



# Marketing Plan Success

New NJAA contest teaches juniors the necessary forward planning of marketing campaigns.

Story & photos by **Kasey Brown**, associate editor

**M**any in the cattle business will tell you that marketing cattle is one of the hardest parts of the business. National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members are getting a head start by participating in the new Team Marketing competition.

New this year, Jaelyn Clark, director of events and education at the American Angus Association, says the NJAA Team Marketing Contest is a spinoff of the NJAA Team Sales Contest. She says juniors were using more technology and supplemental materials as part of their team sales presentation. For instance, pulling up pedigrees on a cell phone is something that might happen out in a pasture in a real-world setting. However, that was moving away from the Team Sales contest's original goals.

National Junior Angus Board officers Will Fiske and Cory Watt wanted to stress that team sales was meant to teach the experience of marketing one animal and the communication needed to do so.

"We wanted to keep team sales traditional to promote a greater understanding of

registration papers, EPDs (expected progeny differences) and pedigree for marketing one animal for what it is worth — its performance," explains Fiske. "It's easy to get caught up in promoting an image and brand [rather] than the animal itself."

Both types of marketing are important in the beef industry, and Fiske encouraged the use of technology because it is applicable to all aspects of the industry. By splitting the contests, each marketing aspect can be honed.

The new contest also can address some areas not previously explored, Fiske explains. Each year's contest will have a scenario, and these could range from female production sales to marketing bulls, a whole ranch, or even the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand to retailers.

Like team sales, teams are made up of three or four juniors from a state, though mixed state groups are an option. Emphasis for team marketing is placed on team organization, creativity, communication skills and marketing techniques.

The 2015 contest's scenario was, "You

are an Angus producer who will hold a female production sale. Develop a one-year marketing plan for your upcoming production sale."

Contest Judge Dana Bessinger, coordinator of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program, Oklahoma City, Okla., says, "This contest is a great opportunity to showcase organizational skills. The sky is the limit of what to include in the presentation. Kids can dream big and be creative. This is a fun project — you can have fun with technology. This is preparing juniors for careers."

Presentations are to be between five and eight minutes long, and can include (but are not limited to) sale book covers, sale videos, flyers, presale events, social media, advertisements, budgets, etc.

## Preparing for the contest

Being a first-year contest, participation was high, with seven teams split between the intermediate and senior divisions. The intermediate Pennsylvania team consisted

of Daniel Rohrbaugh, Seven Valleys; Haley Sweitzer, Wellsville; and Madison Weaver, Ephrata.

Rohrbaugh had done team sales before and thought this new contest would be a good way to improve his public speaking and work on the computer to promote a sale. Neither Sweitzer nor Weaver had participated in team sales before, but they were willing to give the new contest a try.

Weaver explains the team did online research of successful farms' marketing platforms and asked experienced ranchers around them for advice. Rohrbaugh notes that he is the trade show and promotions chair for the Eastern Regional Junior Show next year and has worked with the *Angus Journal* to get the show's advertisement in the magazine. He used that experience to learn about advertisement options. He adds that they looked through several sale books and took their favorite aspects from those to incorporate into their marketing strategy.

Additionally, they added a multimedia approach by combining print media with videos and social media campaigns.

Starting in early May, they created a farm name and sale theme. They named their sale

"Back to Basics." Rohrbaugh explains, "Today it seems like everybody is about the showing, but we wanted to focus on functional females for the commercial producer."

None of the team had put on a production sale before, but they had attended a few local sales. Sweitzer says they learned much about what Angus breeders have to do to put on a sale, the organization needed and the costs involved. She suggests future teams not procrastinate; put effort into the presentation; and practice, both on your own and together when possible. Preparation before the contest included putting together the PowerPoint presentation and print materials. However, contest rules assert that print content must be included in the PowerPoint presentation.

All team members must speak during the presentation. Weaver emphasizes that the judges don't know what you're going to say, so they won't know if you don't say exactly what you had prepared. This knowledge helped give her confidence in the presentation.

### Successful teams

Joining Bessinger at the judges' table were Jeremy Leister, manager of the Oklahoma State University purebred beef center in

Stillwater, Okla., and Ray Williams, business development manager of weighing & electronic ID for Gallagher in Kansas City, Mo.

Leister commends the contest for showing junior members the work and forward planning needed to put on a production sale.

"It takes more than a year of planning and a lot of preparation goes into it," he says. "That's great to realize when you're young. It's also good to learn now that advertising should account for about 10% of your gross budget."

Williams agrees, and adds that this exercise helps families put the pencil to paper on how to stay profitable with a sale like this. He says it really made the juniors think about the budget and how prices can dictate the available possibilities. He loves the customer service aspect that several teams included in their presentations.

The judges note that the most successful teams were prepared and confident, and obvious thought had been put into their presentations. Williams notes that often-overlooked budget items are the auctioneer and sale manager, and the best teams had a realistic timeline. High-quality videos

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## TEAM MARKETING



► Winning first in the intermediate division are (from left) Kansas juniors **Grady Dickerson**, Paradise; **Cale Hinrichsen**, Westmoreland; **Sarah Pelton**, Paradise; and **Alexandria Cozzitorto**, Lawrence.



► Winning second in the intermediate division are (from left) Pennsylvania juniors **Haley Sweitzer**, Wellsville; **Daniel Rohrbaugh**, Seven Valleys; and **Madison Weaver**, Ephrata.



► Winning first in the senior division are (from left) Kansas juniors **Claire Wingert**, Ottawa; **Esther McCabe**, Elk City; and **Jackson Wingert**, Ottawa.



► Winning second in the senior division are (from left) Missouri juniors **Chris Kahlenbeck**, Union; **Brittany Eagleburger**, Buffalo; **Cooper Sadowsky**, Eagleville; and **Sydney Thummel**, Sheridan.



► Winning third in the senior division are (from left) **Alison Bartenslager**, Lewisburg, W.Va.; **Callie Eastin**, Gretna, Va.; **Connor Orrock**, Woodford, Va.; and **Elizabet Nixon**, Rapidan, Va.

### WINNERS NOT PICTURED

Winning third in the intermediate division was the Missouri team consisting of **Jera Pipkin**, Republic; **Lauren Parks**, Brookfield; and **Linsey Rogers**, Conway.

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enhanced presentations and would reach more people, says Williams.

Bessinger notes that teams with a dynamic introduction and poised presentation skills wowed her the most.

“Don’t just read from your PowerPoint; we can read. Tell your story and be knowledgeable and let the PowerPoint supplement that,” she recommends.

All judges appreciated attention to detail, ranging from keeping designs legible and attractive to professional appearance and courtesy.

“I would encourage everyone to try the contest if you want to be in the cattle business so it’s not new to you if that becomes your job,” suggests Leister.

They note that planning, organization, budget analysis and presentation skills will serve juniors well in whatever career they choose.



### Team Marketing rules

1. There will be two age divisions: ages 14 to 17; and ages 18 to 21 (use contestant’s age as of Jan. 1 of the current year). Multiple teams are allowed from each state. Mixed teams may enter, but their division will be determined by the age of the oldest member of the team. Each team will consist of three or four individuals. Participants must be junior, regular or life members of the American Angus Association.
2. In the occurrence of a state not having three members present for a team, they may ask a junior member from another state to compete on their team. Combined teams must consist of at least two members from the same state. However, if a state association has a team, no one else from that junior association may compete on a combined state association team. Sweepstakes points will not be counted for combined state teams.
3. All teams will use the provided scenario listed below.  
**Scenario:** You are an Angus producer who will hold a female production sale. Develop a one-year marketing plan for your upcoming production sale.
4. Anything that can be imbedded within a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation may be used. See example list given below. Presentations will be due by email to [jclark@angus.org](mailto:jclark@angus.org) by July 1 of the current year.
5. Juniors are allowed to bring printed materials that are included in the PowerPoint presentation. Incentive gifts to judging panel (key rings, caps, beverages, etc.) are prohibited.
6. Presentations need to be a minimum of five minutes long, with a maximum of eight minutes. The presentation will not be stopped, but points will be deducted at ½ point per judge for each 10 seconds over the eight minutes allowed. Following the conclusion of the presentation, the team will be allowed up to three minutes to answer questions from the judges. Judges will not interrupt the presentation to ask questions. All questions will be asked at the conclusion of the presentation. A one-minute warning will be given by the event official.
7. Each individual on the team will be expected to speak during the presentation. The objective of this contest is to have the team develop and present a strategic marketing plan.
8. Points will be awarded as follows:  
Content — 10 points  
Creativity — 10 points  
Ability to communicate — 10 points  
Team organization — 10 points  
Overall effect — 10 points  
Knowledge and response to questions — 10 points  
Five points will be subtracted if all team members do not speak. Two points per judge will be subtracted for each minute the team presentation goes less than five minutes and points will be deducted at ½ point per judge for each 10 seconds over the eight-minute time limit.
9. Judging will be by a three-member panel of judges based on 60 points maximum from each judge. The contest official will inform the judges if any points need to be deducted for time violations. Each judge shall total their score and rank the contestants in numerical order on the basis of their score (highest score first, lowest score last). The rankings (not the score) of the three judges shall be added for each team, and the final placing determined by the lowest composite rankings. Actual scores will be used only to break ties. In the event the participants are still tied, they shall be named co-winners and two awards will be given for that placing and none given for the following placing.  
Examples of items that may be in the PowerPoint are (but are not limited) to the following: sale book cover, sale videos, flyers, presale events, social media and advertisements.  
Printed materials not included in the PowerPoint are not allowed to be presented to judges.  
Each winning team will receive an award for each team member and the state junior association will receive the following premiums — 1st, \$75; 2nd, \$50; and 3rd, \$25.

— National Junior Angus Association