

team marketing research

Team	Avg. Ticket	Pct. Change	Avg. Child Ticket	Beer	Soft Drink	Hot Dog	Parking	Program	Cap	FCl	Pct. Change
Boston Red Sox	\$46.46	4.3%	\$46.46	\$6.00 ¹²	\$2.75 ¹⁴	\$4.00	\$23.00	\$5.00	\$15.00	\$287.84	4.2%
Chicago Cubs ²	34.30	7.2%	34.30	5.00 ¹⁶	2.50 ¹⁵	2.75	17.00	5.00	12.00	219.21	4.4%
New York Yankees ¹	28.27	3.4%	28.27	6.00 ¹⁶	3.50 ¹⁶	3.00	12.00	7.75	15.00	208.57	7.6%
St. Louis Cardinals ³	29.78	12.1%	28.57	7.75 ²⁴	4.50 ¹⁴	3.50	10.00	2.50	14.00	207.21	10.6%
New York Mets	25.28	6.9%	25.28	6.50 ²¹	4.75 ²²	4.50	12.00	4.00	18.00	207.13	11.9%
San Francisco Giants	24.53	5.6%	24.53	5.75 ¹⁶	3.00 ¹⁶	3.75	25.00	5.00	15.00	201.62	5.4%
Philadelphia Phillies	26.73	0.5%	26.73	5.00 ²¹	3.25 ²⁰	3.50	10.00	5.00	155.00	193.91	1.4%
Houston Astros	26.66	7.4%	26.23	7.00 ¹⁶	4.00 ²¹	4.00	10.00	4.00	11.00	191.78	5.0%
Chicago White Sox ²	26.19	2.5%	26.19	5.75 ¹⁶	2.75 ¹⁴	3.00	18.00	4.00	13.00	191.26	2.4%
Seattle Mariners	24.01	0.0%	24.01	5.00 ¹²	2.50 ¹⁶	3.25	17.00	4.00	16.00	186.03	8.1%
Toronto Blue Jays ⁴	23.40	15.3%	23.40	5.01 ¹⁴	2.94 ²⁴	3.17	18.24	4.55	13.65	182.71	7.3%
San Diego Padres	20.83	0.0%	20.83	5.00 ¹⁶	3.75 ²²	3.50	4.00	5.00	22.00	180.32	2.3%
Los Angeles Dodger	20.09	6.1%	20.09	8.00 ²⁰	4.25 ¹²	4.50	10.00	5.00	12.00	175.36	10.3%
MLB AVERAGE	\$22.21	5.4%	\$22.00	5.42¹⁷	3.07¹⁷	3.31	11.41	3.89	13.62	171.19	4.1%
Oakland Athletics	22.10	25.2%	22.10	5.50 ¹⁴	2.25 ¹²	3.50	14.00	5.00	12.00	170.41	11.6%
Washington Nationals	20.88	1.0%	20.88	5.00 ¹²	3.50 ²²	4.00	12.00	5.00	12.00	169.51	1.7%
Detroit Tigers ¹	18.48	0.0%	18.48	5.00 ¹⁶	3.00 ²⁰	3.00	15.00	5.00	15.00	162.93	3.2%
Baltimore Orioles	22.53	0.0%	22.53	4.25 ¹⁸	2.00 ¹⁶	2.50	8.00	5.00	12.00	158.62	0.0%
Cleveland Indians ¹	21.54	1.7%	21.54	4.25 ¹⁴	2.25 ¹²	2.50	12.00	1.00	15.00	157.66	0.2%
Cincinnati Reds	17.90	0.0%	17.90	6.00 ²⁰	2.50 ¹⁶	3.25	12.00	4.00	15.00	156.60	7.9%
Florida Marlins	16.70	7.4%	15.61	5.75 ²⁰	3.50 ¹²	4.00	8.00	5.00	15.00	154.12	4.8%
Minnesota Twins	17.26	8.4%	17.26	6.00 ²⁴	3.75 ²⁰	3.25	6.00	2.00	15.00	149.04	2.6%
Arizona Diamondbacks	19.68	2.3%	19.68	4.00 ¹⁴	3.25 ¹⁴	3.00	10.00	1.00	12.00	147.71	1.2%
Atlanta Braves	17.07	-2.5%	17.07	5.25 ¹²	3.50 ²⁰	4.25	12.00	0.00	12.00	145.78	0.9%
Colorado Rockies	14.72	-1.3%	14.72	5.50 ¹⁶	3.00 ¹⁶	3.25	8.00	5.00	14.00	140.88	-0.6%
Pittsburgh Pirates	17.08	0.0%	17.08	4.25 ²¹	2.25 ²⁰	2.25	10.00	5.00	12.00	138.81	-3.1%
Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim	18.97	9.3%	18.70	4.50 ¹⁴	2.50 ¹⁴	3.00	8.00	3.00	6.99	134.32	6.8%
Texas Rangers ⁶	15.81	15.9%	15.81	6.00 ²²	2.75 ¹⁶	2.50	8.00	5.00	10.00	134.24	9.1%
Milwaukee Brewers	18.11	7.4%	18.11	4.75 ¹⁶	2.00 ¹²	2.75	7.00	0.00	12.00	131.94	0.7%
Tampa Bay Devil Rays ⁵	17.09	24.7%	13.85	5.00 ¹⁶	3.75 ¹⁶	3.25	0.00	0.00	15.00	129.87	-9.7%
Kansas City Royals	13.71	0.0%	13.71	3.75 ¹²	2.00 ¹⁴	2.50	6.00	5.00	12.00	120.35	0.0%

Average ticket price represents a weighted average of season ticket prices for general seating categories, determined by factoring the tickets in each price range as a percentage of the total number of seats in each venue. Premium seating (tickets that come with at least one added amenity) are not included in the survey to calculate average ticket price. Luxury suites are also excluded from the survey. Season-ticket pricing is used for any team that offers some or all tickets at lower prices for customers who buy season seats.

The Fan Cost Index™ comprises the prices of two (2) adult average-price tickets, two (2) child average-price tickets, two (2) small draft beers, four (4) small soft drinks, four (4) regular-size hot dogs, parking for one (1) car, two (2) game programs and two (2) least expensive, adult-size adjustable caps. Costs were determined by telephone calls with representatives of the teams, venues and concessionaires. Identical questions were asked in all interviews. Superscript numbers next to Beer and Soft Drink prices denote smallest available size in ounces.

¹Numbers listed as on teams' Web sites or provided by outside resources.

²The Chicago Cubs and White Sox have variable pricing at different price levels – Cubs: Value (6 games), Regular (31 games) and Prime (44 games). White Sox: Mondays (6 games), Regular (38 games), Prime (15 games) and Premier (22 games).

³The ticket prices for the new Busch Stadium did not increase dramatically. The 12.1 percent average ticket price increase is a result of the addition of several new seating categories and additional capacity. The stadium will not be at full capacity until July 13. The team does not control any parking around the stadium.

⁴Prices for the Blue Jays are converted to US dollars and comparison prices were converted using the current exchange rate of \$1USD=\$1.11 CAD. The 2005 exchange rate was \$1USD=\$1.15 CAD.

⁵The Tampa Bay Devil Rays only provided ticket prices for this year's FCI. Concessions and parking prices were added later thanks to reports from the St. Petersburg Times.

⁶The Texas Rangers adjusted seating capacities prior to the 2005 season, which was not reflected in the 2005 FCI.

Back to back jacks: MLB ticket prices fly high

Average ticket price rises to \$22.21, Fan Cost Index elevated to \$171.19

Double-digit ticket price increases by five teams led to an inflated 2006 Major League Baseball Fan Cost Index (FCI). With a 5.4 percent rise in average ticket price and a 4.1 percent boost in total FCI, this year's study shows a second straight year of sharp increases.

More than two-thirds of MLB teams raised prices for the 2006 season. Some teams are trying to maximize revenue from aging stadiums while others have simply adjusted prices as baseball continues to grow in popularity.

The FCI, a relative measure of what a family of four can expect to pay to attend a professional sporting event, rose to \$171.19.

Among those teams that increased ticket prices by more than 10 percent, only the St. Louis Cardinals moved into a new facility. With a 12.1 percent rise in season ticket costs, the team is well below the MLB average for price changes for the first season in a new stadium.

Figure 1—Ticket and FCI increases for new ballparks shows that, on average, an MLB team can be expected to raise season ticket prices by 46.6 percent and total FCI by 25.7 percent.

Only one team since 2000 has reported a smaller increase than the Cardinals—the Cincinnati Reds' season tickets were 9 percent more expensive at Great American Ballpark (which opened in 2003) than at the organization's previous home.

Other teams with major ticket price increases are: Oakland Athletics (25.2 percent), Tampa Bay Devil Rays (24.7 percent), Texas Rangers (15.9 percent) and Toronto Blue Jays (15.3 percent). Of those teams Oakland, Tampa Bay and Toronto showed major seating capacity changes. The Athletics are closing off portions of their upper deck and decreasing the number of tickets available by nearly 14,000 seats. All but the Devil Rays are expected to compete for the playoffs.

Rangers team president, Jeff Cogen, said in a press release, "The Rangers recognize that it is not easy to raise ticket prices. We feel the increase provides the club with competitive balance and puts us in the middle of the pack relative to Major League Baseball."

Teams with more moderate price increases include: Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim (9.3 percent), Minnesota Twins (8.4 percent), Houston Astros (7.4 percent), Florida Marlins (7.4 percent), Milwaukee Brewers (7.4 percent), Chicago Cubs (7.2 percent), New York Mets (6.9 percent), Los Angeles Dodgers (6.1 percent) and San Francisco Giants (5.6 percent).

The only teams to decrease average ticket price were the Atlanta Braves and Colorado Rockies. The Braves were eliminated in the National League Division Series for the fourth year in a row. Its inability to compete for the pennant and advance to the World Series may have resulted in the price change. Similarly, 2005 marked the fifth straight losing season for the Rockies.

The two teams that did compete for the World Series title, the Astros and Chicago White Sox (2.5 percent), reported a smaller than average ticket price boost. Following a championship berth, teams traditionally increase ticket prices by an average of 14 percent.

Even with all the price increases, seven teams' season ticket costs held steady.

The Kansas City Royals—one of the teams that maintained 2005 pricing—are baseball's best bargain. With an average ticket price of \$13.71 and a total FCI of \$120.35, the team is nearly \$9 cheaper than the next least-expensive team (Devil Rays \$129.87).

Other teams with FCIs below \$150 include: Brewers (\$131.94), Rangers (\$134.24), Angels (\$134.32), Pittsburgh Pirates (\$138.81), Rockies (\$140.88), Braves (\$145.78), Arizona Diamondbacks (\$147.71) and Minnesota Twins (\$149.04).

For the third straight year, the Boston Red Sox and the Cubs are the most expensive teams for a family to watch. The organizations also play in the two of the smallest and oldest MLB facilities. Each made off-season improvements to add additional seats. The majority of the Red Sox's changes affected only club level seats, while the Cubs added nearly 2,000 seats in general ticket categories (*see TMR, March 2006*).

Premium tickets—any seat with an amenity such as free beverages, parking and access to events—actually decreased in price for the 2006 season. On average fans can expect to pay approximately \$68 to enjoy seats with a "club" designation. However, the number of premium tickets available increased, as many teams are looking to generate revenue by increasing the number of club seats and areas.

Editor's note: For more information or for other leagues' FCI results, go to www.teammarketing.com. Identical information is collected for all teams. The 2006 surveys for NFL, NHL and NBA will be published on opening day of each respective season. **TMR** included premium seat pricing in the average ticket cost from 1992 to 2001. Since 2002, the FCIs include only a general seating average for the listed ticket prices. Research was obtained from ticket sales executives or from the Web sites of each MLB team.

Figure 1—Ticket and FCI increases for new ballparks

Team	Year Opened	Ticket Increase	FCI Increase
St. Louis Cardinals	2006	12.1%	10.6%
San Diego Padres	2004	31.9%	5.62%
Philadelphia Phillies	2004	51.2%	25.5%
Cincinnati Reds	2003	9.0%	4.4%
Chicago White Sox ¹	2003	20.2%	0.0%
Milwaukee Brewers	2001	54.6%	28.6%
Pittsburgh Pirates	2001	82%	44.3%
Detroit Tigers	2000	103.0%	52.5%
Houston Astros	2000	50.6%	34.5%
San Francisco Giants	2000	75.2%	45.8%
Seattle Mariners	2000	23.3%	31.4%
AVERAGE		46.65%	25.76%

Note: The prices listed from 2000 include the team's premium pricing in the average ticket price. The costs from 2001 on are only general seating prices. ¹US Cellular Park underwent a major renovation prior to the 2003 season. Data from the stadium's first active season is not available.