

team marketing research

Baseball's average ticket jumps to \$14.93; children will pay 48¢ less

In a sport that has often trumpeted a family-oriented image, only 16 of MLB's 30 franchises provide regularly discounted tickets for children.

The league-wide average ticket price increased 9.7 percent, to \$14.91 for the 1999 season. That falls just short of last season's increase of 10.0 percent, when the average was \$13.59.

Sixteen clubs' average ticket prices increased by 10 percent or more, while five teams—the Chicago Cubs, New York Mets, Philadelphia Phillies, Seattle Mariners and Texas Rangers—show an average ticket price increase of more than 20 percent.

For the first time, TMR is including child average ticket prices into the **Fan Cost Index™**. The Minnesota Twins have the lowest average child-priced tickets at \$6.96.

The leaguwide average ticket price for children is \$14.43, up 10.7 percent from the 1998 average of \$13.03.

This translates into an FCI of more than \$100 for 80 percent of MLB franchises.

Only two teams, Texas and Seattle, whose average ticket price rank in the top 10 offer discounted seats for children.

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Team	Beer	Soft Drink	Hot Dog	Parking	Program	Cap	Average Ticket	Pct. Change	Child Avg. Ticket	Fan Cost Index™	Pct. Change
New York Yankees	\$4.75 ¹⁶	\$2.50 ¹⁸	\$3.50	\$6.00	\$5.00	\$12.00	\$23.33	13.8%	— ⁵	\$166.84	12.3%
Boston Red Sox ¹	4.00 ¹²	2.50 ¹⁴	2.50	12.00	2.00	10.00	24.05	16.6%	—	160.21	10.9%
New York Mets	5.50 ²⁰	3.50 ²⁰	3.75	7.00	4.00	10.00	19.89	23.5%	—	154.58	16.3%
Atlanta Braves	4.75 ²⁰	1.50 ¹⁶	2.50	8.00	5.00	12.00	19.21	11.8%	—	144.34	7.1%
Texas Rangers	4.50 ²⁰	2.00 ¹⁶	2.00	8.00	4.00	10.00	19.93	20.9%	19.22	139.31	10.2%
Baltimore Orioles	4.00 ¹⁶	1.75 ¹⁴	2.50	5.00	3.00	12.00	19.82	0.3%	—	139.30	2.8%
Seattle Mariners ²	3.75 ¹²	2.25 ¹⁴	2.25	11.04	4.00	9.00	19.01	27.2%	18.14	136.84	12.0%
Colorado Rockies	4.00 ¹⁶	2.75 ¹⁶	2.75	8.00	5.00	12.00	15.79	0.0%	—	135.16	1.7%
Chicago Cubs	4.00 ¹⁶	1.75 ¹⁴	2.00	12.00	3.00	12.00	17.46	21.1%	—	134.83	12.2%
Cleveland Indians	3.75 ¹⁴	2.00 ¹²	2.25	10.00	2.50	10.00	18.43	6.2%	—	133.20	4.9%
St. Louis Cardinals	4.50 ¹⁶	2.00 ¹⁴	2.00	7.50	4.00	12.00	16.53	6.9%	14.88	127.33	1.0%
Arizona Diamondbacks	4.00 ¹⁴	2.25 ¹⁶	2.75	6.00	3.00	9.00	16.58	12.8%	—	124.32	3.8%
Los Angeles Dodgers	4.00 ¹⁶	2.00 ²⁰	3.00	6.00	3.00	15.00	13.67	12.0%	13.13	123.60	11.7%
Chicago White Sox	4.00 ¹⁶	2.00 ¹⁴	2.25	8.00	3.00	12.00	15.04	3.9%	—	123.17	1.9%
Philadelphia Phillies	4.75 ¹⁸	1.25 ¹²	2.75	6.00	4.00	14.00	13.60	21.2%	—	121.92	29.5%
Anaheim Angels	5.00 ¹⁶	2.00 ¹⁴	2.75	7.00	5.00	12.00	13.19	11.5%	12.75	121.89	8.4%
MLB Average	3.98¹⁴	2.03¹⁴	2.42	7.15	3.88	10.99	14.91	9.7%	14.43	121.36	6.8%
Tampa Bay Devil Rays ³	3.75 ¹⁶	2.00 ¹⁶	2.50	6.50	4.00	10.23	15.08	-3.1%	15.06	120.74	-8.2%
Houston Astros	4.25 ²²	1.75 ¹⁶	3.00	10.00	5.00	10.00	13.30	12.0%	13.10	120.30	11.3%
San Diego Padres	4.25 ¹⁶	2.75 ¹⁶	2.25	6.00	4.00	12.00	11.92	5.1%	—	114.18	11.0%
Toronto Blue Jays ⁴	2.48 ¹²	1.37 ¹⁶	1.41	7.93	3.31	7.60	16.62	1.5%	16.50	112.08	5.3%
San Francisco Giants	4.25 ¹⁴	1.50 ¹²	3.00	7.00	4.00	12.00	12.12	5.7%	10.39	110.53	3.7%
Kansas City Royals	3.00 ¹²	2.00 ¹⁴	2.00	6.00	6.00	12.00	11.76	10.0%	11.33	110.17	15.3%
Detroit Tigers	3.75 ¹⁴	1.75 ¹⁴	2.25	8.00	4.00	10.00	12.23	17.6%	—	108.41	6.2%
Florida Marlins	2.50 ¹²	2.50 ²⁰	2.50	5.00	4.00	8.00	12.17	0.1%	10.84	100.01	0.0%
Pittsburgh Pirates	3.50 ¹⁶	2.00 ¹⁶	2.00	4.00	3.25	12.00	10.71	14.7%	10.06	99.02	5.6%
Minnesota Twins	4.00 ¹⁸	2.50 ¹⁸	2.50	5.00	4.00	13.00	8.46	2.9%	6.96	97.83	1.7%
Cincinnati Reds	3.75 ¹⁶	2.00 ¹⁶	1.75	5.00	5.00	10.00	9.71	16.0%	—	96.32	7.1%
Milwaukee Brewers	3.75 ¹²	1.75 ¹²	2.00	5.00	3.00	10.00	11.02	7.2%	10.14	95.11	-0.1%
Oakland Athletics	4.00 ¹²	1.50 ¹²	2.25	5.00	4.00	10.00	10.10	4.5%	8.29	92.78	1.5%
Montreal Expos ⁴	2.81 ¹²	1.65 ²⁰	1.82	6.61	3.31	9.92	9.38	-6.0%	8.27	87.87	1.6%

RESEARCH AND STATISTICAL NOTES: The Fan Cost Index™ expresses the average cost of admission, concession and souvenir items a family of four might buy at a game. It is comprised of two adult average-price tickets, two child average-price tickets, two small draft beers, four small soft drinks, four hot dogs, parking for one car, two game programs, and two adult-size twill caps. Prices were determined by telephone interviews with representatives of the teams and their venues and their concessionaires. Identical questions were asked in all interviews.

In determining average ticket prices, TMR includes the pricing for all tickets—including club seating—with the exception of luxury suite seats and standing room tickets. Season ticket pricing is used for any team that offers some or all tickets at lower prices to customers who buy season tickets, and season-long "value-date" pricing is incorporated where applicable.

¹ All Boston tickets are sold without a service charge. ² Seattle ticket and parking prices are weighted based on 42 games at SAFECO Field and 39 games at Kingdome. ³ Tampa Bay's concession prices were not finalized at the time of publication; numbers represent 1998 prices. ⁴ Prices for Montreal and Toronto were converted to U.S. dollars at U.S. \$1 = C\$1.52. ⁵ Team does not regularly offer discounted individual game tickets for children. Child average ticket price is the same as adult.

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For the second year in a row, the Twins have baseball's lowest average ticket price, at \$8.46, a 2.9 percent increase from 1998. The Red Sox have the highest average ticket price at \$24.05.

The Houston Astros have the most expensive ticket in baseball at \$175. However, when the Mariners move into SAFECO Field in mid-July, the team's best seats will sell for \$195.

Both the Diamondbacks and the Braves offer daily adult-priced tickets as low as \$1. The Twins boast the lowest-priced season ticket as the club is selling a full 81 game package for \$99 (\$1.22 per game).

Last season's World Series Champion Yankees' average ticket price increased 13.8 percent to \$23.33. That surpasses the Florida Marlins' average ticket price increase of 11.6 percent after winning the 1997 World Series.

The correlation between winning percentage and high ticket prices is once again evident in 1999.

Of the eight teams that reached the 1998 postseason, six (New York Yankees, Boston Red Sox, Atlanta Braves, Texas Rangers, Chicago Cubs and Cleveland Indians) all have average ticket prices among baseball's top 10. Among playoff teams, only the Astros (18th highest ticket price) and the San Diego Padres (23rd) are below the league average ticket price.

TMR's Fan Cost Index, which calculates what a family of four would spend at a game, increased 6.8 percent to \$121.36. For the second consecutive year, the Yankees have the highest FCI at

Five-year price trend

	Average ticket price		Fan Cost Index™	
	Average	Increase	Average	Increase
1999	\$14.91	9.7%	\$121.36	6.8%
1998	13.59	10.0% ¹	113.68	6.1% ¹
1997	12.36	10.5% ²	107.13	4.4%
1996	11.19	6.1%	102.58	5.9%
1995	10.55	1.0%	96.83	1.1%

¹ Beginning in 1998, the FCI incorporates the prices for two average adult-price tickets and two average child-priced tickets. Previously, only adult-price tickets were used.
² Beginning in 1997, the average ticket price incorporates prices for club seating.

\$166.84, a 12.3% increase from last year. The Montreal Expos have the lowest FCI at US\$87.87.

The Expos' also own baseball largest average ticket price decrease of 6.0%. Since Expos ticket prices remained unchanged in terms of Canadian currency, the lowered price can be attributed to the weakened value of the Canadian dollar.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This year's survey marks the first time that the Fan Cost Index™ comprises the price of two average adult tickets as well as two average child tickets (as opposed to four average adult tickets)

TMR will use the same methodology for the NBA, NFL and NHL surveys later this year.

To give an accurate standard for comparison, TMR has re-calculated the 1998 MLB study using the same criteria.

cyberspotlight

Interactivity is the most obvious difference between the Internet and other mediums. And it's this hands-on aspect that can often make or break a fan's decision to visit a team's site frequently.

The Milwaukee Brewers' site (www.milwaukeebrewers.com) stands out as a prototype for sites that fans can touch and feel.

Some of the features include such basic child-targeted games as Brewers-themed Checkers and word jumble games using current and former players' names.

The site even has games targeted at adults. One such feature allows users to construct virtual puzzles of Miller Park.



One TMR editor took three separate attempts to put the puzzle together, working on the site for nearly 30 minutes—a near eternity in online advertising impression time.

One disappointing aspect of the site, however, is the absence of any Brewers merchandise pages—which has proven to be a key to attracting users and dollars from out-of-town and

international fans.

And with MLB's continued aggressive plans to promote the game worldwide, the Internet poses as an ideal link to these international fans.

While the Florida Marlins have an obvious allegiance to their Latino and Hispanic fan base in Miami, it creates the question of other clubs' commitment to promote their individual teams to a worldwide audience.

The Internet can be the world's most powerful communication tool, but only if it's in the correct language.

To ensure that its online message gets across to a larger audience, the Marlins site (www.flamarlins.com) offers in-depth team information, text and features in both Spanish and English—a handy resource for Spanish speaking fans living in Miami or Mexico City.

The Marlins site was designed and is maintained by CBS Sportsline.



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