

#LoveSquash Campaign #GC2018 @squashnz



Background

For those who play squash, it becomes a part of their DNA and they are proud to identify with others who enjoy the benefits of the game. Squash is rated as the World's healthiest sports by Forbes magazine and a major factor why people "Love" squash. Squash might not be as popular as it was in the late 80's and early 90's during the Ross Norman and Susan Devoy era but with strong medal prospects for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games now is a great time to increase the profile of the game.

Squash New Zealand's rebrand in 2014 saw the adoption of the slogan "Try It, Play It, Love It". This slogan captures the 3 stages of progression for players as they try squash for the first time and then become brand advocates for our sport and loving squash.

With this in mind, Squash New Zealand has developed a promotional campaign for the 2018 Commonwealth Games - #LoveSquash. Our goal is to increase participation and achieve international success ("Going for Gold") and we want to see more people trying squash, playing it and loving it. The campaign will be targeted at attracting new and lapsed members into the squash community, by increasing the profile of the game. It will also provide current members with the opportunity to be associated with and be part of a great squash event.

#LoveSquash brings with it the flexibility to be used across multiple mediums (social, email and local campaigns) whilst also allowing it to be applied by clubs and fans in different ways to meet the unique demographics of their particular region allowing for an overarching campaign across New Zealand.

The New Zealand Olympic committee is running the campaign #EarnTheFern in line with 2018 Commonwealth Games. The #LoveSquash campaign will draw on various aspects of that campaign to ensure we do not duplicate efforts and to ensure more traction can be gained, thereby increasing the profile of squash at the games. #EarnTheFern campaign talks about the past, the present and the future of the fern and this can be easily tied into three focus areas throughout the #LoveSquash campaign.

#EarnTheFern Manifesto



It's amazing how far one fern has come.

The Silver Fern has graced our uniforms since the very first Commonwealth Games.

While the fern's design may have changed over the years, its meaning hasn't.

The fern is a belief. That to really win, is to win the right way.

The fern is a contract. To give all you have, and never compromise.

The fern is a legacy. To wear it is to add to it.

It encourages us to push harder, faster, further, higher.

To become part of something bigger.

The fern has come this far with us.

Let's see where we can take it next.

Areas of the #LoveSquash Campaign

There will be three key activation periods for the campaign which include Pre-Games, During Games and Post-Games with each period having a different primary focus. There will be three mediums used for the #LoveSquash campaign which will include Online, Hard Media and Local Campaigns with each medium aimed at achieving the objective set out for the particular activation period.

Pre-Games

The main focus Pre-Games will be to build the profile of squash and our athletes whilst also gaining engagement from players, fans and clubs in the lead up CWG 2018.

During Games

The main focus during the games will be to ensure that SNZ is presenting information as it occurs in a timely and relevant manner whilst also increasing the awareness of players and CWG2018. This will be assisted by Districts and Clubs doing local activations to help increase the awareness of the games and our success.

Post- Games

The main focus of the campaign Post-Games will be to ensure there is increased awareness and profile of the sport of squash as well as an increase in the number of fans of squash and memberships in clubs through the potential success from the CWG 2018. Membership increase will need to be driven primarily through the clubs and the districts with support in promotional activities from SNZ.

Online Campaign

The online campaign will feature 2 significant areas of activation which includes a comprehensive social media campaign and an email campaign.

The social media campaign will be aimed at engaging current and new fans. Fans will engage with Social Media through using the hashtag #LoveSquash, tagging in Squash New Zealand and players in their posts as well as sharing relevant stories and posting their own messages of support.

The email campaign will be aimed at providing current fans with relevant information about the games. They will be directed to the SNZ website for up to date information and to SNZ Social Media channels. The email campaign will target lapsed fans with the same information but it will actively encourage them to reconnect and become active in squash again. New fans will also be targeted through the email campaign with the goal of collecting their details and providing them with information on how to get involved and how to join a club.

The email campaign will tie in with the social media campaign with the emails aimed at sending those fans to the various social media channels to engage them in the #LoveSquash campaign.

There will be a timeline for various activities and competitions to win prizes throughout the campaign with prizes being relevant to the fans who are competing e.g. Current fans, Lapsed fans and New fans.

Hard Media

Hard media is described in this case as TV, Radio and Print media. During the games there will be a saturation coverage and there is an expectation of greater medal success compared to the Olympic Games. With a very large contingent from NZ and many high-profile sports participating and high medal prospects it will be a challenge to gain high coverage for squash.

A lot of work has been done over the past 12 months to increase the profile of squash and many radio stations and newspapers are now giving better coverage to the sport. Getting coverage on TV still proves to be a challenge and it is difficult to get content aired but it is an area we will be working on through our media contacts.

Squash New Zealand will be engaging a contractor to manage this area who has many well-established relationships and whose focus will be on creating opportunities to get as much exposure for squash as is possible.

The NZOC has established relationships with TVNZ and will have numerous press accredited staff. Our goal and focus will be to provide as much information as possible to them to ensure we are getting as much coverage as possible.

Wherever possible our contractor will push the message of #LoveSquash and any material provided to NZOC will have the message of #LoveSquash.

Local Campaigns

Squash New Zealand will provide numerous resources to the clubs and districts to allow them to promote the CWG2018 and to help them increase the profile of squash and increase memberships and participation within their clubs. The resources provided will allow for consistency in the campaign across the country to ensure we get the message of #LoveSquash out to not only our members but the wider public. SNZ wants every club and district to buy into the campaign, actively participating to get the maximum exposure and to meet the objectives of increased profile and membership. Resources and options for clubs on the various activities they can run will include things such as open days, have a hit, social activities at clubs during matches, lunch time viewings etc.

Whilst the focus of this campaign is to gain profile and increased participation there will be a spinoff effect where clubs will create an atmosphere at the club alongside the opportunity to engage new members. To help encourage clubs to become part of these events and to engage in the campaign SNZ will provide a prize for clubs around engagement in the CWG 2018 as well as for those clubs who increase their membership Pre-Games, During Games and Post-Games.

SNZ will also promote a national open day prior to the games where clubs will be able to open their doors to the general public and promote the game of squash.

Target Groups

There are 3 target groups for the #LoveSquash Campaign. These groups are identified as Current Fans, Lapsed Fans and New Fans. The goal for each of these groups varies slightly and is outlined in further detail below. The specific strategy for each group in regards to the particular areas of the campaign (Online Campaign, Hard Media and Local Campaigns) will vary based on achieving these goals.

Current Fans

Aimed at ensuring current fans of squash are engaged with CWG 2018 pre, during and post games. This includes getting them to actively promote squash on social media and helping them to engage new members through their local squash clubs.

Lapsed Fans

Aimed at re-engaging lapsed fans with the CWG 2018 pre, during and post games. This includes getting them to become actively involved on social media and potentially rejoining squash clubs.

New Fans

Aimed at building the profile of the sport through the CWG 2018 pre, during and post games. This includes getting more people picking up a squash racquet, more people becoming part of squash and getting more people picking up a racquet and potentially joining squash clubs.