging in family-friendly entertainment at the Pettit Center.

**Concessions**

What seems to be a missed opportunity for potential sales to customers at the Pettit Center are the concessions. A staggering 73% of public skaters reported that they do not purchase concessions from the Pettit Center. Several reasons that came up through the survey results indicated customers were unaware of the availability of concessions, the concession stand was not open during public skate hours or that customers simply chose not to eat at the Pettit Center. Although nearly three-quarters of the respondents indicated that they do not frequent the concessions, for those customers that were able to respond to the question, 88% responded that the menu and quality was favorable.

**Skates**

In what was supposed to be a significant determining factor for why individuals chose to skate at the Pettit National Ice Center over other ice venues in Southeastern Wisconsin, the quality of the rental skates has proven to be just the opposite - a distracting deterrent. A

disheartening zero respondents claimed that the Pettit Center had better rental skates than other venues, with a small portion of survey takers replying that they expected more out of the Olympic Training Site than the skates that were being issued to its public skaters. Some frequent complaints about the rental skates were that the skates were too worn down, the blades were dull and their appearance being described as “old” or “tattered.”

### **Current volunteers**

The most important aspect of the customer service industry is the connection an organization has with their customers. The best organizations develop and train its employees and volunteers to handle unique and challenging situations with the utmost care, often noting that the “customers are always right.” Interestingly, the customer service customers received throughout their visit to the Pettit Center was rated as good or excellent on 85% of the surveys collected. As many companies can attest to, despite the collective public acknowledging the customer service being above average, it only takes one negative experience to affect one’s reputation.

A noteworthy instance that needs addressing is the behavior of current volunteers on the ice, especially when they are supposed to be looking after customers’ wellbeing. In early January, an off-duty female volunteer took to the ice during a relatively quiet public skating session. Skating against the flow of traffic in an attempt to set up her figure skating practice, this girl was becoming frustrated that the other skaters on the oval were interfering with her routine. Customers had to scramble to get out of this girl’s way to avoid collisions, as she continued jumping and spinning despite a now sizable public skating crowd being on the same ice. What made matters worse was the two on-ice volunteers were engrossed in their own conversation to be attentive to the needs of other skaters and to address this increasingly dangerous situation.

When I was finally able to get the on-ice supervisor's attention, I asked whether this type of skating was allowed during public skate on the oval? He informed me that figure skaters were allowed to practice their jumps and spins as long as the public skating crowd size dictated it. He also said that most figure skaters understand when the appropriate time is to practice their spins and jumps and it "usually isn't a problem." When asked whether it seemed dangerous that less experienced skaters were being forced out of the way of a volunteer focused solely on her own ice time than on other skaters' quality of experience of the Pettit Center, he responded that volunteering here "enables special privileges" and that volunteers are allowed to get away with more than other public skaters without consequence.

As this observation speaks directly to an isolated instance, it bears mentioning that the overall quality of the customer service being provided is seen as satisfactory and something that the Pettit Center can be very proud of. However, the volunteers' attitudes and sense of entitlement speak to larger issues that were unaddressed in the course of this research. Additional steps to understand why behaviors like these are occurring and are being accepted by supervisors in charge of volunteers requires action on behalf of the Pettit Center management to address the most pertinent concerns stemming from this observation.

## **Key Recommendations**

### **Customer service**

Often times the most memorable experience a customer has at an event has nothing to do with the event itself – it is the service they receive that either makes or breaks the entire experience. Being a United States Olympic Training Facility, the Pettit National Ice Center is in a unique situation where its reputation precedes itself to its clients. The Olympic legacy is a

distinguishing factor of the Pettit Center, setting itself apart from every other ice rink in the area. The status of being an Olympic Training Site raises customers' expectations, and when you fail to live up to those expectations, you lose the respect of those you are trying to serve. While you cannot anticipate our customers' expectations before they come to the Pettit Center, you can ensure that once they come to the Pettit Center they are being provided exceptional customer service, both on and off the ice.

Forty-seven percent of the survey responses recorded stated that they believed the customer service provided by the Pettit National Ice Center's admissions counters, skate rental and concession stand was excellent. Therefore, over half of the customers coming in believe that there is room for improvement in the quality of customer service.

#### Recommendations:

1. Set clear expectations for all Pettit Center volunteers
  - a. One of the most problematic situations I have encountered and overheard throughout my time at the Pettit Center is that volunteers feel that they can do whatever they want, whenever they want without consequence. A particular instance of this was the dangerous figure skating by an off duty volunteer that was previously discussed, but notwithstanding, the current volunteers need clear expectations set for them and enforced in order for change to occur in the organization. Whether this is in the form of a volunteer contract or an orientation that sets forth the requirements of the position, those individuals that choose to volunteer at the Pettit Center have to understand that they are there in order to serve others and ensure a safe and enjoyable time using the Pettit Center for all its guests. Those individuals that do not wish to be a part



of the solution and continue to be disruptive and uncooperative in spite of the mission of the Pettit Center, need to be reevaluated and potentially relieved from their roles as volunteers.

2. Hire current volunteers as part-time staff

- a. In addition to setting clear expectations, the Pettit Center could look to bolster its staff by hiring some of the most qualified and most deserving current volunteers as part-time employees. Thoughtful consideration should be made as to which current volunteers, if any, would be a good fit for the organization, but rewarding quality work to those that deserve it could be a way to utilize the volunteer pool as a means to evaluate potential candidates for employment. Showing the current volunteers that what they are doing might lead to a greater role with the organization could persuade them to adhere to the expectations required of them.
- b. Hiring volunteers as part-time staff might bring a higher level of responsibility and dedication to the Pettit Center. Being employed as opposed to volunteering enables the organization to exert greater control over their employees through performance reviews, disciplinary actions and ultimately the retention or termination of one's job as it relates to the job being done correctly.

3. Establish Rink Guard guidelines

- a. A consistent problem I encountered while observing the public skate over the last four months was the seemingly lack of structure for rink guards. Too often would on-ice volunteers use the time they were meant to be helping others or

promoting a safe environment to practice their own skating, count how many laps they could skate in the time available or simply spend the time skating and conversing with friends or other rink guards. Rink guard guidelines should be introduced to help facilitate these volunteers in their duties to help keep public skaters and all patrons safe throughout their time at the Pettit Center.

- b. Basic Skills Instruction, a key feature of U.S. Figure Skating, is a perfect way for rink guides to help inexperienced or beginner skaters become more comfortable on the ice. Basic skills instruction certification is an inexpensive and valuable way for the Pettit Center to heighten its quality of instruction and customer service provided to public skaters with little or no experience ice-skating.

#### 4. Five Point Plan

- a. A very simple and easily managed upgrade to the customer service provided to public skaters of all ages is by instructing all volunteers, rink guards and on-ice officials to learn five simple instructions that skaters should know in order to improve their skating. This could be as simple of instruction as reminding patrons to lace their skates as tightly as possible to ensure a snug fit, or how to stop using toe picks figure skates or additional ways to stop on hockey skates. Every Pettit Center ambassador could take the responsibility to impart this short instructional message to anyone on the ice that seems to be struggling or in need of a little extra help.
- b. Sample Five Point Plan:

- i. Falling and recovery
  - ii. Marching forward across the ice
  - iii. Forward two-foot glide
  - iv. Moving Snowplow stops
  - v. Forward one foot glides
5. Instructional videos
  - a. In an effort to utilize technology to highlight the recent remodeling and improving areas in the Pettit Center, instructional videos offering tips on how to skate, stop, and address some of the major concerns public skaters have could be displayed on mounted televisions throughout the downstairs by the skate rental and the stairwell leading up to the ice. In an effort to increase your social media presence, short instructional You-Tube videos could be produced and linked to throughout the Pettit Center's website and social media footprint. This could provide a valuable public service for anyone searching for ice-skating instructions online as well as a way to authentically connect with your customers.

## **Skates**

Fairly or unfairly, potential customers judge an ice-skating facility based on two necessary items – ice and skates. While the Pettit National Ice Center is known for its world-class Olympic speed skating oval, it is clear that their customers feel they are falling behind in regard to providing quality ice skate rentals. Not a single person surveyed believed the rental skates at the Pettit Center were better compared with other local ice rinks. In fact, when speaking to current and former Pettit employees, the question was scoffed at, calling the available rental

skates “uninspiring relics.” When members of the facility’s staff see the lackluster quality of skates as a prominent deterrent for skaters, what is going on in the minds of paying customers that are being forced to rent and wear them?

In speaking with team members working within the skate rental, it was learned that the vast majority of the rentals available to the public are not maintained properly. The skates are neither sanitized nor cleaned routinely upon return from the ice and are not rotated accordingly to ensure a balanced usage of each pair of skates. As these skates are not being properly rotated, the blades become dull and require sharpening, which is also not being performed on a routine basis. There is currently only one trained and qualified skate sharpener for the Pettit (R. Dean, personal communication, 2014) and his infrequent availability hinders the adequate maintenance these skates require. While there is no excuse for proper sanitation and rotation not being performed, it was observed that the skate rental often is overwhelmed with the volume of renters seeking skates, which begs another question of whether there is adequate staffing to ensure the needs of the customers are being met in a timely fashion.

Finally, there is an issue with newer grey rental skates breaking at the hooks, which fastens the laces around the top of the boot. It was noticed that approximately 30 pairs of skates were thrown into a pile in the back of the skate rental, with nothing being done to keep them out of sight from the public. Whether these skates are defective, a supplier should be informed and steps should be taken by the skate rental staff to properly inform customers of the proper skate lacing techniques to ensure that this is not occurring inadvertently by novice ice skaters.

Recommendations:

1. Train skate rental personnel to correctly select the right skates for individuals
  - a. This may be too harshly criticizing the current work of the skate rentals employees as a majority of rental skate users have little to no experience in selecting their own skates. Only so much can be done from the rentals side, but more aptly being able to explain the tendencies of skate fitting for novice skaters would be of great assistance to customers seeking an enjoyable time on the ice.
  - b. In addition to providing extra training to rental skate employees so they can accurately fit customers with the best skate possible, each skate rental staff member should be ready with several aspects of pertinent skating information, such as how to correctly lace up one's skates, explain to the customer how tightly the boot should fit to ensure the safest skating experience and more. It is a small measure that could be a big difference in a beginner skater succeeding and deciding to come ice-skating at the Pettit Center more frequently.
2. Skate sharpening training for experienced rental employees
  - a. It is understood by this author that there is only a single person that is currently responsible for the sharpening of over one thousand pairs of rentals at the Pettit National Ice Center. While Rainbow Sports, a third-party entity located within the Pettit Center, offers skate sharpening services, there is not a qualified skate sharpener for the Pettit Center on hand throughout the public skating sessions to ensure that blades are being kept sharp. With the volume of

skaters that utilize rental skates, the frequency of which the skates should be sharpened needs to be increased, and the availability of more experienced skate sharpeners would greatly aid in keeping the rental skates in the best condition possible.

3. Invest in new skates

- a. When one of the two absolutely necessary pieces of equipment a successful ice rink needs is lacking the quality expected of an internationally renowned facility, a major investment is necessary to restore the image as a world-class facility. When the Pettit National Ice Center self-promotes it as an Olympic Training Site, the expectations – fairly and unfairly – are raised and the public expects a superior product to be provided. Though this will be a major undertaking, purchasing new skates in waves can help offset the overwhelming cost instead of a single, one time purchase. By retiring the most worn out skates first, it begins to solve the issue of skates being “uninspiring relics” that are old and tattered looking. As these new skates are properly rotated into the existing stock, proper maintenance can be rendered on older skates while a small percentage of the newly purchased skates are being broken in.
- b. Work with the ice skate distributor to ensure that there is a full refund on defective gear and apparel. If the company is unwilling to stand by the quality of their equipment, begin searching for a new ice skate vendor willing to service a world-class facility like the Pettit Center with the best quality skate available.

- c. Instead of merely throwing out the old skates, the Pettit Center could hold several “garage sale” events in order to eliminate old stock of used skates, previous years’ gear and merchandise that is sitting idly in storage without purpose. This could be a chance to recoup some money sold from diminishing assets that otherwise would be chalked up as a definitive loss.
4. Invest in new skate storage
    - a. The current skate storage, while sturdy and capable of doing the job, is poorly designed for the safe storage of the Pettit Center’s rental skates. A major concern with the current storage system is that the one size nature of the skate compartments throughout, whereas skates vary greatly in size, from children’s to adults. The compartments are retrofitted to fit each size of skate, with children’s skates so small that makeshift anchor points are needed so that the skates will fit in the identical but oversized compartments. The real issue is that the larger adult skates are too big for the one size openings that the skate rental employees must forcibly slam these skates into the storage system in order for the skates to ‘fit’ into place. This unnecessary damage to the skates and the blades further the case that the Pettit Center needs to improve the care for its rental skates in order to protect the financial investment and elongate the life of the skates.

### **Appearance**

When addressing the Olympic legacy of the Pettit National Ice Center, it is hard to separate the contributions of the former Wisconsin Olympic Ice Rink from its current existence. The history of Olympic speed skating is great, especially in Southeastern Wisconsin. Once the

outdoor rink was closed and the Pettit Center came to fruition, the expectations of the building were never higher. A state-of-the-art indoor ice center, the dreams of Olympians and those that simply wished to support them, were finally being realized. A designated US Olympic Training Site, the Pettit National Ice Center has been proud to boast so many national and international speed skating events.

While still a US Olympic Training Site and home to several national and international events annually, some of the original luster and shine of the once state-of-the-art facility has been lost over the years. The Pettit Center has greater competition than ever before, and without necessary upgrades, there are rumors of the Pettit National Ice Center losing its designation as an Olympic Training Site.

Greenberg (2004) wrote that there is a continual redefinition of what a state-of-the-art facility is. “Every new building that comes online is advertised as being more extravagant and more profitable than its predecessor. Each new venue is cutting edge. A state-of-the-art facility is fan-friendly and user-friendly, and provides a sporting, entertainment, and shopping experience for the consumer.” The only problem is that there is no new Pettit Center coming. For better or worse, we are stuck with what we have; and we can be so fortunate because of it. The Pettit National Ice Center does not need a complete overhaul but systematic refreshing. It needs new paint and upgrades. The facility is still a world-class facility, but in order to stay relevant, small changes can be big difference makers.

#### Recommendations:

##### 1. Better signage

- a. There is nothing worse for a facility than to have its customers unsure of where to go and how to get there. Ensuring patrons are capable of moving



from point A to point B is absolutely critical, especially when there is a limited number of staff members ensuring a quality time at the Pettit Center. On particularly busy days, the Pettit associates that work in the lobby are already swamped with customer concerns and cannot hope to direct first-time customers at the Pettit to the skate rental and onward to the ice. Increased signage that stands out from the rest of the Pettit's color scheme is necessary to indicate where safe entrances and exits to the facility are, in addition to leading them to the correct area of the Pettit Center they are wishing to visit, either the Hall of Fame Room, the locker rooms downstairs or the most popular location in the facility, the ice. As Greenberg writes, "a state-of-the-art facility is fan-friendly and *user-friendly*" (2004).

## 2. Repaint handrails

- a. The main handrails in the center of the east and west rinks and providing access to the Olympic Oval are in desperate need of being repainted. Arguably the most travelled location aside from the lobby, this staircase should be one of the focal points of the Pettit National Ice Center. Roughly 400,000 annual visitors walk up and down these stairs to get to the ice and the presentation is not acceptable.

## 3. Add color

- a. Look around the inside of the Pettit Center and what is the one dominating color is an uninspiring gray. For a facility that claims to be "Home of the Gold," there is not any gold to be found within the inside of the Pettit Center.

- b. What seems to be the Pettit Center's color theme is red, white, and blue, which is understandable given the association with the United States Olympic Committee. If that is the case, gray should not be the dominating color of choice in this facility. If for example, the Pettit chose to incorporate the colors of the Olympic rings (red, blue, yellow, green and black) that would be an interesting use of symbolism. Or even incorporating a gold, silver and bronze theme coinciding with the colors of Olympic winners would be helpful.

### **Online presence**

One of the most important and easiest ways an organization can influence its current and potential customer base in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is through its online presence. Whereas in the past, the customer would have to physically come for the information they are seeking, the onus is now on the organization to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information it can in an easily accessible manner. Companies are using the new technology in their official websites and in developing mobile applications so that the information is literally at the customers' fingertips. The significance of the Pettit National Ice Center's online presence cannot be understated as 86% of survey responses claimed the online presence was very important to them.

#### Recommendations:

1. Update [www.thepettit.com](http://www.thepettit.com).
  - a. Although [www.thepettit.com](http://www.thepettit.com) is the official online presence for the Pettit National Ice Center, there needs to be a general updating of its features to bring the most pertinent information to the foreground. For instance, one of the first things this author looks for in a website to understand if a company takes pride in its online presence is when the last time it was updated. Every

single page on [www.thepettit.com](http://www.thepettit.com) is out of date. Verified by the copyright information at the bottom of each page, aside from the homepage being over a year old, each page has not been updated since 2009. What this shows observant users on the website is that over the course of the last five years, nothing new or important has occurred.

- b. The schedule information on the homepage can be increased to incorporate pertinent events going on daily. The weekly public skate schedule is shown prominently on the left margin of the Pettit's homepage, which is a nice touch, but customers wishing to know the other events happening on a daily basis are left to search throughout the entire website to find event-specific information or simply call the main office to find out the information they are seeking. Like the scrolling schedule of events located on the screens above the admission windows in the lobby, a detailed yet concise amount of information could be provided online to show a more complete schedule of events, either daily or weekly.

## 2. Mobile Apps

- a. In conjuncture with an updated online presence, the Pettit National Ice Center is missing out on taking advantage of the mobile application presence. By developing a mobile application and filling it with the most pertinent information, i.e. public skate times, Pettit hockey league schedules, speed skating events and other special events, the Pettit would be able to infiltrate the mobile market with a useful tool that today's on-the-go society would need.

- b. In addition to providing valuable schedule information within the app, this could be a marketing opportunity to introduce e-coupons for those that download and stay connected with the Pettit through the application. Perhaps once a month, a mobile app-only coupon can be redeemed for a free skate rental or a box of popcorn, something small enough that is not taking away from the Pettit's bottom line, but also something worthwhile that customers actually want to redeem.
3. Distinguish the Hall of Fame
    - a. In searching for more information regarding the Hall of Fame on the Pettit website, there is a link that brings visitors to <http://www.nationalspeedskatingmuseum.org>. While the website itself is outdated and visually unappealing, one of the discrepancies that the website brings to light is that it is not to be confused with the Hall of Fame Committee of US Speedskating. A quick Google search of "US Speedskating Hall of Fame Committee" brings one to USSpeedskating.org's page that clearly differentiates itself from the National Speedskating Museum's website with its design and professionalism. It is not clear whether the National Speed Skating Museum is a separate entity from US Speedskating's Hall of Fame or if this is one in the same. If these are referring to the same Speedskating Hall of Fame located upstairs at the Pettit National Ice Center, it is the recommendation of this author to advocate for US Speedskating becoming the official website domain for the Hall of Fame.

4. Update <http://www.nationalspeedskatingmuseum.org>.
  - a. If the Hall of Fames for US Speedskating and the National Speed Skating Museum are indeed separate, then a major website overhaul is needed for the National Speed Skating Museum. Not only is the information five years out of date, but the website is visually unappealing. Aside from the Pettit's name on the homepage and a wide-angle picture showing a dated Wall of Fame, there is no connection between this museum and the Pettit National Ice Center. There is more valuable information on a single page of [www.thepettit.com](http://www.thepettit.com) about the Hall of Fame than there is within the entire National Speed Skating Museum website.
  - b. Whether this website must become a property of the Pettit National Ice Center in order to be kept up-to-date and current or whether the Pettit is content with its name and likeness being utilized in a manner that is unbecoming for US Speedskating and the Speed Skating Hall of Fame is a decision that must be made.

### **Merchandise**

Seventy-three percent of people would be interested in purchasing Pettit merchandise if available. While it is important to note that this could be a very intriguing growth opportunity for the Pettit Center, it will likely be a large upfront expense that might give cause for concern. Balancing supply versus demand will be incredibly important if this venture is to be considered. In addition to merely focusing on the supply and demand issue, quality of product is another factor that needs to be considered when discussing merchandising options.

### Recommendations:

1. Invest in merchandise
  - a. For all of the reasons stated above, the Pettit Center should look to invest in merchandise. Understandably there is hesitation to make a large financial commitment that has been shown in the past not to succeed as well as it should or could have, but what is important is that you continue to maximize your opportunities for growth, with merchandise being a key to that solution.
  - b. Perhaps you start gradually with a select few items and build your inventory from that. Instead of large orders, begin with more manageable and diverse selection in order to build up the demand and see which merchandise is most cost-effective in the long run.
2. Look at online shopping options
  - a. In addition to an initial investment in merchandise like [www.teamusashop.com](http://www.teamusashop.com). Online shopping has the ability to reach a farther audience than those located within Southeastern Wisconsin and enables potential customers to browse merchandise options remotely and supporting the Pettit Center from the comfort of their choosing.

## **Limitations and Further Research**

### **Original survey**

The original expectations for the methodology involved a two-part, pretest-posttest survey analysis that was unfortunately never fully realized. Due to operational limitations and a lack of facility assistance, within the first two weeks of research the posttest survey was deemed

impractical and subsequently eliminated in respect to utilizing the pretest survey only. Halfway through the designated on-site research period, upon further consultation with Dean, the pre-test survey was then revised to include several key components of the original two-part survey. The second revision of the research study combined two questions from the original posttest survey and replaced two pretest questions found on the original, which were believed to be no longer pertinent.

Had this research study been completed as originally designed, new conclusions might have been found to show in what areas customers believe the Pettit National Ice Center could seek to improve most. The types of questions that were inadvertently left out of the proposed research focused on meeting customers' expectations, quality of the ice and quality of the overall experience, as well as an open-ended question asking the respondents to address the specific areas in which the Pettit performed well and those areas that could be improved for future service. Despite its limitations, this research was done as a service to the Pettit National Ice Center and its administration, who ultimately had the final say to its overall direction.

### **Fitness and Running**

An area for further research is to look at the fitness and running population that uses the Pettit National Ice Center for purposes other than skating. Known primarily as a world-class ice-skating facility, more information should be derived on how to better serve a population that does not utilize the facility for its primary purpose. Coincidentally, 35% of public skaters say the new running track is important, even when their main priority for being at the Pettit Center was to ice skate.

A similarly designed survey could be developed and investigated to better gauge the fitness-focused audience using the Pettit National Ice Center for other purposes besides ice-

skating. Groups that routinely use the new running track, like Marquette University, Badgerland Striders and Milwaukee Mustangs running clubs, could be brought in for focus groups to discuss future expansion or improvements that would benefit all parties.

### **Merchandise**

It is recommended to better understand the types of merchandise that potential purchasers would be willing to buy prior to investing in this idea. This might necessitate a small focus group consisting of longtime Pettit skaters, individuals recently enrolled in lessons with the Skate School, Pettit employees, Pettit volunteers and non-skating parents of youth hockey or ice-skating clubs, as well as getting insight on what merchandise the non-skating population of runners and fitness users of the Pettit Center would be interested in purchasing.

### **Conclusion**

The underlying theme this research study came away with was how to retain and improve the Olympic expectations that are so closely held with the Pettit National Ice Center. Over 40 years of Olympic legacy and speed skating are so deeply engrained in Southeastern Wisconsin that it is impossible to think of Milwaukee without the Pettit National Ice Center. But there are improvements that are necessary to be made to continue to keep that legacy alive.

Cosmetic improvements within the Pettit Center, a greater resolve to provide exceptional customer service, building relationships with clientele through its online presence and continuing to address potential revenue generating opportunities are only a handful of recommendations this analysis covered. What is undeniably known about this community is that the Pettit National Ice Center has proven time and time again to be a worthwhile venture for hundreds of thousands of annual visitors. If the Pettit Center gives its visitors a reason to come back, Wisconsin will continue to be proud to call the Pettit National Ice Center home for years to come.



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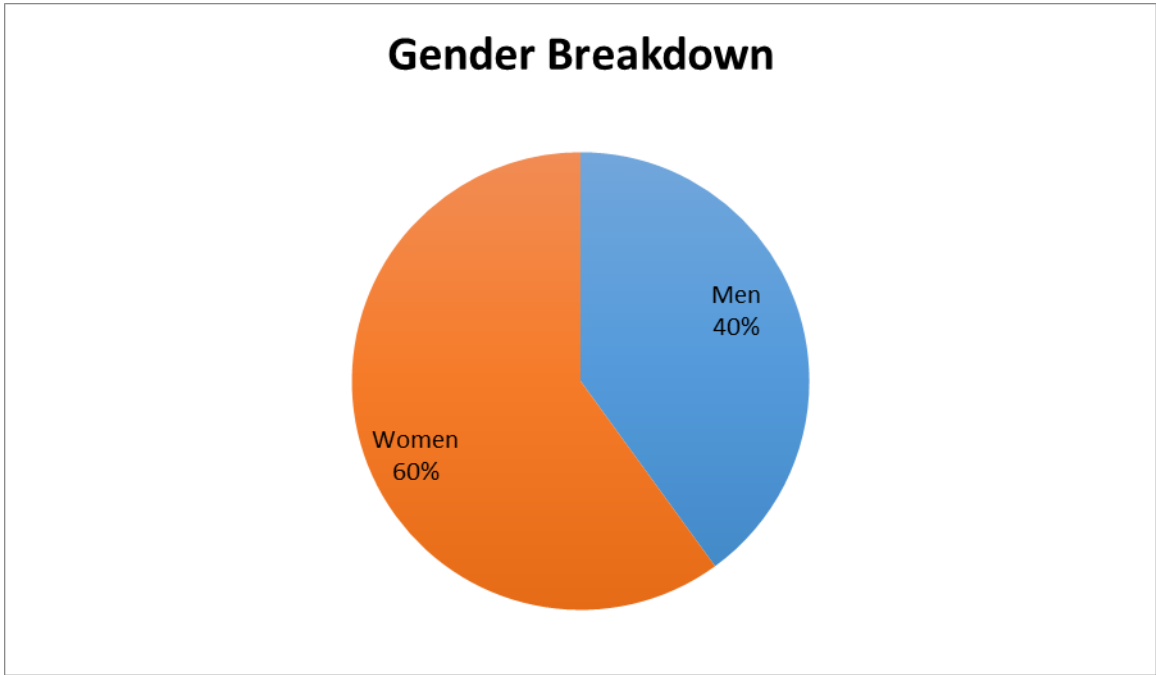
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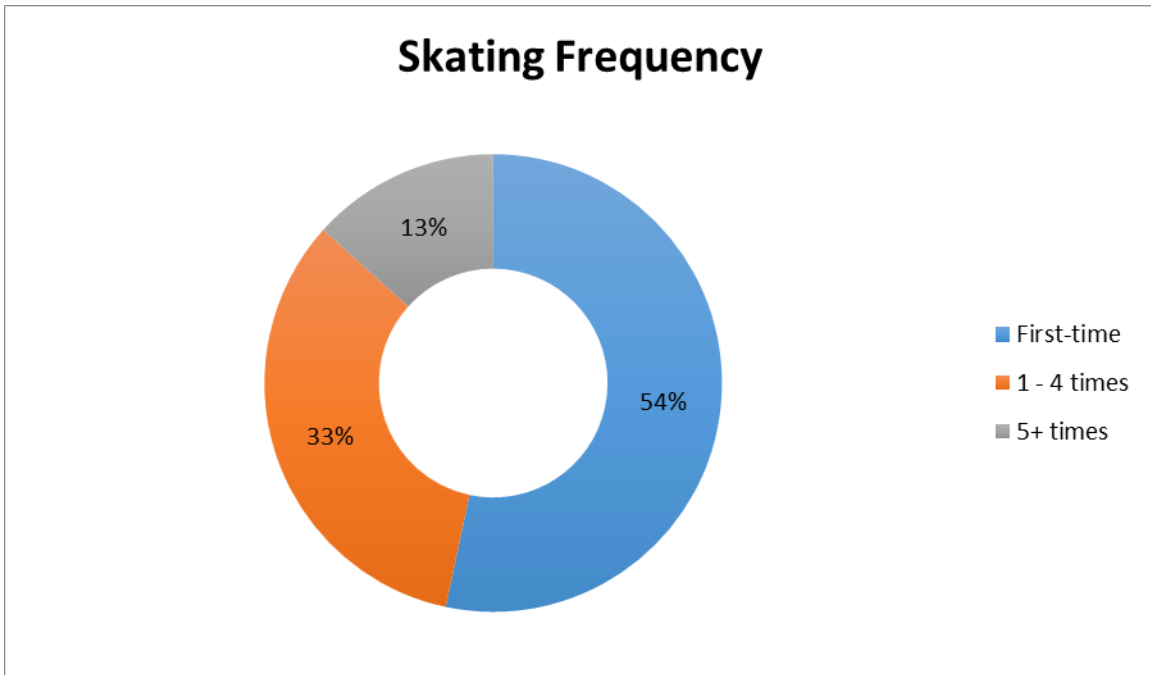
**Appendix A: MU IRB Determination**

<b>MU IRB DETERMINATION OF MU ENGAGEMENT IN HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH</b>	
<b>Researchers</b> do not complete this section. <b>For IRB staff only</b>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The activities as described <b>DO NOT</b> constitute MU being engaged in Human Subjects Research. Submission of an IRB Application to MU is not required.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The activities as described <b>DO</b> constitute MU being engaged in Human Subjects Research. Submission of a MU IRB Application <b>IS REQUIRED</b>. IRB Approval must be obtained before the research can begin.</p>	
 <p>Amanda J. Ahndt, RN, MS, MSN, CIM, CIP IRB Manager</p>	<p><u>11/20/2013</u></p>
IRB Staff Signature/Print	Date

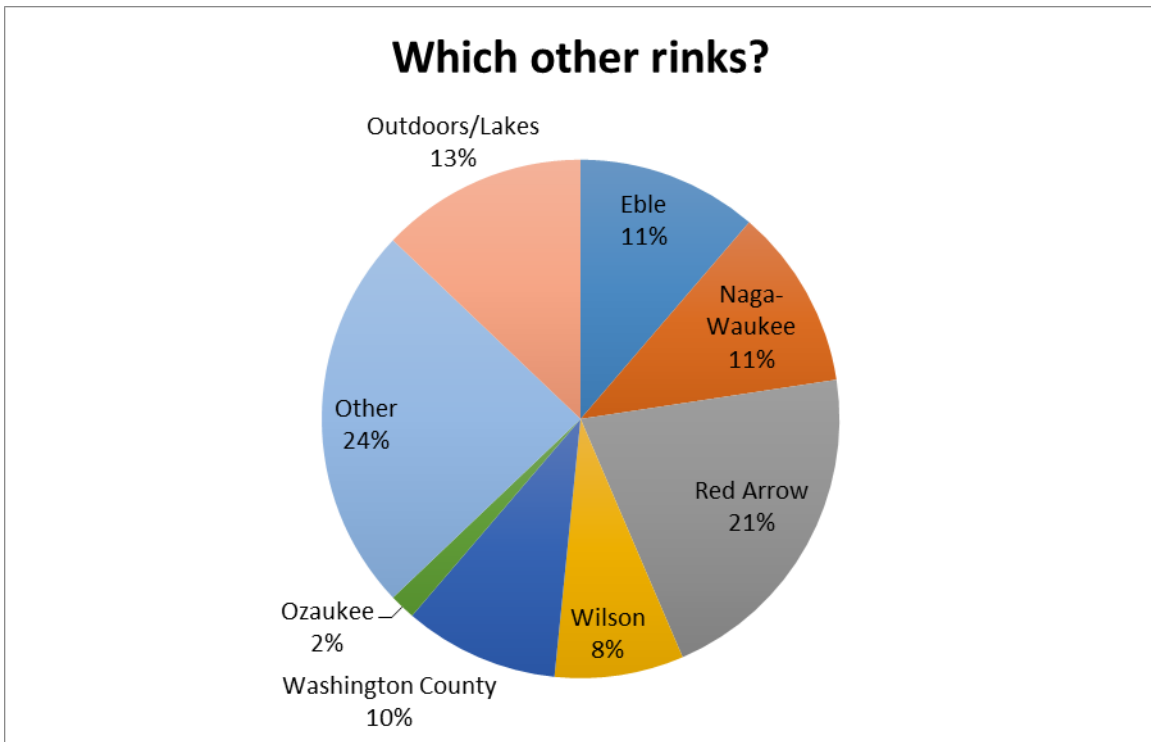
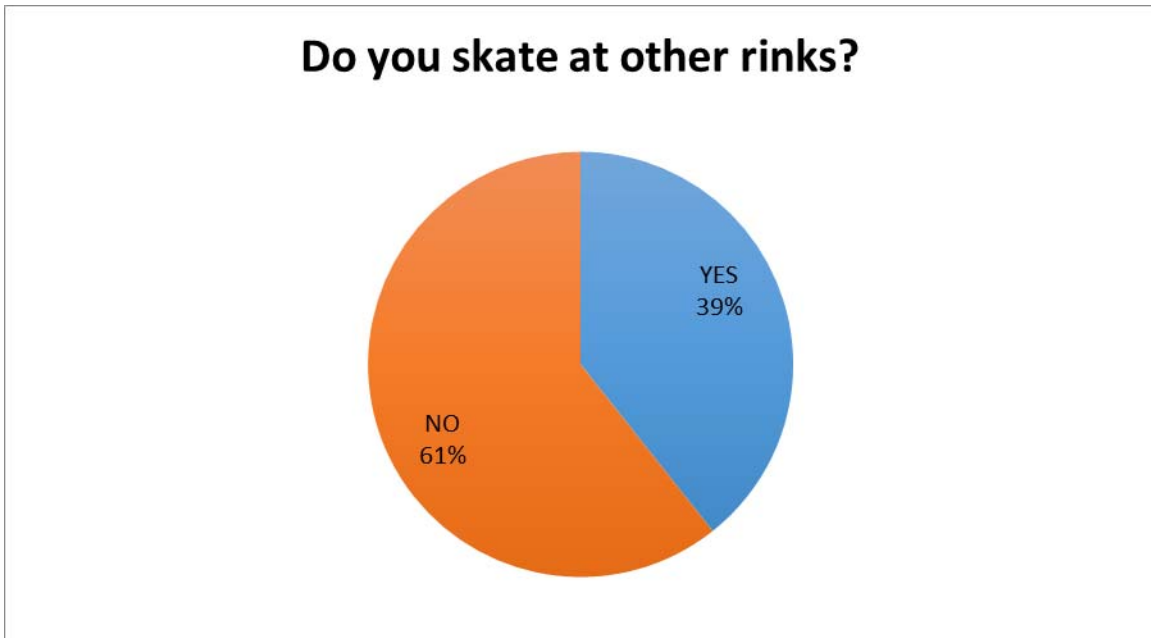
**Appendix B: Gender Breakdown Pie Chart**



**Appendix C: Frequency of Public Skating  
(Question 1)**



**Appendix D: Do you skate at other rinks? Where?  
(Question 2)**

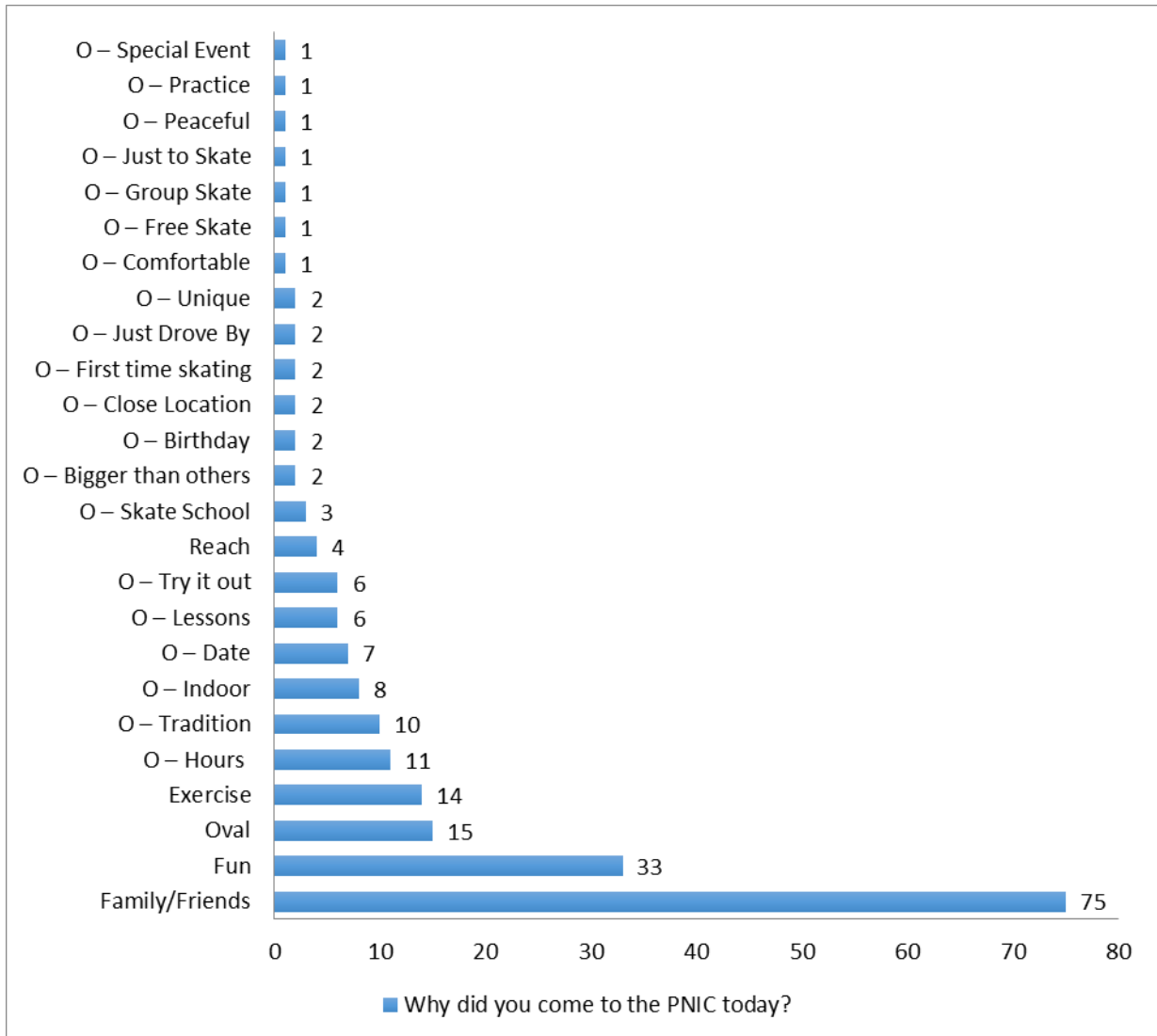


**Appendix E: Why did you come to the Pettit Center today?  
(Question 3)**

Exercise	Friends	Fun, Friends	O - Free skating
Exercise	Friends	Fun, Friends	O - Great times
Exercise	Friends	Fun, Friends	O - Group skate
Exercise	Friends	Fun, Friends	O - Indoor
Exercise	Friends; Exercise	Fun, Friends	O - Indoor
Exercise; O - Tradition	Friends; Exercise; O - Tradition	Fun, Friends	O - Just drove by
Exercise; Oval	Friends; First time skating	Fun; Exercise	O - Just drove by
Friends	Friends; O - Close location	Fun; Friends	O - Just to skate
Friends	Friends; O - Close location	Fun; Friends	O - Just wanted to try it out
Friends	Friends; O - Close location	Fun; Friends	O - Lessons
Friends	Friends; O - Indoors	Fun; Friends	O - Lessons
Friends	Friends; O - Indoors	Fun; Friends; Exercise	O - Lessons
Friends	Friends; O - Indoors; O - Hours	Fun; Friends; Exercise; O - Bigger than others	O - Practice
Friends	Friends; O - Tradition	Fun; Friends;	O - Public skate hours
Friends	Friends; O - Tradition	Exercise; O - Birthday	O - Public skate hours
Friends	Friends; O - Tradition	Fun; O - Wanted to try it	O - Skate School
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	Fun; O - Wanted to try it	O - Skate School
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	Fun; Oval; Exercise	O - Skating School
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	Fun; Oval; Exercise;	O - Something to do
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	Easy	O - Special Event
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	Fun; Reach	O - Time fit into schedule
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	Fun; Reach	O - Tradition
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	Fun; Rentals; Reach;	O - Tradition
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	O - Something to do	O - Tradition
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	O - Birthday Party	O - Tradition
Friends	Friends; Oval; O - Hours	O - Comfortable; O - Peaceful	O - Try it out
Friends	Fun	O - Date	O - Unique
Friends	Fun	O - Date	O - Unique
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Oval
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Oval; O - Bigger than others
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Oval; O - Indoor
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Oval; O - Indoor
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Oval; O - Lessons
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Oval; O - Lessons
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Oval; O - Lessons
Friends	Fun	O - Date	Reach
Friends	Fun	O - Date; O - Too cold to go outdoors	
Friends	Fun	O - First time skating	
Friends	Fun, Friends	O - First time skating	
Friends			



**Appendix F: Frequency of Why People Came to the Pettit Center**



**Appendix G: What services or programs would you like to see at PNIC?  
(Question 16)**

A guiding wall for beginners	Fitness center; Merchandise options	More noticeable signage
A more encompassing schedule	Form fits function	More on-ice instruction; basic skills instructions
Ad-free music	Form fits function	More on-ice instruction; basic skills instructions
Additional parking	Form fits function	More permanent barriers; TV advertising
Additional/more healthy vending	Form fits function	More permanent barriers; TV advertising
Additional/more healthy vending	Form fits function	More skating lessons
Adult only skate	Free Wi-Fi	New tables and chairs in service area downstairs; better cleanliness
Adult only skate	Game room; Arcade	Package deals that tie public skate with hockey
Availability of ice	Good as is	Sharper skates
Babysitting service	Groupons, etc.; more open skate times; more advertising online	Smaller skating area for new skaters; separate area for birthday party guests and skaters
Babysitting service	Groupons, etc.; more open skate times; more advertising online	Special skating events; Theme nights - 80's/Costumes
Babysitting services	Half sizes in skate rentals	Stationary barriers (red pads are not tied down at all); More diverse music selection
Basic skill instruction on ice	Heaters; heated benches	Stationary barriers (red pads are not tied down at all); More diverse music selection
Basic skill instruction on ice	Lessons included in groups/birthdays	Stationary barriers (red pads are not tied down at all); More diverse music selection
Beginners' area	Lessons throughout the daytime/school day; group/family discounts; more TV advertising	Tables and chairs need to be replaced downstairs
Beginners' area	Lessons throughout the daytime/school day; group/family discounts; more TV advertising	Theme nights; Olympian meet & greets
Better coffee; More public hours	Locker maintenance; Lockers upstairs	Theme nights; Olympian meet & greets
Better lockers	Lockers upstairs; Better signage; more storage bins	Themed night skating
Better music (not radio)	More attentive staff; better music (not radio)	Tools for beginners
Better music (not radio)	More attentive staff; better music (not radio)	Tools for beginners
Better signage	More benches	Tools for beginners
Better signage	More competitive pricing; More special event skating; Additional summer hours - not enough ice time	Training handles for beginners
Better signage	More competitive pricing; Zamboni rides as prizes	Water available upstairs
Better signage; cheaper pricing	More competitive pricing; Zamboni rides as prizes	Zamboni rides
Better signage; cheaper pricing	More front desk attendants	
Better signage; cheaper pricing; improved advertising; Cosmetic improvements	More front desk attendants	
Better signage; Confusing	More noticeable signage	
Better signage; updated colors; repainted benches; new flooring downstairs		
Cheaper pricing		
Cheaper pricing; more admissions		
windows open on weekends		
Competitive pricing		
Cosmetic touchups		
Coupons; discounts online		
Cross training program; off-ice training programs		
Elevators for handicap viewing in center		

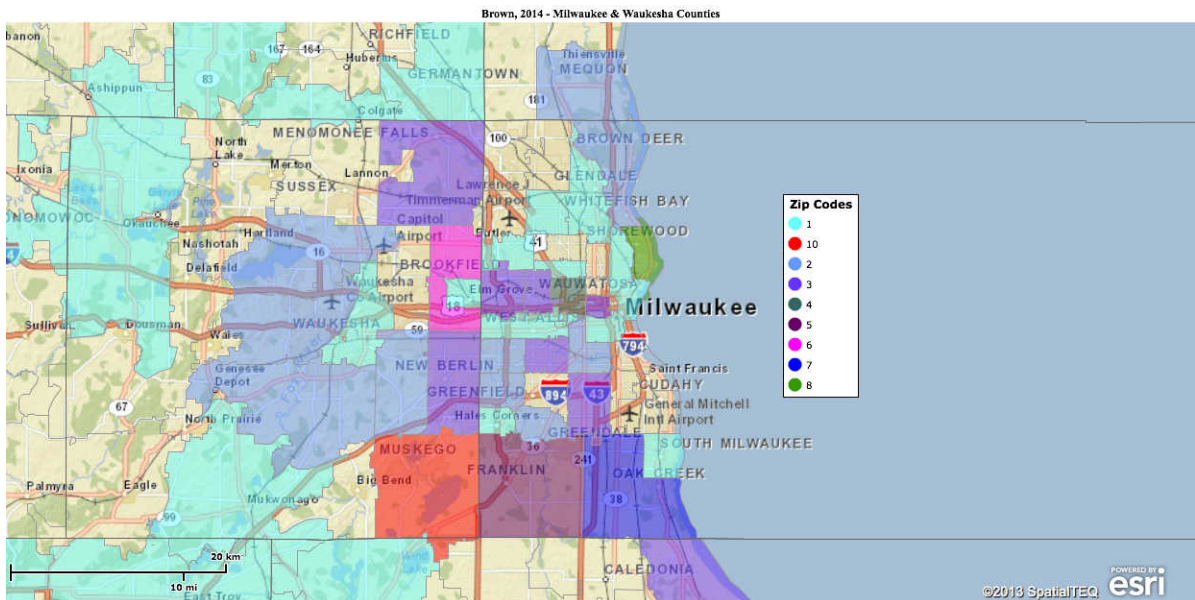
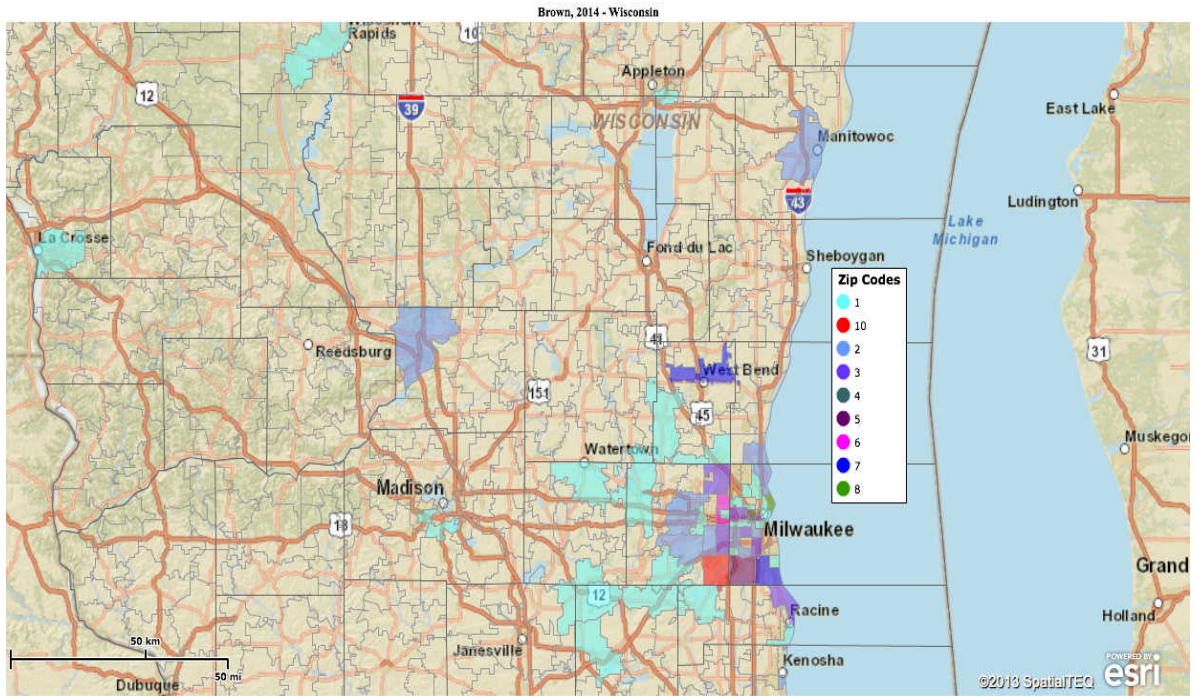
**Appendix H: For demographic purposes only, what is your zip code?  
(Question 19)**

27278	53092	53150	53211	53227
27278	53092	53151	53211	53228
27513	53094	53151	53211	53228
32164	53115	53151	53211	53229
32164	53120	53154	53211	53233
32164	53122	53154	53211	53233
53005	53129	53154	53211	53233
53005	53129	53154	53212	53295
53005	53130	53154	53213	53402
53005	53132	53154	53213	53402
53005	53132	53154	53213	53402
53005	53132	53172	53214	53403
53017	53132	53185	53215	53711
53022	53132	53186	53215	53901
53027	53143	53188	53217	53901
53051	53143	53188	53217	54220
53051	53146	53189	53218	54220
53051	53146	53189	53219	54495
53066	53149	53190	53219	54601
53072	53150	53202	53219	54640
53072	53150	53204	53221	54915
53090	53150	53208	53221	55455
53090	53150	53208	53221	60002
53090	53150	53208	53222	60010
53090	53150	53208	53226	60010
53090	53150	53209	53226	60047
53090	53150	53210	53226	
53090	53150	53211	53227	

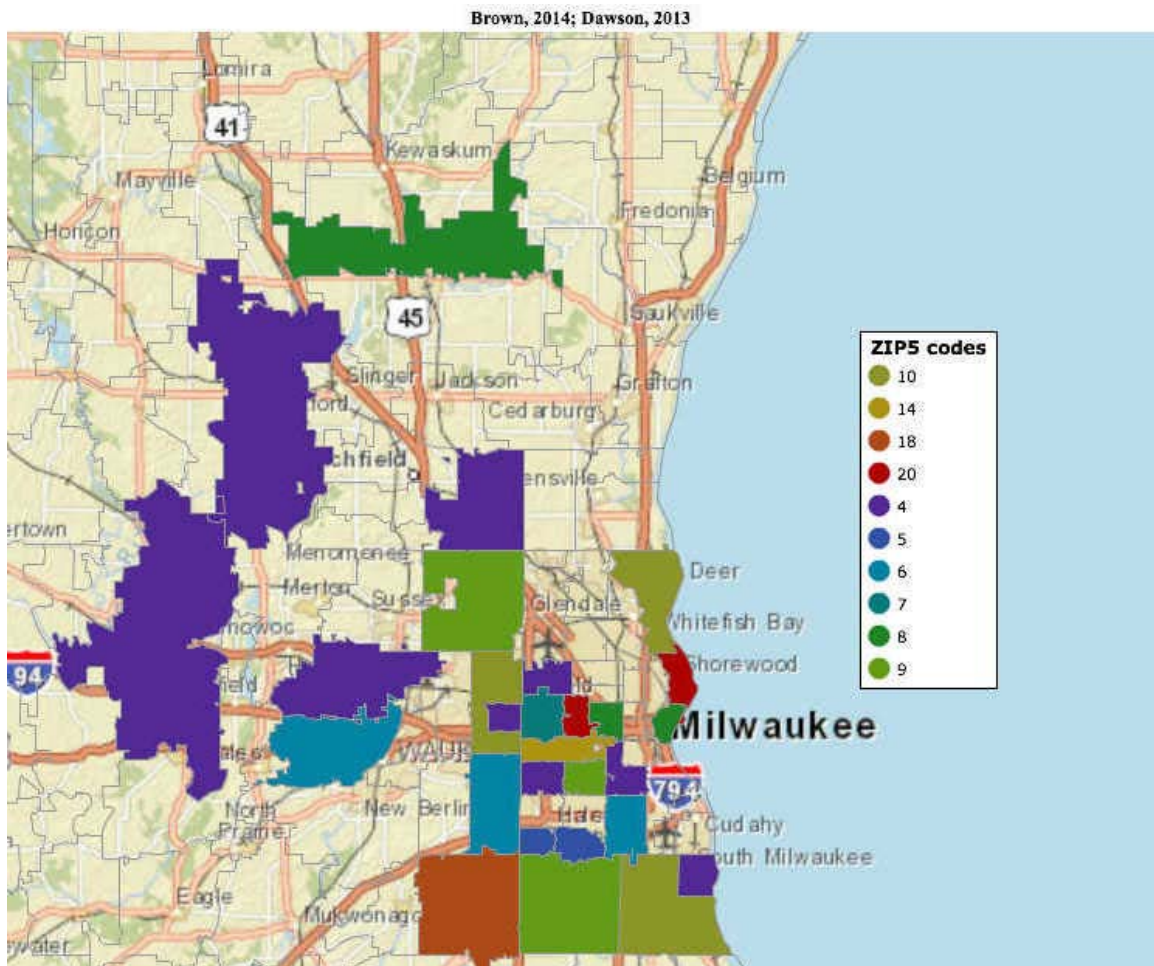
**Appendix I: Frequency of Zip Codes**

53150	10	54220	2	54915	1	53186	1
53211	8	53901	2	54640	1	53185	1
53154	7	53228	2	54601	1	53172	1
53090	7	53227	2	54495	1	53149	1
53005	6	53217	2	53711	1	53130	1
53132	5	53215	2	53403	1	53122	1
53208	4	53189	2	53295	1	53120	1
53402	3	53188	2	53229	1	53115	1
53233	3	53146	2	53222	1	53094	1
53226	3	53143	2	53218	1	53066	1
53221	3	53129	2	53214	1	53027	1
53219	3	53092	2	53212	1	53022	1
53213	3	53072	2	53210	1	53017	1
53151	3	27278	2	53209	1	27513	1
53051	3	60047	1	53204	1	N/A	12
32164	3	60002	1	53202	1		
60010	2	55455	1	53190	1		

### Appendix J: Map of Corresponding Zip Codes



**Appendix K: Compilation Map of Corresponding Zip Codes  
(Brown, 2014; Dawson, 2013)**



\*Sixty five percent of all respondents come from areas indicated on map

### Appendix L: Additional comments

- All services you provide are great
- Attendants were easily distracted between dealing with admission customers and answering phones
- Attendants were easily distracted between dealing with admission customers and answering phones
- Beats all of the ice rinks in Chicago
- Children are too expensive; don't get fair value
- Cosmetic improvements - brighten up the inside (too drab); customer service can be improved; Olympic training is interesting, but not important; running track is a great thing to have; session ending announcements over PA system; "Best Place to Skate" is inside, but should be on outside (preaching to choir); Well-kept secret; Collaborate with local communities, try not to compete with them
- Cosmetic improvements - touchups, repainting handrails; "the little things"; Good reputation with professional skaters; good bathrooms
- Customer service at rentals was poor; described as "cold"
- Doesn't live up to the "Olympic standard"
- Doesn't live up to the "Olympic standard"; clean up the place; lobby chairs and stairways need to be updated; Admissions too pricey; upset WFSC doesn't get discount anymore
- Dull color; Food Not Important
- Dull color; Food Not Important
- Facility is clean, utilitarian, and functional
- Food Not Important
- Food Not Important; Admissions Pricey
- Food Not Important; Admissions Pricey
- Food Not Important; Keep Evening Hours
- Food Not Important; Keep Evening Hours
- Form fits function
- Form fits function; Good job
- Good as it is; Form fits function
- Great popcorn
- Great popcorn
- Great popcorn
- Greater attention to detail; appearance of the facility is getting better but the little things aren't being done; staff is inattentive; music is too loud; rink is dirty/unkept; poor inner rink ice (claims Naga-Waukee ice is better); while a long-time skater, prefers to skate elsewhere but lessons are here
- Just looking to ice to skate on; Form met function
- Just looking to ice to skate on; Form met function
- Keep up on the cleanliness; Pettit is something Milwaukee can be proud of
- Lower area (locker rooms) smelled
- Lower area (locker rooms) smelled
- Met expectations

- Met expectations; drove from out of town to experience; louder music; need to point out rentals better
- Met expectations; drove from out of town to experience; louder music; need to point out rentals better
- More color in facility
- More expensive than other rinks
- Music too low; prices too high
- Nice environment; more than expected
- Olympians are cool
- Olympic training is cool, but not important
- Olympic training is cool, but not important
- Olympic training is cool, but not important; Met expectations; Form met function
- Online really important; scheduling important
- Price is high
- Price is high
- Price is high
- Price is high
- Price is high
- Price is key for concessions
- Prices to be more competitive
- Prices too high
- Provide your own Wi-Fi service; lose Boingo; Appeals to more businesses and helps engage parents/spectators that spend time at Pettit while not skating
- Running track is important now; Popcorn smells great (haven't tried concessions yet)



**Appendix M: Original Pretest-Posttest Survey**



**Public Skate Participation Survey**

The Pettit Center wants to hear about your experiences at our facility. Please take a moment to provide your feedback as your thoughts and ideas will help us to continue to improve our programs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: M / F Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How often do you skate at the Pettit National Ice Center in a typical year? Do you skate at other rinks? Yes or No  
 a. First-time                      b. 1 – 4 times                      c. 5 or more times                      Which rink? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why did you come to the Pettit Center today? Circle all that apply, please.  
 a. Skating is fun                      b. Friend(s) wanted to skate                      c. I like the Oval  
 d. Better rental skates                      e. Great exercise                      f. Easy to reach
3. On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), please rate the importance of the following in your experience here:  
 A. Skating ability:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 B. Skate with your friends:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 C. Food/Music:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 D. Admission prices:                      1      2      3      4      5
4. How many are in your group today? With whom are you here with – Friends, Family?  
 a. 1                                      b. 2 – 3                                      c. 4 – 5                                      d. 6 or more
5. What do you know about the Pettit Center and how important is it to you, on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)?  
 A. Olympic Speed Skaters train here:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 B. New indoor running track:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 C. Hosts birthday parties/corporate meetings:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 D. [www.thepettit.com](http://www.thepettit.com), Facebook and @PettitCenter                      1      2      3      4      5
6. Please rate the following 1 (Poor) through 5 (Excellent)  
 A. Appearance of inside of facility:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 B. Menu and quality of concessions:                      1      2      3      4      5  
 C. Customer service – rental/concessions:                      1      2      3      4      5
7. What services or programs that we do not currently offer would you like to see at the Pettit Center?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your consideration and input to help us improve. Please return the completed survey to the front office or fax them to 414-266-0122 or mail to 500 S. 84<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53214 or e-mail with additional comments to [pnice@thepettit.com](mailto:pnice@thepettit.com)



### Public Skate Participation Survey

The Pettit Center wants to hear about your experiences at our facility. Please take a moment to provide your feedback as your thoughts and ideas will help us to continue to improve our programs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: M / F Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Experience** – Please rate 1 (Poor), 2 (Fair), 3 (Good), 4 (Very Good), 5 (Excellent)

- 1. Quality of the ice: 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Customer service – rental/concessions: 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Menu and quality of concessions: 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. Overall Experience: 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. How long was your stay today?
  - a. Less than 1 hour
  - b. 1 – 2 hours
  - c. 2 – 3 hours
  - d. 3 hours or more
- 6. Did your experience meet your expectations today?
  - Did not meet expectations
  - Met expectations
  - Exceeded expectations
- 7. Based on your expectations described above, what did we do well and what did we do poorly?
 

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- 8. Do you see yourself skating at the Pettit National Ice Center more often?
 

Rate on a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely)

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Thank you for your consideration and input to help us improve. Please return the completed survey to the front office or fax them to 414-266-0122 or mail to 500 S. 84<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53214 or e-mail with additional comments to [pnic@thepettit.com](mailto:pnic@thepettit.com)

**Appendix N: Revised Final Survey**



**Public Skate Participation Survey**

The Pettit Center wants to hear about your experiences at our facility. Please take a moment to provide your feedback as your thoughts and ideas will help us to continue to improve our programs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: M / F Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How often do you skate at the Pettit National Ice Center in a typical year? Do you skate at other rinks? Yes or No  
 A. First-time                      B. 1 – 4 times                      C. 5 or more times                      Which rink? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why did you come to the Pettit Center today? Circle all that apply, please.  
 A. Skating is fun                      B. Friend(s) wanted to skate                      C. I like the Oval  
 D. Better rental skates                      E. Great exercise                      F. Easy to reach

3. On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), please rate the importance of the following in your experience here:

- A. Skating ability:                      1    2    3    4    5
- B. Skate with your friends/family:                      1    2    3    4    5
- C. Food/Music:                      1    2    3    4    5
- D. Admission prices:                      1    2    3    4    5

4. What do you know about the Pettit Center and how important is it to you, on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)?

- A. Olympic Speed Skaters train here:                      1    2    3    4    5
- B. New indoor running track:                      1    2    3    4    5
- C. Hosts birthday parties/corporate meetings:                      1    2    3    4    5
- D. Our online presence - [www.thepettit.com](http://www.thepettit.com),  
 Find us on Facebook and Twitter (@PettitCenter)                      1    2    3    4    5

5. Please rate the following 1 (Poor) through 5 (Excellent)

- A. Appearance of inside of facility:                      1    2    3    4    5
- B. Menu and quality of concessions:                      1    2    3    4    5
- C. Customer service – rental/concessions:                      1    2    3    4    5

6. What services or programs that we do not currently offer would you like to see at the Pettit Center? Would you consider purchasing Pettit merchandise, e.g., sweatshirts, T-shirts, hats, or other items, if available?

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7. Do you see yourself skating at the Pettit National Ice Center more often?

*Rate on a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely)*

- 1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Thank you for your consideration and input to help us improve. Please return the completed survey to the front office or fax them to 414-266-0122 or mail to 500 S. 84<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53214 or e-mail with additional comments to [pnice@thepettit.com](mailto:pnice@thepettit.com)